



# Leave No One Behind



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All photographs, texts and book design concept  
by **Saiful Huq Omi/ Counter Foto**

Concept by **Md Abdul Quayyum / UNDP**

Coordination by **Kazi Md Zilla Haider / UNDP**

Text edited by **Aanila Kishwar Tarannum & Md Rifaat Newaz / UNDP**

Post Production of photographs, design and layout  
by **Shantanu Majumder/ Counter Foto**

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## To The Unborn Child Named Hope

Dear Friends of Bangladesh

I feel honoured to present this book about Bangladesh, which in a small way attempts to present through pictures the incredible development journey of a new born, war torn nation rapidly rising to become the emerging economic power that it is today.

We at UNDP feel proud and privileged to have been a longstanding and steady partner throughout this period of remarkable transformation since 1972, helping catalyse several life changing ideas and investments.

This photo book documents select outcomes of UNDP's diverse work over the years -- from promoting the rights of indigenous people in the north to supporting the climate-change adaptability of people in the southern coast; from enabling access to renewable green energy in remote areas to our partnership with local communities in development work following the Rohingya crisis. The title of this book is apt indeed -- we are constantly trying to reach those who are most in need and make a lasting difference in their lives.

Before you start going through this book, I wish to share three thoughts with you. The first is that, as I often realise, people like me who are involved in human development are extremely privileged. Day after day, we are rewarded by the happy smiles of the many people and communities that we serve.

The beautiful smiles in the photographs are a constant reminder of our mandate and also brings us immense gratification. This is what triggers our passion for development, reinforces our sense of justice and morality and motivates us to go to work every morning.

Second, I believe that by capturing and sharing glimpses of public expressions of gratitude as pictorial memoirs, we are able to tell timeless stories that can inspire successive generations of our ilk and eventually become part of the bedrock of values that institutions such as UNDP are built upon.

And finally, in doing so, we are able to recognise the artistic brilliance of the photographers who have patiently walked alongside us all these years, endured the many rough rides that such journeys are often riddled with, and gifted us with wonderful memories to treasure and share. I join the several generations of development workers from UNDP Bangladesh in saluting them. I hope you will enjoy going through this special memoir as much as we do.

With many best wishes,

**Sudipto Mukerjee**  
Resident Representative  
UNDP Bangladesh



Those who are familiar with my work would agree that this book is quite different from my oeuvre. This book came to us right after I finished the most difficult project of my life, which drained me in all possible ways – ‘136’, a 12 year-long project on Rohingyas.

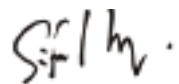
‘Leave No One Behind’ was a breath of fresh air, a respite for my mind; especially after the difficult, draining work of documenting the plight of the Rohingyas. Work on this book began at a time when it was becoming difficult to continue believing in humanity. Taking a look at today’s world, can anyone harbour unadulterated hope? I had my doubts, but I have been proven wrong in the end. Meeting these twenty exceptional individuals with stories of hope, aspiration, struggle and achievement against all odds of life made me feel hopeful again. Bangladesh has truly come a long way since its independence in 1971. The country has produced remarkable people who are making great progress and contributing to building a brighter nation for the 21st century.

These twenty people, a fabulous bunch, have proved once again that there are endless possibilities in store for all of us. We all should dream, and dreams are meant to be realised, as long as one believes in themselves and gets positive reinforcement from their surroundings.

UNDP has brought that reinforcement through their generosity and firm belief in humanity. The people in this book represent just twenty out of the millions whose lives the organisation has touched in its 50 years in Bangladesh. I believe these individuals represent some of the greatest virtues present in humanity.

It has been an honour to be a part of such a heart-warming project. I am thankful to every member of the UNDP team, who have been considerate and patient throughout this long, large-scale project. Thank you UNDP, for believing in me and relying on Counter Foto!

I thank my wonderful colleagues, especially book designer Shantanu Majumder, my wonderful fixer Goshami Kanti Mridul and audio-visual in-charge Ekramul Kabir Shohan for carrying out their work with utmost integrity. And last but not the least, I am grateful to my wife Ritu and my daughter Shoumini for their love and understanding while I travelled far and wide for this project.



