

Child rights bring change: Bangladesh



Forum members created a human chain to advocate for an end to violence against children. Photo: Golam Ehsanul Habib / World Vision

After learning about issues affecting the children of their community, members of Ghasful Child Forum felt moved to act. Their social actions have made a big difference at a local, national and global level.

Ghasful Child Forum is an afterschool group, established in Dhaka by World Vision Bangladesh. At the forum, children and young people learn about child rights, child protection, life skills, hygiene, leadership, communication and mobilising the community. The forum's partnership with World Vision Bangladesh has empowered members to network with local community-based organisations, with other non-governmental organisations – Plan International and Save the Children – and also join with the National Children's Task Force.

WORKING IN THEIR OWN COMMUNITY

Local social actions run by the Ghasful Child Forum include:

- ✓ Distributing warm clothes for street children,
- ✓ Stopping child marriages,
- ✓ Assisting child labourers to break away from hazardous jobs,
- ✓ Running life skills-based education for child labourers,
- ✓ Running child rights programmes attended by more than 3000 children.

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ENGAGING BEYOND THEIR COMMUNITY

Ghasful forum members raised awareness of the national advocacy campaign 'End Violence Against Children' run by World Vision Bangladesh. They participated by:

- ✓ Collecting 5000 signatures,
- ✓ Holding a gathering,
- ✓ Rallying others to create a human chain in front of the National Press Club, which caught national media attention.

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WORKING IN THEIR OWN COMMUNITY

Their latest focus is ensuring all of the local children have their births registered for identity so they can access education and other government services:

- ✓ The first step was undertaking a Youth Action Research Project about this issue in their community.
- ✓ They presented this research to community leaders including the National Human Rights Commission Chair, and the local government official who is the Director of Birth and Death Registration.

Ghasful Child Forum members continue to advocate in their community.

ENGAGING BEYOND THEIR COMMUNITY

Child forum members have:

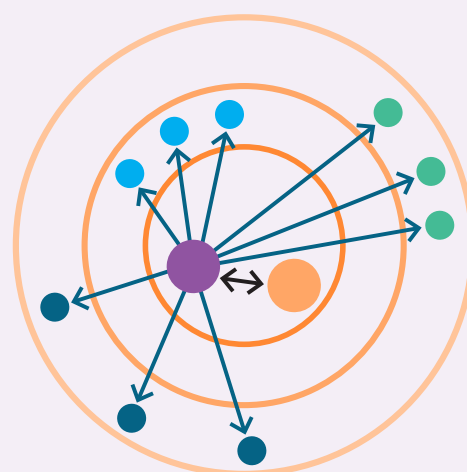
- ✓ Built connections with government policy makers
- ✓ Built connections with national media
- ✓ Child forum leaders met with members of parliament to ensure the government's budget prioritises child development.
- ✓ The Forum has linked with Bangladesh's BBC radio which is launching a programme increasing access to information for children and adolescents about sexual health and gender violence prevention.
- ✓ As a result of the Forum's contribution to policymaking for child journalism, their secretary, Sayma Akter, received an award.
- ✓ Forum Chair, Nizam, Secretary Sayma, and other members have also spoken out at international events.

Ghasful Child Forum members continue to bring child rights issues to the attention of national media and the government.



Child forum members perform a drama about child marriage.
Photo: Golam Ehsanul Habib / WorldVision

ACTION MODEL



KEY

- Ghasful child forum
- World Vision Bangladesh
- community-based organisations
- Bangladesh media organisations
- non-governmental organisations