

THE WOMEN DRIVING BANGLADESH



Arjina

- A FAMILY WOMAN - THE STORY OF ARJINA

Like millions searching for a better life, Arjina and her family moved to Dhaka in 2018. The initial months after her arrival, unfortunately, were rife with struggles and hardships.



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There were days when we couldn't eat. We didn't have money to send our children to school.

“Back in those days, I wasn't keeping in good health. My husband had to provide care for me and look after our family,” she recalled, “There were days when we couldn't eat. We didn't have money to send our children to school.”

Driven by the desire to improve her family's condition, Arjina resolved to start earning once her health recovered. "I told my husband I wanted to receive training from BRAC to work in garments. He was very supportive and helped me register," she said.



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7 months after stepping foot in Dhaka, Arjina began her job as a garment worker. "I feel happy to be able to work," she said, "I can contribute to my family's welfare. And our condition is much better now."



Arjina's income helps send both her children to school. And on her days off from work, she likes to hear them read.

As a woman living in a patriarchal society, Arjina is also entirely responsible for looking after her home and her children. Despite the busy life she leads, Arjina makes time to tailor clothes for people in the neighborhood for additional income.

“I want to see my children educated. My family had to struggle a lot and I don’t want us to go through those hardships again,” she said.

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Arjina wants to keep working in garments for at least another decade to ensure that her family is more financially stable. She recognizes that “machines that operate themselves” may cause her to lose her job.

“I have seen people in dire situations after job-loss because they couldn’t find anything else to do,” she remarks. Arjina thinks she can turn to her sewing machine to earn a livelihood, but she doubts whether that would be enough. “I think learning how to use computers and technology might help us keep our jobs or at least find other work.”

As someone who has had to untangle herself from the grasp of poverty, Arjina wishes for a future where every person is able to earn a livable income.

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