

## Building a Brighter Future

BGD-FIA-BBF-P01



Southern Bangladesh



Economic Empowerment

Budget Year 1 \$54,500

Project Timeline

FULLY FUNDED

JUN 23

MAY 26

### Overview

This project focusses on the rural poor who are particularly disadvantaged. It aims to strengthen 72 Self Help Groups (SHGs) and establish them under Village Development Foundations (VDFs), registered with local authorities. This will help deliver a sound capital base to invest in small business and income generating activities. VDFs are trained in leadership, management, communication, advocacy and financial capacity to empower them as agents of social change, to initiate business and build capacity of SHGs, including fostering their access to government resources and disability support services. The 1300+ SHG members meet weekly to receive training in economic development, agriculture, food security, gender and justice issues. The project also aims to organise children/youth into clubs promoting health, sport, recreation, leadership and education in child rights and protection.

### Impact for June 2023 - May 2024

49

#### 49 Self Help Groups (SHG) formed



from 915 members. 353 have taken out loans from the pooled savings and invested it in small-scale income generating activities such as chicken and duck rearing, paddy cultivation, tailoring, fish cultivation and various small businesses. Training on leadership change/elections, accounts & record-keeping took place.

#### Five Village Development Foundations (VDF)s

formed in 5 unions. 3 VDFs opened bank accounts in their own name. VDFs become the peak representative body of SHGs to help build capacity and establish links with government, local reps and service providers. Training in leadership, accounts, auditing and vision casting was held.

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#### Linkage and Advocacy



14 of the 915 SHG members live with a disability. Ten widow allowance/pension/disability cards were issued due to advocacy and links forged with officials and service providers to improve access to gov't services. Community groups were trained in rights of the elderly and people with disabilities.

#### Adolescent Social Clubs for Child Advocacy

5 new clubs were formed, helping raise awareness of child rights, child labour and gender-based violence. Youths are also taught about prevention of child marriage. Red cards with key contact numbers are being distributed in schools.

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### Kutub's Story

I am a fisherman and the only earning member of my family, including my wife, father, mother and younger sister. The little I earn, combined with two extended fishing bans for conservation purposes, means poverty is a constant challenge. Things got even worse when my boat broke down. Thankfully I've become an active member of a self-help group, putting aside savings each week. When the group heard of my plight they encouraged me to take out a loan for a new boat. After the loan was paid off, I took out another loan for fishing nets and am now earning enough to meet my family's needs, including my sister's education.



Thank you for making a difference