Saiful Huq Omi

## From curse to blessing

We used to live by the river. While that river was essentially the only source of our livelihood and food, we ended up losing our homes to the erosion it caused. After that, we moved to the char for survival, but the area was severely underdeveloped at the time.

There were no schools, no hospitals, and not even transport. It would stay inundated for half of the year. We were not sure if it was possible to grow crops or even rear fish in the salty water, let alone know the ways to do it. Surviving in the char was not easy.

Amidst the hardships, UNDP launched a project in the area and that transformed our lives forever. They trained us on how to grow vegetables and cultivate fish in the salty environment and gave us appropriate seeds and fish fry to get our farming initiatives off the ground. We finally learned that it was possible to utilise the land, even when it remained inundated in saltwater.

Our success with farming became an example for people in villages near and far – a symbol of hope. I’m just glad that we learned and found a way to turn the curse of salinity into a blessing.

It has also strengthened our bond as a community since we farm in groups and enjoy working together. Upazila agriculture officials regularly visit to monitor our progresses. These achievements have made me happier, happy for myself and the people around me.

I have always lived and will continue to live near the land and the water. I hope to continue to be a farmer in this beautiful land till the day I die.

Project: Integrating Community-Based Adaptation into Afforestation and Reforestation Programs in Bangladesh (ICBAAR)









## Working for a better future

After losing our homes to river erosion, me and my family took shelter in a nearby forest. Since, we lost all we had, we made do with whatever we could earn by selling leaves and twigs we collected through the day. The earning was inconsistent and we were never sure if we would have food on our table.

While we were unhappy with the way things were going, we had no idea on how to turn around. That is when we learnt of a UNDP project in our area which helps people with vegetable cultivation. We took their training and support and started small - just growing beans and potatoes.

We managed to survive and even made some savings. We used that to later expand the array of vegetables with tomato, cauliflower, okra and other seasonal vegetables. Although we didn't make much profit at the start, we persevered and as the days passed, we earned more and more.

My family is now self-sufficient. We eat three meals a day. I can send my daughter to school. We have set up a small grocery store that we plan to make bigger in the future.

None of this would have happened, if I had not gotten the opportunity to learn more about farming using the FFF model or the support to survive at the early stages of our farm. Now it is running smoothly and I can now dream to give my daughter a better life - what more can a mother ask for?









## Carrying on the spirit of the Liberation War

March 7, 1971 - Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was giving his historical speech for independence - I was there. When the war broke out, the occupation army attacked our area, burned our houses, and started arresting and killing people mercilessly. I managed to flee with a group of people and managed to make contact with some freedom fighters, who helped me join the war for our country.

After the initial training, we were divided into groups and sent to the frontline to fight against the occupation army. We won the war and now have an independent country. This country got the opportunity to develop only because we liberated ourselves from the oppressing forces to build a future of our own.

And the country has developed a lot. I realised this first-hand when I discovered an error in my freedom fighter certificate. I became worried about what sort of hassle I would have to face to get it corrected, whether I must travel all the way to the capital to sort the matter. But then I found out that I could have it done online.

It has been more than four decades since independence, and I think Bangladesh has come a long way in terms of achieving its goals.

Everything from the country's past to its present operations are now being documented online and all processes are on the brink of being digitised, with UNDP's support.

I am a man who has always sided with what is right and have spent my life acting on strong moral grounds and I hope the country's future-digital or otherwise - also proceeds towards the path of truth.

Project: a2i











## Smart investments for a brighter future

When my husband passed away after a long battle with cancer, I felt lost and alone. I was unsure of how I would survive.

