

BANGLADESH CHILD PROTECTION

ACTING TO END CHILD LABOR



The boy in the foreground collects plastic bottles from the garbage near a market, which will then be sold.

Many children in Bangladesh toil away as laborers under conditions that threaten their health and safety—welding metal in dangerous industrial shops, casting nets from isolated deep-sea fishing boats, and using rusty tools to gut shrimp in fish processing factories. Some children are forced to beg or to pick through trash, looking for food, clothing, and castoff items to sell. Others are sexually exploited.

Nearly 1.7 million children ages 5 to 17 in Bangladesh are engaged in illegal child labor.*

World Vision's Child Protection Project in Bangladesh aims to end child labor. We are working to remove children from exploitative and hazardous work and keep those at risk from engaging in such work. We also are connecting impoverished families to the resources they need for their children's healthy development. One of our key objectives is to increase access to education for children who are vulnerable to or already engaged in labor. Our goal is to come alongside families, communities, and partners to ensure that boys and girls are kept safe and have opportunities to thrive as God wants them to.

World Vision recognizes that sometimes children of legal working age need to earn income to support themselves and their families. When parents are trapped in low-wage jobs, single parents are on their own, or children themselves are heads of households, sometimes children must work to ensure that all family members are fed, clothed, and housed. But we are committed to preventing and ending children's participation in labor that is harmful, exploitative, or violative of a child's right to protection, or which keeps children from attending school.

The Bangladesh Child Protection Project is a comprehensive response to child labor. Our project seeks to protect children from labor and all forms of violence within supportive families and communities. Our efforts focus on encouraging the withdrawal of children from labor, increasing children's access to school, improving parents' incomes, and training older children for jobs that are legal and have decent earning potential. We also are raising awareness of the risks children face and equipping families and communities to create a safer environment for children.

*2015 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor-Bangladesh, U.S. Department of Labor

Beneficiaries We plan to serve 51,045 people (24,928 children/youth and 26,117 adults) over four years, October 2016 through September 2020. Beneficiaries will be vulnerable working children, including those laboring in hazardous conditions such as motor garages, deep-sea fishing, fish processing, workplaces with equipment such as lathes, and welding shops. We also will assist children involved in domestic labor, garbage picking, transportation, and hotel work.

Activities A key intervention will be to create Child-Friendly Learning and Recreation Centers. **Children ages 3 to 5** who are at risk of child labor or already engaged in labor, such as domestic servitude, will receive early childhood education in neighborhood-based centers and also will receive help transitioning to public primary school. Our goal is to reach children at a very early age and guide them on a path to school, not work.

Children ages 6 and older who work will attend centers near their places of work. Children will work part-time and go to the centers part-time, engaging in catch-up education to make up for years of lost schooling. This intervention acknowledges the sobering reality that families rely on their children's income to help pay for such essential needs as food and housing. To encourage participation in the center's activities, World Vision will provide a modest stipend—called a conditional cash transfer—to families who allow their children to forgo some of their earnings by working part of the day and then attending the center part of the day. Upon graduation from the center, children will receive a one-year scholarship to full-time primary or secondary school.

In some cases, **youth ages 14 and older** will receive vocational training and assistance in obtaining employment in dignified jobs with regular income.

To effectively assist **families** who have children engaged in or at risk of child labor, we will identify and respond to their particular needs. A key strategy is to provide skills training so parents can find new jobs with decent earning potential or begin their own business. Mothers and fathers also will participate in positive parenting training.

We will create and activate **local child protection committees** and train them to report incidents of child labor and other abuse and to connect child survivors with medical and social services.

We also are holding **events and meetings to increase awareness of the risks children face** and how to create a safer environment for them.

Location The project operates in Khulna division in southwest Bangladesh.

Budget The total funding need is \$4.28 million over the life of the project.

Please consider partnering with us to help children engaged in and at risk of child labor in Bangladesh.



Sharmin, right, dropped out of school after finishing fourth grade to help her mother make and sell cakes on the roadside. But with the help of World Vision and a child labor prevention committee, she was able to return to school.

Sharmin became a representative of that committee. She inspires other children to continue with their studies and shares what she has learned about child rights and child protection with her community. Sharmin's mother and father took part in training for parents of working children. This helped them to be supportive of their daughter's return to school.



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World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice. Motivated by our faith in Jesus Christ, we serve alongside the poor and oppressed as a demonstration of God's unconditional love for all people. World Vision serves all people, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, or gender.