

Case Story for ActionAid Bangladesh

Rexona Khatun

Sonakhali Self-Reliant Women's Group
Shyamnagar Upazila

Rexona's Fight Against Adversity

With her prior knowledge gained from participating in Women-Led Emergency Response (WLER) training and group activities, Rexona was able to support her community during Cyclone Remal. As soon as she learned that a cyclone was approaching her area, Rexona and members of Sonakhali Self-Reliant Women's Group quickly alerted the villagers and initiated immediate preparedness measures for saving their lives and properties from the upcoming storm. She also drew the attention of the people to necessary precautions for the protection of livestock.

Rexona distributed emergency supplies and helped the vulnerable members of the community, especially elderly, children, and disabled people, to reach the nearest cyclone shelters. At the cyclone centre, she provided dry food and drinking water to the people who were taking shelter and paid special attention to the needs of women and children during their stay at the cyclone shelter.

Rexona was there for the affected individuals even right after the cyclone, as she had actively advocated for the rehabilitation of the sufferers of Cyclone Remal.

“When the threat of Cyclone Remal loomed over us, I knew that unity within the community was our greatest strength. Sharing knowledge and resources would help us save our lives and collectively overcome any disaster that comes our way”

After joining the Sonakhali Self-Reliant Women's Group, Rexona learned about various services available at different public and private organisations for women like her. For instance, on the advice of the agriculture office regarding which variety of paddy is suitable for saltwater, she saw a bumper crop in the paddy field next to her house.

Moreover, Rexona's fish farming activity in the enclosure became successful with the support of the fisheries department. She received timely support on all aspects of fish farming—from recommendation of suitable carps in saline water to feeds and medicines at proper doses for better growth.

With training on gender-based violence from ActionAid Bangladesh, Rexona was motivated to work for change in her community to address violence. She organised

meetings among the wives and mothers-in-law to share an understanding of how peace and harmony are necessary for the betterment of their families. She also conducted discussions with the husbands regarding the family violence so as to make them understand the benefits of peaceful living. She was able to reduce violence-against-women incidents in her village through her initiative.

Previously unaware of climate-resilient cultivation techniques, Rexona has started growing a wide variety of vegetables and fruits in her yard with the knowledge she acquired from ActionAid Bangladesh training. Not only does this provide nourishment for her family, but it also allows her to make money from selling the produce. Her current financial stability enables her to save money through the deposit scheme initiated by the women's group.