

Bridging Communities in Cox's Bazar: Mitigating Risks and Promoting Gender, Governance and Localization of Humanitarian Responses in COVID-19 Era

Project Duration: 36 Months (August 2020 to July 2023)

Project Location: Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

Population: Host and FDMN communities

Partner organizations:

1. BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health (JPGSPH), BRAC University
2. Centre for Peace and Justice (CPJ), BRAC University

Funded by:

International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada

Overall objective:

The overall objective of the project is to provide critical evidence to influence policies and interventions that will promote tolerance and peace building, encourage civic engagement and facilitate psycho-social well-being among the Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals (FDMN) and host communities in Cox's Bazar.

Project Description:

BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health (JPGSPH) and Centre for Peace and Justice (CPJ) of BRAC University have collaboratively undertaken a participatory action research to co-create new approaches to promote greater localization of humanitarian interventions. JPGSPH is the project lead and also leading the research component, and CPJ will lead the intervention component in the project. The project will use gender-transformative approaches to mitigate the adverse impacts of COVID-19 on the most vulnerable groups (MVGs) of FDMN and host communities in Cox's Bazar.

The overarching objectives will be achieved by implementing three separate but inter-connected work packages (WPs):

Work Package-1 (Year-One):

Raise awareness and preparedness around the COVID-19 pandemic in Rohingya camps and host communities by undertaking a rapid assessment through survey,

qualitative assessments and focused ethnographies with communities; and community outreaches for awareness building, and formulation of key lessons learnt for policy dissemination. A total of 3600 people will be reached directly with the COVID-19 awareness messages under the project.

Work Package-2 (Year-Two):

Help mitigate safety and security risks of most vulnerable groups MVGs and other vulnerable groups in the post COVID-19 period through: generation of in-depth evidence on the challenges, which include: safety & security, social cohesion, and psychosocial well-being faced by women, adolescents and youth and other MVGs in FDMN and host communities. Participatory research methods will be applied to support the processes to empower women and adolescents from FDMN and host communities. A total 3000 community people (women, adolescent and youth, elderly people, camp CSOs, *Majhi*, *Imams* and Teachers) will be reached over time by 30 Youth Volunteers (YVs) through Interpersonal Communication (IPC) approaches.

Work Package-3 (Year-Three):

Enhance constructive civic engagement, social cohesion and gender sensitivity among and between Rohingya FDMN and host communities. CPJ will provide civic education and training to community youth and CBOs and facilitate civic engagement initiatives and local level advocacy. More than 600 community people (youth and CBOs representatives) will receive civic engagement training. BRAC JPGSPH will apply participatory research approaches to understand the effectiveness of the interventions.

Finally, there will be a wider dissemination of research findings through meetings and dialogues with government representatives, volunteers, CBOs, local NGOs, and UN agencies to share emerging findings and recommendations, using online and offline platforms.