

MotherSchools Bangladesh 2024



WwB

Parenting for Peace in Bangladesh

Project Partner: Manusher Jonno Foundation

This project has been made possible through the generous support of the L'Oréal Fund for Women.

ENDING VIOLENCE AND EXTREMISM IN VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES THROUGH WOMEN ROLE MODELS.

1

Partnership

5

Groups

110

Role Models Trained

One iteration of the MotherSchools Bangladesh Parenting for Peace programme was implemented by Women without Borders and its local partner Manusher Jonno Foundation in 2024. The project was made possible through the generous support of the L'Oréal Fund for Women.

Mobilisation & Training



19
Trainers

WwB trained 19 MotherSchools trainers during a two-day Training of the Trainer workshop.

Mentoring



50
Calls

WwB held 50 mentoring and monitoring calls with its local implementing partner and MotherSchools Trainers.

Workshops



50
Workshops

WwB organised 50 workshops as part of the MotherSchools programme, including weekly sessions and trainings.

M&E



340
M&E
documents

WwB conducted 220 questionnaires, 20 interviews, and collected 100 reports.

Graduation & Dissemination



1
Ceremony

WwB and Manusher Jonno Foundation jointly organised one final Graduation ceremony to mark the culmination of the project.

The Project | Executive Summary

Problem Statement. Mothers are uniquely positioned to serve as first responders in their homes and communities. Yet current security approaches do not capitalise on this fact; some two billion mothers as potential peacekeepers continue to be overlooked.

The Goal. The MotherSchools: Parenting for Peace programme aims to end violence and extremism by training mothers as role models to act in vulnerable homes and neighbourhoods before extremism is normalised, and to prevent cycles of violence from being adopted by the next generation.

The MS Theory of Change. If we recognise mothers' unique potential and equip them with the competence and confidence to translate their potential into action, then they will become the first line of defence against violence and extremism in at-risk communities.

The Partner. WwB partnered with Manusher Jonno Foundation in Dhaka, Bangladesh as the Local Implementing Partner (LIP). LIPs are local non-profit organisations who have demonstrated strong project management, an understanding of the challenges on the ground, and the capacity and capability to partner with WwB to deliver and scale the MotherSchools programme locally.

The Project. Applying the WwB 'MotherSchools' Model to build networks of Role Models. Key Activities include:

- Mentorship: Continuous knowledge transfer and mentorship to LIP
- Mobilisation: Identify leadership and trainer potential across all countries
- Training: Train LIPs, MotherSchools Role Models, and Trainers
- Monitoring: Monitor MotherSchools roll-out on a weekly basis across all countries
- Assessment: Conduct Entry and Exit Questionnaires with MotherSchools Role Models
- Evaluation: Review all monitoring and assessment data to furnish an impact report
- Dissemination: Organise Graduation Ceremony to provide a public forum to project actors

The Output. Trained 110 mothers over 1 year across 5 thanas in Dhaka: Mirpur, Mohammadpur, Adabor, Hazaribagh, and Shahbagh; weekly LIP calls for duration of project; 1 virtual kick-off workshop (1 day); 19 trainers trained (1 train-the-trainer workshop, 2 days); 50 workshops held (5 groups); 110 MotherSchools Role Models trained (40 hrs. each); 220 Entry and Exit Questionnaires collected, 20 Entry and Exit Interviews conducted, 50 monitoring calls held, 100 monitoring reports received; 1 Graduation Ceremony; 1 Project Impact Report.

Measuring Impact. Project impact is evaluated following a mixed-methods approach employing quantitative (Questionnaires) and qualitative (Interviews, Monitoring Reports) assessment tools. The different methods are triangulated and bring in various perspectives: those of the participants, the Notetakers, and the Teachers.

Impact Model. The project's impact is presented using the Social Reporting Standard's Input Output Outcome Impact Model IOOI-Impact Model.¹ The effects that are recorded by the Impact Model are changes in the target group, in their living environment, or in society. The effect on society is referred to as *Impact* and the effect on the target groups is referred to as *Outcome*.

The Impact | Outcome Level: Confidence, Competence in Parenting, Competence in PVE

By the end of MotherSchools, Participants will have learned to find their own value and potential, and they will have acquired the confidence to speak out in their families and communities. They will begin reflecting on their previous parenting approaches and expand their pedagogical competencies, such as mutual understanding and trust-building with their children. Through the MotherSchools, Participants will develop a sound understanding of the developmental stages of adolescence and will feel ready to embrace their newfound role in security, better understanding the importance of early prevention and their role in it. Participants will be able to initiate conversations without fear, know where to turn if concerning developments arise, and feel confident to seek help when necessary.

