



ANNUAL REPORT 2013

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about SPREEHA BANGLADESH FOUNDATION

Spreeha (স্প্ৰেহা), originating from Bengali, means hope, intention, and strong desire. The charter of Spreeha is to empower underprivileged communities to flourish and break the cycle of poverty. By engaging deeply within the community to provide healthcare, education and training, we intend to establish an atmosphere where the community feels enabled to exercise their rights and responsibilities. Spreeha Foundation, a Washington based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization (EIN: 45-3361624) established by a group of NRB based in USA.

Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation is an independent organization registered as a Trust in Bangladesh; providing service in healthcare, education and training to the slum dwellers at Rayer Bazar area in Dhaka City.

our MISSION, VISSION AND VALUES

mission

Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation strives to break the cycle of poverty for underprivileged people by providing healthcare, education and skills training.

vision

Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation envisions life without poverty where underprivileged people are empowered to improve their quality of life.

our values

Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation is guided by the following values:

- Sense of hope and compassion
- Accountability and Transparency
- Pragmatic approach to finding solutions
- Collaboration
- Sustainability
- Deep Community Engagement
- Pursue Growth and Learning

message from THE CHAIRPERSON

Fighting Poverty

One Community at a Time

It is with a lot of pride and satisfaction that I share our very first annual report with you. The year 2013 was a significant milestone for us since this is our first full year in operation from the time when we started our journey in December, 2012.

Our mission is helping the underprivileged communities to flourish and break the cycle of poverty, enabling their children to not only survive, but thrive and become contributing members of our society. We plan to work with the most disadvantaged people around the urban slums of Bangladesh. We challenge ourselves for sustainable change and understand it will not happen overnight. While there is no quick fix, Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation knows that with the right health interventions for mothers and babies, good primary and secondary education for children and skills/job training for youth and adults, these people can turn themselves around.

We believe development is only truly sustainable when it is community driven, and when an investment is made in the human capacity of a community. Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation started 'Health and Hope for Disadvantaged Project' at Rayer Bazar, Dhaka, Bangladesh to support the slum dwellers in partnership with SpaandanB Bangladesh Country Office. The program intervention is defined in three components as health, education and empowerment.

This year, I met expectant mothers in Rayer Bazar who had a greater chance of giving birth to their babies safely because Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation provided an excellent pre/post natal care for them. Today, 1500 families have access to primary healthcare because of our outpatient clinic. We brought preschool education to their doorsteps and built three preschools inside the slums, supporting 234 children of ages 3-5. Our school aged children excelled in school through our after-school coaching. We made sure our children are immunized, community enabled through health camps, girls and women are engaged in community groups, and youth are getting the technology training through our computer labs.

As indicated in our 2013 financial report, this year our total income was BD Tk44.0 lakhs. We are evolving a fundraising strategy, through which we aim to quadruple our size next year and prepared to bring our solution to many other underprivileged communities throughout the country in next five years. This continues to be possible with the support of friends, donors, volunteers and employees that makes Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation more than just a development organization. It's the dream of all involved to give every household an opportunity to foster their full potential. Your commitment has given a few families the chance of building a new future but the work is just beginning and our journey continues.

Finally, I express my sincere appreciation to Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation USA and fellow affiliates for their continued support and confidence in Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation. I would like to thank my colleagues in the board for being so strongly engaged and for bringing in such a rich diversity of perspective within the Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation governance framework. I would also like to compliment the leadership and staff for effective implementation of our strategy through their commitment, passion and dedication.

Best Wishes,

Mahmud Hossain

Chairperson

spreeha bangladesh

INTERVENTION

Approximately 40 million people in Bangladesh live in urban areas, out of which 21% live below the poverty line. Such poor urban households live in inadequate and insecure houses, often in unsanitary conditions and face difficulties in accessing employment, made worse by having little or no social protection. They have limited access to adequate health services and education opportunities. With one of the highest urbanization rates in Asia, the situation continues to worsen for an increasing number of urban poor in Bangladesh. Despite this, urban poverty goes largely unrecognized in Bangladesh as the misperception that addressing it might result in increased migration. Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation intends to empower slum dwellers breaking the cycle of poverty through their access to healthcare, education, social and institutional resources.

Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation's core objective is the provision of support in three major areas- healthcare, education, and empowerment. Initially, Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation is implementing the plan in a pilot program at Rayer Bazar, Dhaka in partnership with other established organizations and private entities. The organization will develop a project performance framework for each of its goals to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs in terms of output, outcome and impact. Successful implementation of these goals in a pilot will guide Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation towards a scalable effective model that can be replicated in other slum areas throughout Bangladesh and beyond.

Since starting its first project in December, 2012, Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation has had an eventful as well as a highly effective 2013. Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation runs its activities at Rayer Bazar slum area shown in the map below through 2 major initiatives: Firstly, a project named "Health and Hope for Disadvantaged Families" funded by Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation USA partnering with SpaandanB is being implemented. Secondly, funds are being raised from local sponsors, corporations, special events, and activities to focus on capacity building and sustainment.

OUR PROGRAMS AND GROWTH STRATEGIES

Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation's core objective is the provision of support to the underprivileged community in the following three major program areas:

Healthcare

1. Provide access to physicians, medication, and education to improve general health.
2. Offer immunization and child health education programs.
3. Offer Prenatal and Postnatal care services.
4. Offer special health programs.
5. Offer family planning services.

