



DISTRESSED
CHILDREN &
INFANTS
INTERNATIONAL

DCI Newsletter

Message from the Executive Director



Dear friends of DCI,

All of us at Distressed Children and Infants International (DCI) hope you have had a wonderful year and are looking forward to an exciting New Year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our sponsors and donors for taking an active role in DCI's programs to help the underprivileged. I would also like to thank our teams of extraordinary volunteers all over the United States for their hard work and dedication to the cause. We are especially thankful for these committed individuals, whose work allows DCI to maintain its operational

costs at only ~4% (in year 2009).

I am proud to report that because of dedicated supporters like you, DCI was able to retain all of its 1100 children in the program for 2011! Below are some of our achievements for 2010:

What your support did in 2010!

- 1100 underprivileged village children were able to continue their education. 1000 children were supported with two hours tutoring support six days in a week .
- 30 underprivileged children received pre-primary education from DCI School
- 3520 impoverished village children are receiving free healthcare.
- 3200 disadvantaged children and 3822 adults have received free eye care. 64 patients received cataract surgeries.
- 8 primary schools were supported with capacity development training.
- Sanitary latrines were built in two primary schools
- 228 families were supported with skill-building and financial support for initiating income generating activities.
- 330 orphans received clothing and healthcare support. 12 orphans are now residing in our newly established Sun Child Homes
- 3165 patients received treatment in our health care clinic

For the New Year of 2011, we have two resolutions: increase transparency and improve sponsor communication. To these ends, we have commissioned a professional website that is more informative, user friendly, and shows field results more clearly. We also want to make sponsor communication more prompt, so we have set up a professional database. These developments should be up and running by April of 2011.

As you know, DCI works at the root level of poverty, a task that is very challenging and at times extremely frustrating. However, we are constantly re-energized and inspired by the support we receive from people like you, who demonstrate a genuine desire to do something for these children. Together we will continue supporting these children who can now dream of a better life.

Happy New Year 2011!

Ehsan Hoque, MBBS, Ph.D.

Together
let's
create
a better
world
for
tomorrow.

NEWSLETTER TEAM:

Asahi Hoque
Ian Burzynski
Simon Bayley
Saika Kibria

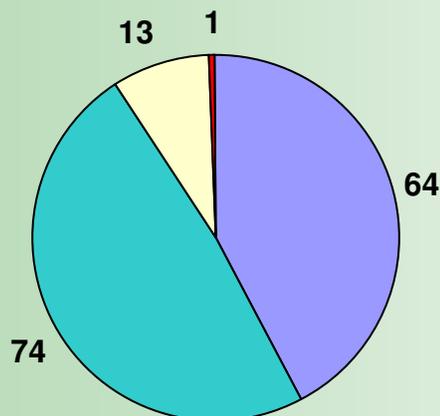
SCSP: Sun Child Sponsorship Program

Most frequently asked question of the year:

Why does DCI need to provide tutors when children are already attending school?

Answer:

1. In rural Bangladesh, there are simply not enough schools for the children. To accommodate most of the children in the area, government schools run in shifts of only 3-4 hours, a situation that is clearly inadequate for elementary school children.
2. Teachers are very hard to obtain in remote villages. Additionally, due to the lack of a government monitoring system, teachers often do not maintain a consistent class schedule.
3. What DCI realized is that although many children are returning to school through sponsorship support, this is not enough to get the education they deserve. Beginning in late 2009, DCI has hired a total of 68 tutors to help children learn. After their school hours, children meet at the local DCI field office in groups of 10 to receive tutoring support.



■ 1st Division ■ 2nd Division □ 3rd Division ■ Unsuccessful

Clear Results!

The tutor support is demonstrably helping the children get back on track. This is obvious from the results of this year's Year End Exam. The pie chart shows the 5th grade results from 2010.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The success of DCI's projects relies on your passion and generosity. The work that DCI is doing on behalf of impoverished children would not be possible without your support.

www.distressedchildren.org

Zakia Begum Becomes a DCI Tutor



Zakia Begum with her students

“I don’t think about my past anymore. I thank DCI for turning things around. I never thought I could get a chance like this here in this village.”

-Zakia Begum, DCI Tutor

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Zakia Begum was born into a farmer family in remote Bangladesh. She is the youngest of three siblings. According to the social standard of villages of Bangladesh, she is dark and is not considered pretty. Her family has little money, so her parents were always worried about her prospects for marriage. For girls in these villages where opportunity is limited, the main achievement is to get married. Zakia, however, was a very good student, and with the limited resources available to her she received her Higher Secondary School Certificate (12th grade). Around that time her parents found a groom for her. She got married and everybody was happy for a short time. But shortly thereafter Zakia’s husband left town and stopped all communication with her. Later they discovered he was already married. Zakia’s life was turned completely upside down: she became an object of gossip, a burden on the family, and she lost all hope. In her own words, *“I felt very small. I did not feel like going out of my home. I felt everyone was looking at me in a strange way. I felt like a burden all the time, and did not know what to do* (wbþRþK Lye tQvU gþb nþZv| evwoi evBþi tei nþZ cv&iZvg bv| mevB þhb tKgb `„wóþZ AvgvþK t` LZ| Avgvi tçQþb hv LiP nþZv Zv gþb nþZv Avgvi cwievþii Rb` GKUv evowZ tevSv| Avwg eySþZ cwiwQjvg bv Avgvi wK Kiv DwPZ|ó).

