

# Diversified Educational Foundation

## Education, Food and Shelter for Orphans & Poor

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### Our Mission

DEF offers a comprehensive and effective approach towards helping orphans and impoverished children break the recurrent cycle of poverty and illiteracy through education. The effects of poverty and the deprivation of basic human needs on young children are devastating. We provide them with an unwavering, cherishing, and enriching environment to help create better futures. We provide opportunities for either education or vocational training so they can reclaim their human dignity and become productive members of society.

### DEF Organizational Structure

The Diversified Educational Foundation, established in 2008, is a 501(c)(3) organization registered with the IRS and the State of Michigan. We work with our sister organization in Bangladesh, the Manab Kalyan Foundation, which is registered with the NGO Bureau and the Social Services Ministry of the Bangladeshi government. We operate these organizations with no overhead costs; 100% of our funds raised are used on our projects. DEF is subjected to yearly audits conducted by a certified accountant and monitored by the government for an annual renewal of certification. MKF payroll includes one full-time resident teacher, one imam, three part-time teachers, one coordinator-caretaker and a cook. Everyone else involved is a volunteer.

### MKF Facility

With the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, the students made their way back to the MKF dormitories. Currently, the facility dorms 72 students, with the potential of hosting more *Insha'Allah*. Those staying at MFK attend different public schools in the city of Sirajganj, ranging from Primary school to Secondary School. Currently MFK has three students attending a 4-year diploma institute and two in Higher Secondary School. Last year, four students graduated

with a Secondary School Certificate and two with a Higher Secondary Certificate. This alone is a big accomplishment, however if these students receive admission to a public university for undergraduate coursework, MKF will also provide for their expenses.



MKF Students

At present, MFK employs one permanent and five part-time teachers. The teaching staff assists students with their afterschool homework in Mathematics, Science and English, among various other subjects. Recently, the MKF facility has some new students in attendance, and the faculty has already enrolled them in accelerated courses at MFK to prepare them for admission into the local schools.



Classroom

It is important for DEF to nurture and support well rounded individuals to take on the world. In addition to doing their homework and studying, the students attend Arabic and Quranic classes prior to going to school. The dormitory has a prayer room, in which the students pray five times a day. The students are also encouraged to

participate in physical activity and they often play soccer, volleyball and table tennis. Recently, everyone had a great time taking part in an annual sporting event organized by the school. Some even came back with awards!



Sporting Event

### Mohammad Ali



Mohammad Ali

"My dad passed away when I was seven. I have a brother and two sisters. My father was the only member of our family earning income. My mom was faced with a dire circumstance to maintain family expenses and my siblings and I were worried about school expenses, and whether or not we could continue to attend. My mom started to work in a garments factory, however her income was still not sufficient to meet the family's educational and everyday expenditures.

Alhamdulillah, my brother and I were very fortunate to receive admission into MKF while attending the local public school. My mom is still working and taking care of my

two younger sisters at home. Currently, I'm in 10<sup>th</sup> grade. My goal is to become a B. S. engineer. I am thankful for the help we received from MKF, because otherwise we may have had to drop out of school and work a low paying menial job. I've been enjoying the activities at MFK a lot."

## An Annual Invitation

Mohamed Anwarul Islam, my dad, loved Ramadan. As the month would approach, he would start searching for the right box of dates for our family, review the map with locations of masajid he would visit for fundraising for DEF, and begin preparing himself emotionally and spiritually for the gift of this month. He spent a significant amount of time during Ramadan at the masjid - for fundraising, for taraweeh prayer, and for time spent with other Muslims. When he was at home, he would usher us to gather at the table 20, sometimes 30, minutes before iftar, reminding us that we don't want to miss the time to break our fast together. My mom would fry up beguni and piyaju, prepare chola and muri, and make sure the table was stocked with jilapi, dates, and home-made lemonade. After iftar, we would pray maghrib together as a family before coming back to the table for a proper dinner.

The year that he was sick, I could see the impact it had on him to miss these social practices and spiritual rituals. His excitement for the arrival of Ramadan was palpable and to go without his normal customs affected him deeply. He transitioned from this world about 10 days after his last Eid al-Fitr. This month always reminds me of the power of the heart over the stomach and over the mind. What touches the heart impacts every part of our lives.

Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

الإِسْلَامُ أَنْ تَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَتُقِيمَ الصَّلَاةَ وَتُؤْتِيَ الزَّكَاةَ وَتَصُومَ رَمَضَانَ وَتُحَجَّ الْبَيْتَ وَالْأَمْرُ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّهْيُ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتَسْلِيمُكَ عَلَى أَهْلِكَ فَمَنْ انْتَقَصَ شَيْئًا مِنْهُنَّ فَهُوَ سَهْمٌ فِي الإِسْلَامِ يَدْعُهُ وَمَنْ تَرَكَهُنَّ كُلَّهُنَّ فَقَدْ وَلَّى الإِسْلَامَ ظَهْرَهُ

Islam is to worship Allah without associating a partner with Him, to establish prayer, to give charity, to fast the month of Ramadan, to perform pilgrimage to the House, to enjoin good and forbid evil, and

to greet your people with peace. Whoever neglects anything from them has abandoned a part of Islam, and whoever neglects all of them has thrown Islam behind his back. [Source: Shu'ab al-Imān 8297]

I look forward to checking in on the children at DEF especially during Ramadan each year. What are they eating for iftar? How is the new building working out for them? Overall, how are they doing this year? I know that many of you as DEF sustainers also feel this energy as Ramadan approaches - each year, I get texts, emails, and phone calls asking where you can donate. It means so much to have that support and to know that each of you hold this initiative with such care. With the arrival of this newsletter, I hope you can read about the children and about DEF's work over this last year and feel that you have had your annual check-in with us. May Allah bless you for your contributions and accept your good works during this special month. Please keep my father, his DEF board members, and this community in your prayers this Ramadan.

- Namira Islam Anani,

## Barakah in Islam

The word 'barakah' has many meanings in Arabic; the most relevant to this narrative being 'growth' and 'increase'. Barakah is the increase of Allah's blessings to our lives. It is His divine power to grow something beyond measure, beyond ordinary expectations. Barakah can show its capability and impact in all facets of our lives: health, wealth, iman, education, social status, career, etc. There are some people with limited income living healthy and fulfilling lives, whereas others are suffering with an abundance of wealth. When Allah gives barakah on something, the outcome is multiplied irrespective of quantity. During the battle of Khandaq, Muslims were cut off from food and drink. Jaber Ibn Abdullah, one of the sahabies of Rasulullah (SM), had very little food. He invited Prophet (SW) and 5 of his companions to his house. But Prophet (SW) refused to attend by himself and brought along the entire army. With barakah from Allah, Jaber Ibn Abdullah was able to feed the entire Muslim army of 1500 from a small pot of food. The quantity of

food was the same, but the quality sufficed the entire army.

As Muslims, we need barakah in our life to be successful in this world and the hereafter. Below are some of the ways to increase barakah from Allah (SWT):

1) Have absolute fear of Allah (Taqwa) and stay away from any form of disobedience. Allah (SWT) says in the Quran, "And that if they had remained straight on the way, we would have given them abundant provision." (72:16).

2) Recite the Quran: Quran is the most blessed attribute that Allah has provided to mankind. Rasulullah (SW) said, "Indeed, the house in which the Quran is recited- the goodness [in it] increases..."

3) Take part in charity and helping the underprivileged. Rasulullah (SW) said, "Charity does not reduce wealth." [Muslim]. The physical amount outwardly decreases, but the remaining amount attracts barakah so that the actual benefit from it is not less. [al-Nawawi, Sharh Muslim]

4) Be honest, sincere and fair at your work or business. To make a halal living, avoid unethical practices at all costs.

6) Start your day early in the morning and put forth your best effort in earning your livelihood: Rasulullah (SW) prayed, "Oh Allah, give barakah to my Ummah in their early-morning work." [Ibn Majah, Sunan]

7) Be good to other people. Be obedient and respectful to your parents.

8) Live in moderation, avoid being wasteful and extravagant.

9) Establish prayer in your family.

10) Make istigfar a habit. It is the ultimate barakah-bestowing tool.

11) Send salawat to Prophet (SW): He (SW) said, "If anyone invokes blessings on me once, Allah will bless him ten times". [Abi Dawud 1530]

12) Constantly ask Allah (SWT) for barakah  
-Monowar Zahir

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