Education

1. Organize Pre-school programs for children age 3-5 years.
2. Organize After-school tutorial support for children age 6+ years.

Empowerment

1. Organize home daycare for underprivileged children age 0-3 years
2. Organize adolescent girls' clubs to educate them on the necessary awareness of their Rights & Responsibilities.
3. Provide skills training and marketing support.

To further its mission, Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation focuses on and seeks sponsorship funding from government, corporations, non-profits, non-governmental organizations, foundations, and individuals. The sponsorship opportunities are in the form of monetary donations, resources, and infrastructure support, etc.

Also, the foundation's growth strategy will be focused on the following areas:

- Capacity Development- strengthen and leverage Spreeha's tangible and intangible assets to ensure that it is better equipped to accomplish its missions.
- Governance- establish organizational policies and practices to improve accountability, transparency, integrity and operations.
- Fundraising and Income Generation- pursue funding from Spreeha's partners and sponsors for programs and capacity development.

our first year IN REVIEW

2013

Key Highlights

Number of people Spreeha served through its healthcare, education and empowerment programs:

11,610

Healthcare

1. Total **5,259** beneficiaries served, among them **234** were referred
2. **109** mothers got Antenatal and **39** received post-natal care
3. **39** safe deliveries
4. **440** children received polio vaccination
5. **2** eye camps, **1** child health camp, and **1** blood-grouping camp organized

Education

1. **156** children in pre-school and **147** children in after-school
2. **43** parents meeting conducted
3. **303** children received hygiene materials, school supplies, and nutrient supplements
4. **303** children received hygiene education

Empowerment

1. **30** girls in Adolescent Girls Club
2. **14** total Adolescent Girls Club meetings organized
3. **6** total women empowerment meetings organized

**spreeha bangladesh
foundation**

PROGRAMS OVERVIEW

HEALTHCARE

HEALTHCARE GOAL 1

Provide access to physicians, medication and education to improve general health of poor people.

Progress in 2013



TOTAL NUMBER OF
PATIENTS WERE SERVED IN
REGULAR HEALTH CLINIC.

4,024

The population was categorized as per age groups and offered two types of general health services:

- Curative care through outpatient clinic
- Preventive care through door-to-door medical services and health education

2013	New Patients	Follow-up Patients	Patients Referred
February	148	41	18
March	186	133	25
April	185	132	17
May	245	142	22
June	233	173	25
July	190	200	36
August	121	124	16
September	248	259	22
October	188	200	18
November	255	229	18
December	206	186	17
TOTAL	2205	1819	234

Table: 2013 Healthcare Service Delivery

An outpatient clinic started its operation in Feb, 2013 with physician access for 4 hours/day and five days/week. In 2013, the clinic was open for 200 days and 4,024 patients received health services. Besides that, 234 patients needed specialized service and they were referred to other government and non-government facilities.

General Healthcare Challenges:

- The service delivery process was not mature enough to handle the actual ground reality.
- Health worker training was limited.
- Outpatient diagnostic service was not available causing interrupted patient care.
- Door to door service was most effective during off hours since most parents work during the day, which we were unable to offer.