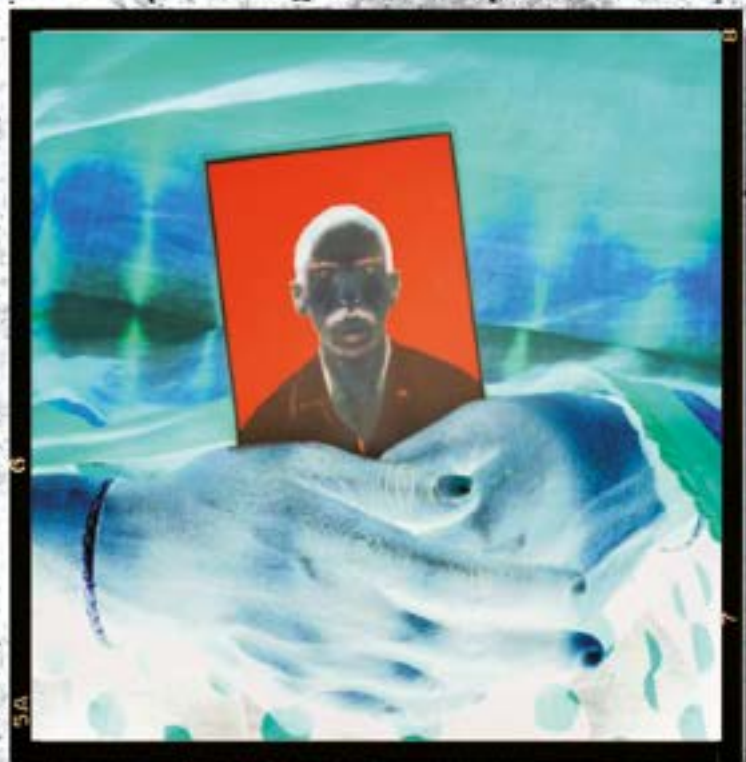
Then I came across a UNDP project, which was hiring rural ultra-poor and marginalized women like me to do construction work and maintenance of roads, schools and mosques. I was selected through the lottery and things started to turn around for me.

The SWAPNO project trained us on how to make savings, livelihood alternatives, and how to run businesses. I carefully and painstakingly managed to save enough to invest in a cow. It was worthy and soon I saved enough to buy another one.

I also took sewing training and got a machine for that purpose. Villagers helped spread the word that I knew how to sew, and orders came in for clothes and three-piece outfits. I sold the clothes for a small margin and realised that there is a steady demand for these. So, I invested more of my savings into this initiative.

I thought my survival was at stake when I was grieving for my husband. Today, I know that I have managed to do well for myself. I was able to make the best out of my situation due to the opportunities I received from UNDP's SWAPNO project. Their training and support can go a long way for women, we just have to remain true to that step towards an independent life.

Project: Strengthening Women's Ability for Productive New Opportunities (SWAPNO)











## Prioritising self-reliance

I am proud to be an independent woman, but the struggle for this independence was not easy. When I was very young, my father left, and my mother had to take care of her three children all on her own. I grew up seeing my beloved mother constantly facing humiliation due to her situation, but she still managed to provide for us.

To help my mother, I started working as a maid when I was barely a teenager. I always wanted to have a family, but few men would agree to marry someone who couldn't afford a dowry. I ended up marrying someone who lied about his previous marriage, which caused further problems for me. My husband's first wife made my life miserable, and on top of that, he married again when I was five months pregnant with my second child.

Unable to take the humiliation, I decided to prioritise my own wellbeing to provide for my two children. I divorced the man despite facing further humiliation from many in my community. I was labelled a "bad woman". Men would disturb and harass me while also shunning me for being a divorcee.

But the more they tried to humiliate me, the stronger I grew. When men disturbed me, I never stayed silent. I protested. I even had to file a case once to teach them a lesson, and I won the dispute after fighting for five years. Later, those who provoked me asked for forgiveness. I took the benevolent route and withdrew the case once they promised that they would fix their behaviour.

Like my mother, I learned to be independent without the help of any man. I faced all my struggles with dignity and self-respect. I was determined to be financially independent. I worked hard and received training to be an entrepreneur from UNDP. I learned how to plan and think like a businessperson. I bought a shop with all my savings, and I am now supporting our small family of three. Women aren't weak - we are resilient, smart and capable.

