

The Chunati Sewing Academy

THE PROBLEM

Every day, an estimated 70-80 Bangladeshi women are trafficked into the neighboring Indian sex trade. In a male-dominated culture, women without the provision and protection of husbands and fathers remain especially at risk of “disappearing” across borders.

An estimated 53% of Bangladeshi women between the ages of 15-49 are victims of domestic violence. Yet these women find themselves without options. Due to cultural constraints, they are unable to leave home, whether to seek safety or employment that might increase their “value” and end their abuse (2007 Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey).

Thus, many Bangladeshi women remain in a critical state of risk—either unprotected and vulnerable to traffickers or trapped in abusive situations.

THE SOLUTION

The Chunati Sewing Academy: Removing Risk by Adding Value

The Chunati Sewing Academy began with a woman who flowed into the life of our founder and president many years ago. Battered wife number two, she found a sister in our president and a safe place in her home. Here she also saw sewing take place regularly. When she asked if she could learn, our president bought her a sewing machine. Soon she began making more money than her husband. His whole view of her changed. He liked the income. He especially liked her working from home. She continued to save and to grow her business. Now her community respects her; her children go to school; her abuse ended; she has a future! Today this Bangladeshi sister walks tall with her head back and eyes alight. Dignity...disguised as a sewing machine!

When battered Bangladeshi women start earning an income, their abuse often decreases or ends completely. Suddenly the extra wife who was “an irritant, a mouth to feed, in the way” becomes an equal, a bread winner, someone of value. Widows and orphans gain protection when they gain vocational skills and employment. They are no longer susceptible to the scams of those promising stable jobs across borders. Society sees them as valuable as they work with dignity and become self-sustaining. The Chunati Sewing Academy embodies WAR’s mission to “create circles of protection in culturally sensitive ways.” It does not put the woman further at risk by fighting the abuser or the culture. It empowers her to work with dignity and become self-sustaining—proving to society that she is not an object to be beaten or sold, but is worthy of respect and value.

THE PLAN

Nestled in a Hindu village, the Chunati Sewing Academy faithfully trains women as seamstresses, offering them valuable vocational skills and a future of self-sustainable employment. The Academy has graduated multiple widows, orphans, and other at-risk women. With daily worship and Bible study, women who have been neglected or abused slowly learn of their true worth and value in Christ—all while learning skills valuable to their society as well. Here they have access to health care through the organization’s medical clinic and fresh water from a tube well dug by WAR, Int’l. Upon graduation they receive a sewing machine and the opportunity to begin a home-based business. As they work from the sanctity of their homes, they can watch their children and maintain their “honor” within Bangladeshi culture. In the past, these graduation ceremonies have drawn the attention and respect of their community. Important local officials watch as “the least of these” in their society, the invisible widows, lesser wives, and orphans, are empowered to work with dignity in the name of Christ.

In order to carry the Chunati Sewing Academy to their fifth year anniversary, **we are asking for two years of funding for this program.** With these basic budget needs met, the Academy can plow forward in expanding their ministry and widening their circles of protection. They can open their doors to the women on their ever-lengthening waiting list. They can throw energy and resources behind dreaming and growing projects to meet the multi-faceted needs of their community. Please consider partnering with this program to spread the Gospel to at-risk women and children and lift them to lives of dignity and worth.

2013-2014 Budget Breakdown

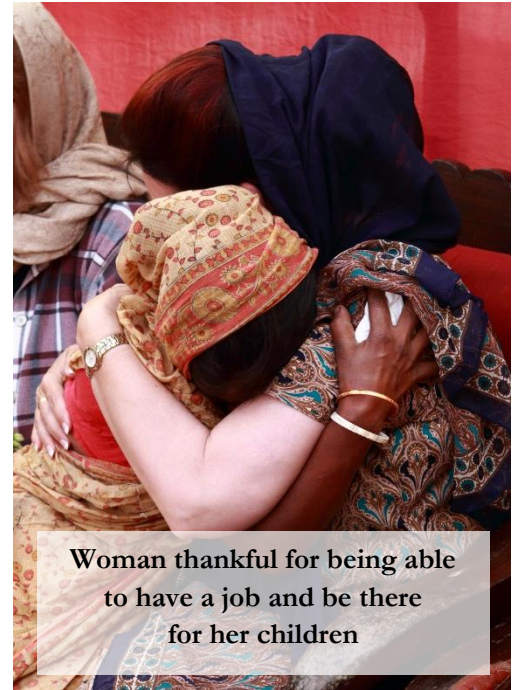
Materials	\$369
Tailor Salary	\$1,468
Sewing Machines as Graduation Gifts	\$1071
Sewing House Rent	\$368
Graduation	\$153
Evangelist	\$1,542
Other	\$215
Total:	\$5,186



Presenting new dresses created



Women sewing
in the center



Woman thankful for being able
to have a job and be there
for her children



Becky at a graduation ceremony