The Impact | Outcome Level: Applying the Knowledge, Breaking the Silence, & Leadership

Following the MotherSchools, Participants will apply new parenting methods to bring them closer to their children. They will be successful in encouraging their husbands to participate in family life more, fostering an atmosphere of mutual respect and open communication. Owing to the group process, the graduates will feel at greater ease when speaking about taboo topics in the family and community, and they will be ready to solve problems together. Participants will feel confident in their own leadership potential and in disseminating their parenting skills within their communities, exhibit a greater degree of self-reflection, and aspire to lead by example.

The Impact | Outcome Level: Trust, Norms, & Networks

Conversations in a safe space will generate awareness around how a supportive environment is conducive to trust building, learning, and personal development overall. Graduates will demonstrate heightened confidence and awareness in dealing with different norms and values, and they will be more open about their personal views. Participants will have seen the strength that can be formed when groups of women come together, and they will intend to continue such initiatives post-graduation. They will value mutual support and wish to integrate it into their daily lives.

¹ Source: www.social-reporting-standard.de

The Project | Participant Motivations

*Participant motivations to join the MotherSchools & to safeguard youths at risk
(Data from Interviews and Monitoring Reports)*



“We need this school because the environment within our [community] is not so good. For an example, our children does not listen to us. Sometimes we see our children does not listen to us just because of our behaviour. Sometimes we cannot provide them money as they want and sometimes the internal societal environment. So if I receive the training then I will be able to teach my neighbours, I can train them as well. That's why I decided to join the MotherSchools.”
(240131 BD MSP EnDD 1, Paragraph 17)

“If we learn something from [these types of groups] we can use it to help others. If there is a backup support it helps to grow mental strength.”
(240202 BD MSP EnDD 1, Paragraph 253 - 255)

“[I decided to participate in MotherSchools] for my children, for my children security [...], because the community where I live is not a safe and secure area. That's why I join the MotherSchools. And also for the betterment of my children, I join this school.”
(240131 BD MSP EnDD 3, Paragraph 21)

“I heard them once talking about drugs and drug addiction. My husband is also a drug addict, that's why I thought to [sign up to MotherSchools] in thought of getting any suggestions or other supports.”
(240206 BD MSP EnBA 2, Paragraph 44)

“In our society and communities, mothers are very afraid, their child are [...] involving the bad companies, involve the terrorism. They are very afraid about this.”
(240206 BD MSP EnBA 1, Paragraph 149 - 151)

“In our community, drugs issue is the main problem. I have a young son and I always think that if I let him go outside the house he can be the part of those drug dealer. [...] And I have a girl child also, though our community is full of dangerous people. Girls are not also safe here. All those things make me worried about my children's future life.”
(240131 BD MSP EnDD 3, Paragraph 178)

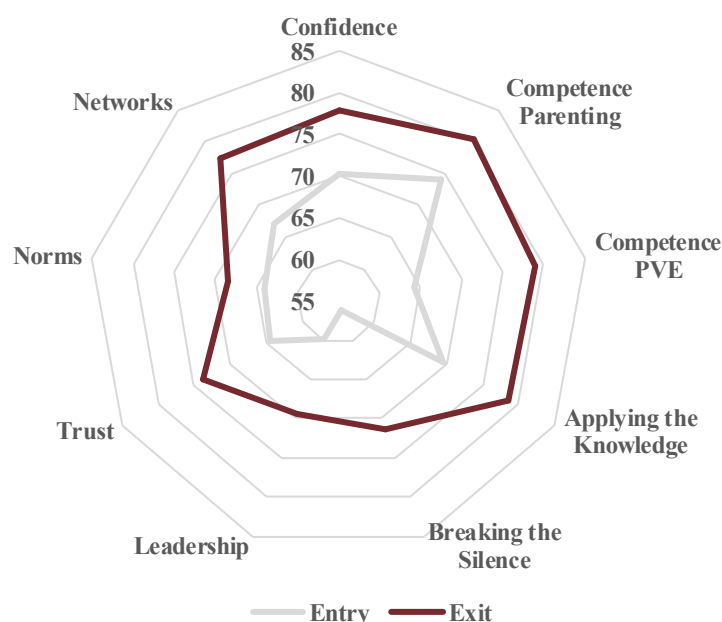
“I want to know about my teenage girl's mental health and how can I understand all the situations related with her. And what she does outside the house.”
(240207 BD MSP EnBA 1, Paragraph 97)

“In early age girls run out from home and get married, young boys are involving with different bad gangs and they start to do crime like pick-pocketing and taking drugs.”
(240207 BD MSP EnBA 1, Paragraph 268)

The Project | Executive Summary: Indices development

Overview of the results

Development of indices over time



The spider diagram shows the nine Impact Dimensions before and after the MotherSchools according to the Entry and Exit Questionnaires filled in by Participants. The index represents values between 0 and 100, with 100 being the highest possible value and 0 being the lowest possible value.