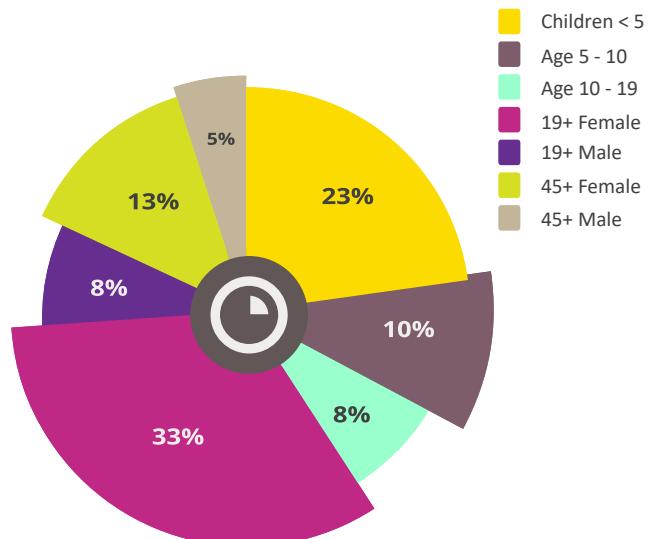


Fig: Patients Category

HEALTHCARE GOAL 2

Offer prenatal and postnatal care services to underprivileged females

Progress in 2013



NUMBER OF MOTHERS WHO GOT PRE/POST-NATAL CARE

109



NUMBER OF SAFE DELIVERIES ENSURED

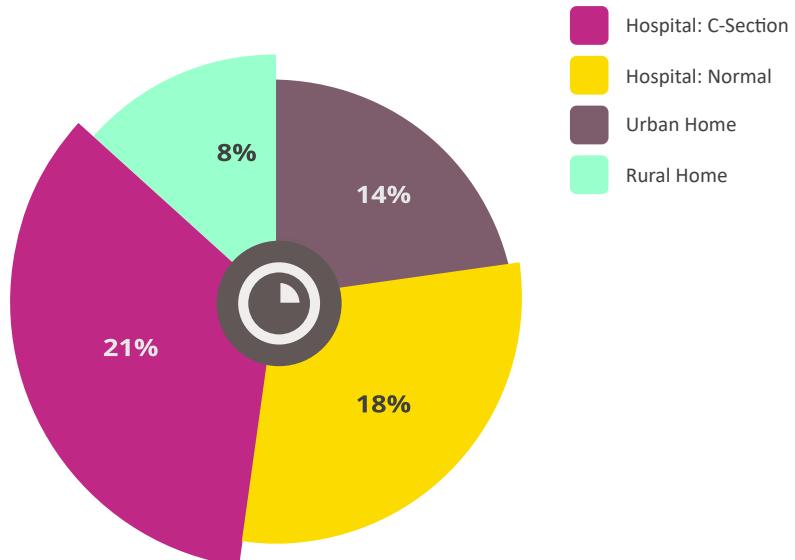
39

In 2013, 109 Mothers got Pre/Post-Natal Care and 91 of them were immunized. Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation also ensured 39 safe deliveries among 61 deliveries last year. Rest 22 women decided to go back to home for delivery.

Last year, 20 meetings were organized with ANC and PNC mothers using Information Education and Counseling (IEC) materials on certain issues. Awareness on maternal & child health care, nutrition & hygiene, Ante natal care, postnatal care, safe delivery, immunization and contraceptive methods were ensured by linking the group members to our clinical services, governmental services, or other non-government organizations as appropriate

Pre/Post Natal Care Challenges:

- About 36 percent of the ANC mothers decided to go back to village for delivery. Even though our health workers followed up with them, it was challenging to provide quality support remotely.
- Social workers were not trained to take care of the mothers proficiently
- Work prioritization was not planned causing inefficient service.



HEALTHCARE GOAL 3

Offer Immunization and Child Health Education Programs to Poor Parents with Young Children

Progress in 2013



NUMBER OF CHILDREN POLIO VACCINE WAS ENSURED TO

275



NUMBER OF NEWBORNS POLIO VACCINE WAS ENSURED TO

39



NUMBER OF CHILDREN WHO RECEIVED NUTRITION SUPPLEMENT

303

Awareness on maternal & child health care, nutrition, and hygiene was ensured through social workers visit and parents meetings. Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation also provided nutritional support to 303 children twice a week through its preschool and afterschool programs.

On December 21, Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation participated in the 21st National Immunization Day (NID) while our health care center was selected as one of the immunization centers. Spreeha's health workers and volunteers administered oral polio vaccines to 275 children at its center.

Children, adolescent girls and parents were educated on Malnutrition Prevention through regular counseling and learning sessions during doctors' visits, health camps, parents meeting, group learning sessions and home visits of Social workers.

HEALTHCARE GOAL 4

Offer Special Health Programs to Underprivileged People

Progress in 2013



POLIO VACCINE BENEFICIARIES

275



PEDIATRIC-CARE CAMP BENEFICIARIES

89



EYE-CARE CAMP BENEFICIARIES

99



BLOOD GROUPING BENEFICIARIES

125

Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation organized a health camp in the Rayer Bazar slum at the Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation Healthcare Center on January 23, 2013. A total of 89 patients (children) were treated during the event. 99 patients were also treated during a special two-day eye treatment camp at Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation Healthcare Center.

Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation held a daylong blood sampling session last year at its Health Care Center at Rayer Bazar in cooperation with Human Aid Bangladesh. People from nearby Rayer Bazar and Katashur area attended the session and sampling of their blood groups were made free of cost.

HEALTHCARE GOAL 5

Offer Family Planning Services
to Underprivileged Adult
Married Couples

Progress in 2013



NUMBER OF COUPLES WHO GAINED KNOWLEDGE REGARDING CONTRACEPTIVES

1,047

Social workers ensured usage
of contraceptives by 1,047
Fertile Couples through
counseling and group learning
sessions.

Family Planning Methods	Frequency
Injection	++++
Pill	+++
Natural	++
Norplant	+
Condom	+
IUD	+
Ligation	+

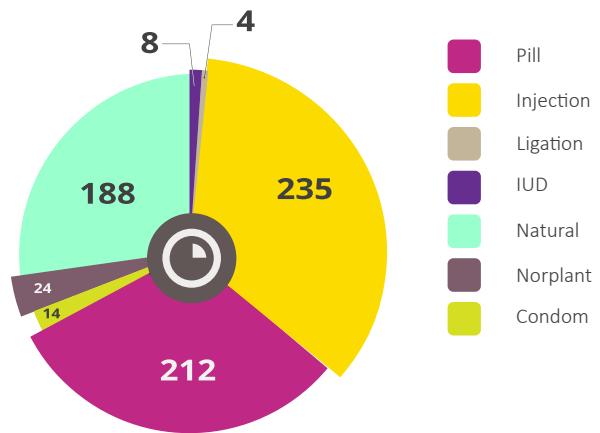


Fig: Family Planning Summary

Other Health Programs Challenges:

- Health camps and other health related events were conducted in an ad-hoc basis due to resource availability.
- Connecting the community with other government and non-government healthcare providers were lacking.
- Health prevention and hygiene education was not fully effective.
- Malnutrition identification and prevention could not be addressed fully among our beneficiaries.

