Journey of Hope: Support for Rohingyas

Project Update Report through August 2018

Journey of Hope: Support for Rohingyas is a project funded by Spreeha Foundation catering support to the forcibly displaced Myanmar people at Cox’s Bazar through healthcare, early childhood development, counseling and community awareness.

Funded by:  Spreeha Foundation, 2205 152nd Ave NE Redmond, WA 98052
Contact: info@spreeha.org Website: spreeha.org

Implementing Partner:  Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation, 104/A-16/1, Jafrabad, Buddhijibi Road, Mohammadpur, Dhaka 1207
Contact: info@spreehabd.org Website: spreehabd.org

Project Area: Cox’s Bazar
Journey of Hope: Support for Rohingyas

The project started in December, 2017 in response to the desperate humanitarian situation of 1.2 million Rohingya people taking shelter in Bangladesh, with over 655,000 people arriving on August 25, 2017. Among them many are orphaned children. Every day, the number was increasing ranging from 500 to 1,000. With the increased number of human flow, the need for WASH (Water, Sanitation & Hygiene), health, nutrition, food security and shelter were identified as immediate scale-up to save lives in both settlements and host communities.


Focusing on Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation’s partnership model, the project runs through implementing partners who have facilities of healthcare, community awareness and counseling, and early childhood development space. For the period of January, 2018 to June, 2018, Spreeha partnered with RISDA Bangladesh to run healthcare facilities and early childhood development centers at Unchinprang Camp of Cox’s Bazar.

Impact Summary

Healthcare - 2292 patients received maternal and child health care service (MCH) - 1315 patients received family planning service - 11773 patients received primary health care service

Education - 171 children attended in child friendly space

Community Awareness and Counseling - 171 families received awareness and counseling service

Events - 2300 families received solar lights in Extend the Day event, 21st January, 2018 - 210 patients received health care in health camp, 21st January, 2018 - 230 patients received health care in health camp, 25th March, 2018
Healthcare

MCH Service During the service period of December, 2017 to June, 2018. Putibonia Camp faced a massive flow of displaced Rohingya community entering into Bangladesh. Right after facing a trend of violence, pregnant women and neonates were the most exposed group towards health hazard. So, the service period focused mostly on MCH Service (Antenatal, Normal Vaginal Delivery, Neonatal, and Postnatal care). A total of 2292 patients received MCH services among which 1579 pregnant mothers received Antenatal Care (ANC), 51 women were assisted for normal vaginal delivery (NVD), 611 new mothers received Postnatal Care (PNC), and 51 neonates received Essential Neonatal Care (ENC). The service included consultancy, safe medication and referral to other health care service when needed.

Family Planning Services

Family Planning Services consisted of Depo (Injectable contraception for female patients), Pill (Oral Contraception for female patients), and Condom (for male patients). A total of 1315 patients received family planning services among which 955 female patients received oral pills and depo (injectable) and 350 male patients received condoms.

Primary Healthcare Service

Primary healthcare service consisted of consultancy, safe medication, and referral to general medical conditions, communicable diseases, injuries, and other diseases. A total of 11,773 patients received primary healthcare. Among the category of disease, violence related injuries were in higher frequency (7429 patients). Since displaced community migrated on an emergency basis and had to go through a long and hectic transition, limited curative care (LCC) were on higher demand than any other concerns among which 5,393 were female patients and 2,099 were male patients. And 4,344 children were diagnosed with diarrheal diseases and lung diseases (ARI).
Education

Early Childhood Development Center

In January, 2018 Spreeha constructed two child friendly spaces (Block A & B) at Unchingprang Camp of Cox’s Bazar. Those two spaces started off with a total of 142 students. Later in June, 2018 the spaces started serving a total of 171 students from 5 to 12 years of age. Each child friendly space conducts sessions in two shifts (shifts are based on children’s age group).

To start off with familiar elements, and create a sense of belonging, children from 5-7 years were made aware of their own country name, community name and nationally important names for Rohingyas (e.g. national fruit, national bird). To assist them in developing the first steps of communications, children from 7-12 years were introduced with the steps of greetings through role play. In order to create normalcy in their lives, all children were introduced with “A day in a child’s life” (Basic Daily Routine of a Child) in their native language.

Community Awareness and Counseling

The purpose of community awareness and counseling is to assist community members to develop health awareness, hygiene in the behavioral pattern, and the importance of sending children to the child friendly spaces. Bengali facilitators with the help of Rohingya translators and Majhis (Rohingya Community Leaders) reached out to the families to encourage them to send their children to the child friendly spaces, and create a normal environment for their children.