“My initial experience was that, after entering the MotherSchools, [...] at first the mothers didn’t understand, but by the end, they did. And since these mothers are very young, as they marry at a very young age, they had no idea about many of our points due to getting married so early. No one had ever told them about these things or taught them anything. So, for some of them, certain topics were entirely new. For example, child security and building self-confidence—these were new concepts for them. But from the third session, they started showing us so much confidence that we noticed a strong interest in the MotherSchools. After that, they became very keen on every lesson from the school.”
(240522 BD MSN ExDD 2, Paragraph 29)

“After the class, actually they do know how to raise up their children properly, how to listen to their children, how to manage their children that their children don’t engage with the extremist activities or extremist act and how to make a network with their neighbours, with their friend and also how to involve their husband with all of her work [...]. The MotherSchools do a great job to make those women confident, make this women courageous.”
(240524 BD MST ExBA 1, Paragraph 42)

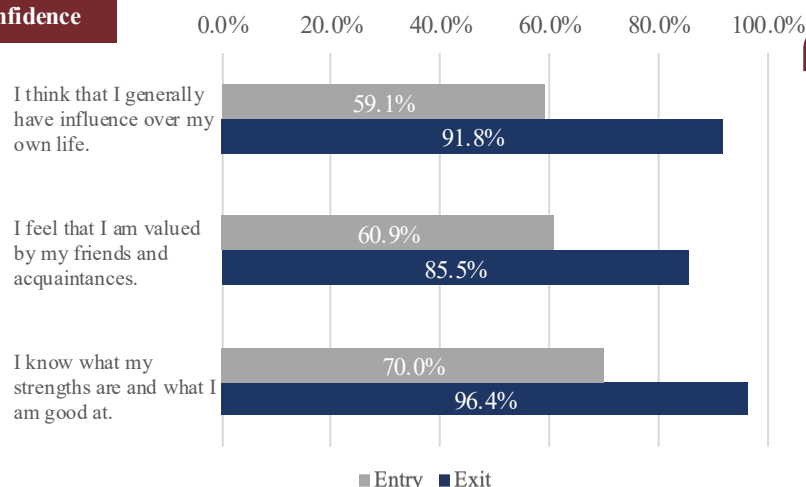
“Gradually we saw the family members of the mothers or their sisters or their sister-in-law [...]. They were very interested to know the topic, because the mothers went to the home and they discussed the topics [from MotherSchools] with their families.”
(240522 BD MST ExDD 1, Paragraph 26)



The Project | Outcome: Knowledge Level

Top 3 Indicators for the Knowledge Level outcomes: Confidence, Competence in Parenting, Competence in PVE
(Graph data: Entry and Exit Questionnaires; Quotes: Interviews and Monitoring Reports)

Confidence

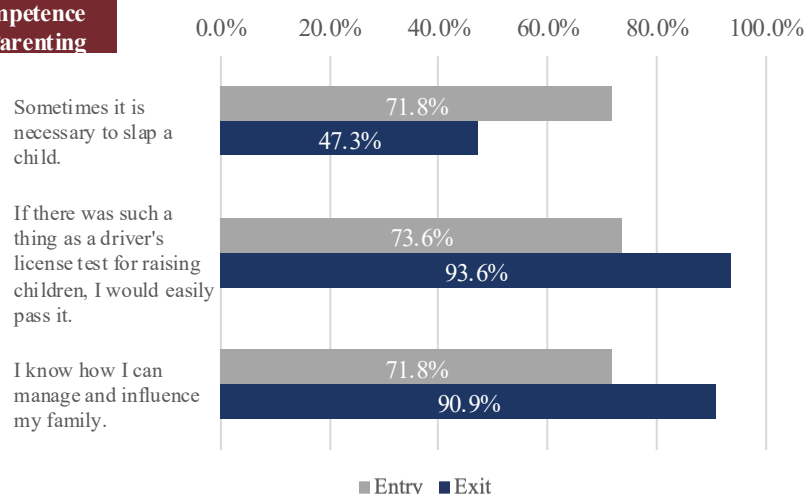


“There are so many changes [after MotherSchools]. Earlier I was afraid of speaking, but [now] I am not. My children and my relatives listen to me and I know how to speak.”
(240521 BD MSP ExBA 1, Paragraph 263)

