

CONCERN
worldwide



**PAVEMENT
DWELLERS:**

**ON THE STREETS
TODAY, FIGHTING**

FOR A

**BETTER
TOMORROW**

Amena and her 4 year old daughter Ishma sleep on the pavement near Padma General Hospital in Panthapath, Dhaka.

PAVEMENT DWELLERS: ON THE STREETS TODAY, FIGHTING FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

Pavement dwellers are at the lowest end of the urban poverty continuum in Bangladesh. Among 2.8 million urban extreme poor in the country, pavement dwellers account for at least 4% or 112,000 people¹. Living in the harshest conditions - often beneath flimsy plastic sheets or under the open sky, they are deprived from their socio-economic, political and human rights almost every day. As the most neglected echelon of the society, they remain unseen and unheard.

Urban Extreme Poor on the Poverty Continuum



Main challenges faced by pavement dwellers:

With limited or no access to shelter, healthcare, education, power and water supply, sanitation and waste management, survival is a daily struggle for pavement dwellers. The majority being illiterate, pavement dwellers' access to formal employment is almost non-existent. They are only able to engage in low-paid and hazardous jobs, mostly working as rickshaw pullers, porters, domestic workers,

daily wage labourers, sex workers, and waste collectors for a minimal pay.

Pavement dwellers suffer from a severe lack of food and nutrition, poor health, and water-borne and respiratory diseases. Violence against women and girls is rampant, with women particularly vulnerable to exploitation and intimate partner violence.

Pavement dwellers also face significant social stigma from public and government institutions. Excluded from municipal and national government planning, as well as, provision of basic government services and safety nets, they are under constant threats of harassment, exploitation and eviction from their places of shelter and business.

How Concern Worldwide is helping the poorest people in Bangladesh:

Concern Worldwide has been working with pavement dwellers since the launch of our flagship programme "Amrao Manush - We are human too" in 2008. Pursuing a comprehensive development strategy, we prioritise increasing programme participants' incomes, and creating their access to basic services such as shelter, education, healthcare, water and sanitation.

In addition to reducing risks and vulnerabilities to natural and manmade disasters, we focus on establishing street dwellers' rights and entitlements as citizens of Bangladesh. We also aim to reduce social stigma and change people's overall perception towards pavement dwellers.

¹Parliamentarians can make the difference - Pavement dwellers' right to survive: All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Extreme Poverty and Urban Pavement Dwellers, Bangladesh Parliament, 2013

Concern's approach to tackling urban extreme poverty is tailored to address the economic, social and political empowerment of the poorest and the most marginalised people in the country.

Today, Concern runs a total of twelve multi-purpose Pavement Dweller Centres (PDC) through the Urban Integrated Programme - ten of which are located in Karwan Bazar, Green Road, Mouchak, Kamlapur, Shadarghat, Paltan, Ananda Bazar, Gabtoli, Mirpur 1 and Mirpur 2 areas of Dhaka city, and two in Kodomtoli and Enayet Bazar areas of Chittagong city. These PDCs operate as one-stop shops providing a range of facilities and services that help our programme participants to stand on their own two feet.

How Concern helps pavement dwellers graduate from extreme poverty:

Rights & entitlements

- Birth registration certificates for programme participants' children
- National identity cards for adolescents & adults

Livelihood & training

- Life skills & leadership training for adolescents & adults
- Apprenticeships & vocational training for job placements
- Entrepreneurship training for proper business management
- Unconditional cash grants for adults to set up micro-businesses
- Individual saving schemes for daily, flexible deposits for all
- Individual & group counselling, psychosocial support & awareness sessions on issues such as health & nutrition, positive parenting & human rights
- Community development to empower participants to demand their citizenship rights & voice their concerns through the platform for pavement dwellers formed by Concern, which is named 'Potho-bashi Unnoyon Shongstha' or 'Pavement dwellers' Development Organisation'.

