

Inclusive Education a way of development

NEWS LETTER

August 2013

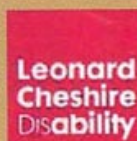
Inclusive Education A way of development

Project in brief

With the support of European Union (EU), Gana Unnayan Kendra(GUK) and Leonard Cheshire Disability (LCD) have been implementing a project titled "Promoting rights through community action: improved access to inclusive education for children with disabilities" in the 42 Union Parishad and 4 Municipalities under six Upazilas of Nilphamari district. Total direct beneficiaries of the project are 2100 school children (age 4-14) with disabilities. This is a 3 years long project covering the duration from 1st January 2012 to 31st December 2014. The overall objective of the project is to create conducive environment for the promotion of inclusive education by working with children with disabilities, their parents, teachers, local schools and the education authorities. The initiative of the project is to work towards an inclusive and empowered society where all children with disabilities enjoy their right to education on an equal basis with others, by working with and supporting Non State Actors (NSAs) and LAs to build and replicate a successful model for inclusive education.



European Union



Gana Unnayan Kendra (GUK)

At a glance achievement of the project to date

Basic data

- 253 primary schools come under the project so far
- 1573 CWDs including 899 boys and 674 girls has enrolled in school. Among them, H&S-443, Physical-456, Visual-156, Intellectual-355, Multiple-162

Formation of Social Groups

- 1618 members including 839 boys and 777 girls involve in 100 child clubs
- 1760 parents including 1090 female and 616 male involve in 100 parent's groups
- 6 Sub-districts level and one district level Alliance of Civil Society has been working

Capacity-building

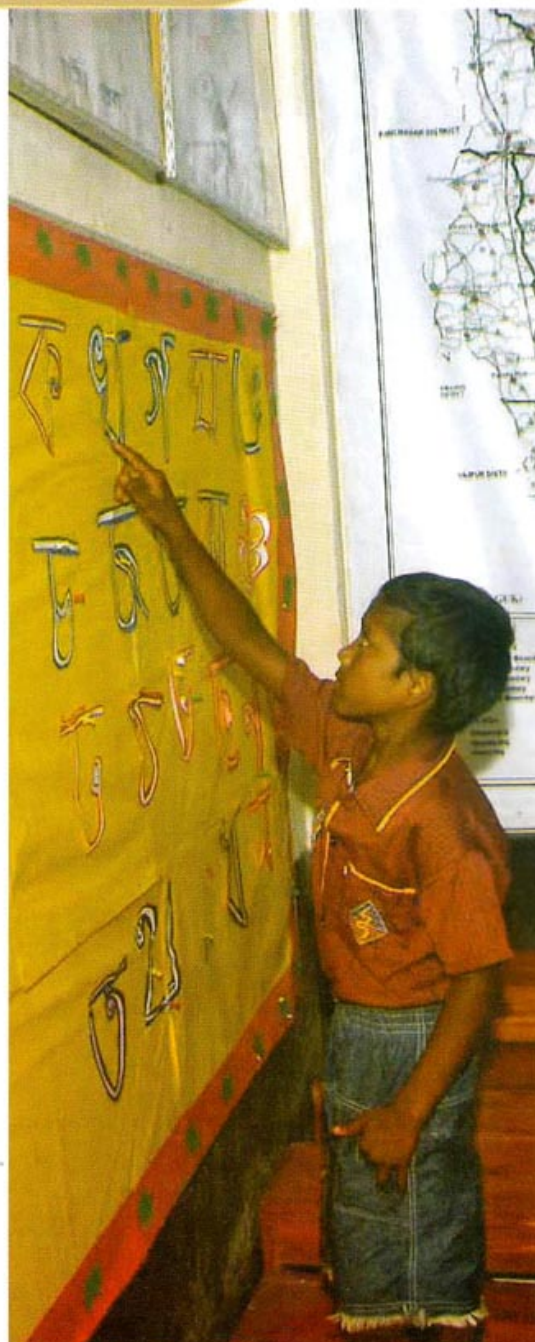
- 223 school teachers including 139 male and 84 female have received training.
- 146 caregivers has received rehabilitation training focusing better care and understanding of basic therapy for CWDs from the project
- 652 CWDs has received Therapy from the project
- 70 parents and speech & Hearing Impairment children has received sign language training
- 702 CWDs clinical assessment carry out
- 7 Inclusive Education Resource Centers has been established

Barrier free access

- 15 schools are fully accessible in terms of ramp, toilet, classroom adaptation, lighting and visual aids.