“I enjoyed the power of speaking the most. [...] Where I used to face obstacles or couldn't speak, through this class I have gained this power. I mean, I have understood my own strength.”
(240522 BD MSP ExBA 1, Paragraph 210)

“Earlier I was hesitant to talk to others or I had not that courage in me. Now I have the courage, I don't have any fear right now, so now I can talk to anyone in front of any stranger. I have learnt it from MotherSchools and thus I became more courageous.”
(240523 BD MSP ExBA 1, Paragraph 180)

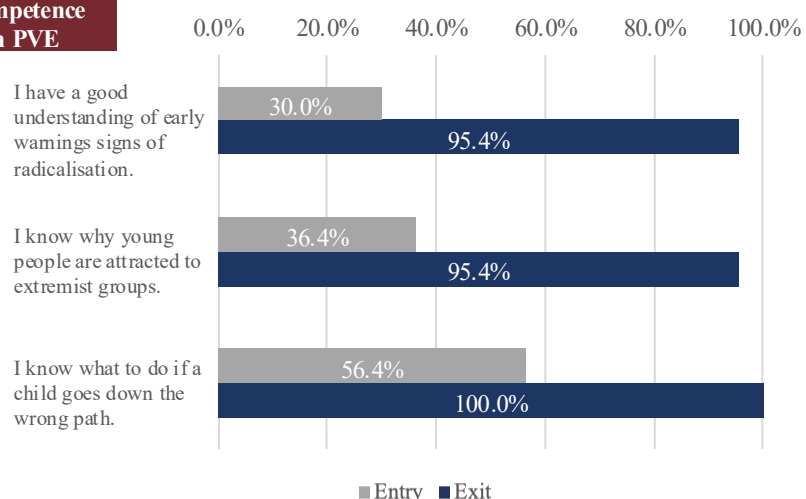
Competence in Parenting



“There are children around us, around 13-14 years old, who sometimes get scolded or even beaten. I used to be afraid to address these issues, but now I can. I've learned that instead of scolding or hitting them, we need to guide them with understanding and love. If we use harsh methods, the children might become even more stubborn, but with love and care, they improve. If we hit them today, tomorrow they'll think, 'they'll hit me anyway, nothing will change'. But if we show them love, they tend to listen and follow the right path.”
(240523 BD MSP ExDD 1, Paragraph 190)

“Before we give priority to our children's demand, but we do not understand which is good or bad for them, but now we try to listen to our kid and try to understand their mind. [...] When we start to listen to them, [they] share everything with us and now we are more aware about them. Now my kids share everything with me, even what they are doing in their school life they told me willingly, which did not happen before.”
(240525 BD MSP ExBA 1, Paragraph 152)

Competence in PVE



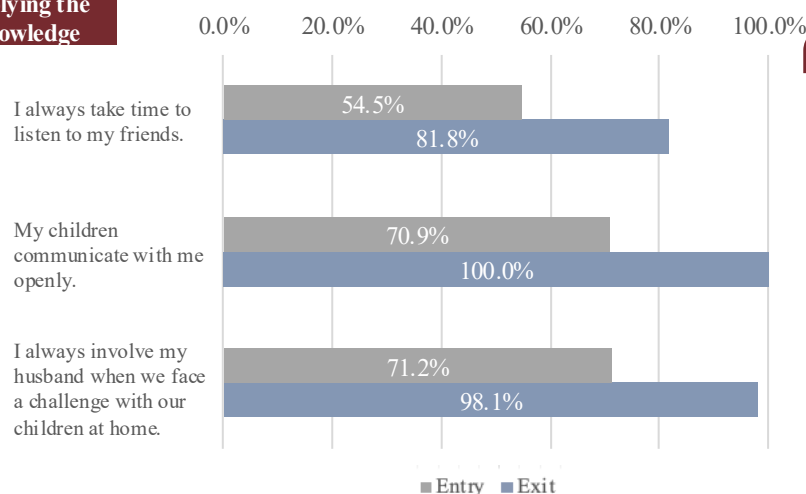
“Before going MotherSchools we do not have any idea or do not have any knowledge to how could we save our kids from different kind of danger, and we did not give any importance to our children. Now we notice our children's problem and we are more conscious about them. Now we have confidence in our mind that we are good enough [with] knowledge to do something better for our family.”
(240525 BD MSP ExBA 1, Paragraph 140)