EDUCATION

EDUCATION GOAL 1

Organize Pre-school Programs for
Underprivileged Children Age 3-5 years

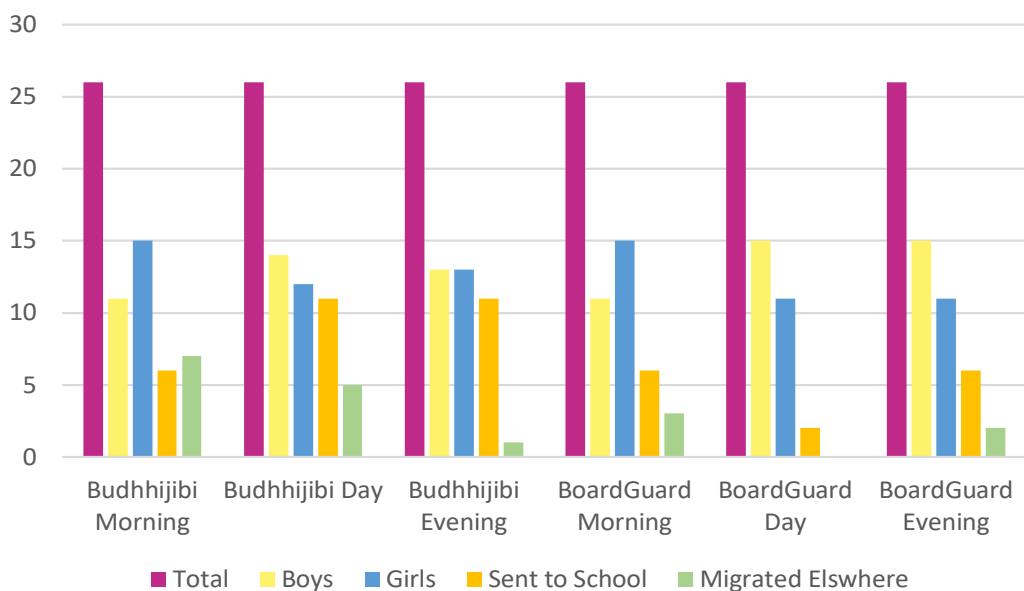
Progress in 2013



**NUMBER OF CHILDREN
WHO WERE A PART OF THE
PRE-SCHOOL PROGRAM**

156

Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation started its preschool education program a year ago with 26 children. Throughout the year 2013, a total of 156 children were a part of the pre-school program. Spreeha utilizes the “Kajoli Model” because of its innovative features and its “fun and game” approach to promote childhood education in underprivileged areas.



Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation has been operating Buddhijibi Pre-Schools/Early Child Development (ECD) Centre with a capacity of enrolling 78 children in 3 shifts at Jafrabad, Rayer Bazar, Dhaka since 15th December 2012. Throughout last year, a total 85 children were enrolled and they have been prepared for mainstream primary education. In January 2014, 28 children have been admitted to mainstream primary schools in class one. And 13 of them migrated back to village and other part of the city.

Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation started its 2nd Pre-school/ECD Centre in September 2013 at Board Guard, Mohammadpur with a capacity of 78 children.

Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation provided quarterly education and hygiene materials, healthy snacks twice a week, and clothing three times a year to all its preschool students.

Preschool Education Challenges

- Migration is the main challenge. Children were often sent back to village to live with grandparents due to lack of daycare support.
- Teachers were not trained sufficiently.
- Preschool education delivery model was not mature.
- Evaluation framework need to be finalized.
- Parent's involvements were not adequate.

EDUCATION GOAL 2

Organize After-school Tutorial
Support for Underprivileged
Children Age 6+ years

Progress in 2013

Grade	Boys	Girls	Total
Class-1	14	15	29
Class-2	12	17	29
Class-3	11	18	29
Class-4	13	7	20
Class-5	2	18	20
Class-6	1	13	14
Class-7	1	0	1
Class-8	0	4	4
Class-9	0	1	1
TOTAL:	54	93	147

summary
AFTER-SCHOOL

junior class one/pre-school

A total of 45 children were enrolled from the Junior Class One. Four children migrated to villages. The details are below:

Junior Class 1 / Preschool Summary	Boys	Girls	Total
Migrated to Village	1	3	4
Enrolled in Class 1 at Jaffrabad Pathshala	10	11	21
Enrolled in Class 1 at Jamula Bank Primary	0	1	1
Double Promoted to Class 2 at Jaffrabad Pathshala	0	1	1
Secured Top Positions at Jaffrabad Pathshala	2	1	3
Admitted to Madrasa	1	0	1
Promoted from Preschool to Class 1	5	9	14

class 1

A total 15 students were enrolled in Class One. Two children migrated to their village homes and were admitted to class two in local primary schools. The summary is captured in the table below:

Class 1 Summary	Boys	Girls	Total
Migrated to Village and Other Part of City	2	0	2
Promoted to Class 2 with 1st Position at Jamula Bank Primary	1	0	1
Promoted to Class 2 with 2nd Position at JaffrabadAdhorsho Primary	1	0	1
Promoted to Class 2 at JaffrabadAdhorsho Primary	3	8	11
TOTAL	7	8	15

class 2

A total of 28 children were enrolled in Class Two. Among them, 1 girl migrated to her village home. The Class 2 summary is in the table below:

