

Dulali's Dream

Selina is a pretty, healthy and happy girl of 12 years. She goes to school with her brother while her parents work at home, bringing in enough money to feed, clothe and care for their children, and have a little left over to spend when they go to the Federation gatherings. "When I look at her," says her mother, Dulali, "I can hardly believe that just a few years ago I could hardly feed her. We were so poor, I couldn't give her a decent meal. When she got hungry, I would make a thin mixture of wheat flour and water and that was all."



It was only four years that Dulali joined the RDRS Group in her village near Kurigram town. At that time, she and her husband, Salimuiddin, both worked as daily farm labourers but their combined wages added up to no more than a pittance and the family was extremely poor, and unhappy. But when she joined RDRS, the prospects that unfolded before her seemed almost unbelievable – training in income-generating skills, innovative agricultural projects, micro-credit, saving schemes and more.



Dulali received training in tree nursery management, learning how to grow fruit and timber trees as a source of income. She was able to take a loan, of 2,000 Tk to set up her own nursery. She and Salimuiddin worked hard, planting tree saplings, weeding and doing everything they could to ensure strong and healthy trees. Their first endeavour proved successful and so Dulali took another loan, of 5,000 Tk, to expand their nursery, and then a third loan to lease more land and to

employ workers. Last year alone she developed 30,000 saplings, having taken a loan of 7,000 Tk, and so far the nursery has yielded an income of about 50,000 Tk.

In the middle of her large, productive nursery, Dulali can beam with satisfaction. "Before, I would work on other people's land as a day labourer but today I hire labourers to work for me on my land." She goes on to explain the reason for her success. "We have eucalyptus trees, neem trees and trees for timber. There is a great demand in the market for all of these."

Last year Dulali and her nursery were featured on the popular TV show "Mati O Manush", broadening her reputation in the local area, and giving Selina something to talk about at school.