“At the end of the session all the mothers or most of the mothers agreed with us that they learned about the steps of radicalisation and violence. They didn't know about those terms before. So, they will start learning more about those topics and will improve their relationship with their children.”
(24 BD MS MonN G4 S6, Monitoring Call)

The Project | Outcome: Action Level

Top 3 Indicators for the Action Level outcomes: Applying the Knowledge, Breaking the Silence, Leadership
 (Graph data: Entry and Exit Questionnaires; Quotes: Interviews and Monitoring Reports)

Applying the Knowledge

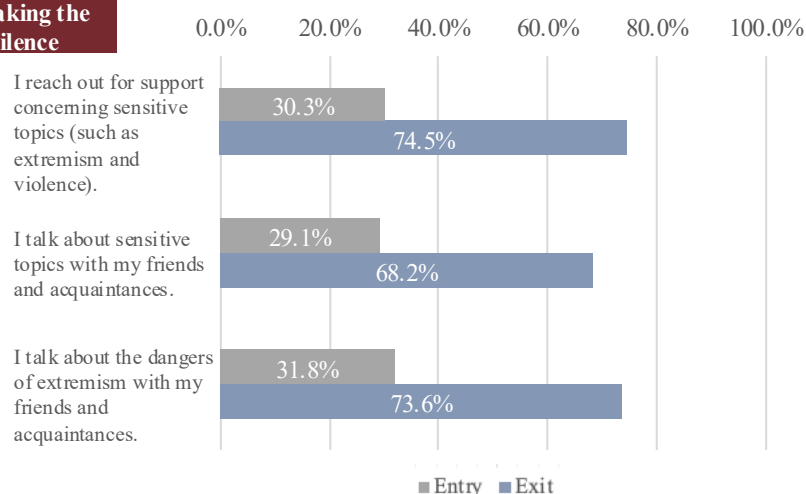


“After joining the MotherSchools I am able to make my husband understand how can we maintain our family [and] children in a better away. Previously we do not have knowledge about all those things and we do not have better understand[ing]. My husband listens to me now and he is also happy to hear about MotherSchools and get interest about my learning and now we together trying to maintain our family and children.”
 (240525 BD MSP ExBA 1, Paragraph 269)

“Now, I listen to [my children], give them time, make decisions based on their words, and value what they have to say.”
 (240522 BD MSP ExBA 1, Paragraph 318)

“Now I am more confident and courageous than before. With my knowledge and courage, now I feel confident to talk about [extremism] inside my house and with my husband also.”
 (240523 BD MSP ExBA 1, Paragraph 330)

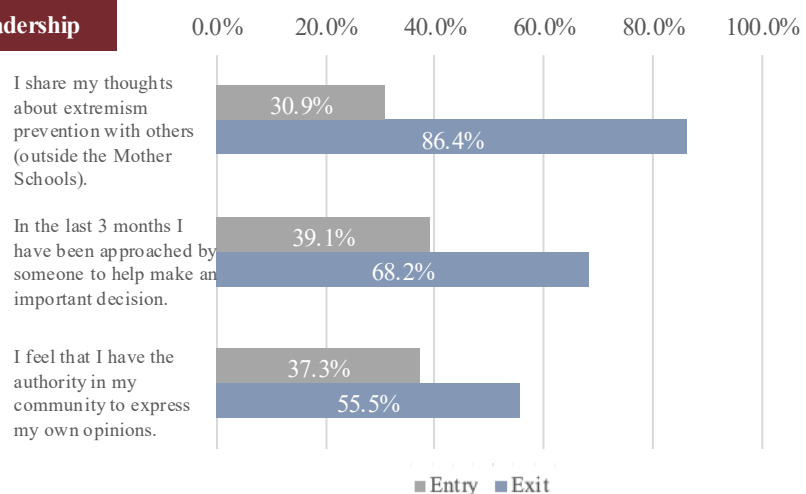
Breaking the Silence



“[Participants] did share towards the end. And the things they couldn't talk about with their families or where there was a lack of confidence, later on, they were able to share those with their families. Then, about radicalisation—these are topics that aren't much discussed in our society—they talked about these issues with everyone in their families and with those around them. Since their confidence has grown significantly, now they're speaking up in areas where they previously didn't feel confident.”
 (240522 BD MSN ExDD 3, Paragraph 135)

“After the MotherSchools, mothers actually have the courage to speak up if they face any problem in their family, if they want to share their opinion, raising up their children or if they want to manage their household work, they now know how to use their smart power and how to speak up, speak up their opinion with their family members and with also their husband.”
 (240524 BD MST ExBA 1, Paragraph 82)

