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You are standing up for domestic workers in Bangladesh

Time and again, Oxfam field workers have borne witness to the injustice and abuse faced by domestic workers.

Now—with your help—we are working hard to give them a voice.

In the Dhaka region of Bangladesh, your support is reaching Bibi—a 35 year old domestic worker whose income is the sole provider for her family of five children.

Bibi fled home at a young age, escaping from an oppressive stepmother. She turned to live-in domestic work in Dhaka, before her father forced her back to the village to be married.

In the face of extreme poverty, Bibi and her husband went back to Dhaka. But an accident broke her husband's waist, leaving him unable to work. Now Bibi is back in domestic service.

90% of domestic workers in Bangladesh are women—and it's a job that is fraught with insecurity and abuse.

Most have no established working hours, which means they are rarely paid for overtime.

Because domestic help is “informal employment” they have no rights to a minimum wage or even decent working conditions.

Women are often confined within the households they work for—at the mercy of their employer's family and visitors. Nearly one half of domestic workers have faced physical abuse—but the threat of being fired always hangs over their heads.

Through our program “Securing Rights,” you and Oxfam are standing up for these women.

With local partners, we have helped organize Domestic Workers Groups—providing vocational training, job placement, and life skills. But we also know that life won't permanently improve for these women unless systems and society change, too. So with your help, we are advocating for legal recognition of their labour rights.

Thank you for always standing with us to speak up for those whose voices have been silenced for too long.



Photo Credit: April Bulanadi, Oxfam

Cristy Espina sorting their clothes, which were washed out by the storm surge caused by Typhoon Phanfone.

UPDATE FROM THE PHILIPPINES

Recovering from Typhoon Phanfone

From Christmas Eve through Christmas Day, the vicious Typhoon Phanfone hit the Philippines seven times. It was the twenty-first typhoon to wreak havoc in the Philippines in 2019. Many of the communities were still struggling to recover when Phanfone hit.

Oxfam staff have been on the ground assessing immediate urgent needs, and making plans to support long-term recovery.

We believe that almost 2 million people have been affected—mostly in coastal areas which already lack proper resources and basic services.

Thousands of people lost their homes, and access to clean water. Hardest hit of all were the region's farming and fishing communities—crops, boats and equipment all destroyed.

Cristy Espina's family is just one of those affected. Her house was washed away.

Cristy is a single mother of seven children. They are staying in a makeshift shelter with her sister—itsself badly damaged. Five of her children

are still in school, but now they can't secure even one single notebook to share.

She says in tears, "I don't know how we can recover everything that was destroyed. If only we could just leave and move to a safer place."

We have been working with local partners to provide immediate cash assistance to three coastal villages badly affected. Many coastal villages are in dire need of emergency shelter, bedding, drinkable water and food.

Damage to power lines, schools, housing and other infrastructure loom as serious problems for disaster recovery.

With your help, we are assisting Oxfam Philippines to reach 2,500 to 3,000 families with cash, WASH and shelter needs.

But our work won't stop there. We have been working in the Philippines for over 30 years, striving for economic equality and sustainable futures. We will work closely with our partners in the typhoon-affected areas to rebuild homes, lives and futures.

NEWS FROM PAPUA NEW GUINEA

You've helped launch Onano's thriving bee business!

Onano John is a bee farmer who got her start after attending a series of bee farming training workshops offered by Oxfam, our local partner New Guinea Fruit and the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The mother of three young children, Onana jumped at the chance to learn new ways of earning an income for her family. Now her hard work and enthusiasm have paid off. She is selling honey for a good price, and reinvesting her savings in her bee farm—and her family.

"My name is Onano John. I'm a farmer. I work on the garden, flower garden, coffee garden, and now I look after my honey bee hives. This is my second year as a bee farmer.

I saw that bee farmers made good money from honey. That's why I wanted to be a bee farmer.

Two years ago Oxfam and New Guinea Fruit Company sponsored a bee farming training. I did not have any bees at the time, but I was interested and I attended three times.

When they saw me come back for the third time, they gave me a box to start me off. I took it home, purchased some more equipment, and made a stand for my first hive.

Every morning and afternoon, I would check that one hive. When I saw that there were many bees and were going to produce honey, I was excited—not scared.

Eastern Highlands, Papua New Guinea: Onano John, a bee farmer, collects honey from her hives in the Eastern Highlands.



Photo Credit: Patrick Moran / Oxfam



Photo Credit: Patrick Moran / Oxfam

So far, I have harvested and sold my honey six times! This let me buy more equipment.