Project: Strengthening Women's Ability for Productive New Opportunities (SWAPNO)













## Patience bears a golden fruit

Life has taught me that everything comes with patience. No matter what hardship one goes through, they must face it with patience and perseverance, or else the situation will never change. My childhood was difficult – my family was so poor that we regularly had to go to sleep hungry. I was married off as a young girl; so young that I didn't even understand what marriage meant.

I still tried to adjust. "I can at least eat," thought my young self. But even this new life was uprooted when river erosion destroyed our home. To make matters more difficult, I found out I was pregnant soon afterwards. I still remember how helpless I felt to not be able to take proper care of myself and the baby inside my womb. How horrible it felt to not have a place to live while a baby was on its way! I had to work as a maid in other people's houses to survive. I still couldn't source proper nutrition for me or my family.

It appeared that life had more misfortunes in store, as my husband died soon after my baby boy was born. Already grieving, I was pushed further into misery as people around me started stereotyping and humiliating me for being a widow.

Even then, some were kind enough to let me live and work at their houses with my baby. I earned little, but I knew I had to save up to give my son a better life. Finally after saving around BDT 8,000, I started a business selling dried fish. That was when UNDP's training for entrepreneurs came in as a great help as I understood the workings of a small business from there.

Later I also started selling fabric as a side-business. With my knowledge from the training and experience of selling dried fish, I grew a keen business sense. I was able to buy a piece of land and build a house with my hard-earned money. I could support my son when he got married.

I am very happy with where I am right now. My son and I work hard on our business. Looking back, I can tell that my patience and perseverance helped me rise above the immense hardship I went through. I am glad that my son's family, especially my grandchildren, get to live a better life. I hope that all women and girls can access the means to improve their situation and I hope they find the strength within.

Project: Strengthening Women's Ability for Productive New Opportunities (SWAPNO)









## Recognising myself, becoming myself

I knew that my body was like my brother's – like a man's – and my mind was that of a woman, like my sister's. When I was just seven years old, I realised my identity could not be put into the binary notion of gender that our society follows. Our society was not ready to accept transgender people, and even now it is a fight.

Everywhere I went, I had to assert my identity. I had to leave my home as my family was facing difficulties because of this. Our society has always humiliated trans people and kept us from living a regular life. We have been deprived of basic human rights for ages. People have shamed us for the simple fact of being ourselves.

I am glad that the government has recognised transgender people as a third gender. It may not seem like much, but this recognition is helping us carve out our space in this society and the world. UNDP's Human Rights Programme has been a true advocate for trans rights, as their work has gone above and beyond simple awareness raising. They have joined our fight for equal rights and are affecting change at a macro level.

As for me, I started to find my own way with the help of the Social Welfare Society. Transgender people have long been pushed into begging and extortion due to the stigmatisation they face, but I chose to be a human rights activist to change the fate of my community. Today, my work with HRP and in the field of trans rights speaks for itself.

I am proud of my identity, I am proud to be a self-dependent trans woman, who is no less human than anyone else.











## Women unite for lasting change

Right after the devastating cyclone Aila, we had no home, no place to stay for eight months straight. All houses, roads and schools in our community were destroyed. We could not feed our children, let alone send them to school. We had to venture out to other areas to find work. When we finally returned and built new houses for ourselves, the difficulties remained.

That is when we formed a cooperative of eleven women, built a hatchery and started cultivating crabs. UNDP brought in trainers who conducted in-depth workshops on farming crabs, and we got started right away. The organisation also provided us with the initial support needed for the farming.

We calculated that if we farm crabs worth BDT 20,000, we can earn a profit of BDT 40,000. We shared the profit equally, and this venture changed our lives for the better. We can support our families and even afford to send our children to school.

After the suffering we have been through, this venture was the touchstone that made us self-reliant. Our success has inspired many other women, who are now coming forward to initiate or join such ventures to be financially independent.

Project: Enhancing adaptive capacities of coastal communities especially women









## Contentment in serving my village

To be of service to my community is perhaps the best part of working as a village police. I must say that I am very proud of my job and myself, because I have worked really hard to get here.

I used to pull rickshaws in the past, but I did not want that to be the end of the line for me. So, I learned how to read and write.