Leadership



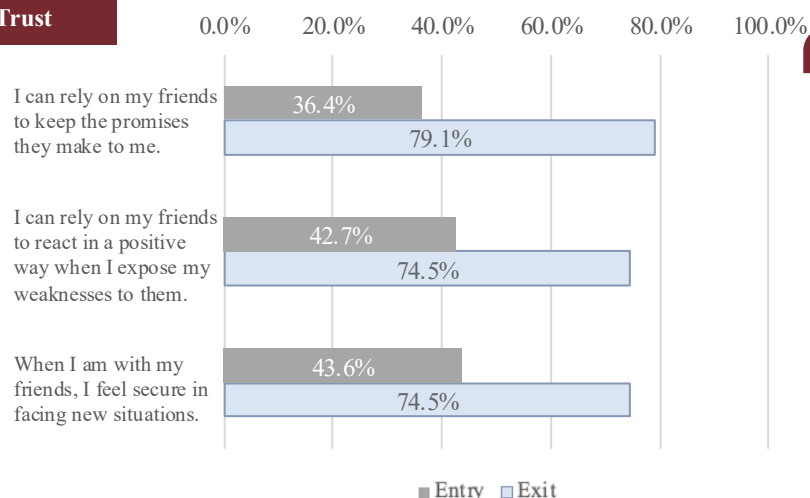
“Actually, I can make decisions in all situations now. [...] It has happened like this [after MotherSchools]. In my family now, everyone listens, and outside the family, meaning in society, I can be heard and understood.”
 (240522 BD MSP ExBA 1, Paragraph 250 - 258)

“Earlier if I share, my position in my family was absolutely a person with no importance. But now it changed. I can see even my husband consulted with me before he takes any decision and he shared everything he did so far. Most of the time I lead all the decision-making process, not only in my family, but also the same happens within my relatives and neighbours. Because they listen to me.”
 (240523 BD MSP ExBA 1, Paragraph 132)

The Project | Outcome: Sustainability Level

Top 3 Indicators for the Sustainability Level outcomes: Trust, Norms, Networks (Graph data: Entry and Exit Questionnaires; Quotes: Interviews and Monitoring Reports)

Trust

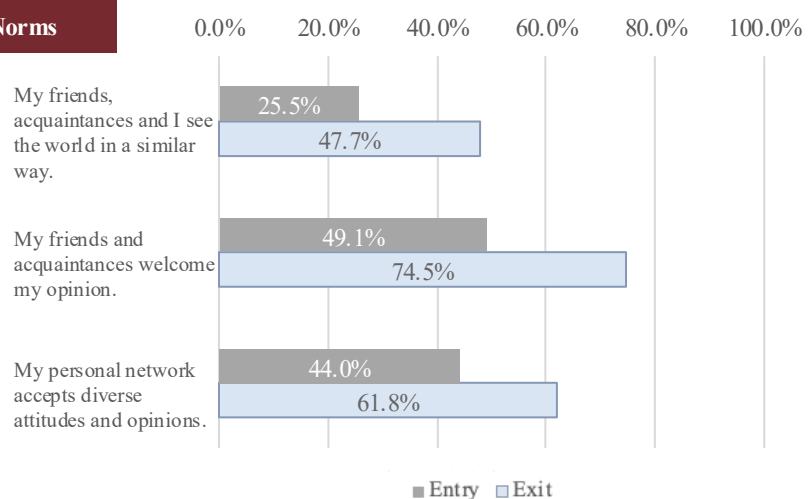


“We have new friends [from MotherSchools]. [...] Previously, we did not trust with each other, but now we trust them and we share sorrows and happiness together.”
(240525 BD MSP ExBA 1, Paragraph 545 - 548)

“We assured them that their stories would remain confidential and not become a source of embarrassment elsewhere. This assurance helped many mothers open up and share their personal experiences with us.”
(240522 BD MSN ExDD 2, Paragraph 107 - 108)

“Before MotherSchools, I do not try to listen [to] my children. However, now, I start to listen [to] them carefully and feel them valuable, that is why they start to share me everything. Now my husband also trust me and I trust him because we share everything with each other.”
(240525 BD MSP ExBA 1, Paragraph 524)

