

# Cyclone Simulation Helps Barisal Residents Prepare for the Worst

*NOBO JIBON, MARCH 2012*



Save the Children's USAID-funded Nobo Jibon program, together with its implementing partner Speed Trust, and with the technical assistance of the Cyclone Preparedness Project, held a cyclone simulation on March 7, 2012 at Pakhimara Prophullah Vhoumic Secondary School campus in Nilgonj union of Kalapara Upazilla, Patuakhali. The purpose of the event was to increase local awareness on disaster risk and preparedness. The simulation also allowed relevant institutions to test procedures and work together in a controlled environment. About 4,000 people, including women and children, participated in the program.

To create a realistic simulation, an artificial village was created in a large field with temporary houses, shops, a Union Parishad office, school, mosque, CPP office, a pond and trees, and nearly 150 volunteers acting as village residents and other actors in the simulation. In the simulation, the scene quickly changes from one of serene daily life to a large-scale cyclone, and the actors demonstrate giving and responding to warnings, evacuation to shelters, securing of assets and belongings, and the devastating impacts of a strong cyclone on the unprepared.

Participants and observers refreshed their knowledge of cyclone warning signals and effective responses. They learned about food and asset preservation, life-saving and first aid techniques, accessing safe water, and proper evacuation methods. Above all, preparedness for a cyclone at any time was stressed.

VIP participants included Dr. James Schear (DASD), Richard Greene (USAID Mission Director), journalists, and several local government officials. Closing remarks were given by Mr. Dan Mozena (US Ambassador to Bangladesh), and Dr. Aslam Alam (Secretary of Food & Disaster Management). The program was made possible through support from USAID and the dedicated efforts of Save the Children's Dhaka- and Barisal-based DRR staff.

