

ASPIRE

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New OBAT School!

OBAT Quarterly Board Meeting

OBAT's quarterly board meeting was held on March 15th, 2015. Various important issues were discussed and motioned during the meeting. Two new board members were confirmed, Mr. Abdur Rahman Yaqub and Mr. Javed Imam, both of whom are from Chicago and have added tremendous value to OBAT through their efforts over the years. We are extremely honored to have them join the board and extend a very warm welcome to them. The next quarterly meeting is scheduled for June 7th.

New Website: Check it Out!



You can check out our updated website at the same URL as before: www.obathelpers.org.

Many thanks to Fatima Hussain with After Hours Marketing for devoting her time and talent to the new site.

25 Students Complete New Computer Course



Computer Course in Progress

Last year, a new computer training course was introduced for Junior School Certificate students. It was



The school building

We are elated and proud to report that a new school has been added to OBAT's educational projects. This high school is located in Mirpur camp which is the biggest camp in Dhaka and contains more than 20% of the population of Urdu speaking people.

While this school has been in existence since 1974 under a different management, students were charged a tuition fee. The management committee was finding it increasingly hard to continue the schools' operations as more and more students left due to inability to pay the fee. During Mr. Anwar Khan's visit to the school in January 2015, he was requested by the committee to take over the school to ensure its continuity.

In February, OBAT formally took over the school and is now also planning to add a tutoring and computer training center to its projects in Mirpur. Reach us at contact@obathelpers.org if you would like to adopt this school with the help of your friends and family. Join us as we take another firm step toward empowerment!

Save the Date: Race4Rehma!



Walkers at the 2014 Race for Rehma

For several years, through Race for Rehma, OBAT has contributed to a local cause in its home city, Indianapolis. This year we are joining hands with the Syrian Refugee Initiative, (spearheaded by the Center for Interfaith Cooperation) to welcome and settle Syrian refugees in Indianapolis. More than half of the Syrian people have been displaced from their homes in the four year old Syrian civil war and now it's our turn to show Rehma/compassion. Join this walk for compassion to help build a new life for refugees arriving from Syria.

All proceeds from this walk will go toward the Syrian Refugee Initiative. Funds will be used toward programs such as providing them with ESL classes, driving lessons and basic necessities of living. You can walk on your own or form a team with your friends.

Register here: race4rehma2015.eventbrite.com

gradually implemented at all OBAT computer training centers. The first batch of twenty-five students recently finished their 45 day course, learning basic computer skills such as typing, Microsoft, email, etc.

International Women's Day Celebrated in Camps



International Women's day is globally celebrated on March 8th. This year, the strong women of the Khulna Sewing Center joined the celebrations by commemorating the day at the center. Women's empowerment is at the core of OBAT's long term vision.

OBAT Receives Recognition

OBAT is featured in Charitable Advisors as one of the three Indianapolis based organizations working globally to bring a change. Charitable Advisors is a weekly not-for-profit online news magazine.
<http://bit.ly/1Bp6TKA>

486 OBAT Preschoolers Begin 1st Grade



Preschoolers Celebrating at Annual OBAT Sports Day

In 2014, OBAT's preschools prepared 486 children to enter first grade. We are looking forward to enrolling more excited and eager preschoolers this year!
Read more here: <http://bit.ly/1c3xh0J>

Education for Working Children Program Inducts 5th Batch

Renewable Energy Sources Workshop



The workshop in progress

OBAT's partner, CHANGE, has arranged a training course with the collaboration of the U.S. department of State, in which, participants will work on developing renewable energy products. The program was initiated on December 29th 2014 in Dhaka. Twenty-

three candidates

were selected for the workshop. Amid this group of professional engineers and students from polytechnic institutes, there are five students from Mohammadpur camp in Dhaka. According to the president of CHANGE, Mr. Sajid Iqbal,

"The financially struggling student participants from refugee camps can bring in tremendous insight about the real life conditions of the poorest communities of the country. They can give us an idea of what kind of products are most needed in poor households." The two month training program is being held at OBAT's facilities at Mohammadpur.

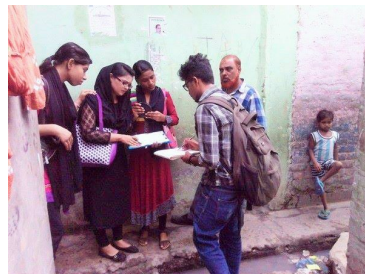


Students configuring electronics

OBAT Think Tank & PARAA Collaboration



Volunteers gather information from camp residents



Think Tank members conducting the survey

PAARA, a UK Based organization, has implemented a project 'House Hold and Camp Mapping Survey' in the camps. This survey is funded by OBAT and will be conducted by PARAA in different camps all over Bangladesh. Ten volunteers from OBAT's Think Tank helped them conduct the survey in Market Camp, Dhaka. The youth from the Think Tank supported PARAA by collecting the information, going door to door and entering the information into their system. We are thankful to the Think Tank for volunteering seven-eight hours every day and for committing to support PAARA in any future projects.

Euglena & OBAT: Tackling Nutritional Deficiencies in OBAT Students



The 5th batch of OBAT's Education for Working Children Program from Mohammadpur camp, Dhaka has just begun their program. None of these individuals have ever gone to school or used a pen or pencil, but are all very keen to learn. In this program, they will go through a six month program during which they will learn Bangla, English, Math and Arabic. The Education for Working Children Program has been very successful in educating those children who cannot attend school as their parents need their helping hand to make ends meet. These kids hence have to spend their day working as barbers, welders or street hawkers to contribute to their family's income. By enrolling in this program, they attend school from 7 am to 9 am daily and then head to their places of work. Thank you for your support for this effective project!