Norms

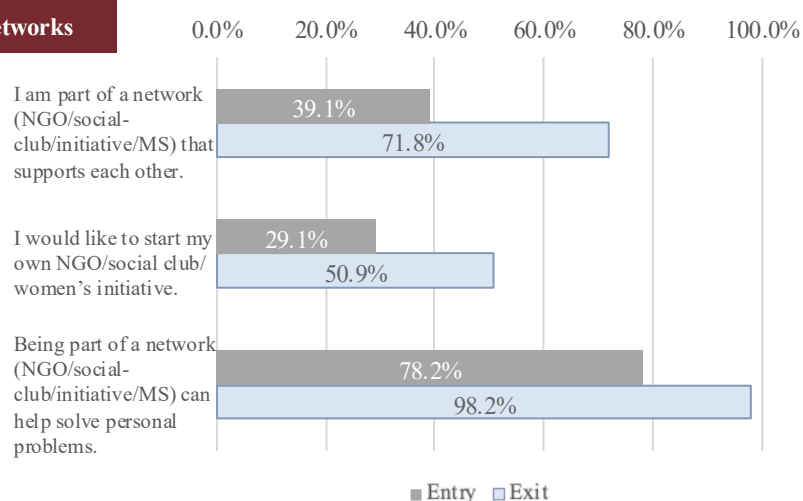


“The most surprising thing was that our mothers were initially very judgmental. They would judge anything very easily. They didn't want to understand other people's perspectives, but I think towards the end, they stopped judging. They first understood the situation, tried to understand the other side, and tried to reach a conclusion after verifying the other person's perspective.”
(240522 BD MSN ExDD 3, Paragraph 44)

“Before starting the programme, we are not connected with the other mothers and we do not understand each other. But now we listen [to] them and now, I know what is going on in their minds.”
(240525 BD MSP ExBA 1, Paragraph 173)

“The change [in my relationship with my husband] happened, now we take all the decision together. We make decision about our children and family and try to execute all those things together.”
(240525 BD MSP ExBA 1, Paragraph 238 - 241)

Networks



“We learn a lot from [MotherSchools] and previously we do not use to talk with each other. Now we talk with each other and like to meet and try to remember the memories of MotherSchools classes.”
(240525 BD MSP ExBA 1, Paragraph 568)

“Many of the mothers have leadership qualities and have a lot to say. They are eager to create a network and are very interested in leading social development initiatives.”
(240522 BD MSN ExDD 2, Paragraph 124)

“After the 10th [MotherSchools] class when I asked them, ‘do you think you have the ability to raise your voice against [dangerous people]?’ And all of the women said together, ‘yes, we can now raise our boys, because we are not alone here. We have 20 mothers along here and now we can raise our boys against them’.”
(240524 BD MST ExBA 1, Paragraph 22)

The Project | Outcome: Improved Family Relations

*Stories from Participants, Teachers, and Notetakers
(Data from Interviews and Monitoring Reports)*



“A mother had a 14-year-old son who never listened to her. His father used to take him to tutoring, and he was good at it, but the boy would leave and go out with friends. The mother cried a lot, and both parents would get angry. After attending the MotherSchools and learning new things, the mother changed her approach [...]. She stopped saying things like, ‘why aren’t you coming home on time? Why aren’t you studying?’. Instead, she gave the child more freedom. As a result, the child started coming home earlier and stopped skipping out [...] The mother shared her story with tears in her eyes, feeling relieved that her child listens to her now. She said, ‘I didn’t know that by avoiding anger and allowing him to be himself, he would come to me more’.” (240522 BD MSN ExDD 2, Paragraph 85)

“I can’t express how helpful the school has been to me. Before, I was always agitated with my daughter. She never listened to me. Whatever I said, she took it the wrong way and hence I shouted more with her. But now I am calmer and I talk to her. [...] And if she’s still arrogant about it, then I stop and I remain quiet and I give her space and time to think about what I have said. And then it feels that when I stop talking to her, she feels like maybe I’m too angry. And hence she comes back to me and says, ‘okay, mother, I’m sorry. I really should not have done it’. Then I explained, ‘I’m not angry at you. I just gave you time to realise what you have been doing’. [...] Now I feel that my daughter understands me and I understand my daughter more.” (240523 BD MST ExDD 2, Paragraph 52, P quote)

“[My child who is 5 years old], I used to always get angry with him and he did not sit for eating his food in time or he went out to play without informing me and stayed out. But now I don’t. Now I try to understand his need, his need of playing and his need of eating at his own time. And I give him more time. I spend more time with him and I try to make him understand that I am there. So he now feels that, ‘okay, mother is there with me for a long period’, so he feels more safe and hence [he] finishes his food in time as well.”