Support for mobility and education

- 200 CWDs has received money for transportation support.
- 349 CWDs including 188 boys and 161 girls have received Assistive Devices from the project.
- List of 555 CWDs has submitted to Social Welfare Department for Disability Identification Certificate
- 6 workshops are held on Inclusive Education where 345 participants from different organizations including govt. department were present.



Contents

- Capacity-building of teachers and community groups- A vital role to ensure and promote inclusive education. **Page 04**
- Inclusive Education Resource Center- A place of study and recreation of CWDs. **Page 6**
- Poverty- Destroy the dream of CWDs. **Page 7**
- Accessibility - One of barriers to development of CWDs. **Page 09**
- Community groups- A driving force to link demand and supply side. **Page 10**
- Sharing feeling of student with disabilities. **Page 11**
- From margin to development- Hafsa Zerín, an instance. **Page 13**
- Akash, and example of inclusion . **Page 14**



Editor

M Abdus Salam

Editorial Board

Anjum Naheed Chowdhury Lucky

Aftab Hossain

Asadul Islam Asad

S K Mamun

Shohel Rana Khandoker

Executive Editor

Aziz Ahmed

Afsana Chowdhury

Graphic Design

Hiranmay Chanda

Ibrahim Khan moni

Editorial

According to World Health Organization (WHO), there are 10% disabled people of total population in the world. Bangladesh, a densely populated country is lived by 16 million different types of people with disabilities. Although fundamental principles of the constitution strictly opposes the discrimination against the citizen of Bangladesh, Children with disabilities are victims of discrimination in education, health, free movement, recreation and participation. This marginalized part has been living with inhuman lives alongside isolated from social and development activities. The right of children with disabilities to a high-quality education alongside their peers is enshrined in the UN Convention on the rights of people with disabilities. National Education Policy 2010 of Bangladesh calls for ensuring primary education of CWDs. This international and national legal instrument does not conduce to bring any changes to the societal norms, practice and structure to ensure the education of CWDs. Despite the policies, specific issues kept many girls and boys with disabilities out of school. Lack of skilled teachers, disability friendly infrastructure and attitudinal problems exclude CWDs from their basic fundamental rights of education. Disability and poverty are interrelated. Most of the families who have disabled children are poor and cannot fulfill the basic needs of their disabled children. These children are confined in a house and isolated from all types of development and social activities that hinder the proper socialization of CWDs. GUK in partnership with Leonard Cheshire Disability has been working for CWDs considering social context and environment of Nilphamari district. Our attempt to promote accessibility and inclusive education of CWDs that brings joy, happiness and progress of CWDs as well as showed them to dream. We believe that Inclusive Education is one of the most effective approaches in achieving "Education for All". We have shared our learning, experience and progress working with CWDs through this newsletter. I hope that readers of this newsletter will gain a better understanding and realization of inclusive education that expand the approach of inclusive education and contribute to the development of CWDs in the coming days. I would like to convey our cordial acknowledgement and heart-whole thanks to EU for extending support for the project. We would also like to comprehend the complementing efforts of our staff members to bring out the newsletter.

Capacity- building of school teachers and community groups- A vital role to ensure and promote inclusive education

Mr Rabiul Islam, head teacher of Dakhin Mokter Para govt. primary school was not able to handle the student with disabilities properly due to lack of knowledge of managing them. After receiving training from GUK on inclusive education and utilizing her learning properly, she becomes popular in her community as a skillful teacher of CWDs. She enrolls 9 CWDs into her school. Now she is called by the "Guide of CWDs". Teacher is the key person to ensure teaching learners as well as plays a vital role in influencing the education system. Teachers evolve their students through maintaining a process and some techniques. But, if teacher does not know how to teach students of special need, what will happen then? The answer

