

AHP Field Story Template – AHP Activation

AHP activation name and country:	DFAT III, Bangladesh
Event/Activity: (Insert a brief summary – 1-2 sentences – of the specific event/s or activity/ies being covered. Refer Field Story Guidelines for content guidance.)	An AHP supported Plan International Bangladesh in partnership with Friends in Village Development Bangladesh (FIVDB) initiative for Education at South Shilkhali Chakma Para of Baharchara Union, under Teknaf Upazila in Cox’s Bazar. Indigenous people of South Shilkhali Chakma Para are making invaluable contributions to their communities and towards their Educational rights. Kajol Chakma and Keching Chakma are such devoted souls who are working towards their dreams of Educating every child and Youth of their Chakma tribe.
What AHP organisations were involved in this particular event/activity?	Plan International Bangladesh- PIB
What local partners were involved?	Friends in Village Development Bangladesh (FIVDB)
Image/s attached – Y/N? List the filenames of images submitted with the document. Where possible, please submit photos as separate .jpg or .png files with the Field Story content.	Attached image in Separate file.
Photo credit: Include the name of the photographer and/or organisation	Roksana/FIVDB
Prepared by (organisation name):	FIVDB
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Title: Bridging Towards Change: Indigenous People Working for Education of Tribal Children & Youth

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Chakma is the name of the largest tribe found in the hilly area of eastern Bangladesh, the Chittagong Hill Tracts, where about 300,000 people live. A small part of the tribe resides in the hilly area of South Shilkhali Chakma Para of Baharchara Union of Teknaf Upazila. The people of Chakma tribe are down to earth, hardworking individuals. Unfortunately, most of them are illiterate or semi-literate as there are no educational institutions in the community. Language is a major barrier for them when it comes to education.

The Chakma are very inclined to do physical labor, regardless of age or gender; if you visit a family, you will not find one of them sitting idle in the corner or loitering. This is the nature of the Chakma people

and Kajol and Keching Chakma are such dedicated and passionate people who work for the educational rights of Chakma children and youth.

FIVDB, in collaboration with Plan International Bangladesh, has established two SBK (Shishu Bikash Kendra) centers and one AYC (Adolescent and Youth Club) to substantiate the educational goal of the AHP project in Teknaf, Cox's Bazar, as part of the program.

Kajol Chakma, a young girl of 10th grade, lives with her small family in the semi-rural area of Chakma Para. She works as a facilitator of the Sunflower SBK center, teaching 22 children ages 3-5, six days a week, even during this lockdown. She simply could not stop working during the lockdown, but continued her work by making individual home visits to the children. She teaches the children how to greet others, how to say their name, how to recite a poem and connect it with gestures and body postures. She plays indoor and outdoor games with them, gives them psychosocial support, and gets them to make their own toys with local materials that are readily available in the area. She also does caregiver sessions with the parents of the children twice a week.

When I asked Kajol what influences or drives her to do this wonderful work so passionately, she replied, *"All my life I have seen my people as different because we do not speak the language of the common people of Bangladesh, we do not look like them, so we do not fit in. Then I realized that maybe these things make us different, but if we all have the same education, we are all the same. I do not want these kids to feel the same way I do. I want them to feel like they are part of the country, just like any other kid."*

Just like Kajol, Keching Chakma, a high school graduate who works as an SBK facilitator at the Shiuli SBK Center in Chakma Para, has some interesting insights to share. He believes if he and his work can make a difference in a child's life, he will consider himself successful. Keching also works for our new facility in the community, an Adolescent and Youth Club (AYC) where illiterate and semi-literate youth can learn reading, writing, arithmetic and various life skills that will help them in the future.

When I see these boys and girls working towards education in this community since the establishment of the SBK centers in February 2021, I realize that no dream is a small dream, and when a dream has so much passion in it, it brings a lot of positivity and change to the society. Kajol and Keching Chakma are examples of so many local boys and girls who want to bring the light of education to their Chakma community in South Shilkhali. Together with its local NGO partner, FIVDB, Plan International Bangladesh continues to support the children and youth of this community as part of its role in the Australian Humanitarian Partnership.