(240523 BD MST ExDD 2, Paragraph 52, P quote)

“Through the MotherSchools, they have learned how to properly raise their children, guide them correctly, interact with them, and protect them from radicalisation, addiction, or being influenced by bad people, so that they can grow up properly. They’ve learned how to prevent these issues. They’ve also learned how to handle the complexities that arise during the teenage years, the distance that often forms between parents and their children, and how parents often lose control over their kids during this time. They’ve learned how to manage these situations. For those whose children have already been radicalised, they’ve learned how to bring them back on the right path. They had no understanding of these things before, but through the MotherSchools, they’ve gained this knowledge and have become much stronger in these areas.”

(240522 BD MSN ExDD 3, Paragraph 191)



The Project | Outcome: Involving Fathers

Stories from Participants, Teachers, and Notetakers
(Data from Interviews and Monitoring Reports)

“Some of the mothers, [...] who have changed a lot, had very bad relationships with their husbands, or experienced a lot of violence – these husbands would often hit their wives. This led to frequent quarrels in their households. But over time, as they attended more sessions and discussed the MotherSchools at home, these mothers started telling their husbands, ‘I’ve learned not to treat you badly’. Over time, the husbands began to realise, ‘my wife is learning something good from this school’. They started saying, ‘okay, I’ll listen to you now’. From this, I learned that when a mother can improve her relationship with her husband in this way, the father naturally becomes more willing to cooperate with his wife for the child’s development or humanitarian growth. He becomes willing to support the mother. This doesn’t happen in every case, but it’s evident that by changing the mothers’ behaviour, they were able to involve the fathers more in their children’s lives.”

(240522 BD MSN ExDD 2, Paragraph 57)

“Our Bangladeshi fathers are always used to doing outside economic work, they are not interested in doing other household chores such as taking care of their children. This is the main concern of mothers, how they can get their husbands to involve with their children. At the end of the class, they all said that they will go home and discuss this with their husbands.”

(24 BD MS MonT G1 S9)

“They want their husbands to be more involved. Some of them are already involved. But as I said, after the session 9 of the involving the fathers, the mothers, they were very, very interested in this whole session because they felt that, yes, their fathers don’t really spend, most of them don’t really spend quality time. And they understood through the session how they need to involve their father [husband]. They need to make them understand spending quality time. Not only spending time, many fathers come back home and sit with their children for eating. They eat together. They maybe sit together and also spend some time in the evening, but that’s not quality time. Quality time means talking to the children, understanding them, relating with the stories of the whole day, understanding their need for the next day. So this kind of discussion that the father should have with the children, this we explained and this, the mothers really appreciated that. They never thought in this manner. And they need to work on this relationship. And as we said in the next session, they said that, ‘we now have explained to our partners and they felt they need to spend more quality time with the children’.”

(240523 BD MST ExDD 2, Paragraph 54)



The Project | Outcome: Empowerment through Independence

Stories from Participants, Teachers, and Notetakers
(Data from Interviews and Monitoring Reports)



“ In our area, the local councillor has taken measures regarding these issues [of drugs and early marriage]. There has been an initiative to form an organisation focused on education and preventing early marriages. This organisation, inspired by MotherSchools, provides practical education. The councillor has prepared resources for hands-on learning. This initiative has come from the encouragement we received from MotherSchools, which led us to form this organisation. [...] It is because of the encouragement we received. At MotherSchools, we all got inspired and came together. From that inspiration, we formed a group to provide education here. For example, I know [sewing], so I will teach that. Whoever knows something will teach it to others. This organisation will focus on teaching women skills. It will help them understand and explain various topics. Many people will get involved, sharing their knowledge, and there will be classes.”

(240522 BD MSP ExBA 1, Paragraph 430 - 434)

“ Some of the women in our [MotherSchools] group, they weren't working any part time jobs. They were just looking after the family. But then the other mothers discussed about the financial independence, how that has helped them to be more stronger, play a stronger role in their family. So they also thought to get [a job]. They were doing some small jobs, part time jobs like sewing and tailoring. And then they felt like they are able to contribute to the family and they are getting more confident about themselves. And then they are getting more confident about looking after their children in a proper manner because of their being financially independent. It gives them some more liberty to take more decisions about the children's well being. Like someone was not able to send their child to a coaching class after school because of the money constraint. But then later on, she started off on a small job of tailoring some school dresses for the nearby children. And then she said that, 'I am now able to send my daughter to school. So I have decided, I have taken the decision independent to my husband. So now I feel like, yes, I can do changes for my children as well'. So we felt that they were getting more confident throughout this.”

(240523 BD MST ExDD 2, Paragraph 50)

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