

## Vemicompost makes salina confident

Salina Begum (45) is a lower middle class family housewife. Husband lokman hossain (52) was a farmer. In 2014 Salina's husband left her and got married another and went away elsewhere. Salina became helpless with her 03 children.

On that moment, she maintained her family maintained with her brother and neighbors support. To survive she started to cultivate with her husband's small cropland. Children's education was also stopped. By receiving loan, she arranged daughter's marriage. Her son also got married by her own choice and separate from her mother. She has fallen in a big trouble. Debt, loneliness makes her ill mentally and physically. She tried to an opportunity to earn for maintaining her family.

Ulashi Sreejony Sangha formed a group under the project named Climate Resilient Agriculture financial support by CAFOD-UK & DFID at Salina's community given priority of the poor, helpless, widowed woman on vermicompost production in October 2015. Under the project 25 beneficiaries including salina took one day capacity building training on vermicompost production. In January 2016, 900 grams of earthworm and two chari (Vermicompost production container) received as input materials. She started to produce vermicompost from then. Sadly when salina begum travel to relatives house for 2 days in april 2016, 90% of her earthworm died in hot condition. Salina again spent days in despair. Later in collaboration with Ulashi Sreejony Sangha she bought new 200 gms earth worm at low cost and started production again. But after some days she again falls in trouble by mole. Again her earth worm destroyed. About two month later salina again raised money and bought 200 gms of earthworms and started production. After that she was carefully producing vermicompost with a shade. In order to produce vermicompost Salina faced various types of criticism from the people of their community. Her husband also informed, he would come back if she had left the worm farming. Salina begum has continued production without any reason. Without the production of vermicompost there was no other alternative to her to economical sustainability. **"First time I was scared to handle earthworm but I was committed to overcome my poverty"**.



From FFS monthly meeting salina informed that, for applying excessive chemical fertilizers through crop cultivation our soil reduced its fertility, disease and pest attack increases, production cost increase gradually, human health also in risk. Considering the effects, she applied vermicompost on her cropland and observed that plants color, growth is good than the other cropland. Disease and pest attack rate is low, fruit taste is better. And consumers also preferred her crop. She realized that vermin compost is an excellent quality organic fertilizer. Some farmers come to her to purchase vermicompost and she started to sale. Then she started to increase chari (Vermicompost production container) gradually. Now she has 57 number of chari. Every month her production is 400 kg. And the sold value is BDT 4000. She assumed that she have 14-16 Kg earthworm in her production container. Every month she also sold 1-2 kg earthworm. She sold earthworm by BDT 1200/Kg. Now she earns monthly average BDT 5000 from her earthworm and vermicompost sell. She also continues crop cultivation. She informed that every season she earned BDT 12000-14000 from crop cultivation. Sometimes she falls in problem to produce vermicompost and crop cultivation which is solved by the assistance of field staff of USS and technical support from Sub Assistant Agriculture Officer.

Salina begum is now financially economical. Her husband also came back. With the help of selling her worm and fertilizer husband and wife manage their family smoothly and started a small business. She also contributed on that business. She paid all the lent money to her relatives slowly. In view of her transparency and progress, other members requested her to serve as the secretary of the Rural Sales and Service Center (RSSC). She is also performing her duties successfully. Her contract increased at the upazila level offices. Under the leadership of salina begum, their vermicompost production group got a vermin compost separator machine worth BDT 1 lakh through contract with Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), Jhikorgacha Upazila, Jhikorgacha. All of the vermicompost producer use this machine to separate earthworm from vermicompost beside their community.

**Salina say's that, "I am really grateful to Ulashi Sreejony Sangha (USS) to become a member of CRA project. CRA project gives me the opportunity to live with honor. Now I am a responsible person of RSSC, I have the access to the govt. officials especially DAE. I can share my problem with Sub Assistant Agriculture Officer (SAAO) any time with agricultural problem. I have also access to voice in society. The acceptance in my family has increased. I am also contributing the society to soil health by producing vermicompost"**

Salina begum wants to increase her vermicompost production container day by day up to 100 and wants to continue safe food cultivation. According to her acceptance she wants to take part in the reserved women seats for the upcoming union council elections so that she can do something for the people of the area. Like any one of the girls one wants to work on child marriage without being cursed.