is, student of special need will be deprived from their educational rights. It is a reality of the education of CWDs in general schools in the context of Bangladesh. Primary Training Institution Instructors who instruct to teachers on how to develop learning system in the school, have hardly knowledge about the inclusive education. Govt. Officials who are directly related to education, health and social welfare services, and actively implement different govt. project, has not proper knowledge on inclusive education. These shortfalls hinder learning of CWDs in general schools and finally CWDs are excluded from mainstream education. Without proper resources, CWDs inclusion in general school is not achieved. Though govt. has taken some initiatives to develop teaching



system considering CWDs but those are very limited. The Education Minister, Nurul Islam Nahid said on June 2013, "The government is committed to inclusion of children with disabilities in the regular education system by making schools more accessible to these children and providing training to teachers ". The ongoing project of GUK has been providing training support to

school teachers and govt. officials to motivate them through developing their knowledge and skills on class management, learning environment and materials development regarding CWDs education. In addition, community group members receive different trainings to improve their knowledge regarding needs and rights of CWDs.



- 223 school teachers including 139 male and 84 female have received training to-date,
- 1573 CWDs including 899 boys and 674 girls has enrolled in 253 primary schools to-date.
- 146 caregivers has received rehabilitation training focusing better care and understanding of basic therapy for CWDs from the project to date

Inclusive Education Resource Center (IERC) - A place of study and recreation of CWDs

Children with disabilities are isolated from the family and social activities in the context of Bangladesh. They are confined in a home and pass lonely life. As a result, they grow without proper socialization. These children cannot cope with their peers of Non-disabled children. These children need special care regarding adaptation in the environment of classroom before go to school. Information regarding teaching system, methodology and materials are needed to advance the inclusive education. IERC fulfils all types of needs and requirements of CWDs and their teachers.

IERC is one of important aspects of Inclusive Education Approach. It is served as information and capacity-building hubs for children with disabilities, parents, teachers and other stakeholders to gain skills and knowledge towards promoting the inclusive education. In order to address the educational needs and issues of large number of children with disabilities through promoting effective and

meaningful inclusion in mainstream education system, the IERCs play crucial role in enhancing the quality of education, increase learning abilities of all children including children with disabilities. Equipments in IERCs are kept in considering the needs and requirements of different types of children with disabilities. For recreation, it provides carom board, chess, Ludo, ball, ring ball etc and information related material such as UNCRPD, national and international documents for teacher, braille & story books, books on teaching methodologies etc. are kept in IERC.

The project has established 7 Inclusive Education Resource Centers (IERC) at primary school to avail the inclusive education related information and services for the teacher's and CWDs. These centers also provide the services including physiotherapy, speech therapy, mobility orientation, ADLS practice, therapeutic play and information & advice about teaching learning's materials.



Poverty – Destroy the dream of children with disabilities



Children with disabilities have many abilities but often face discrimination and lack of support from society. UNICEF calls for inclusion of these children in policy planning and social services as it will benefit both communities and societies that they are living in. Societies need to concentrate on the abilities and potential of children with disabilities to foster their talent, says the UNICEF report.

School aged Children with disabilities, who live in remote areas, mostly come from poor family. Guardians those are extreme poor are not able to bear the cost of their children's study, they live from hand to mouth in general. CWDs need special care and service to study in school which has never been met by their poor parents and therefore CWDs are always deprived from their educational rights. Society is not aware and state support which is very limited according to the needs and requirements of CWDs, do not reach to actual needy CWDs for the negligence of service provider and actual data. Some educational materials like Braille, audio-recorder, school bags, sign-language books etc are necessary for the education of different types of CWDs. These materials are not available in local market. In addition, these are very expensive to buy. School authority has limited resources and services do not fulfill the needs of children with disabilities. Moreover they have little idea for development of children with disabilities.

The project introduces different learning materials and idea considering the context for study of children with disabilities. Following supports are provided by the project to continue the study of poor and mobility problems CWDs.