Class 2 Summary	Boys	Girls	Total
Migrated to Village	0	1	1
Failed Final Exam and Stayed in Class 2	0	1	1
Promoted to Class 3 with Special Permission	1	1	2
Promoted to Class 3 with Positions at JaffrabadAdhorsho Primary	1	2	3
Promoted to Class 3 with Significant Improvement	9	12	21
TOTAL	11	17	28

class 3

A total of 20 children were enrolled in Class Three. Among them, 3 children moved to their villages. The Class 3 summary is in the table below:

Class 3 Summary	Boys	Girls	Total
Migrated to Village	2	1	3
Stopped Going to School	2	0	2
Promoted to Class 4 with Positions	0	1	1
Promoted to Class 4 with Significant Improvement	9	5	14
TOTAL	13	7	20

class 4

A total of 21 children were enrolled from Class Four. Among them, 1 girl migrated to the village.

Class 4 Summary	Boys	Girls	Total
Migrated to Village	0	1	1
Failed the Final Exam	0	1	1
Promoted to Class 5 with Positions	1	3	4
Promoted to Class 5 with Significant Improvement	1	14	15
TOTAL	2	19	21

class 5

3 Boys and 9 Girls have been enrolled in Class-5. All of them participated in the Public Exam/PEC Exam 2013. Below is their achievement:

Sl. No.	Student Name	GPA
1	Habiba Akther	3.83
2	Sadia Akther	4.25
3	Lucky Akter	3.5
4	Tamanna Akther	4.08
5	Sima Akther	4.25
6	Tahmina Akther	3.92
7	Afroja Akther	4.08
8	Riya	3.43
9	Tohedul Islam	3.5
10	Rakebul Islam	3.5
11	Sabbir Hossain	4.5
12	Daina Islam	3.67

class 6

In Class six only one boy has been enrolled. He failed in ICT and Physical Exercise subjects in the 1st term. But in the Final Exam he secured B- and promoted to class seven.

class 7

Four girls were enrolled from class 7. Among them one girl failed in English 2nd Paper in 1st term and in General Science in 2nd terminal exam. But she secured A- in Final Exam with significant improvement in academic performance. Performances of rest of the 3 girls were reasonably and significantly improved while they have been promoted to class eight.

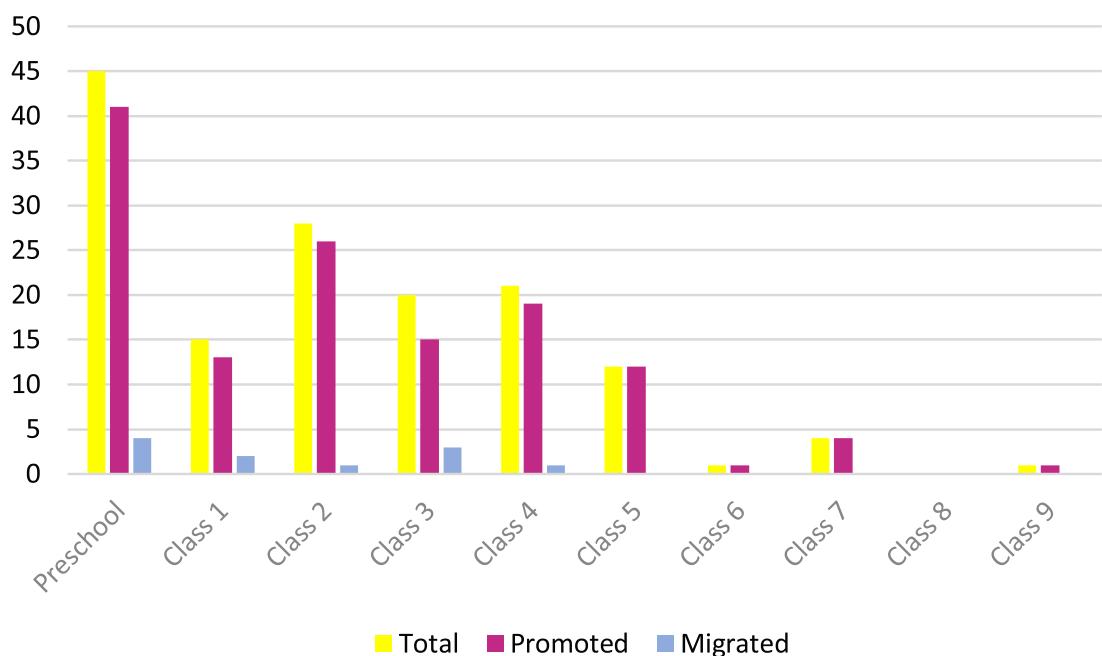
class 8

There was no enrollment from Class 8.

class 9

Only one girl has been enrolled in class 9. She has been promoted to class ten with good result

overall SUMMARY



After School Tutoring Challenges

- Migration is a challenge. Children were often sent back to village to live with grandparents due to lack of support.
- Collaboration with the mainstream school is the key to the success of our afterschool program and could not be ensured due to lack of resources.
- Teachers were not trained sufficiently.
- Afterschool education delivery model was not mature enough to handle efficiency and growth.
- Evaluation framework need to be finalized.
- Parent's involvements were not adequate.