I found an advertisement for recruitment as village police. I applied and got selected. I then found out all the good they do in the community. Being part of the rural law enforcement organisation has enabled me to stop child marriages and carry out anti-drug drives, which has been essential in keeping our community stable and peaceful.

A UNDP project trained our local government on tackling these issues and strengthening our community, and to great success.

There haven't been any instances of child marriages in our village in many months, and in case anyone attempts such a thing, we are always ready and just a phone call away.

I believe that my work is for the benefit of the people of my village. I'm also providing for my family while ensuring peace, law and order in the locality.

I am more than happy to advise people whenever they are facing any problems. I am happy and content that my job serves a greater purpose.

Project: Efficient and Accountable Local Governance











## Forest for the people, people for the forest

From where I come from, the coast of Bangladesh near the Sundarbans, most of the people depend on the mangrove forest for their livelihood. But most of us were ignorant about how to care for the forest that provides for us. How do we protect the environment and co-exist with it responsibly?

There was a time when killing dolphins was widely accepted. We would kill the dolphins and use its fat to ease rheumatic pain. It was a tradition handed down over generations and we did not know if it had any scientific basis.

But when UNDP launched its conservation efforts in our area, we found out how crucial the seemingly useless dolphins were to the survival of the forest and us.

We realised that dolphins were indeed our friends and helped us by eating dead fish, preventing diseases among underwater life, increasing oxygen in the water and enriching the river ecosystem for all life to survive within and around it.

I now try to share this knowledge with everyone. Not everyone listens to us, but we still try our best, going door to door to raise awareness. We also rescue pigs, deer, monkeys, wildcats, and snakes and often take huge risks to save the animals.

This is called “social forestry”, which can play a huge role in protecting the many endangered animals and the biodiversity of the Sundarbans. It is a natural, non-intrusive way to save the forest through engaging the communities that live around it.

As the impacts of climate change increases - storms, cyclones, salinity and river erosion - it is essential to protect the forest.

We have gradually learned about these issues and now, we, as a community, are passionate about the cause.

Project: ‘Expanding the Protected Area System to Incorporate Aquatic Systems’.  
(Widely known as Dolphin project)







## Life is easier with electricity

Living by the river Meghna poses some difficult challenges, despite the river being an essential part of our livelihood. The area is plagued by natural disasters, and as a result, our lives and livelihoods are often disrupted.

I have been running a grocery business for 25 years. When I started the venture as a small store, I would use kerosene lamps or candles at night. Later I arranged for solar electricity but on stormy days, I had to use a candle. The arrangement was not convenient.

Recently, solar grids were set up by UNDP to bring a steady supply of power in our area. Life has become much easier since. We can keep our store open till late at night, which has been good for business.

Besides, electricity is more affordable now. Vehicles are running on it, furniture stores and workshops can work longer hours thanks to the steady supply. We can charge cellphones easily.

Quality of life has improved for people of all ages. The children can study at night. We feel more comfortable praying at the mosque as fans have been installed. Some of the lights are kept on after it gets dark, which makes us feel safer.

Besides my grocery business, I am also a farmer. Agriculture is now easier. The positive effects of electricity being easily available are now obvious in my area - there is more progress and more hopes for the future!

Project: Development of Sustainable Renewable Energy Power Generation (SREPGen)









## Justice made accessible and affordable

Since I was a child, I saw my family struggling with poverty. Our family was a fishing family, my ancestors did it, so did my husband. After our marriage, we carried on the heritage.

We took money from a local loan shark, bought a boat and fishing nets. We worked hard and things were starting to look up. But then the money-lender started pressurising us to repay the loan even though the due date was much later.

It was impossible to reason with him. When my mother tried to mediate the argument, he got violent. He pushed her to the ground and she had to be hospitalised for the injuries.

I filed a lawsuit and it went to the district court. But the proceedings were very slow and the travel to and from the district headquarters was fast becoming unaffordable financially and physically for me.