- 200 CWDs has received money for transportation support to date.
- 349 CWDs including 188 boys and 161 girls has received Assistive Devices from the project to date.
- 1000 CWDs receive extra coaching support and 1573 CWDs receive school bags & writing pads from the project.
- 25 school-vans has been supporting CWDs to reach in school

Transport support

CWDs cannot make them able to attend regularly in school. Mothers or fathers, or elder siblings might drop CWDs in school, but this can eventually become too difficult. It has found that parents express their full interest to leave their children at school at the beginning but gradually this interest reduces for various family problems. In this way, most of CWDs suddenly drop out. These project provided school van to school authority so that CWDs easily participate in their classroom. In addition, the project also provides support of transportation cost to the CWDs.

Assistive device

Wheel-Chair, hearing Aids, Walker, Special chair etc is necessary for movement,communication of CWDs. These devices are not available in local level. In addition, Poor CWDs are not able to buy those. This project offers different assistive device to CWDs to ensure their study and mobility.

Retention Support

Extra coaching support, school bags & writing pads, Audio-recorder, Braille slate, sign language books are provided by the project to CWDs.



Accessibility- One of barriers to development of CWDs

One of guardians of CWDs says, "If a child cannot use the toilet all day long during at school, he or she faces health problems and loose interest to attend in school."

Inclusive education means disabled children being taught in the same classroom alongside non-disabled children. Accessibility is one of major problems to ensure inclusive education for disabled students. Accessibility in terms of access to school-building, disability friendly toilet in school and suitable black-board are major barriers for CWDS to study in general school. Most of school buildings have no ramp for wheel chair users. In addition, building structure

of community school is too tough to sit in classroom for CWDs. There is no available space in classroom. Crutch and wheel-chair user and sometimes visual impaired disabled children face tremendous problems due to inaccessible building and therefore, loose interest to go to school.

The project has been supporting assistive device to the different type of CWDs to improve their mobility as well as builds ramp, toilet and black board in the school building. In addition, social influencing committees of the project influence to local govt. and business community to provide financial assistance to the authority of school management to build ramp.

15 schools are fully accessible interms of ramp, toilet, classroom adaptation, lighting and visual aids.



Community Groups— A driving force to link demand and supply side

Nurunnahar Begum, mother of Rekha (5) a child with physical disability lives in a village of Uttar Kaniakhata of Nilphamari Sador Upazila. She became frustrated when she knew her daughter was child with special need. After taking advice from the project staff, Nurunnahar got admitted her daughter in a primary school and she also got involved in parents group. Parents group was formed to create awareness among the parents of CWDs about the rights of CWDs and role and responsibilities of society and state towards CWDs. Receiving training and information, now Nurunnahar is a leader of a parent's group and plays active role to create awareness among the community towards CWDs.

Social force is very important aspect regarding awareness creation and advocacy purpose. These forces raise voice to society and govt. officials about the needs and demands of CWDs and work as a pressure group in the community to overcome barriers of CWDs in education, movement etc.

Appeal of community people is easily accepted by the service providers and therefore social mobilization work takes place easily and effectively. Social group plays a vital

role to link the demand and supply side. CWDs who are demand side and duty-bearers are supply side. Social force plays as a mediator of both sides to bring in the same line. Accountability and transparency of the project also ensure to involve community people in the project implementation level. This project is formed different tiers of community groups such as parent's group, children club, civil society alliance to engage themselves in the project work. These groups influence local authorities and state agencies for inclusion and development of CWDs. 100 parent's groups, 100 Children clubs and an alliance of civil society, federation of PWDs, representatives of teacher and journalists association have been working in the project areas to influence the local government for effective implementation of national and international policies and laws of CWDs.

- 1618 members including 839 boys and 777 girls involve in 100 child clubs;
- 1760 parents including 1090 female and 616 male involve in 100 parents groups
- 6 Sub-districts level and one district level Alliance of Civil Society are working
- List of 555 CWDs has submitted to Social Welfare Department for Disability Identification Certificate to date



Students with disability share their feeling after receiving aids and getting admission in school

After getting a wheel-chair 8 years old physically impaired boy Kamal Uddin says, "I can now easily move everywhere I want. I have got friends who assist me to move and I now go to school regularly. As a member of a child club, we do meeting there and learn many things to share with each other."

Emon 10 years old boy says, "Now I have no problem to reach in school because I am getting money for using transport facilities. I enjoy my school life now."