In a conflict situation and in an over-crowded camp, drawing the attention of beneficiaries is much tougher. Facilitators have to go from door to door every day to keep the parents informed about their children’s activities.

Events

1. Extend the Day – Solar Light Distribution, 21st January, 2018

Camps at Cox’s Bazar do not have electricity connections at shelter homes. When the camps become pitch dark at night, making ways to the toilets or outside becomes nearly impossible. Partnering with Extend the Day, a Bainbridge Island based non-profit organization, the project distributed inexpensive solar lights among 2,300 families at Unchingprang Camp, Cox’s Bazar. Additional 100 lights were distributed among kids at early childhood development centers. Living in open spaces without electricity, solar power helps the displaced community with lights at the lowest possible cost.

Jo Lonseth from Extend the Day, shared in the website that, “The ways that the families were describing the way they were going to use the light with such excitement, brought me to tears!”

2. Health Camp 1, 21st January, 2018

At Unchingprang, Cox’s Bazar, one health camp was conducted on 21st January, 2018. Dr. Ishtique Ahamed Zahid, led the health camp. Approximately 210 patients received free treatment (consultation) and 210 patients received free medication among whom majority were female and children. The health condition of the patients was very poor, children were malnourished, majority of female were anemic,
flue was a common incident among children, a significant amount of patients were suffering from diarrheal disease.

3. Health Camp 2, 25th March, 2018

The second health camp was conducted on 25th March, 2018. A medical team of two ran the health camp leading by Dr. Ishtique Ahamed Zahid, Head of Programs, Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation. Approximately 230 patients received free treatment (consultation) and 230 patients received free medication. Due to excessive heat and raised temperature, majority of patients were suffering from dehydration, water related disease like diarrhea, dysentery, enteric fever; children were most vulnerable, and two critical children were referred to Bangladesh Army Facility.

Case Profiles

**Spreeha’s childhood development center creates a fun space for the children**

Humira Bibi lives in Block D of the Unchinprang Camp. She lives here with her parents and five other siblings. 10-years old Humira attends Spreeha’s child friendly space. Outside of the child friendly space, she spends her day in collecting water and aid for the family. The space creates a relief and comfort for her. She shared:

"I love to come to class for my friends, Asma and Jinara. We play and study together here"

She is able to spend time at class with her friends and her favorite teacher.

**Spreeha’s health care catering to the diverse need of the beneficiaries**

Md. Anash, a 12-years old boy, lives at Block B of Unchinprang Camp. He came to the camp with his two sisters and five brothers. All of his siblings including him live here with his mother. Their father passed away when they were young. He came to attend Spreeha health camp on 25th March, 2018. He was suffering from itching of his skin. After the treatment, Anash received free medication.

Anash shared:

“I came here to see the doctor. My skin has been itching for the past few weeks and I want to know what medicine I need to use"

He hopes to be a religious teacher in future.
Challenges

1. Communication Barrier:
Spreeha has a strong background of building relationship with the community. At Unchinprang camp the first barrier Spreeha faced was communication (e.g. language barrier) with the community. We overcame the barrier through getting help from educated Rohingya individuals at the early childhood development center. Each space at Unchinprang Camp (Block A & Block B), runs through both Bengali and Burmese teachers that overcomes the language barrier.

2. Health & Hygiene Practice:
Building health and hygiene practice at the community has been another challenge. Coming from a distressed situation and going through another transition at the camp, displaced population seek for extra incentives (e.g. relief, food) to attend the hygiene education sessions. We have taken an innovative step to engage the community to overcome this barrier. We engage parents with their kids. Learners (Kids) celebrate cultural day at the early childhood development space once in a week where their parents are invited to watch their activities and get involved in the hygiene education session.

3. Natural Disasters:
Being on a hilly area, the project faces sudden landslides and severe rain shower. These slow down the project activities. Childhood development space of Block B needed to be constructed twice during the monsoon season.

4. Legal Barriers:
Currently, Bangladesh government is giving approval to the projects on a temporary basis (for 3-months). Therefore, the project personnel have to renew the approval on a constant basis. Also, formal education is not approved either. Therefore, Spreeha is focusing on behavioral development and early education in early childhood development centers.

5. Monitoring:
Distant monitoring with restrictions to access the camps makes monitoring difficult. To overcome this, Spreeha has appointed a native field supervisor who is experienced with addressing immediate needs, reporting to the camp in charge, and managing immediate actions.
Photographs

Picture 1: Children at Spreeha childhood development center

Picture 2: Facilitators showing graph at the childhood development center
Picture 3: Medical team and patients at the health camp 2, 25th March, 2018

Picture 4: Children at the Extend the Day, solar light distribution event, 21st January, 2018