Luckily, Zakia’s situation was reversed through the help of DCI. When DCI was looking for educated after-school tutors for its sponsored children, Zakia applied and received a job. She says she doesn’t feel like a burden on her family anymore. While working with children she feels that she can also make something out of her life and is determined to stand on her own feet.

SPECIAL THANKS to all our contributors, donors, and supporters for your commitment to DCI’s programs and mission. Together we can change the world, one child at a time. We welcome you to DCI, and we look forward to working with you in this most important mission.

CORPORATE MATCHING:

Many corporations/companies will match portions of employee donations to charity. Please consult your HR department to determine if your employer will match your contribution to **Distressed Children & Infants International (DCI)**.

Join DCI on Facebook

Stay updated on DCI's programs and current activities.
 Join us on Facebook at <http://facebook.com/DCI.International>

www.distressedchildren.org

Health Care for Underprivileged Program

Kohinoor Begum's Story



Kohinoor Begum and her family have lived in the Kallyanpur Porabari Bosti (Porabari slum) for the past 25 years. Her husband used to be a rickshaw puller. Kohinoor has nine children: three sons and six daughters. She is suffering in asthma and anemia.

Kohinoor got married at a very young age. They lived in their village. As a newcomer at her father-in-law's house, she was very happy. Her husband was a farmer, and owned a plot of land and a house. He cultivated the land to make their livelihood, but tragically they lost their land and home in a flood. They became helpless and were forced to go to Dhaka in search of work. They took place at Kallyanpur Porabari Bosti.

Kohinoor worked as a household worker and her husband became a rickshaw puller. Due to ignorance and lack of family planning, Kohinoor gave birth to nine children. As a result, she became very weak and malnourished. Her husband also became strained trying to maintain their big family. Day by day his physical condition weakened.

Under these circumstances, they arranged marriages for three daughters, and their three sons also got married. But they were shocked to find that the children simply separated from the family and didn't look after their parents. Soon one daughter returned from her husband's family with children permanently. Though they tried to run their family with all their heart and soul, bad fortune continued to follow them. A road accident disabled Kohinoor's husband, rendering him unable to work. At the same time Kohinoor became very sick, suffering from asthma and anemia. She was also unable to work in her physical condition. Their family became dependent on their daughters' insufficient income, which they gain from doing hazardous work. Their income was far from sufficient to provide for Kohinoor's medical treatment.

During a field visit, DCI social workers discovered Kohinoor's condition. They took her to DCI's health clinic at Kallyanpur and start providing treatment. At the time, the situation was very critical, but Kohinoor is now receiving regular treatment from our health clinic and is gradually improving. DCI visitor Ms. Roksana Ahmed Polly met with Kohinoor and gave her some money to purchase fruit and other nutritious food.



Ms. Roksana Ahmed Polly is at DCI's Health Clinic, Kallyanpur, Dhaka

Orphan Support Program

Mini Akter takes shelter in DCI's Sun Child Home



Mini Akter, a five year old girl, lost her father when she was very young. She also lost her mother when she was just three years old. She has no memory of her parents. Mini was living with her maternal grandmother, who is a beggar. Her grandmother often took her Dhaka for a month in order to beg. The income was not sufficient. Most days they did not get sufficient nourishment, and they had no place to stay at night. Mini's grandmother is elderly and in poor health. She cannot work hard, and providing food, clothing, and medicine for Mini was a real burden for her. Day by day Mini became thinner and weaker.

Our Nilphamari representative heard about Mini and tried to contact Mini's grandmother. After that he found them. RSC representative came to know that Mini's grand mother decided to keep Mini in any house or madrasa. He also saw that Mini's physical condition was very poor. He informed us about Mini in detail.

DCI arranged to bring Mini and her grandmother to our office in Dhaka. When she arrived, Mini was so weak that she could not move or speak properly. We talked with her grandmother and admitted Mini to our Sun Child Home for Orphans.

Now Mini is a student of grade-level 'Play' at the Sunrise Model School, Mohammadi Housing Ltd. Now she is able to play, dance, draw, and sing every day at the Sun Child Home.



Mini with her friends (2nd from left)

What Parents Are Saying:



I really appreciate this endeavor. It is a very constructive effort to involve our kids with their roots. I am requesting all of our friends to involve their kids for such support to the distressed children of Bangladesh.