Hearing impaired 12 years old girl Humayara says, "I have got a hearing aid that enables me to hear. I can participate actively in the child club meeting every month now. I have made many friends in the club and effectively communicate with them. I enjoy my life now."

Physical impaired 11 years old girl Kolpona says, "I felt unhappy due to my past idle life. Community trainer has given me a wheel-chair, school bag and note books to study in school. Last year I enrolled in class two. I like to go to school very much. I am grateful to the community trainer for his attention and help."

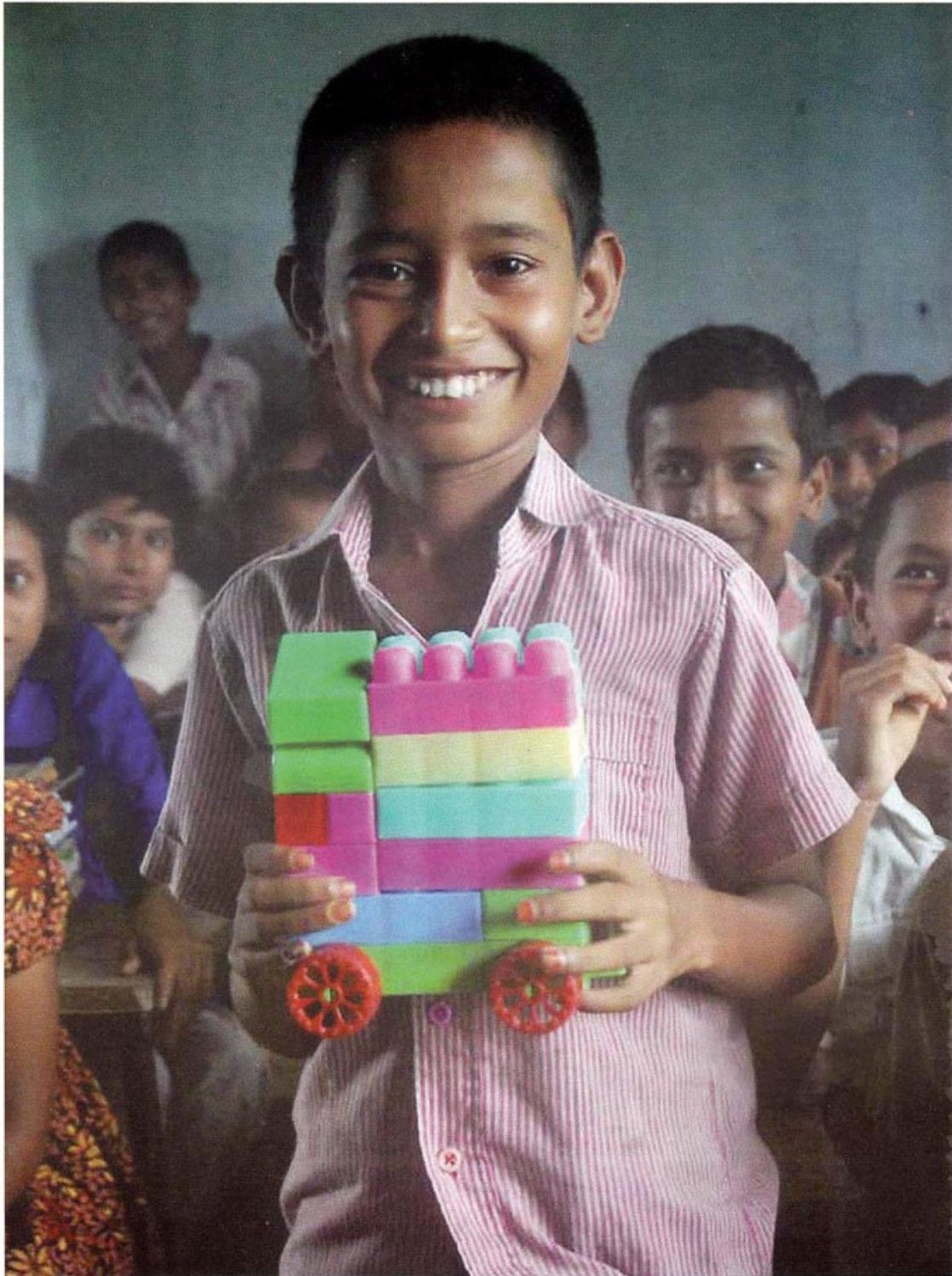
Orpit Ahmed Akash, a 6 years old boy with physically impaired says, "I love rhymes, both English and Bangla that I learn at my school and from my tuition tutor. My friends help me, too. They help me to study, lend me pencil if I forget to bring it. I enjoy playing with my friends, too."