Dr. Shujaat Wasty Visits Camps



Shujaat Wasty Speaking at Rangpur School's Sports Day

OBAT's Vice President, Mr. Shujaat Wasty visited the camps in March with his brother-in-law, Mr. Adil Chaudhry who is a Propulsion Engineer working for Air Canada in Montreal. The duo visited Mirpur, Millat, Kurmitola and Adamjee Camps, discussing issues faced by the camp residents, future projects, Think Tank action items and various other topics. Deeply touched by the difference he witnessed made by OBAT, Mr. Chaudhry left his comments on GreatNonprofits.org: <http://gr8np.org/go/7xp>

Dhaka School Students Receive Books



Euglena is a Japanese organization with its only international office located in Dhaka, Bangladesh. They focus on the research, development and marketing of, "euglena," which is a microalgae. The company's goal is to combat poverty with euglena, which contains most of the nutrients needed for human survival. Euglena is transportable in powdered form to meet the nutritional needs of people in poverty stricken areas. The company is working with OBAT and started distributing nutrition biscuits at the NLJ school in April 2014. Each child receives a packet of biscuits everyday. Prior to beginning this program, they visited the school, met with the teachers and gauged the nutritional deficiencies of the students by measuring their height and weight. After the program began, they have regularly measured the impact of the biscuits on the students by assessing their weight. Recently, the group visited the Dhaka School and met with the head teacher there to discuss initiating a program at the school.

UNHCR Arranges OBAT's Meeting with Foreign Diplomats

On February 10th, the UNHCR organized the first advocacy meeting on behalf of the camp residents with diplomats from the U.S., Switzerland and the Netherlands. The main objective of this meeting was to discuss the issues faced by the camp residents, the current situation of camps, rehabilitation issues and the Bangladeshi government's policy towards camp inhabitants. The OBAT team discussed the above issues in detail with the diplomats and requested them to hold talks with the government to rehabilitate the camp residents in an urban versus a rural environment. Although this option is being considered by the government, it is not perceived as viable as this community has lived all their lives in an urban setting and have developed the skills to survive in such an environment. The diplomats were also apprised of OBAT's projects and activities. In attendance were Mr. Joshua Hatch (U.S. embassy), Ms. Nathalie Paarlberg (Netherlands' embassy), Mr. Christian M. Fotsch (Switzerland's embassy), Mr. Khalid Fansa (UNHCR, Bangladesh) and Mr. Sohail Khan (OBAT's project officer in Bangladesh).

Can You be our Matchmaker?



Happy to receive books!

The young children at Dhaka English School received free textbooks recently in a ceremony presided over by Ms. Khaleda Begum (Thana Educational Officer). Every step bringing OBAT students closer to empowerment is celebrated with their trademark, spectacular smiles - we are grateful!

Dungeons or Houses?



Ms. Mehwish Farooq inside a resident's home

In a blog post (read here: <http://bit.ly/1CPXE8H>), Mr. Atif Godil who recently visited the camps with his wife, Ms. Mehwish Farooq, recounts his impressions of the sights and sounds of the camps and the poignancy of the circumstances endured by the camp residents.

Camp Visit: Mr. Malik Rashid



Mr. Malik Rashid addressing the Think Tank

Mr. Malik Rashid from Canada visited OBAT's team in Dhaka recently. He met with OBAT Think Tank's volunteers and watched a presentation of their activities. He appreciated their activities and expressed gratitude to them for volunteering their services to OBAT. Mr. Rashid also visited OBAT's tutoring center. We are always grateful to our visitors. Interested in making your own trip? Contact us to begin planning!

Shop at Amazon

OBAT is a part of Amazon Smile. You can combine shopping and giving when you shop at Amazon. Amazon will make a donation to OBAT Helpers if you

Do you work for any of these great companies?
Boeing | British Petroleum | CarMax | ExxonMobil | Gap | General
Electric | Johnson & Johnson | Microsoft | Soros Management
Fund | State Street Corporation

The above companies are all top matching gifts companies (not a complete list). You can double your donation to us when your employers match your donation. Check with your employer if they have a matching gift program and double your impact!

Camps Celebrate Mother Language Day



Rangpur school children with their prizes on competition day

On February 21st, OBAT Helpers Bangladesh observed International Mother Language Day. An inter-school cricket tournament was organized among all Chittagong schools namely, Halishaher, SB Nagar and Ferozeshah. The cricket matches were hosted by the Halishaher School. Khulna School organized a hand writing competition for their students while Rangpur School organized an Islamic quiz competition for their students studying there. Dhaka English School students participated in an Art competition. The youth of Mohammadpur camps under the banner of OBAT Think Tank brought out a rally and paid homage to the martyrs at Central Shaheed Minar.

About OBAT

OBAT Helpers is a U.S. based non-profit, 501(c)3 organization committed to providing aid, support, education and economical empowerment to suffering and displaced people. Our immediate focus is the forgotten and ignored Urdu speaking community, commonly known as stranded Pakistanis/Biharis, who have been suffering silently in the many shanty camps across Bangladesh for the past 43 years. OBAT was formed ten years ago to empower the camp residents through its various projects related to health, education and micro finance.

We hope that you will continue your generous support and create hope for these unfortunate and forgotten people. Together, we are making a difference in their lives as we help them fulfill their hopes and dreams.

Please share this message with your friends and families and invite them to join us on this journey!

designate it as the charity of your choice.
<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/47-0946122>

How can YOU Help?

[Buy our book, "Forgotten," to support our projects](#)

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We value and appreciate your support tremendously. For questions and concerns, please email us at contact@obathelpers.org

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&
Donate!

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