EMPOWERMENT

EMPOWERMENT GOAL 1

Organize Home Daycare for
Underprivileged Children Age 0-3
years

Progress in 2013

Due to high cost and low enthusiasm among the parents to share cost and collaborate to form a cooperative daycare service, this program could not be started in 2013.

Home Daycare Challenges

- Cooperative Daycare is a new idea in Bangladesh and it will take a longtime to convince parents the importance of collaboration and teach them how a community can help each other to raise kids.
- Food expense is a significant part of the program cost and a parent sharing is important for its sustainability.
- Providing logistical support could be a challenge.

EMPOWERMENT GOAL 2

Organize Underprivileged Adolescent Girls' Clubs to Educate Them on the Necessary Awareness of their Rights & Responsibilities

Progress in 2013

In June 2013, Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation formed an adolescent girls club consisting of 30 members aiming to educate them with the health, interpersonal relationships, rights and responsibilities, and life skills. In September, 9 more girls joined the team. 14 classes with 9 topics were offered last year.

The details are in the table below:

Date	Discussion Topic	No. of Class
7/4/2013	Interpersonal Communication	1
7/11/2013	Physical and Psychological changes during Adolescent Age	2
7/25/2013	HIV and AIDS	2
8/18/2013	Health and Personal Hygiene	2
8/31/2013	My Relationships	1
9/5/2013	Dealing with Stress	1
9/19/2013	Life Skills	2
9/26/2013	Birth Registration	1
10/5/2013	Child Marriage	2
10/26/2013	Physical and Psychological changes during Adolescent Age	1
10/31/2013	HIV and AIDS	1
11/7/2013	Health and Personal Hygiene	1
11/14/2013	Life Skills	1
12/12/2013	Child Marriage	1

There were also 6 classes offered to adult women group on various health/hygiene and social awareness issues. Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation also supported 12 women getting legal support through other non-government organizations.

EMPOWERMENT GOAL 3

**Provide Skills Training and Marketing
Support to Disadvantaged People**

Progress in 2013

Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation has successfully opened a new Computer Center in Dhaka starting its operations from December 2013. The lab will initially start operating with 15 computers donated by GrameenPhone. Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation signed an MOU with Dnet under which they will be setting up the computer center and also conduct a two week long training for Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation staff, pre-school and after school program teachers.

We will be running two programs from this center:

1. The after school program children will receive basic computer education which will also include a computer-based English learning curriculum developed by The British Council and DNet.
2. The second program will focus on job centric Computer Skills Certification which will be available for our adolescent girls club members and the slum youth.

Empowerment Programs Challenges

- Service Delivery model need to be matured.
- Leverage existing resources and link our beneficiaries to get the services is a key point. But collaboration with other organizations were challenging.
- Program evaluation and monitoring framework need to be finalized.
- Resources were not available to plan and execute effective skill development trainings.

**spreeha bangladesh
foundation**

BASELINE SURVEY

As 2013 is the inception year of Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation in the Rayerbazar community, door to door visit for needs assessment and stakeholder mapping was a priority for us. A total of **5,870** people were interviewed for the baseline survey where their demography were revealed. As maternal and child healthcare is a big part of our healthcare program, we also inquired about fertile couples. Employment, education and living condition etc. were also identified in this baseline survey. The whole idea behind this survey was to better understand the needs of the people so we can focus on human centered solutions for them.

**spreeha bangladesh
foundation**

OUR STORIES

Healthcare

Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation brings smile to little Sadia..

Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation has finally brought smiles on the lips of little Sadia, the 7-month old daughter of rickshaw puller Mohammad Ashraf and housewife Ms. Samia. They live in a slum adjacent to the town protection embankment of Mohammadpur area in Dhaka city.

Sadia had a severe bout of chicken pox. After disappearing temporarily, the pox revived in an alarming form throughout her entire body. Her condition deteriorated sharply, risking her life at one stage.

Rubina, a Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation staff member came across Sadia during her routine visit. She was very alarmed to see the dire condition of the baby who was moaning in pain. Rubina suggested Sadia's parents to shift her to a healthcare center immediately. When Sadia was brought to the Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation Medical Center, attending physician Dr. Zahid, considering the severity of the disease asked Rubina to immediately rush the baby to the Children's Hospital. After getting due treatment for 12 days, Sadia recovered from the disease and has been visiting

Spreeha's Medical Center for routine check-up. Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation provided medicine and covered ancillary expenditure for Sadia's treatment. With a broad smile on her face, Sadia has now returned back to the embrace of her beaming mother!

Safe Motherhood Day

With the theme of "taking care of the mother after childbirth and prevent maternal mortality", Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation observed the "Safe Motherhood Day" on May 28, 2013.

The program focused on safe motherhood, including a detailed discussion by Mrs. Zohra Aktar, Mrs. Rubina and Mrs. Lily Begum on the following topics related to the theme of the day:

- Five signs of danger during pregnancy
- Complicated situations of the mother during antenatal, obstetric and postnatal periods
- Nursing of the mother after childbirth
- Roles and responsibilities of males towards a safer motherhood.

In the second part of the program, Solar Lamps, provided by Seattle based non-profit and Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation partner extend the

day (<http://www.extendtheday.org/>), were distributed among the participants. They can use these Solar Lamps when they go out of the house during nighttime. Their children, for their studies, can also use these during load shedding at night.

