

# **Success stories from women with disabilities groups in Bangladesh**

## **Taslima finds shelter in the WWD group**

Taslima became disabled through receiving the wrong treatment during her maternal delivery. When she became disabled her husband divorced her because of her disability. As a divorcee she had a very hard time and a miserable life. She was tortured in many ways because of the social cultural norms in Bangladesh. After 12 years, another poor man persuaded her to marry him, because she had received 8000 Taka and two goats, as relief after cyclone Sidr from various NGOs. Taslima wanted shelter and agreed to marry, but unfortunately it did not bring any positive changes to her life - rather she lost her last assets. Her new husband started to abuse her for leaving his home, and finally, he sent her to another village.

One member of the 'Potuakhali WWD group' heard about Taslima's situation. She raised it at a group meeting and all the group members discussed the issue and decided to protest this injustice. Farzana, the WWD project manager, and Salahuddin, of SARPV, were present in the meeting and agreed with the group's decision. After meeting all the group members they went to Taslima's husband's home and put pressure on him to let Taslima come home. This unexpected visit made scared him, as he realised that Taslima had strong support from the women with disabilities group. He agreed to give her shelter. But Taslima no longer felt comfortable with her husband because of his earlier mistreatment of her and she divorced him.

Now the women with disabilities group is making plans to help Taslima to live safely.

## **Sanjida's Daughter gets support to attend school**

Sanjida is a blind woman, who has been separated from her husband for many years. She and her only daughter struggle to survive. They have no means of earning a living and most days they cannot eat. Her daughter is a student of class nine in 2008, but the school authorities did not allow her sit her exam because Sanjida could not pay the fees.

The 'Baggerhat WWD group' took action to resolve this issue. The leader of the group attended a meeting with the school authorities and convinced them to allow Sanjida's daughter to attend the exam. She also encouraged them to give the girl free studentship and one of the Government scholarships that is available to poor girl students.

All this happened only because of the unity of the women with disabilities group.