—Anusur Rahman Nanto, Australia



My son has been sponsoring a child in Bangladesh through the Sun Child Program since 2005. Abid likes the program, especially the communication with his sponsored friend. Abid saves money in his piggy bank and always waits eagerly for the letter and picture of his sponsored friend. This is like a pen pal relationship and is moving towards a lifelong friendship for him. It is easy to give money. What matters is the involvement and the relationship. — Dr. Abdul Ali Manu, Mississauga, Canada



I have seen thankfulness generated in my children through DCI's Sun Child Sponsorship Program, and I wouldn't trade that for anything. I can definitely tell you that if you want to teach your children to be thankful, compassionate, and to live a grateful life, consider sponsoring a child or getting your kids involved in some kind of volunteer activity with DCI. It teaches them to think beyond themselves and will ultimately help them to be a responsible person. —Jolly Kibria, Los Angeles, CA



We have been sponsoring a distressed child in Bangladesh since right after my little daughter Sohi was born. We are very happy with the program and feel very blessed. We keep our sponsored child's picture displayed in our home so my daughter will realize she has a friend back home in Bangladesh and develop a connection with our roots. We will be more than happy to continue participating in this program in the future.

—Sonia Khan, Little Rock, Arkansas

A Success Story

Sahera Begum Receives a New Home

We can't even obtain adequate food for three meals a day, how would I construct a house?..I never thought I could live in a safe place with my children..." --- Sahera Begum



Sahera Begum, age 46, is one of the poverty-stricken members of a remote village situated in the Potuakhali district in Bangladesh. For the past six years following the death of her husband, she has been struggling to raise her son Aiub (14) and daughter Sabina (11) through begging on the streets and by working as a domestic servant. Those days when she cannot obtain work, Sahera and her children are forced to go without food. Their shelter is a hut comprised of leaves collected from the Holga tree mixed with hay. The land on which the hut was built was not hers: a kind

neighbor built the hut to provide the family with temporary shelter.

Sahera Begum was working when Cyclone Sidr landed. As the evening approached, the weather became increasingly alarming. At first she didn't pay it any attention, but soon she saw all her neighbors leaving their homes to take asylum in the government-built shelters. Sahera took both of her children with her and took protection in the shelter.

In the middle of the night, Cyclone Sidr unleashed its mayhem on surrounding areas, resulting in the destruction of Sahera's tiny hut. Sahera was already poverty-stricken, and with the cyclone she lost her only shelter. After that, helplessness engulfed Sahera. Even the dream of rebuilding her home was an impossible task. In her own words, "We can't even obtain sufficient food for three meals a day, how would I construct a house?" She spent the days under the open air next to her wrecked house, but as temperatures dropped at night she took refuge from the cold with her children at the courtyard of her neighbor's house.

DCI came to the rescue of this distressed family. A house with a tin roof was built in place of Sahera Begum's collapsed hut. Now she can reside in a safe home with her children in the winter, summer and even amidst severe storms. "I never thought that I could live in a safe home with my children. Thank you DCI for providing me with this opportunity" conveys Sahera Begum.

Announcements

2011 Dues

ALL Sponsors: DCI requests all sponsors to pay sponsorship dues for 2011 by June. \$180/yr

All Donors: You can donate at any time for the following causes:

Support an after-school tutor: \$25/month, \$300/yr (1 tutor for 10 children)

Help a family become independent through income generating activity

- \$100 buys a goat & \$250 buys a cow for a family to improve their livelihood and also nutrition.
- \$600 buys a duck farm of 300 birds for a poor family.
- \$1000 can establish a grocery store for a poor family

Give the gift of sight

- \$50 can provide eye surgery for an individual and \$500 can provide an eye screening camp for about 300-500 people.

Help with safe water & latrine

- \$100 for Shallow Tube well and \$1000 for deep tube well, can provide safe drinking water for a community
- Ring slab latrine \$150

Any Zakat contributions: for your specific interest or general emergency fund.

2011 Conference on Child Rights & Sight

Organized by: Distressed Children & Infants International (DCI)

Co-Organizers: Yale UNICEF, Rights & Sight for Children (RSC), Eye Surgery Associates
Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, USA Saturday, September 10, 2011

On behalf of **Distressed Children & Infants International (DCI)**, we cordially invite you, your family, and friends to join our **3rd Conference on Child Rights and Sight** on Saturday, September 10, 2011 at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut. Register by July 14 to secure the lowest registration fees. Save the date as it is never too early to plan for a great event!

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS:

We encourage you to submit an abstract for possible oral or poster presentation. The conference will focus on issues of child rights, child labor, poverty alleviation, blindness prevention, empowering the underprivileged through education, public health, mental and physical well-being of youth, leadership, teamwork, and volunteering. Click here to submit an abstract and to find abstract guidelines and related information: <http://www.distressedchildren.org/>

QUESTIONS?

E-mail Ian Burzynski (ian@distressedchildren.org) or call us at 203-376-6351 to learn more about exhibitions and sponsorship opportunities, or for any additional questions you may have about the conference.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Abstract Submission Deadline: June 30, 2011
Registration Deadline (at reduced rate): July 14, 2011
Media Registration Deadline: July 30, 2011
Registration Cancellations Deadline: August 26, 2011

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