

## Story of Unheard Voices 1:

This is case of 144 villages in Jessore. Its a story of about 400,000 people in three Upajilas. These people have been waterlogged not for days, weeks or months — since July of 2005 with no one to speak for them. Their months of suffering have been caused by prolonged water-logging resulting from the implementation of the faulty Khulna Jessore Drainage Rehabilitation Project of the Asian Development Bank and Bangladesh Water Development Board. One lakh people of the 144 villagers were forced to live an inhuman life with their homesteads, agricultural lands, schools and roads remaining under water since October, 2005. This case was highlighted and also was highlighted the case of 10,000 who studied from home but did not have the money to register for the Secondary exams. Drishtipat started a campaign on the web, on the blogs and among the public universities and raised the required amount. The money was handed over, they registered for the exams and went through matriculation. Also because of the hue and cry in the media and intense lobbying, the government allocated a large amount of money to solve the water loggin issue. The problem has now been resolved. You can see the whole slide show of the campaign here:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/drishtipat/sets/72157594540723032/show/>



## Stories of Unheard voice 2:

Story of Madhabi – the household help....

Sometime last year 10 year old Madhabi Majhi's life almost came to an end at the house where she worked as a maid. Hers was a story of torture and abuse by her employer. It became so bad that one day her employer allegedly pushed her and her co-worker Moni Mala from the top of a six-storey building. Fifteen-year-old Moni Mala never lived to tell the series of events that led up to that fateful day. Madhabi survived only to be threatened to change her story on how it happened. The story was highlighted in Drishtipat blog. Outrage started to pour in from all around the world. Members responded with concern and fury. Vittorio Barrile, a Swiss expatriate donated for her medical expenses and possible court actions. The family managed to pay off people to get Madhabi released from the hospital at their homes.



Andrew and Jules Morris from the UK, working under the Ministry of Education, and members of Drishtipat decided to take it on themselves to do whatever they can to help Madhabi and ensure justice. They continued to pursue the case on Drishtipat. Bangladesh women's lawyer's federation came forward. A lawyer from the organisation along with a policeman went into the owner's residence and rescued Madhabi from their clutches and put her in the organisation's shelter home. Drishtipat helped raise money for this shelter home as there are many others like Madhabi.



Drishtipat wants bring about more long term sustainable changes on the way domestic workers are treated in Bangladesh and help potential partner organizations like Shoishob and BNWLA who work in this area on the ground. To know more about the shelter,

<http://www.bnwlahostel.org/>

and

Madhabi and other such stories <http://drishtipat.org/blog/?s=madhabi>

### Stories of Unheard Voices 3:

#### Story of AndharManik

Andharmanik school is a small primary school in the north east corner of Bangladesh that is attended by girls from surrounding villages. Girls like Minakhsmi did not feel safe to go or return home from school everyday due to poor law and order situation devoiding them from the power of education. With a small grant from the DP challenge competition, a dormitory was built for these girls so that they can safely attend classes during weekdays. With a small help from you, Drishtipat can help you make these concrete actions to empower people in the remotest of areas.

Here are some of the pictures of the opening of the new dormitory.

[http://www.drishtipat.org/dpchallenge/Update/hostel\\_opening.JPG](http://www.drishtipat.org/dpchallenge/Update/hostel_opening.JPG)

<http://www.drishtipat.org/dpchallenge/Update/hostel1.JPG>

### Stories of unheard voices 4:

Story of some young women in Mirjapur. Some of the remotest areas of Mirzapur has fishing villages have poor rate of education for young girls. Drishtipat with a help of a local partner took up a project to increase the education rate of the girls of the community. Lack of awareness and poor economic condition prevents the girls from going to the schools. However, a few among them had started going to schools but faced possibilities of not continuing higher studies due to the early marriage and socio-economic environment and related cost. The aim was to help a few and create role models among them and with that the participation rate of girls in education will increase. Jolly is one such girl whose education stopped after her father died. She has started going to schools. Rani now is getting vocational training at a tailoring shop to gear up for a practical jobs when she graduates. It is Jolly and Rani's basic human right to get education so that she can live a life of dignity.



Below is the full list of scholarship winners who are being supported through the drishtipat grant.

[http://www.drishtipat.org/dpchallenge/Update/Students\\_DP\\_womenEducation.pdf](http://www.drishtipat.org/dpchallenge/Update/Students_DP_womenEducation.pdf)

## Stories of Unheard voices 5:

Three years ago, a poorly constructed Spectrum Garments Factory collapsed in Bangladesh taking with it 70 lives and injuring many more. Readymade garment workers are the life blood of Bangladesh economy which thrives on the export of these products to Western countries. Rafiqul Islam Masud, unmarried and aged 20 years, son of a poor cultivator father, is one such injury victim. Rafiqul Islam joined the spectrum just a week as a drier before the collapse of spectrum building with a remuneration of meager Tk. 3,000/- pm. He had serious injury on his right leg and ankle and will be disabled somewhat for the rest of his life. He now lives in an almost inaccessible remote village in a char area. His father has a large family of nine members, four of them are minors to maintain. The little income his father earns is too little to maintain such a big family. Young Rafiq was a big help to his father. We gave him grants so that he can run a small grocery shop and run a small business in his village market.

There were many we helped through this program. The fund raising online was possible through an online photo exhibition. To see a full list of the beneficiaries, you can check [http://www.drishtipat.org/images/Garments\\_disaster/](http://www.drishtipat.org/images/Garments_disaster/)



In July of 2006, Drishtipat London staged a play on the life of a garments worker to bring about fair wage to the worker and fair price from the western buyers to the Bangladeshi garments exporters. The benefit was a charity night and it highlighted the case of a garment worker who found freedom from the male dominated society in the garment workers only to be exploited again at rogue garments factory. The play followed by a debate brought all the stakeholders together to debate the issue of compliance. However, the safety standard of these workers are often a thorny issue. While much has improved since Garments, Drishtipat continues to highlight Bangladesh's interest in the foreign countries, the importance of the industry and the importance of compliance. The money raised from that night went to the pay scholarship for the daughter of a victim of Spectrum disaster and also to help a few garments workers highlighted in the film Bostrobolika to pay for their medical fees, childcare etc.