Securing our future: one mother and one child at a time

Rani, a healthy, proud mother of a newborn, glows as she admires her beautiful baby girl. As she prepares to leave the Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation Health Clinic where she safely delivered her newborn, she smiles and says to the Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation community health worker who provided her discharge education: "Dekha hobe tahole" - "See you then". Most health care providers in developing countries like Bangladesh would schedule a mother's postnatal visit, hope she returns for it, and leave it at that. Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation thinks and acts otherwise.

In the past decade significant resources have been invested in antenatal health care in developing countries. However, amidst all the great work in this area, the most vulnerable period of the maternity experience have all too often been ignored the

postnatal period? Evidence from Bangladesh indicates that the majority of maternal deaths occur between the third trimester and delivery, followed by the first hours and days after childbirth. Approximately 75% of neonatal deaths occur in the first week after delivery. (Lancet, 2005)

Research has shown that community-based early postnatal care has great potential to prevent newborn deaths. The practitioners at Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation provide the necessary training, supplies, and supervision to its community workers. These trained health care workers then pay regular home visits to families during pregnancy and within days after birth. These community-based approaches at Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation have shown to initiate practices among mothers that are already saving newborns' lives.

As huge components of its health care program, Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation provides both early, routine integrated antenatal and postnatal care and so far in 2013, is already caring for 39 mothers who have safely delivered. Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation currently has 48 more pregnant women under care and will continue providing its services with

goals of saving the lives of hundreds of newborns and mothers every year. As part of its coming year's goals, Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation is aiming to care for at least 200 pregnant women through its healthcare programs.

Polio-free Bangladesh and Measles-Rubella vaccination campaign

Incredibly, Bangladesh has successfully maintained polio free status since 2006. To reinforce the country's polio-free status, this December 21, Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation participated in the 21st National Immunization Day (NID) while our health care center was selected as one of the immunization centers. Spreeha's health workers and volunteers administered oral polio vaccines to 275 children at its center.

Education

Building the new Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation Preschool

Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation has completed building a new pre-school facility, which currently houses 78 students. There are a total of three sessions between morning, noon and afternoon. The first two sessions have a class size of 26 while the afternoon session has 28 students. Most of the students are from the local slum that previously didn't have the opportunity to pursue their basic right of primary education.

Being in school also helped these children to have a safe and nurturing environment while their parents are out for work. They are taught using the Kajoli model, which is based on the idea that pre-school learning should be more "fun and game" than hard work. The program utilizes the innovative use of pocket board, pocket cards, black boards, community participation and other methods, to help them learn to read, write and count. It's also an unfortunate reality that children like them are exposed to water born skin and other diseases and also suffers from malnutrition. The Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation education program was actually born out of necessity

when it became obvious that the source of most of their health issues is rooted to the time that they are left by themselves during the day. Each session also provides the students with nutritious snacks while it's underway.

Currently there are a total three teachers, including Afsana, a Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation veteran who is now contributing back to the dilapidated environment that she has been able to move out of. At completion, Dr. Bari inspected the school for scholastic quality.

Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation is also building its second facility to accommodate more students in the near future. To learn more about Spreeha's educational programs, take a peek at <http://spreeha.org/education/>

A Tale of Two Sisters

Four sisters- Afsana, Afrin, Afroza and Anika: like the fate of many in urban slums, their father has abandoned them and their mother is unable to support a family their size. The four sisters live with their grandmother in an 8 ft. by 8 ft. hut in the middle of what we call the Rayer Bazar slum.

Our story today is about Afsana and Afrin; a true story about resilience in the face

of adversity. "I would like to be a photographer in the future. Please pray for me," says Afrin, the second of the four and a tenth grader. "After becoming a journalist, I want to unveil the tragic tales of our impoverished people," she adds.

Despite little to no financial support from their parents, today Afrin is determined to materialize her dreams because she has Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation beside her. Afrin is a regular at Spreeha's after-school tutoring center and at the same time, earns a living by teaching little kids at the Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation preschool.

Spreeha's after-school center hosts a diverse and high-poverty student population from its surrounding slums. Despite these factors, students attending the center have far exceeded everyone's academic expectations, including their own. To its credit, Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation has an outstanding faculty that holds its students to very high academic standards.

While these urban slums see extremely high school dropout rates due to lack of basic resources, Spreeha's after-school initiative was born keeping in mind the needs of the school-going children in the slums.

Alongside attending private tutoring sessions at the after-school center, Afrin is also an active member of the Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation adolescent club and its computer lab.

While this story was being put together, Afrin's eldest sister, Afsana was awaiting admission examination results as a bachelor's degree student under National University, Bangladesh. This is the same young girl who, even a couple of years ago, had given up all hopes of academic pursuit. She did not know a way out from the dreary future which deprived her of further education and self-sustainability.

A few months ago, our blog shared a story on Afsana's plight and her remarkable fight with Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation on her side. Today, we would like to wholeheartedly congratulate Afsana on her selection by the National University, where she not only aced the admission examination but also got selected to study her field of choice! Afrin and Afsana, your resilience inspires us every day to work even harder so that no child could fall through the cracks of the system and that every one of you would be able to reach for the stars.