Luckily, a village court was set up around that time in our area. The case was transferred there. I was stunned by the promptness with which the court delivered justice. In just three hearings, minutes away from my home, the matter was resolved. The medical bills of my mother were compensated and the conflict resolved peacefully. Accessing justice is no longer a never-ending hurdle, thanks to UNDP's efforts in setting up fair and affordable village courts.

Finally receiving a ruling on that case was a happy moment for me. My business survived and now I can concentrate on it fully, with no added stress of a legal dispute.









## Business is better when there's an ice factory around

My business of supplying fish is going well now, but the start was rather bumpy. We got into the business since me and my husband had been struggling for years, and we thought starting the business would improve our living conditions. My husband's initially started, but later I joined in to help as well.

We started buying catch from local fishermen and selling them out to the wholesalers on the mainland. However, it was difficult to maintain a steady and quality supply since we did not have steady supply of ice to keep the fish fresh.

The construction of the ice factory could not have happened at a better time. UNDP's work behind the factory has benefitted many businesspersons in the area.

The ice factory has erased many of our problems to a large extent. The ice is affordable, and it adds little extra cost to our business. Using our profits, we bought a piece of land and built our own house along with a pond. We can now also afford to send our children to school.

All my debts have been repaid, and we have been running the business successfully for fifteen years.

I became more and more involved with the venture, and I believe women are perfectly capable of running businesses, or any other task they set their mind on.

Project: Development of Sustainable Renewable Energy Power Generation (SREPGen)













## Equality at home and life

My father works as a mason and my mother is a tailor. I help out my mother at her job by sewing buttons on the dresses and sometimes ironing the clothes. Sometimes I find her hard at work after returning from school, so I try to reduce her workload by taking on household chores. I do the cooking and I take care of my little sister, whom I love a lot.

I believe this work isn't gendered at all. In fact, knowing household chores is an essential life skill for all. My friends and I have attended a programme by UNDP called Brave Men at school. It broke down the issue of gender for us and taught us the value of equality in every sphere of life.

My family also holds these values close. We have a close bond and have fun together. The four of us often go to the beach. Playing with seawater is a refreshing and fun activity for us, although my favourite sport is football. I really enjoy playing football and bridge with my friends.

When I grow up, I want to be a police officer. So, I study hard to achieve my goal. I want to help my family and work for my community, keeping them safe while also teaching the value of equality.

Project: Human Rights Programme







## Opening up my mind

While attending university may seem like a perfectly achievable goal to many young people in the country, it wasn't so easy for me. I was dependent on the Braille method for most of my primary education years and much of the educational content available was still inaccessible for me.

Once audiobooks were introduced as a means of learning, I found it much more comfortable. I am glad a2i took the initiative to make education more inclusive, as it has helped me greatly. For me, listening to audiobooks is as refreshing as listening to music.

I had to persevere to get myself into university. I had to work hard and study hard to overcome the difficult hand that life has dealt me. But now, I am loving my time at university. I have adjusted well. The environment suits me.

I am getting to know so many people from diverse backgrounds and with varied interests. I am growing as a person.

Who cares if my eyes don't work perfectly when my mind is opening up and learning more every day?

I want to be a professor of English after graduating. Another option is to become a BCS Cadre, but we'll see what happens. For now, I am working towards my goals with the same perseverance that I have shown in my life so far.

Graduating is my first priority right now, and after that, let's hope I fulfil all my dreams.





## One call to alter the course of life

One morning, I found my house decorated for a wedding I had not agreed to. I had finished seventh grade, and my father had arranged for my marriage to an autorickshaw driver who is twice my age.

My family made this decision as they had been burdened with financial troubles for long and the harassment from eve teasers that I faced when I went outside. I have seen similar fates of my other friends and most of them suffered a lot after their marriage.

There was no way that I could imagine that my future will end at getting married to a much older, unknown man – there must be more that I can do.

I called the 333 helpline and informed them of my predicament. Within a few minutes the local representative, a member of our Union Parishad, contacted to learn more about the marriage. He, along with the Upazila Nirbahi Officer, arrived at our house to stop the marriage soon afterwards.

