

## Uplifting At-Risk Girls

BGD-CUP-UAG-P03



Dhaka, Bangladesh



Anti-Trafficking

Total Budget

Project Timeline

\$72,934

JUL 18

JUN 21



### Overview

This project assisted with the expenses of running a hostel for at-risk girls, for their education and for the vocational training for some of the older girls. The girls were living on the streets prior to contact with our partner, they were at high risk of exploitation and did not have families who were able to care for them. At the hostel, the girls can complete their schooling and are provided with a caring and supportive environment in which to live. The 3-year project supported 14 girls, aged between 9-17 years at a hostel 2 hours from Dhaka.

\*The photos in this report are of the girls at the hostel but names and photos do not correspond to those in the stories.

### Objectives

### Impact



14 At-Risk girls have a safe home

14 vulnerable girls were accommodated in a safe and loving environment, relating well to each other, helping in times of need, preparing and eating their meals together. 4 staff look after the girls like mothers.



Transition to online learning

Local schools remained closed all year. 2 of the 'house mothers' helped the girls with their studies twice a day and a tutor was hired for the 4 high school girls. These older girls had one donated laptop to access learning.



New life skills and activities

One benefit of the extended lockdown were the new activities that the girls took up. These included cooking, gardening, stitching blankets, painting and other craft activities. They also got a dog named Brownny!



COVID-19 Pandemic Response

The continuous lockdowns were depressing and heartbreaking. The girls have been unable to participate in cultural programs, sports, competitions or excursions. They also have not been able to receive any visitors or volunteers.



### Life change

- The girls have a new self-confidence and sense of belonging to a family who love and care for them
- They now understand themselves and their world better through their experiences and formal education
- They now have the opportunity for employment and being able to support themselves in the future



## Nina's Story

My mum died when I was 3 months old. I grew up with my dad on the streets and in a Mazar (an Islamic saint's tomb) with beggars and other homeless people. Because I was at risk of abuse and exploitation I came to live at the hostel last September where I have found my new family. I am interested in learning how to cook and helped with our Christmas celebration and other special meals. I have a small flower garden that I am caring for now that we are home indefinitely due to COVID-19. I was worried and confused that I wouldn't advance to the next year level at school but I was able to sit my exams at home and passed them.



Home schooling during COVID-19 lockdown

## Santhi's Story

I became an orphan at 4 years old when my mother died of kidney failure. I saw her pain and suffering and then she was gone. I had a 'stepmother' for years and spent my days and nights in the Mazar. I was beaten many times and never had enough food to eat. A few years ago, the hostel became my safe address. Here I have a comfortable bed, nice food and clothes to wear. I remember my first birthday here when I got to eat Biriani and cake and we all danced together. This year I was promoted to Grade 3. I like to draw and sing when I am not studying. I also like playing badminton. I want to be a teacher when I grow up.

