

SUCCESS STORY

Increasing School Attendance and Achievement through a Midday Meal Programme

Students Lining Up to Wash their Plates and Hands before Lunch



*Ms. Hosneara Begum,
Head Teacher of Nagarkumari School*

She motivated and counseled parents on the importance of nutrition, and encouraged the community to implement this important program.



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In 2011, the Prime Minister asked the Deputy Commissioners from all districts to mobilize community support for a Primary School Midday Meal Programme. Following the meeting the Deputy Commissioner from the Panchagarh District, Md Tofazzel Hossain Miah shared the idea with the local government representative, he called a meeting of stakeholders who could be involved in making the program a reality including political and business leaders, civil society representatives and local media.

Ms. Hosneara, the Head Teacher of the Nagarkumari Govt. Primary School of Boda Upazila raised her voice and said, 'Yes, we can do it'. Under her leadership a series of meetings were held at her school to gather the resources and assistance necessary.

This September the program will celebrate its second anniversary. Today, the 300 children in the school enjoy a daily meal. The food is provided by 200 donors including teachers businesses, wealthy families, and local farmers. Some donors provide money which is used to pay mothers who cook the wholesome meals. The donations are deposited in a bank account and there is full transparency in how the funds are spent.

Enrollment from the local catchment is 100%. Each day three hundred students enjoy a healthy diet. For example, it might be fish, vegetables, rice, and dalh.

With a bit of encouragement the community came together to support its children. Now, their attention span is increased, and attendance is up because children are getting healthier from the improvement in diet.

Ms. Hosneara notes, "The community is so supportive and willing to continue the programme. I am very happy to be a part of it and I now know that I have their support when the school needs help."