

SAMAR JODHA'S FEEDBACK

This is a quick note on the work supported by Dubai donours and Emirates for the Dhaka Project. I had the opportunity to be in Dhaka in 2006 and since then I have been hearing through various media sources about the progress and growth of the Dhaka project. When I was there in 2006, I could really



see Maria and her inexperienced team struggling and fighting with the system in trying to get the project to take off. She had so many plans for the children education with much more focus on capacity building in a system so alien to her. And this time freshly returned from the project, I am so glad to tell you that place has been transformed with her vision and hard work. This has been made possible with some serious teamwork and support system from so many crew members, individuals including staff from Emirates in Dubai and Dhaka.

I have experience of working for over 18 years in issues related to sustainable development with CSR programs (other than doing commercial photography including shoots for Al Maha, Emirates 1st class/Business class lounges among others). And working for Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, BBC World Service Trust in Africa/Asia and number of grass root level NGOs, one has realized how much of a challenge it is to work as an individual in some of the most difficult environment.

I personally think Maria's commitment towards the larger cause out there reflects her integrity and determination towards the changes we all dream of. And it has given each individual at the Dhaka project the hope and purpose for a brighter future.

For past 15 years I have been running photography workshops with children from low income & productivity families in developing countries. The purpose of these workshops are to break the tough daily cycle of survival and make



them have a different week, where they do something which brings out the creativity which each individual possess. Its about aspiration and empowerment for these children. Last week I had the opportunity to teach and learn from the 23 children from the Dhaka Project.

Each child got a camera and after his/her orientation they were out there making their first photographs. Most of these children have not even had them self photographed ever and they did the most amazing images with such sensitivity and imagination. This

followed by them making prints and finally getting certificate and awards for their efforts.

The next stage of their work will be becoming an



exhibition for a fund raising by selling individual large format framed prints.

Samar Jodha