This one small intervention changed the course of my life. I appeared at the JSC exam that year and passed. I can now make plans for my future without worrying about forced marriage.

I now dream of being a police officer in the future and dedicating myself to removing child marriage from society entirely.

This 333 service has been very effective for this cause. As a police officer, I want to work on bringing harassers and rapists to book, and create a much more equitable, safe society for girls and women like myself.

Project: a2i











## Ease of business, ease of life

Success is the fruit of hard work - trust me, I learned this from experience. Right now, I would call myself a successful businessperson, and I hope to continue this streak and expand my business.

Apart from hard work, it helps to have mechanisms that make the process of running a business easier. I have relied on agent banking for my work many times. I have taken out loans, I have been paying utility bills using agent banking services for both my business and household.

I can pay the bills from a mobile app. For everything else, I can just go to the agent and ask for their service. These services were made possible by a2i's continued efforts and I must say, it has greatly reduced the stress of doing business.

My family was too poor to afford education for me when I was a child. When I initially decided on my business, I went door to door for loans, but rarely got help. But when agent banking was introduced, my problems could be solved easily - I got a loan without much hassle. Although it was a small amount, it had a big impact.

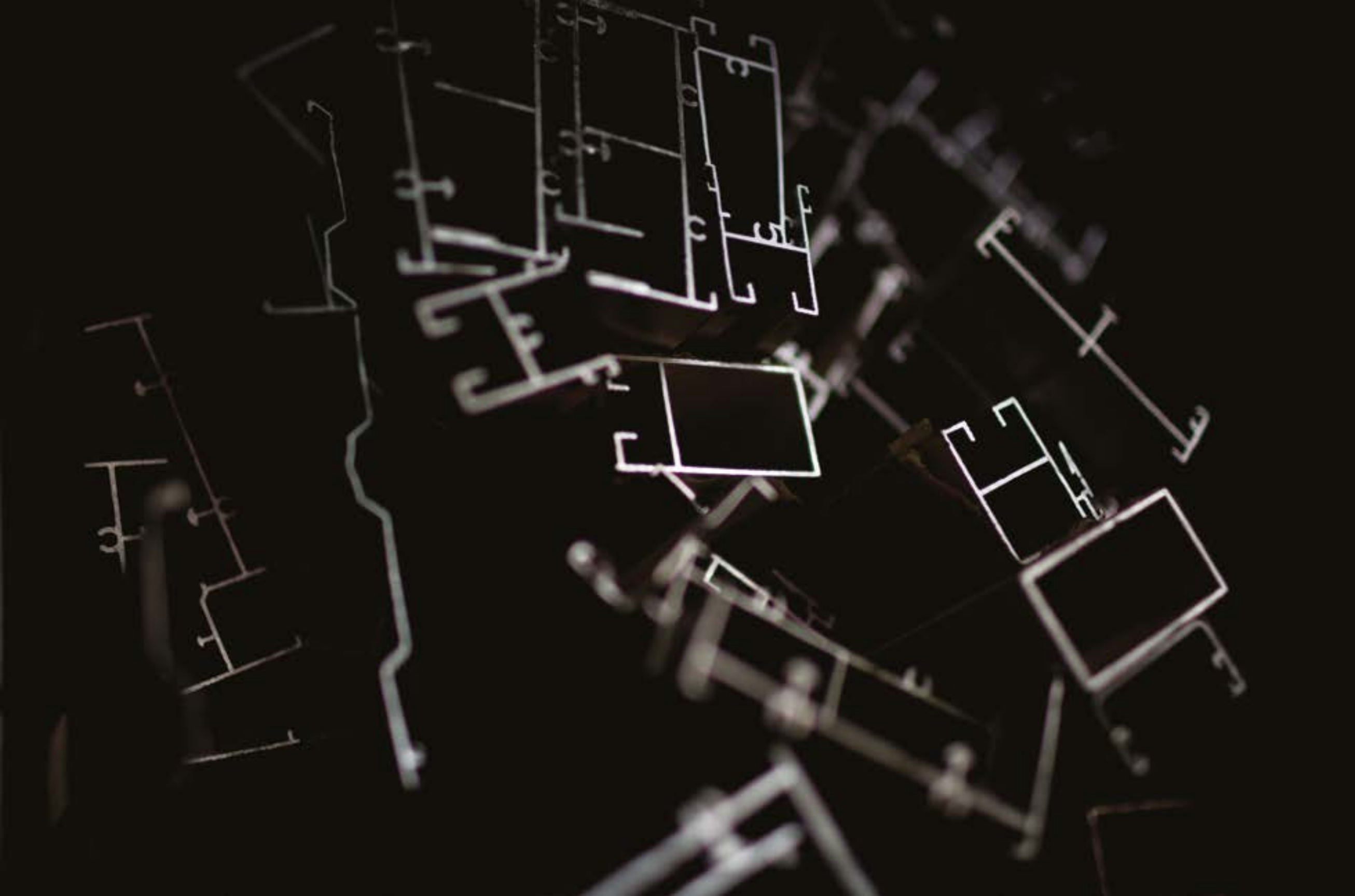
It changed my family's life for the better. We are financially comfortable, and my two daughters are receiving education. All I want in life is to see them succeed.

