

## Unimaginable Conditions

Imagine driving along a main road from north to south of a country and finding it has suddenly washed away. At places, temporary bridges had been erected to allow the goods trucks to pass along but their weight means the surface breaks up even more. Looking ahead it looks as if you are driving across water rather than on



solid ground. Access to villages is down slippery paths where the mud sticks to your clothes. Cows can be seen tethered on a raised area but a nearby brick built hut is no longer accessible or usable. Every home you can see has been damaged, many beyond repair. But there are people there working, repairing and generally getting on with life.

Shushilan, supported by Christian Aid, had only been working in south west Bangladesh for about a year when heavy flooding forced them to start emergency aid. Around 2,000 vulnerable families have received emergency aid packages which includes rice, pulses, 2 cases of salt, a gaslight, water purification tablets, soap, jerry can and 6 candles. Once the immediate situation is under control they will start building community forums and give more training on disaster preparedness.

Chahinu Sharda, his wife Rashida Nama and son Mito Sharda stand beside their home with Chahinu's mother. Training by Shushilan had shown them it was good to raise the level of the structure and this meant many household items were saved. However, this time the floods were high, about waist level and it has not drained away so well, so everywhere is extremely muddy. Chahinu, Rashida and Mito look tired from all the anxiety as the whole area is a dangerous environment for small children. The path past their home is extremely waterlogged and villagers cannot get to a nearby pump. However, there is another one at the edge of the village that is still usable. The emergency aid package from Shushilan will get them through the next few days and weeks and hopefully with training they will be able to cope better when floods next come.

IMAGE© Commitment for Life: Rashida Nama (L), Chahinu Sharda (M) and Mito Sharda being held, outside their raised home.