Targeting the poorest and the most vulnerable people living on pavements and public spaces – specifically children, women, the elderly and the disabled, we select people with:

- No productive assets and regular sources of income, who are earning around Tk 1,500-2,000 a month;
- No place to sleep at night, who are staying at a specific location for at least 3 months;
- No facilities for washing, bathing, resting and sheltering themselves;
- No access to education, healthcare and income generating activities;
- No safe place to store money and belongings.

Basic service provision

- Toilets, lockers, kitchen & resting spaces for all participants
- Night shelter for women, girls & young boys aged below 8 years
- Day-care for children aged 2-6 years for pre-school education
- Formal education for children aged 6+ years
- Non-formal education for working children aged 8+ years
- First aid services & primary healthcare through referrals
- Nutrition for children, pregnant women and lactating mothers through balanced diets

Advocacy

- Pavement dwellers' access to birth registration certificates and national identity cards so they can demand their citizens' rights
- Change in provision to provide services to pavement dwellers
- Accountability of City Corporations and Municipalities for delivering their role to support pavement dwellers
- Social safety net schemes for the urban extreme poor from the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
- Education stipends for school-going children of pavement dwellers & their access to cultural schools from Dhaka South City Corporation
- Construction of Pavement Dweller Centres on land allocated by Dhaka South City Corporation
- Early warning messages prior to evictions by law-enforcement agencies

Concern's impact on the lives of pavement dwellers

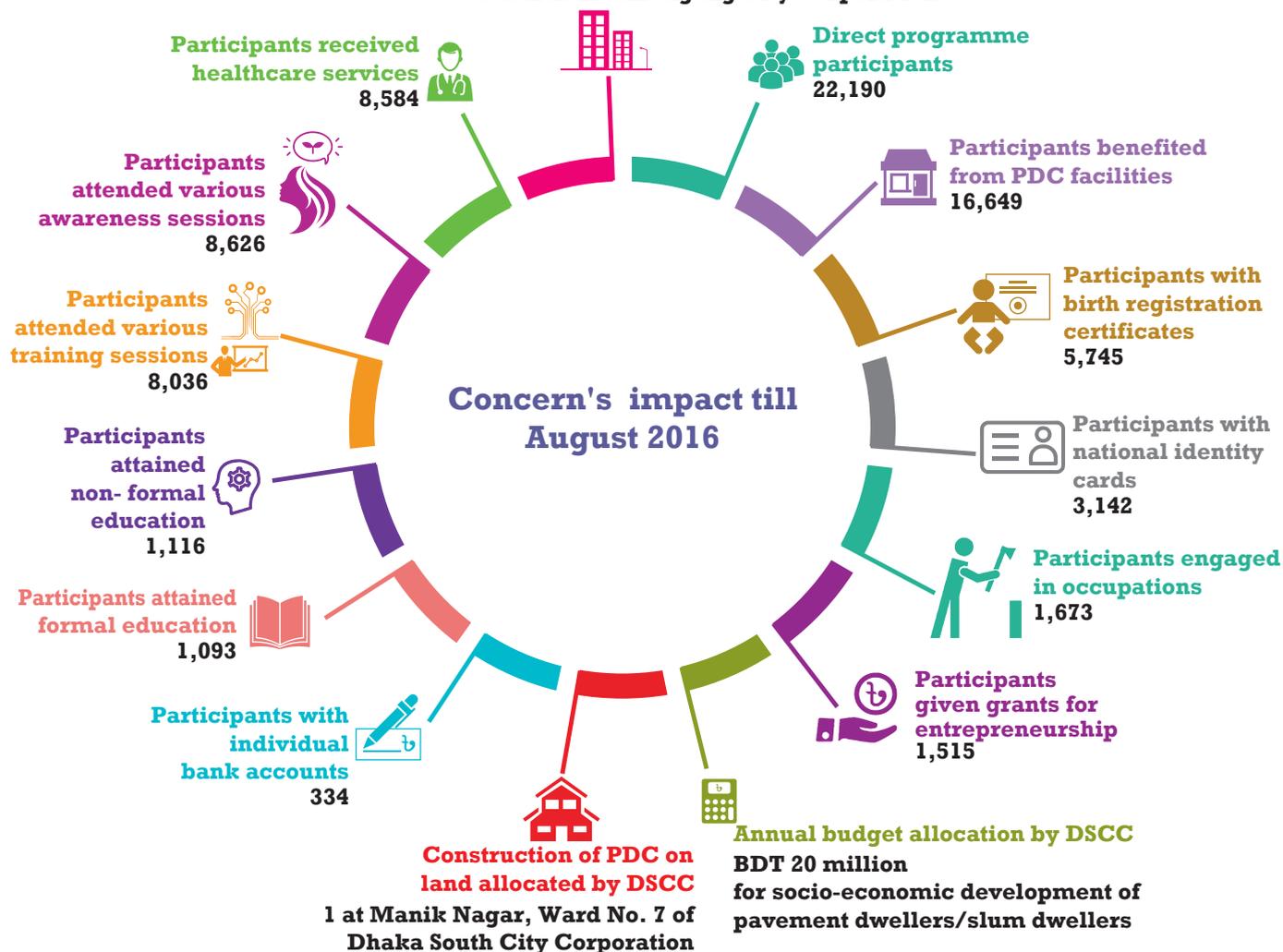
Concern has reached more than 24,500 homeless people from a total of 5,448 urban extreme poor households in 32 wards of Dhaka and Chittagong City Corporations till December 2015. According to our Annual Graduation Survey in 2015, 47.8% of these households - comprising of more than 11,700 programme participants, had moved out of extreme poverty with our support.