Empowerment

AFSANA'S DREAM

Afsana, a seventeen-year-old teenage girl, lives in a slum in the Rayer Bazar area of Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh. She is the eldest of four sisters and is preparing for the high school certificate exam. Her father, Afsari Mia is a rickshaw puller, who doesn't earn enough to upkeep the family. The family often doesn't have enough to eat for days.

To make things worse, Afsari Mia is addicted to drugs. He is indifferent to their daughter's education and considers them to be a burden.

Afsana's mother, Helena Begum and her grandmother, Swati Begum used to work from early morning to late night as house maids to bridge the gap and to bear their educational expenses. Recently, her mother had become ill and had been forced to live in her village.

Afsana used to get depressed thinking about a future where she'd no longer be able to pursue her education or even worse, her father would forcefully get her married. She was afraid of being the victim of youth marriage, an unfortunate reality that curses

her society.

Despite such constraints and hindrance, Afsana kept her head up and remained optimistic. She aspired one day she'd complete her education and come out of the vicious cycle of poverty and hardship.

Then one day, Afsana met a project coordinator for Spreeha, who immediately recognized her potential and caring nature. She ended up recruiting Afsana for the Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation After-school Program as a tutor and sitter. This gave her an opportunity to contribute to society while earning enough to cover her and her sister's educational expenses. Afsana is also going through Spreeha's Women Empowerment programs that allow her to learn the use of technology.

Now Afsana dreams of a future where the darkness of poverty and frustration can fade away and her family can enjoy a bright future, all through her own strength and perseverance, empowered by Spreeha.

**spreeha bangladesh
foundation**

EVENTS

Events

1. Visit by Researchers from Harvard and Brown University

Dr. Rosemary B. Duda, Associate Professor at Harvard Medical School and Dr. Ruhul Abid, Assistant Professor at Brown University Medical School visit Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation healthcare and education programs in Dhaka, Bangladesh. During the visit, members of Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation Bangladesh Advisory Board accompanied them.

2. Iftaar and Special Meal

Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation hosted a series of Iftaar and special meal events this Ramadan with all its students and staff. To mark the benevolent sharing of their sponsors, the Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation students participated in these festivities with much gaiety. With these and the other upcoming events, Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation intends to make this Eid and many more to come, extra-special for the children of Spreeha.

3. Children's Art Competition

A number of children from the Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation after-school program recently took part in an Art Competition, the

children ranged from 1st graders to 5th graders. The result was the reflection of their purity, potential and aspiration that remain uncompromised by their neglected surroundings. Take a look for yourself- their drawings about their family, loved ones, beautiful homes and serene landscape

4. Blanket and Clothing Distribution

In an effort to battle the harsh cold front that has swept Bangladesh this freezing winter, Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation organized a blanket distribution event in December. As part of this initiative, the foundation circulated two blankets each to 53 families in the Mohammadpur/Rayer Bazar slum. Furthermore, members and volunteers of Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation also organized a clothing drive and distributed them to over 100 children and young adults, also in the same area.

5. Mother's Day

The word "maa" brings about the sweetest emotions in all of us. Our mothers are our inspiration. They provide the much needed love and care from the moment we're born. They cradle us with the affection that is beyond

comparison. They motivate us to do our best we can, and becomes the happiest and celebrates our achievements, whatever that may be. These are some of the thoughts that resonated in the minds of the participants in an art competition organized by Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation to celebrate Mother's Day. While it started out as an art competition, the children couldn't resist embedding a few lines of thought and poems to share how they feel about their mothers.

6. World Blood Donation Day

Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation, a voluntary organization, took a daylong program in the city on Monday in observance of the World Blood Donation Day, reports BSS. As part of the program a discussion was held on creating mass awareness on blood safety and blood ingredients. The speakers highlighted the importance of blood donation for saving the lives of dying people specially the pregnant mothers. Innumerable people across the world die every day for want of blood, they added. The organization also held a daylong blood sampling session at its Health Care Center at Rayer Bazar in cooperation with Human Aid

Bangladesh. 125 people from nearby Rayer Bazar, Katashur and Baubazar area attended the session and sampling of their blood groups were made free of cost. Golam Moinuddin Shahan and Qazi Jubayer Radhin of Human Aid Bangladesh and Mohammad Humayun Kabir and Ms. Rubina Chowdhury of Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation were in the overall supervision of the day-long program.

7. National Immunization Day

Incredibly, Bangladesh has successfully maintained polio free status since 2006. To reinforce the country's polio-free status, this December 21, Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation participated in the 21st National Immunization Day (NID) while our health care center was selected as one of the immunization centers. Spreeha's health workers and volunteers administered oral polio vaccines to 275 children at its center. "Full access to children must be protected and preserved so that the heroes of the polio campaigns – the volunteers, the vaccinators and the social mobilizers – can continue to make history by keeping the scourge of polio away from our children," says UNICEF Bangladesh Representative Pascal Villeneuve.

8. Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation Health and Eye Camp

Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation organized a health camp in the Rayer Bazar slum at the Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation Healthcare Center on January 23rd, 2013. A total of 89 patients, including 65 children were treated during the event. 99 patients were also treated during a special two-day eye treatment camp at Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation Healthcare Center.

spreeha

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