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Bollywood, Eyeglasses and Babies!



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GLOBAL

Bollywood, eye glasses and babies!

What in the world could those three things have in common? The answer is, Symbiosis Bangladesh. I recently returned from a visit to Bangladesh and our partner organization's celebration of their achievements over the last year (something I think is healthy and so encouraging for organizations to do!) Employees shared about their victories during the

previous year but also some of the challenges they faced. They were asked to consider how they could continue to improve their work over the coming year and then we celebrated! And I mean wonderful, fun, celebrations...Bollywood dancing, singing and local instrument playing, traditional dancing, outdoor competitions that included a tug-o-war between international guests and the Bangladeshi staff, carnival games and stalls that showed off handicrafts (and henna tattoos!) that some of the Symbiosis development projects had made. All of this done at a retreat center in the countryside during the coldest weather in recorded history in Bangladesh! No one complained, though, as employees and their families came together to share stories, laughter and success while also knowing that the situations they were working in always presented great challenge. Yet, joy and hope abounded! Read below about a special project that I am particularly excited to support.

Symbiosis Bangladesh is an NGO partnered with International Ministries, ABC-USA as well as several other international partners. They provide services to the poor and marginalized throughout Bangladesh in an effort to empower and free them from exploitation. In all that they do, they strive to attain sustainability with their programs and bring dignity to the communities they work among. To learn more, click here: [Symbiosis](#)



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Traditional Birth Attendants (TBA's)

After a few days of celebrating the accomplishments of Symbiosis Bangladesh, I was eager to go and see some of the health care projects that they spoke about. I had met Bonnie, the midwife that was newly in charge of the TBA (Traditional Birth Attendant) clinics that Symbiosis had started in two locations, and was hoping to open in a third rural site. She was energetic and thrilled to introduce us to her staff and show us around the facilities. The day after the celebration ended, we traveled to the first facility which happened to share the location with another health program, SPECHS, the eye glasses and eye health program. We had two tours in one! But first, devotions and chai. After meeting with the staff, studying the Bible and drinking some chai, the staff began showing us the eye care facility, explaining which machines were broken or which supplies they currently needed to provide

appropriate care (please let me know if you would like to help here!!) It's a wonderful community resource helping many people to see better and providing education to the community and in the schools. Two young women are even being sent to India on scholarships, in a month, for special training so that they can return and help more.

Next, was the TBA program. Wow!! Providing pre-natal, birthing services and antenatal care. They work with women and children to keep them healthy with education and health services and when cases are too complicated, they get them to the closest hospital. The four women I met have all received their training at a nearby hospital and are eager for continuing education. There is only one midwife, Bonnie, who is able to provide some advanced services so she is on-call 24/7! But she gladly provides care and showed us the delivery rooms, consultation rooms and post-delivery rooms with her colleagues. They had instruments and supplies I was surprised to see in such rural locations but they are committed that the care they provide is appropriate and up-to-date. Basic but appropriate. We visited one more site (with more tea!) and learned that it was not functioning at the moment simply because it needed a bathroom repaired and they didn't have the money for repairs. Without a functioning bathroom they weren't allowed to run the clinic. So, using money that supporters like you have given, I was able to help supply funds (along with donations from my colleagues) to make sure the clinic will get the repairs and be open very soon!

The next day we made a long drive to a more rural location where there is a building simply waiting for the funds to begin another TBA clinic. There are approximately 5000 women and children in the area that would utilize this service if it was open today. With a wonderful building in place, it is only a matter of purchasing materials for the clinic to begin. You can read more about this project and what it will do at:

<https://www.internationalministries.org/bangladesh-safe-birthing/>

By making a gift to this project, you can make sure another birthing center is opened and more women and children receive the needed care in this remote area. One center has been fully funded but this third facility is waiting for funding. Please help today!!

[Read More](#)



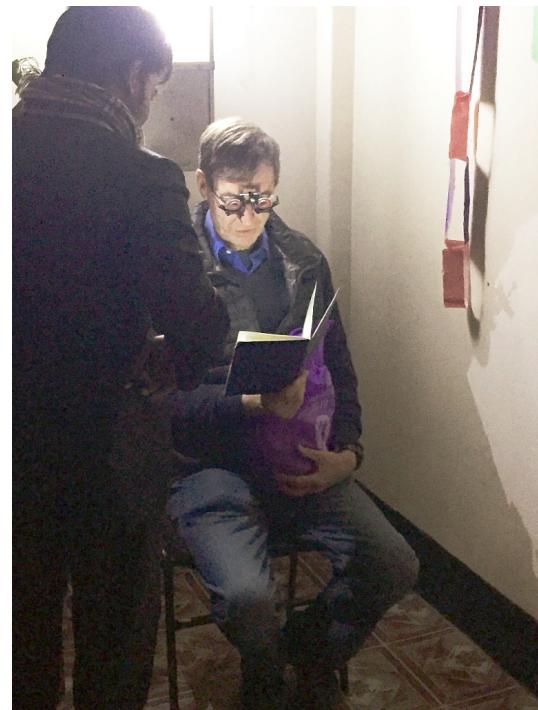
SPECHS vision program

To learn more about the vision program in Bangladesh and how you can help through donations or simply knowledge of what they do, click the link below:

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Bonnie and the TBA's

Here are the Traditional Birth Attendants (TBA's) and Bonnie, the midwife, in one of their clinic rooms. They are very proud of their facility and the care that they provide. Bonnie is the woman in red.



Upcoming events

As always, I am so very thankful to everyone who prays for my safe travel, writes and supports me with your gifts. I could not do this work without you. I travel again in February and will share details soon!

To make a gift in support of Kristy's ministry on a monthly, quarterly or yearly basis, please click the following link. Kristy is responsible for raising funds for her salary and projects and deeply appreciates your support.

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