Programme target areas

18 Wards in Dhaka South City Corporation

9 Wards in Dhaka North City Corporation

5 Wards in Chittagong City Corporation





*Nazma Begum,
a successful catering business owner*

Nazma's story

Today, Nazma runs a catering business, serving home-cooked lunches to office-goers in the vicinity. *"I cook rice, vegetables, lentils, chicken and fish at home every day. Once the meals are packed, my husband and I take a rickshaw to deliver the lunch boxes door to door. I sell about 60 boxes a day, at Tk 50 each. This gives me a monthly profit of Tk 12,500 on average, which is enough for me to save some money and also keep my business running at the same time. Now I want to take a permanent spot and set up a little restaurant on the main road so I can sell my food to everyone in the neighbourhood."*

Nazma Begum (35) has long been the breadwinner for her family of seven. She lives in Naya Paltan, Dhaka, with her husband Zakir, daughter Suraiya (16), and sons Jahid (10), Arafat (8) and Shafayet (5). Nazma's eldest daughter Lamia (19) is married and now living with her husband.

Nazma has also rented out two rooms in her three room apartment recently. The family shares one room, while 12 tenants live in the other two rooms. *"My tenants pay around Tk 3,500 – 4,000 each per month, so I get more than Tk 42,000 as rent."*

A successful business owner and a devoted mother, Nazma has pulled her family out of poverty through sheer grit and determination. Today, they live in a spacious three room apartment - a reality that was only a dream when Nazma had joined the Amrao Manush programme in 2012.

Nazma is now a graduate participant. She still avails PDC facilities like day care and tuition support for her children. She has been saving monthly deposits at a bank since March 2016 for she has big plans for the future. *"Although I married Lamia off right after she finished high school, now I want Suraiya to complete her education and get a high-paying job so she can be*

She says, "Long ago, I used to live in the streets of Paltan in Dhaka. There was no security, no shelter and no bathrooms. During the day, my daughter would use the toilet at her school. I could only use the drain, and for that I had to wait until late night.

When I heard about the Amrao Manush programme, I quickly signed up with Concern's Pavement Dweller Centre in Paltan. Being a participant meant that we could use amenities like the bathroom, kitchen and lockers when we needed, and that too, for free. Most importantly, it meant that we did not have to live in the shadows anymore. Coming from the streets, we finally had a place to call home."



Nazma prepares home-made lunch boxes for her clients

