



2007- December, 12th - Today, once again, we have been through different ways! Maria and Vítor left to buy items to the betterment of houses sponsored by **Burjuman** and **Emirates Foundation** and Sofia has been taking care of renting new houses for the 11 families who lived in appalling condition in huts. The 1st and 2nd months of rent has been sponsored by Raahi, a sponsor from Dubai who has visited the Project during last week and among many other means of support he left 500 USD that are now to be used to rescue these 11 families from the slums.

Sofia's morning has been used on visiting houses to rent and in the afternoon she took charge of renting houses' contracts with the respective landlords. It has been an experience somehow funny, some of the landlords - the most modest showed up very well dressed at the Dhaka Project Office, where the contracts have been celebrated, written in Bangla - they had a clean aspect

- all done with no rush. The richest and most important landlord has had a special treatment, we have gone to his house to perform the contract, with all family and friends observing the negotiation, counting the money of the rent (it's a use in this place - each time a valuable payment is done, the money is counted by four or five people!!!!) During the negotiation the employees were bringing in offers to us - glasses with water, waffers, tea... all a ceremonial. Sofia accepted to drink some tea, thinking that for a matter of education she shouldn't refuse it and that it



couldn't do any harm to her.. and just as having drunk it, the landlord's daughter proudly informed that the tea was a very nice one because it had fresh milk, come from the cow in the patio! It seems that the consequences from the tea are already appearing.. she has already

taken a preventive "Imodium".

The high moment of the day has been when we told and showed the children their new houses! They hardly believed it!!! They were really happy. Really they are worth of all efforts to see that consequent joy. It has been as we had offered them a Palace - when in reality what we were offering them was a one room house.. but new, clean, brick buildings, with electricity... a luxury for who until now might have always lived in a bamboo hut without nothing!

Besides that the integration in the Bangladeshi society is easy, fastly we are recognized and

saluted by neighbours, merchandisers and passers by. All know our names. On what concerns to buying something it is a daily struggle, once when they see an Occidental all think that we are rich and the prices easily are multiplied, discovering where to buy the quantities we need is also a challenge, the shops rarely have more than 3 or 4 units and we generally need tenths. Vítor and Maria concluded to be better buying the several units in different shops. (Ordering is



not a solution because the merchandisers won't deliver them, just selling day by day). In fact there is no a projection to a future in people, from what you may evaluate the frustration and the difficulty on working in these circumstances. All that goes out of their routine isn't understood, what causes us to go round in circles. And sure each shop each negotiation that begins always with the price doubled and a crowd assisting to what we buy.

But we know that 100 TK (1 EUR) are 3 kilos of rice we can give to the children, so we can't give up discussing the price not achieving the best price. On the way to a shop accompanied by a trader, they found a street mattresses factory. Maria asked the taxi to be stopped to see the prices, the trader got close to the seller and told him the price louder than he supposed to have done. When inquired about it he said that he was that shop's owner, story in which we don't believe. The trader has gone with the taxi, leaving Maria and Vítor in the middle of an all sort of shops place, crossed by a four lane highway. They turned back in a Rickshaw along the highway where there are all kind of vehicles and the pushes are



frequent and normal... Let's imagine a rickshaw challenging a bus. In spite of all the rickshaw driver was feeling happy for having work to do, even having his and our life in risk at every minute. The buyings have finished at 8 PM, and we came back on foot accompanied by a Rickshaw with the buyings of all this day, stopping at some more shops to find a few missing units. It's the best endurance for a Pedi-paper! In the halfway home, a 70 some old years man was hit by a rickshaw, Maria had to get in rescue once again (nobody had realized about the gentleman, nor concerned about



him), having the traffic to be stopped to rescue the man who was crying for help, then he was soon helped by several people on request of Maria. Today we have also met a grandmother with her grandson, survivor from the Typhoon and who were sleeping in the street having as only goods a pan and a piece of fabric that was used as a blanket, on request of Maria one of the landlords of the rented houses by The Dhaka Project's families has come down to help.

One of the great difficulties is focusing the Project on the children education and the families supported by the Project, because the needs of the population supported by the Project are so many that the help es never sufficient.

In the evening we had our moment of relax with the visit of 3 children and we could play with them and win their very well deserved smile!!!