Ashrafunnessa an activist for Inclusive Education

Ashrafunnessa, President of Tengonmari Parents' Group says, "Like others, children with disabilities have the rights to education". Ashrafunnessa is well-known in her community as an activist for inclusive education.

During talking with Ashrafunnessa, she says "Once rights of persons with disabilities especially for CWDs are overlooked or schools deny enrollment of CWDs, I stand beside the suppress people and protest against the discrimination. I work for creating community awareness towards rights of CWDs. I provide information to Parents about the services of govt. and share the way of getting it. GUK motivates me to fight against discrimination and violation of human rights."





From margin to development- Hafsa Zerín, an instance

Seven years old Hafsa Jerin Akhtar lives with his parents, a small farming community at Chorai khola under Nilphamari Sadar upazilla of Nilphamari district. Her father Mr. Mosharrif Hossain is a day labor and Mother Morsheda Khatun is a house wife. The land is dry with sparse vegetation. The community is poverty stricken, their nutritional status low and their sanitation facilities vastly inadequate. Life in Chorai khola is hard for the whole community but few have suffered more than Jerin who has had to live with the extra burden of cerebral palsy.

Cerebral palsy is common in Bangladesh, neither untreatable nor incurable. However, poor access to medication coupled with the social stigma attached to his condition has made Jerin a social outcaste. In Bangladesh there is a popular misconception that epilepsy is communicable and that those affected have been inhabited by "demons" or "spirits".

Families affected by CP often face ostracization and isolation from their community. Jerin's neighbours have warned their children against associating with him and his siblings and some people even flee when they see him in the street. Jerin's mother explained, "Sometimes when I am walking with Jerin, people run away. They say his sickness is communicable."

Jerin has received a similar reaction at family. He says, "Most of my family members won't allow me to sit with them; they will not lend me any of their things. They won't share their food with me, and, as much as possible, they avoid any contact with me."

GUK came across Jerin at a field consultation in Nilphamari, January 2012. For the first time Jerin & her mother was given the opportunity to talk openly about the isolation and the sense of desolation that her condition had caused her. As a result of this meeting, GUK began work to improve Jerin's access to medication & therapy and ensured that she received regular visits from a physiotherapy & Community trainer who could monitor her recuperation and help him reintegrate into his community. GUK also became active in challenging the stigma and misconceptions that Jerin's community, like many people across Bangladesh.

One year on Jerin's life has changed immeasurably. GUK' support has boosted her self confidence and attitudes within her community are rapidly changing.