I also bought food from the market for my family, and was able to help my husband travel to see our child graduate.

My husband did not know that bee farming can earn money, so he did not help me in the beginning. But then he saw the money I was making from the honey sales and so he started to help me. I gave him some money for helping me.

It's hard work, bee farming. Bees sting me on my legs, my mouth. Sometimes my lips and eyes get swollen. I am very tired, but I am happy.

Now I have helped others—I have given a swarm each to three boys who helped me. And I've paid my children's school fees, uniforms, clothes and food for our house.

Before there were no women bee farmers. But now I see a lot of women at the training and the meetings."



Photo Credit: Patrick Moran / Oxfam



Photo Credit: Patrick Moran / Oxfam

CLIMATE CHANGE

Women, Water and Peace in Pakistan

Pakistan has one of the world's highest mortality rates. More than 900 children under the age of 5 die every single day.

The main causes are diarrhea, respiratory infection, and malaria. And of course, acute malnutrition.

Contaminated water is one of the biggest contributors in spreading disease. Indeed, water is on everyone's minds—all the time.

Zeb-Un-Nisa has to walk **more than nine hours each day** to collect water for her family. The journey is dangerous, with aggressive animals and men from other villages harassing her.

Once, a dog viciously attacked her, and Zeb-Un-Nisa became gravely ill from the bite.

"The scarcity of water has really destroyed our lands, so we were accustomed to skipping meals. When the floods came, my children and I were unable to eat for two days. And now, it has been four or five years of drought."

It is hard to imagine, but life used to be even worse for Zeb-Un-Nisa and her family. In addition to the long, dangerous daily walks for water, she was forced to travel for hours to the city to buy vegetables—the land around her home has been barren and unproductive for so long.

But you and Oxfam have helped Zeb-Un-Nisa and other women like her to build a kitchen garden. And now feeding her family is much easier.

"When we used to have to go to the market, we wasted money on fuel and a lot of time. Now we are eating from our own kitchen garden, our health has improved."

We go to our labouring work, and when I come back I can easily go and pick vegetables from my garden and make a meal with roti to provide for my family.



Photo Credit: Khaula Jamil / Oxfam

I am growing okra, zucchini, bitter gourd and turnip. My favourite is okra.

It makes me so happy to have a garden; even if we eat little, we cook well and we eat happy.

I really hope for access to water and the inclusion of women's rights—those are my goals."

Thank you for bringing help and health to Zeb-Un-Nisa and her family. Her dream is our dream and together we can help her realize it—rights for women and water for the whole community!

Women in Pakistan have lived for a long time under the direction and control of the men in their families. That is starting to change in Sindh. Women are finding their voices—thanks to supporters like you!



ROWENA'S CORNER

Oxfam is part of my story



Peggy Killeen

Peggy Killeen was born and raised in South Africa. In 1985, when Peggy was 21, she was an activist in the anti-apartheid movement, building bridges between white and black youth to break down barriers.

When a State of Emergency was declared in South Africa, Peggy joined the newly created *East Cape News Agency* to raise awareness with national and international media on what was happening in the Eastern Cape. One of ECNA's seed funders was Oxfam Great Britain.

It wasn't long before a number of the journalists were arrested, remaining in detention without trial for several months. "At that point we all went underground into hiding," said Peggy. She worked with a fellow activist and photojournalist, sending updates and stories to Reuters and other news agencies.

Peggy also became an advocate for communities threatened with "forced removal" by the apartheid government—some families losing homes they had lived in all their lives. She arranged pro bono legal support, connecting these families with lawyers who would help them.

"Working with development agencies doing advocacy work and bringing people together has always been important to me," Peggy says. She



Peggy in the 80's in South Africa

continued working on the ground for grass roots organizations and eventually did international field work for the UN.

When she moved to Canada, Peggy went into fundraising. "It's the same work, telling stories and asking for support so that important projects can continue." Peggy took a special interest in working with donors who were thinking of leaving a legacy gift.

Peggy realized that leaving a gift in her own will would be a powerful way to make a difference. "When I made my first will, the charity that came immediately to mind was Oxfam Canada. It was a decision about what I value, my roots, and about giving back."

"My gift is about my story...it's autobiographical. And Oxfam is part of my story. If Oxfam Great Britain hadn't sponsored the project, I wouldn't have been recruited by ECNA, and that was the trigger for the work that I ended up doing for the rest of my life."