

A school for mothers

Joint initiative of MJF, Women Without Borders helping women become agents of positive change

TAHIRA SHAMSI UTSA

"I did not know of ways to access my basic civil rights like having a national identity card or filing for a birth certificate," said Rani Akter, a homemaker and mother of three currently living in the capital's Mohammadpur.

The 38-year-old had to rely on her husband not just for economic support but for very basic official work as she had always lived in an isolated and controlled environment in her home.

However, Rani transformed into a well-aware mother as soon as she started going to MotherSchools, a joint initiative of Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) and Women



Over 900 mothers have graduated from the school so far. However, the initiative looks to reach more families, especially the marginalised ones, to make a significant positive change in the long run. PHOTO: COLLECTED

The core of the project resides in its innovative treatments, which focus on helping moms who are most at risk of poverty, unemployment, and social exclusion.

LAURA KROPIUNIGG
WwB executive director

Without Borders (WwB), a Vienna-based international advocacy and research organisation for women, that started its journey in 2019.

"The school informed me of my rights and also guided me about parenting," said Rani, who

was informed of the initiative by another mother in her area.

Since its inception, the project has worked to educate mothers from different social backgrounds and nurture them into becoming agents of positive change in the society.

Under this initiative, trainers of Community Participation and Development (CPD) conduct sessions on weekends (Fridays and Saturdays) from 3:00pm to 6:00pm in 25 wards of both Dhaka north and south city corporations.

The course modules comprise of awareness-related lectures and activities on child development, empowerment, openness,

psychological security, identities, motherhood, self-esteem, emotional competency, security, psycho-social development, fostering healthy parent-child relations, spotting early warning signs of radicalisation and ways of preventing it.

Each student must attend 10 sessions over the course of five months, followed by an assessment test on the eleventh visit, in order to graduate.

Most parents, especially those from marginalised backgrounds, are unaware of the importance of ensuring a safe and rich environment when raising a "I

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