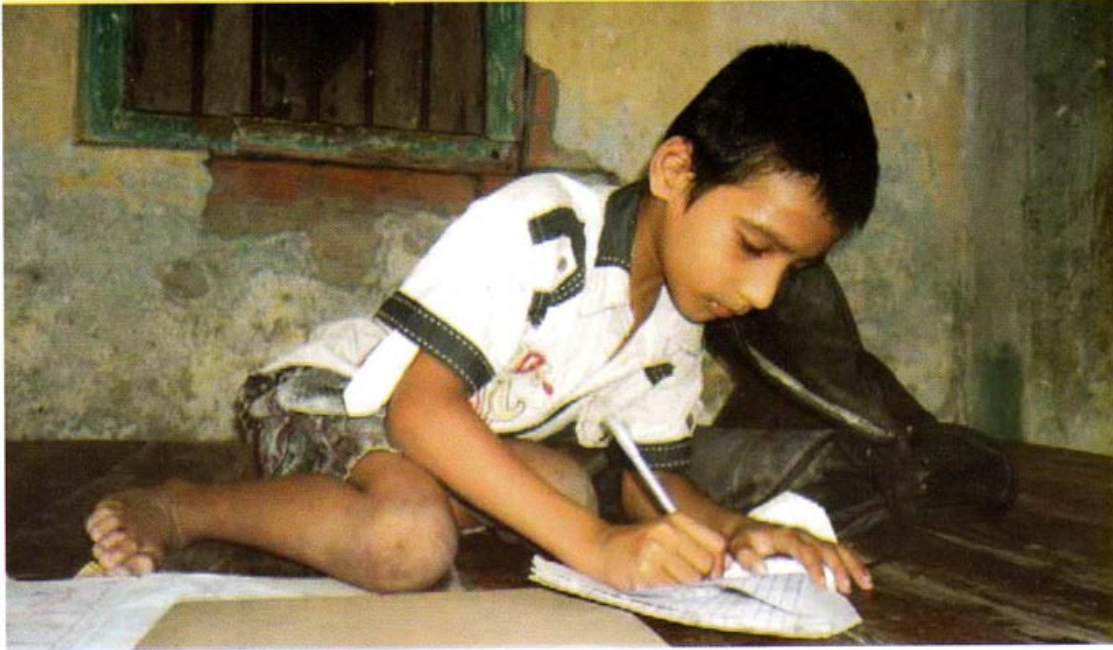
GUK IE Project technical team assessed and prepared a rehabilitation parents plan. As per the plan Physiotherapist of project has been given advice to her mother about therapeutic service and made a Parallel bar by family contribution. A walking aid also provided by the project support. GUK also included her parent into a four day long training (Training for the Caregivers) where her mother Morsheda Khatun practiced therapeutic intervention and the use of assistive devices based on Jerin's individual needs to improve her movement.

As a result of project initiative she is able to walk 2-3 steps without support.

In the month of January 2013 she also enrolled in the nearest Dakkhin Kaniakhata Govt. Primary School in the class of pre primary. Her condition improved day by day. Now, Jerin can walk without assistance from others. She can go to her school, roam around her neighborhood, can use bathroom and toilet independently. Her parents along with her peers, teachers and community people are astounded seeing her improvement. Now she does not feel excluded. She can write few alphabet and goes to school regularly.



Akash, an example of Inclusion



Orprit Ahmed Akash, a 6 years old boy with physically impaired lives in Shoudagorpara, Shakhamacha, Sadar Nilphamari. His father Babu Islam is a day laborer and mother Rozi is a housemaid. Akash is enrolled in class one in 2013.

Akash is identified in 2012 during survey. Community trainer carries out his educational and rehabilitation assessment and thereby makes plan for development. He has been given wheel chair, school bag and education material like note book etc. as well as transportation cost to school and extra tuition fees. His mother receives Caregiver Training which is helping her to take better care of Akash. His mother is an active member of Parents' Group where they discuss on the rights of their children and related issues.

Akash says, "I love rhymes, both English and Bangla that I learn at my school and from my tuition tutor. My friends help me, too. They help me to study, lend me pencil if I forget to bring it. I enjoy playing with my friends, too". His teacher Ms. Parvin says, "Akash is a regular student. He is very attentive to his lesson. As

I have got training on Inclusive Education from Gana Unnayan Kendra (GUK), all colleagues including Headmaster has developed a specific plan for our disabled students. Akash studies in class one and we provide "Block Teaching (i.e. single teacher teaches all the subjects)" for the students. She adds, "Apart from our regular teaching-learning procedure, students with disability receive extra tuition provided under Inclusive Education project of GUK which is very helpful for them to learn their lessons. Akash has shown tremendous improvement in his studies since he has been receiving extra tuition. Akash will appear his Second Terminal Examination (School based examination system) and we wish his bright performance."

Rozi, Akash's mother says, "We never think that our child will be able to attend in school. Community Trainer of the project who keeps in touch with us and aware us about the rights and needs of CWDs, plays a vital role to enroll him in school. The Project has provided a wheel chair to ensure his mobility. His teachers are very helpful. We are very happy toward Akash's improvement and grateful to GUK."

Picture Gallery





European Union



Gana Unnayan Kendra (GUK)