

Education



During the COVID-19 pandemic, Education appeared as the most suffered sector. In Bangladesh, educational institutes were remained closed for 18 months. The students and their families suffered to great extents but for the children with disabilities, the suffering was far greater. The Government of Bangladesh and some educational institutes laid plans to mitigate the challenge by introducing measures such as online classes, television lessons. But, in most cases, these facilities hardly reached to the students with disabilities due to the economic vulnerability, lack of technological devices and other few issues.

CDD implemented different interventions to support the education of children with disabilities.

The main interventions follow:

- Developed and distributed educational materials for homeschooling the students with disabilities;
- Provided education-materials such as smart phone, Tab, books, bags;
- Provided fees of Home-tutor;
- Trained the parents if the students with disabilities, their family members, teachers to enable them to teach and support the students with disabilities;
- Provided online training to field staffs on inclusive-education;
- Provided regular home-based support to children with disabilities and their parents to keep their education going;

- Provided support to the students with disabilities to help them access to the entitlements of the Government; and
- Continued the interventions of making the infrastructures of the education institutes accessible.

Amid the lockdown, CDD provided assistance to enroll 207 boys and 149 girls into mainstream schools in January, 2021.

The World was at Halt, but Mim's & Junaid's Education wasn't

Eleven (11) years old Jannatul Mim (physical disability) loved going to school regularly. She was in 5th grade of William & Marie Taylor School (CRP, Chapain, Savar, Dhaka) when schools were forced to shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Junaidul Haque Maruf (13, multiple disability), a student of 7th grade at PROYASH Special School (Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka) had the same experience as Jannatul Mim.

With countrywide lockdown going on, Mim's father had to close his retail vegetable business. And, Maruf's father did not have any regular source of income. The COVID-19 pandemic caused economic loss to their economic stability. In spite of the economic hardship, both the parents tried their best to provide support so their children could continue their education.

During that challenging time, CDD extended its support to ensure the continuity of education of students with disabilities. CDD provided the families of students with disabilities with cash and food support to overcome the first wave of the pandemic. Then hygiene support was also provided to keep the families safe from Corona-contamination. Meanwhile, schools started taking classes online. The new-normal brought on new demands such as smartphone for online classes. It was impossible for those struggling families to bear these expenses.

CDD provided Mim with a smartphone and Junaid a Tab to attend their online class. CDD even covered the internet cost and supplied educational materials as well. Apart from attending online classes, such technology-devices helped them to improve their language skill. Even, Junaid could attend therapy-sessions through participating virtually. On the other hand, a home-tutor started helping Mim with her daily academic-lessons whose tuition fees were borne by CDD during the lockdown period. And, since Junaid loves recitation, he initiated a YouTube channel where he uploaded videos of his recited poems.

