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## Remengmawi Bawm: A shining example of community-based business



Remengmawi Bawm is a mother and an entrepreneur from the Bandarban hill district of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. She lives there with her husband and two children and is now a self-sufficient woman thanks to joining the Shapla Women's Entrepreneurs Group, a women's business centres (WBC) formed with support from the Leadership to Ensure Adequate Nutrition (LEAN) project, funded by the European Union. Through the LEAN approach, entrepreneurs are selected by the participating communities and trained by the project to become community agriculture and business advisors who also charge appropriate fees for their services and sell input supplies to producers.

Remengmawi Bawm has a reputation in her village for sewing which she has capitalized on in joining Shapla. These days, through the WBC she is getting a lot of work orders to sew clothes and additional orders are being distributed to other members of team 'Shapla'. With the help of team members, she has expanded her businesses into new areas. Recently, under her leadership, Shapla submitted and won a competitive tender to produce 350 masks for COVID-19 prevention. The team says that this job has boosted their self-confidence and they are confident this is their first formal contract of many. Altogether, the Shapla team earned a total of BDT 14,000 (EUR 140) by making masks and this example has become an inspiration to Remengmawi Bawm's community and CHT as well.

In addition to supporting her family through sewing, Remengmawi Bawm received training from the LEAN staff on nutritious food, nutrition, health and hygiene. After receiving the training, she has been conducting regular training sessions for pregnant, lactating mothers and adolescents. Besides her village and community, she is conducting sessions in other villages/paras as well. Through conducting these sessions, she earns an addition BDT 1,500 per month on top of the BDT 5,000 she makes from her sewing business. She says the sessions help her meet and make new customers and her business is growing in a way that makes her feel confident she can meet the needs of her family and ensure they have nutritious food. She's also very pleased it allows her to no longer be financially dependent on her husband. She says she expects more training from LEAN project in the coming days through which she will be able to spread further nutritional and hygiene advice among pregnant, lactating women and adolescents in her community.

