

Project No. 47

UNDERPRIVILEGED CHILDREN PREPARATORY EDUCATION PROJECT (UCPEP)

Principle:

Providing education opportunity for the children of disadvantaged and un-reached communities, as it is a basic human right, not a privilege.

Objectives of the Project:

- To create opportunities for hard to reach children to have access to quality education; and
- To strengthen community management and linkage with the government and other development agencies for attaining manifold benefits.

Background:

The Underprivileged Children Preparatory Education Project (UCPEP) was initiated in 1997 with the aim of providing basic education for the children of underprivileged communities. The present (fourth) phase started in January 2008 and will end in December 2010.

Staff Strength: Total - 24 (Male - 22, Female-2)
Volunteers – 2,335 (Male-1213, Female-1,122)

Donors: Secours Catholique, France; Catholic Relief Services (CRS), USA; Korea Hope Foundation (KHF); Caritas Spain.

Expenditure:

Foreign Partners' Contribution : Tk. 27,649,938
Local Contribution : Tk. 1,774,090
Total : Tk. 29,424,028

Beneficiaries: Direct: Male 7,201 Female 6,898 Total 14,099
Indirect: Male 21,208 Female 20,851 Total 42,059

Target and achievements:

The major achievements of the project are as under:

Sl. No.	Items/Activities	Achievement as on June 2008	Performance in FY 2008-2009			Cumulative as on June 2009
			Target	Achievement	% of Achievement	
1	Schools	197	192	192	100	192
2	Students:					
	Boys	134,893	8,061	7,201	74	142,094
	Girls	134,951	7,889	6,898	74	141,849
	Total:	269,844	15,950	14,099	74	283,943
3	Graduated students					
	Boys	26,347	957	928	97	27,275
	Girls	27,246	900	1,060	118	28,306

Sl. No.	Items/Activities	Achievement as on June 2008	Performance in FY 2008-2009			Cumulative as on June 2009
			Target	Achievement	% of Achievement	
	Total	53,593	1,857	1,988	107	55,581
4	Dropout students	8,707	-	343	-	9,050
5	Meeting					
	No. of SMC meeting	25,178	958	956	100	26,134
	No. of teachers meeting	17,689	198	195	98	17,884
6	Training					
	No of teachers trained	4,035	387	370	96	4,405
7	School IGP					
	No of IGP taken	1,599	-	15	-	1,614
	Amount invested	48,675,556	791,559	1,219,253	154	49,894,809
	Profit earned	14,647,578	667,061	673,576	100	15,321,154

The above Table shows that a total of 192 schools arranged basic education for the disadvantaged children during this reporting period. A total of 14,099 students got admission and 1,988 students graduated whereas 343 students dropped out. In total 370 teachers received training on major subjects and Child Centered Method (CCM).

Impacts:

This project has created a number of positive trends in the lives of underprivileged communities. Some of them are mentioned below:

- Teachers' professional skills have enhanced.
- Students enjoy learning through CCM. For this reason their attendance in school has increased.
- School Managing Committee (SMC) members are regularly monitor school activities. They have prepared Micro Plan with the involvement of community people. Their involvement in the school activities has created education friendly circumstances. The literacy rate is increasing in the *Adivasi* society
- The community members are taking care of the phased out schools. The local government and elites somehow support the education centers.

Conclusion:

UCPEP has introduced the concept of pleasurable learning through CCM to increase the literacy rate in its working areas and to contribute to the national effort aiming at achieving Education For All (EFA). During the last fiscal year it encountered some difficulties such as small space in the classroom, dropout of teachers, etc. The project management tried to overcome the hindrances with effective supervision and alternative fund for extension of five school buildings. Community participation in the implementation process was the main strength of the project. This trend would lead to successful management after phasing out of schools at the end of the project period. As the financial capacity of the community is extremely feeble, it is necessary to support this project till the disadvantaged people become economically stable.

Combined Initiative of Italian Embassy and Caritas Bangladesh

The Director along with the Deputy Director of Italian Cooperation Emergency Program (ICEP) ceremonially inaugurated two schoolhouses on 27 June '09 in Aila-affected area. Italian Embassy, Dhaka granted fund for reconstruction of UCPEP schools. Tk. 387,958 was sanctioned for Pakkhali School and Tk. 369,102 for Nogendranath School located in Mongla *upazila* (sub-district), under Bagerhat district. Caritas extends sincere gratitude and thanks to Her Excellency, the Ambassador of Italy to Bangladesh for stretching out a helping hand to the disadvantaged children receiving elementary education.



Junior School Certificate Program

Junior School Certificate (JSC) Program is a joint initiative of Bangladesh Open University (BOU) and Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE). Caritas Bangladesh is one of the implementers of this program. The main principle of this program is to create an opportunity for school dropped out and working children to be mainstreamed in education. This Program started in July 2007 for three years through eight Open Distance Learning (ODL) centers to enhance the scope of education for dropouts and workers. Locations of the centers are: four in Dhaka Metropolitan city, one in Serajdikhan, one in Louhajong *upazila* under Munshiganj district and one in Nawabganj *upazila* under Dhaka Regional Office. A total of 385 dropped out and working learners (200 female and 185 male) study there. Necessary teaching and learning materials and other items are provided for them by CAMPE. This program will end in June 2010. The project is supported by OXFAM – NOVIB, SDC and EKN.

Louis Hasda's Hope for a Bright Future

Louis Hasda (19) son of Nandalal Hasda and Agnes Hasda is an inhabitant of village Kazipara under union Pachondar, *upazila* (Sub-district) Tanore, district Rajshahi. He is an *Adivasi* (indigenous) boy. Their family is landless and very poor. He has two sisters. The elder sister got married some years ago and the younger one reads in class ten in a local high school. His parents work hard to maintain their family. Despite economic insolvency Louis is now studying BBA in Jahangir Nagar University.

There are 120 families in Kajipara of which 6 families are Muslims and the rest are *Adivasi* (indigenous). They are mostly day laborers. Some are small farmers.

Twenty three years ago in Kazipara village there was no opportunity for children to receive education. In 1986 Caritas started a school under 'Underprivileged Children Preparatory Education Project (UCPEP)' there. In 1994 Louis got admission in class I. After graduation (grade III) he got admission in grade IV into Kachua Govt. Primary School in 1997. He studied there for two years and completed the course. Then he

got admission in grade VI into Kachua High School in 1999. Two years later Louis decided to go to another institution to continue his studies as some teachers had not come to this school to teach students regularly. But his family was unable to bear his educational expenses. So he went to Sursunipara parish-priest (17 km away from his village) and expressed his desire for further studies in a favorable atmosphere. The boy's determination enchanted the parish-priest who provided necessary support to him. Having received assurance from the priest the boy took admission into St. Joseph High School under Boraigram *upazila* (sub-district) of Natore district. From there he passed the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examination in 2004 with GPA 4.00 points (out of 5.00). After two years he also passed the Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examination from Notre Dame College, Dhaka with GPA 4.00. He got some financial assistance from college for his HSC course. Now Louis is receiving higher education in Jahangirnagar University, which is a reputed university of the country. He wants to choose a good career and help his community as much as possible.

He always encourages other students of his village to be attentive to studies and attain success in public examinations. Following his example some pupils are trying heart and soul to receive tertiary and higher education.

A student like Louis needs an opportunity to develop his potentials. It is only the opportunity, which makes big differences among people. Louis got access to education because Caritas started UCPEP School in Kazipara village. He expressed profound gratitude to Caritas for all sort of facilities he received during his primary education.