

Into Darkness



ing course in their area on how to identify blindchildren.

Since 2003, CSF has been using this method in various districts of Bangladesh to detect and refer cataract blind children for sight restoring surgery. Over one third of total blind children have already been identified by this programme. It is expected that by using the Key Informant Method, by 2010 all blind children will be identified and cataract blindness due to cataract will be eliminated. This method has been appreciated globally and in countries like India, Pakistan, Ghana and Malawi it has been successfully replicated.

The success of the Key Informant Method and CSF led to the creation of Child Disability Study in 2008 which encompasses not only blind children but also other physically disabled children. In 2008, the CSF has also established its own hospital Wahida Matin Memorial CSF Child Vision Centre with the collaboration of Wahida Matin Memorial Trust.

From the beginning, CSF has launched several projects and campaigns. These projects aim to address the need of incurably blind children. It focuses on comprehensive 'Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR)' approach in its broadest sense to include home-based Rehabilitation, Inclusive Education, Self Help Group and advocacy delivered as integrated service based at the Upazilla (sub-district) level.

Dr M A Muhit, the founder President of the CSF, points out that the journey with CSF has taught him few essential lessons. He says, "The social capital in Bangladesh is well developed. Bangladeshi people are friendly and communicative which ensures the success of the Key Informant Method".

But he says that the problems are much deeper and varied. This is not only a case of blind child but with it comes the problems of child marriage, malnutrition, lack of education, the negative attitude of the society towards disabled people, rehabilitation etc. Funding is another huge problem. Since it is a non-profit organisation, only 400 children out of 40,000 could have been rehabilitated because of lack of funds.

Child Sight Foundation started its noble journey with a vision of a world where no child is denied his or her human rights because of blindness, they dream of a society where no-one is stigmatised for her physical disability.

Since its establishment the CSF has been doing a world of good, making a profound contribution to the society by bringing light and happiness to the lives of thousands of unfortunate children and their families so that they can lead a wholesome and meaningful life.

If the reader is interested in donating or learning more about CSF consult the organisation's website- www.childsight-foundation.org or e-mail to cbpb@agni.com, Dhaka office- New DOHS, Mohakhali (RD#12, HSE#208).