

CEDAR Fund

‘Supporting Pastors in Bangladesh Through the Pandemic’ Project Report

Project timeframe:

November 2021 to October 2022

Project partner:

National Christian Fellowship of Bangladesh (NCFB)

Project background

As of the end of 2021, the pandemic has raged globally for nearly two years. All countries worldwide devised quarantine policies, implemented city lockdowns, and limited social movements to all degrees, all of which had crashed economies, especially that of the poorer countries.

CEDAR’s partner in Bangladesh reported that, prior to the pandemic, the income from tithing in rural church communities was insufficient to support the basic household needs of the church pastors, resulting in pastors working other jobs during the week while serving the church on the weekend. When lockdowns were implemented, churches were forced to stop all gatherings, and the pastors were left without any income from offerings. The drastic drop in income sources, combined with the broader livelihood challenges, has put a tremendous strain on rural pastors.

As such, in November 2021, CEDAR has decided to provide a one-time financial subsidy to help the rural pastoral families get through this difficult period.

Project grant and beneficiaries number

CEDAR granted US\$19,900 (HK\$155,220) to support a total of 100 pastoral families in Bangladesh (total 600 people). Every pastor was given approximately HK\$1,200 to purchase basic necessities. The remaining goes to the partner as admin fee, and transportation fee when visiting these families etc.

Project details

For this project, our partner worked with leaders from 14 denominations across 13 districts. These leaders reviewed each family's financial situation to identify 100 families that were in extreme difficulties and select them as the grant recipients. In the project briefing, our partner explained the aid scheme and operation to all the benefited families, and for the families to articulate their needs. The leaders of different denomination also helped to purchase tools and resources from local markets and distribute them. Effective communication and thorough planning beforehand have greatly assisted the success of this project.



The benefiting families received a variety of resources to help them make a living, such as lamb, pig, chicken, bamboo, sowing machines, lamb wool, bobbin thread and more. In addition, for some families who lack basic shelter and food, extra subsidies were provided by our partner as an assistance.



Essential tools and resources that were provided to some of the beneficiaries' family.

Sharing by beneficiaries

Sujan is a pastor at Potia Baptist Church. He and his wife, Dipty, alongside his children live in a Muslim community. Through their service to the local community, they have led 20 families to the Christian faith and built a church 25 miles from home. The honesty, friendliness and kindness of Sujan and his family have been a good witness to the Muslim community and have even attracted a neighbour to come to know Jesus. In return, this neighbour has given the pastor's family and piece of land to call home.



Before the pandemic, the living expense of pastor Sujan's family was supported by the church, but it was reduced as the pandemic hits. As pastor Sujan joined the project by CEDAR, his family was given the basic tools to help them make a living – a sowing machine and fabrics to make clothes that could turn into earnings for daily necessities, and eventually make them self-sustaining.



Dipty was very good at sowing and embroidery work, by the grace of God, the sales went up and the customer base kept growing.

Before joining the project, pastor Sujan's income was only sufficient to cover the family's expenses for 20 days out of the month. And now, Dipty's work has contributed additional income to cover the family's monthly expenses. This additional income has also helped with the elder daughter's school fee, ensuring education for their children. Dipty also has the flexibility to work from home also allows her to manage household responsibilities while selling affordable goods. This has greatly lifted the burden on pastor Sujan and allowed him to serve fully.



As Dipty shares: 'I am very glad I could contribute to the family. And I am especially grateful for the opportunity to share the love of God and Jesus Christ with my female customers. I promise that I will keep selling quality handcraft work at an affordable price as a way to bless others.' The women in the neighbourhood were very pleased with the excellent work from Dipty at a much lower price, and many of them have become good friends with her since.

A leader from another denomination (Rev. Hubert A Mitra) attended the annual event hosted by our partner, he attended wearing the shift sowed by the very hands of Dipty. Pastor Sujan and Dipty, together, have shown gratitude to the gift of sowing machine and the ability to earn for the families through every act of love they share.

Take Action

It is thanks to the ongoing generosity of our supporters that the pastoral families in Bangladesh could receive our aid. However, there are still many families there facing the exact, if not worse threat on a daily basis. CEDAR has provided schooling to local children, worked to combat human trafficking and child-marriage, and designated churches to implement integral mission in the predominantly Islamic country. For this, we earnestly call for your prayer to address their needs and ask for your consideration in helping these people by making a donation.

Donation

Online donation	Click here for an online donation
Cheque	Please make it payable to CEDAR Fund
Direct Deposit	<p>HSBC : 004-600-385678-001</p> <p>BEA : 015-185-68-00931-7SSA</p> <p>BOC : 012-581-2-020114-7</p> <p>DBS : 016-478-001364162</p>
Credit card: Visa / Master Card	Online donate here or fill in the donation form
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Faster Payment System FPS ID: 3354016	<p>Login to your online banking app and pay via Faster Payment System (FPS)</p> 

Please donate according to the above methods and send the cheque, bank-in slip or screenshot of successful payment along with your name, contact phone number and mailing address to us via mail, email or WhatsApp.

Mailing Address: CEDAR Fund, G.P.O. Box 3212, Hong Kong

WhatsApp (for donation matters only): 5160 7549

Email: sharing@cedarfund.org