Project: a2i













## Rising from the ashes

I was married off at the young age of 12. I was just a child then, yet my days and nights were filled with mental and physical abuse because my poor father could not afford to pay dowry. On top of that, I found out after marriage that my husband already had a family with a wife and children.

It was humiliating and painful, but I did not know a way out. I gave birth to three daughters, and then my husband left me. I had to go through a lot of trouble to raise my girls, as their father did not provide any support. Although it resulted in hardship, his departure was the change I needed to take matters into my own hands.

With a business grant from UNDP, I started a small business selling betel nuts. It might not be much, but it helped me provide for my family. I am earning enough money to overcome my financial troubles. All of this is to educate my girls, so that they can have a better life and brighter future. I hope the same for all little girls. I hope no one has their future snatched away by child marriage.

Program Head: Poverty

Topic: Business Grant- A tool of Women empowerment and prevention of violence.









## Small innovations leave a large impact

The women in my community are strong and hardworking. The fact that we used to carry large containers of water for the whole family and our domestic animals from a faraway river is a testament of our strength, but this comes at the cost of valuable time and energy. Carrying such loads everyday was a huge physical burden and took up large chunks out of our days.

It seemed like an unsolvable problem, but all it took to ease our burden was a small innovation known as rainwater harvesting. We set a water tank for this purpose with help from IBFCR, and the tank has been very helpful whenever we quickly need some water.

I could also invest in cows with the project's help, and the animals are near and dear to me. I take care of them, and they help me earn a livelihood for my family.

My worries over sourcing nutrition for my children have been eased to a great extent. We can afford three meals a day now.

Of course, there is a long way to go in terms of ensuring equal opportunities and fair treatment of indigenous people, but at least this is a small step towards improving our lives, and for that I am happy.

Project: IBFCR  
Head: Crisis Prevention and Increased resilience











## Access to water changes lives

My life has been anything but easy. I grew up in a poverty-stricken household. After marriage, my husband died and I was left with a son to fend for myself. My only solace was my mother's presence.

We raised my son together, but he left me after growing older to live in a different place. Since then, I have been taking care of elderly mother.

Despite life's hardships, I never gave up on bettering our situation. I received some monetary help and bought a cow. Now I sell the cow's milk, which has eased our financial problems to a great extent.

In the past, sourcing drinking water was a huge problem. We had to travel through hilly terrains to faraway places just to get some freshwater. We'd shower every few days since water was scarce.

Collecting water took up a significant amount of time and energy that we could've spent on earning a livelihood or doing housework.

Today, we have a better system of sourcing freshwater. The UNDP project in our area has installed mechanisms that brings water closer to us. We don't have to hike far, water is accessible.

This has made a huge difference in the lives of the women in CHT -- we have more time for family and work. Now, mere survival is not the foremost priority for my community, rather we are focused on improving our living conditions.

Program Head: Environment  
Project: SID-CHT













