

NOBO JATRA - NEW BEGINNING

USAID's Development Food Security Activity



Success Story

**Building resilience using
an integrated approach in
south west Bangladesh**

Layering interventions in gender, WASH, livelihoods and disaster risk reduction to improve resilience of extreme poor households



For the last 2 years, Rina and Gour have been involved with Nobo Jatra through multiple channels. Since her pregnancy with Kriti, Rina has been receiving a monthly Conditional Cash Transfer of \$27 per month – directly to her mobile phone via an e wallet. The couple use this cash to purchase nutritious food on a weekly basis and also manage to save \$5 dollars a month for emergencies – mostly related to seeking health services for Diya and Kriti. Both Rina and Gour attend monthly courtyard sessions where they learn about exclusive breastfeeding, how to cook complementary foods and understand essential WASH behaviors such as hand washing and baby wash. The couple have also received a latrine through Nobo Jatra – a major milestone, given that they had no latrine previously and had to walk long distances to use community latrines or had to resort to open defecation.

Further complementing the cash transfers, Rina, Gour and even her mother in law also receive weekly voice messages on each of their mobile phones – with each message tailored to Rina’s gestation cycle when she was pregnant and now to Kriti’s age. The last message, recalls Gour, was related to helping Kriti balance as she learns to

Rina and Gour Mondol have recently graduated from a 9 month male engagement module focused on shared decision making, fair division of domestic and child care tasks and improving supportive relationships within families. Gour, a daily wage worker at local farms, is especially delighted to have completed the training, provided by World Vision’s Nobo Jatra project.

‘Six months ago, I would go to work in the morning, come home at night, eat and go to sleep. It didn’t occur to me to do anything beyond this. Now, if I tell you all the things I do – you won’t believe me. Its better if you ask Rina.’

Gour Mondal, Nobo Jatra participant

Rina, also a participant in Nobo Jatra’s 15 month nutrition safety net Conditional Cash Transfers, acknowledges the positive changes in the household and in her relationship with Gour.

‘Before work in the morning, Gour plays with our children, Diya (7) and Kriti (13 months). The children love interacting with their father. While I do the cooking, Gour gets the children ready and we sit and eat breakfast together as a family before he leaves. Cleaning the toilet is another chore he does now – I still can’t believe some of the changes.’

Rina Mondol, Nobo Jatra participant



walk and to continue feeding her at regular intervals throughout the day.

Systematically building resilience for families like Rina and Gour is the key to achieving long terms health and nutrition outcomes – especially for future generations like Kriti and Diya. Till the recent past, the family subsisted on approximately \$1.80 per day and were entirely reliant on Gour getting daily work as and when he could. Now, Rina is slowly able to contribute to the household



finances through the income she is beginning to generate through tailoring – a market driven skill that allows her to earn equitable wages. Rina initially completed literacy training for 6 months, based on which she also undertook 4 days of intense training on tailoring – both sets of trainings provided by Nobo Jatra. Rina is now stitching all the clothes for the household and is starting to take orders from neighbors.

'I'm just starting out – on average I make about \$12 a month – but that will go up the more practice I get. I also make all my children's clothes – that's a saving in itself.'
Rina Mondol, Nobo Jatra participant

The relief and harmony between Rina and Gour is palpable. Slowly, the family are improving their nutrition, health and importantly, their resilience – Rina recalls how often Diya had diarrhea as a baby whilst Kriti, fortunately has enjoyed better health. Both Rina and Gour attribute this to having the means to purchase adequate food, access health care through Growth Monitoring Promotion and immunizations at the local community clinic – and mostly, to just having access to more information related to caring for Kriti.

'We live in an area that has been afflicted by so many cyclones and tidal surges. But now, we feel more confident to overcome these even. We have a household disaster plan – we know that we have to save small amounts of money, where the nearest cyclone shelter is and how to get there quickly, what kinds of dry food to prepare and store and to follow the weather updates on our phone and the radio.'
Gour Mondol, Nobo Jatra participant

Step by step, Rina and Gour are building their resilience capacities and recognize that in order to successfully do so, there are many pieces of the





About ‘Nobo Jatra-new beginning’

‘Nobo Jatra-New Beginning’ is a five year USAID Food for Peace Title II Development Food Security Activity that seeks to improve gender equitable food security, nutrition and resilience in southwest Bangladesh. World Vision Bangladesh, together with the World Food Programme and Winrock International and 3 local partner NGOs, implement the project, integrating interventions in Maternal Child Health and Nutrition, Water Sanitation and Hygiene, agriculture and alternative livelihoods, Disaster Risk Reduction, good governance and social accountability and gender to achieve its objectives. Nobo Jatra is implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR) of the Government of Bangladesh in four upazilas under two districts – Dacope and Koyra upazilas in Khulna and Shyamnagar and Kaliganj upazilas in Satkhira – and it aims to reach 856,116 direct beneficiaries.