**Brief Note**

**Barisal Urban V2R Project**

The British Red Cross along with Australian and Swedish Red Cross is supporting the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) to implement a resilience building programme through its network of volunteers in ten urban slums in the city of Barisal, southern Bangladesh. Goal of this project is to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience of 10 targeted slum communities of Barisal city corporation.

**Project at a glance**

**Duration:** October 2015 to September 2018

**Coverage:** 10 slums spread into seven administrative wards of Barisal City Corporation

**Beneficiary:** 23,879 people of 5623 households of ten slums of Barisal City Corporation

**Component:** DRR, WASH, Livelihood and Organizational Development

**Budget:** 1 million GBP

Barisal city lies on the banks of the river Kirtankhola, 180 km south of the capital Dhaka and 100 km north of the coast of the Bay of Bengal, one of the areas most exposed to cyclones in the world. There are 24 canals crisscrossing the city, most of which are used as major drainage channels It spreads over 58 sq. km and is populated by 320,000 inhabitants, almost equally distributed between women and men, per the latest data. The estimated population density is slight under 30,000 inhabitants per km2

It is one of the biggest river ports in Bangladesh, connected by navigable rivers with Chittagong, Dhaka and Khulna and well served by all-weather roads to the north and south, as well as a domestic airport. The city becomes usually the base for cyclone relief and recovery operations and is a key transhipment centre for agricultural produce from the fertile but vulnerable coastal region and Dhaka. Barisal city corporation is comprised of 30 administrative wards, lowest tyre of administrative unit of the city corporation.

Barisal Urban V2R project is supporting the people of these urban communities with the tools and knowledge to be better able to assess, monitor and manage their problems related to water logging, water and sanitation and livelihood. There is also a focus to linking these communities with the local branch of the BDRCS along with local government bodies like ward of the city corporation and NGOs to ensure services to reduce their risk and problem. The project also working with teachers and students of 10 schools to communicate the importance of water and sanitation and how risk reduction techniques can help in a disaster situation. Besides, capacity building of the BDRCS Barisal unit is one of the major intervention of the project, so that the unit become capable enough to manage project, retain volunteers and hold functional relationship with city corporation to provide support to vulnerable people.

*Expected outcomes of the project:*

1. Communities and schools are better able to prepare for, mitigate the impacts of and respond to the hazards they face
2. Communities have access to improved and safe drinking water and sanitation facilities
3. Communities and school children are practicing safe sanitation and hygiene behaviours
4. Communities have diversified livelihoods
5. Communities are organised and connected
6. BDRCS Barishal Unit becomes stronger and sustainable, able to provide high quality services to vulnerable people in Barisal and to fulfil effectively its mandate and auxiliary role, working together with the Barisal City Corporation to save lives and protect livelihoods

Community Profile

Role of BDRC, CDMC and City Corporation

* BDRCS
* Implements the project in line with its strategic development plan
* Ensures human resource required for the project at NHQ, Unit level
* Forms PSC at NHQ level for strategic direction of the project
* Forms PIC at Unit level for implementation of project activities at field level
* Monitors and evaluates the projects and produces reports for concerned authority
* CDMC
* Community mobilization
* Assist in community assessment
* Implementation of activity at community level
* BCC
* Provide services to the slum dwellers
* Coordinate with stakeholders including BDRCS
* Holds regular standing order meetings
* Develops plan and implement actions
* Monitor and supervise development activities in the city corporation

Accomplishment

* Functional linkage with City Corporation and line departments like Department of Public Health and Engineering (DPHE), Education Department, Health Department etc. of government is in place to ensure effective planning, implementation and monitoring of project activities.
* Decision and priority action of Barisal City Corporation and Department of Public Health and Engineering were accounted into drainage construction/rehabilitaiton, water point installation and latrine construction.
* As a part of organizational development, the office building of Barisal unit was constructed with all necessary facilities and equipment.
* 15 member CDMC (Community Disaster management Committees) (150 CDMC members of 10 communities) has been formed and trained in each of the 10 communities so that they can lead their community in a proper fashion
* CDMC centre (office of the CDMC) has been constructed in eight communities. This CDMC centres are used as the office of CDMC and point of social gathering for respective community.
* 25 RCY of Barisal unit and 250 CDRT (25 member in each community) members have been trained in first aid, search and rescue, emergency response, early warning, fire emergency and (PHAST) Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation. These trained volunteers were equipped with associated first aid, search and kits including personal gears.
* 7-member water user group (tube-well caretaker-4, WASH volunteer-2, CDMC representative-1) has been formed and trained in each of the 10 communities. This trained community volunteers are supporting the community to repair and maintain the water points appropriately.
* To reduce the problem of water logging in 10 slums of Barisal City Corporation 4000 feet sewerage drainage was constructed. The drains have been constructed in way so that they can be used as sidewalk during normal time and emergency.
* To improve water and sanitation facility in the slums of Barisal City Corporation where V2R project is operational 30 deep tube-wells and 20 double-chamber (separate bathroom and latrine, 10 for male and 10 for female) were constructed.
* During last year 10 street drama have been arranged focusing personal health and hygiene practice where on an average 550 spectators were present.
* As a part of school sanitation student brigade was formed in each of the 10 selected schools of the Barisal city corporation.
* To establish functional linkage with city corporation and education department workshop has been arranged where officials of city corporation and education department along with BDRCS staff and volunteers were present.
* Ward Disaster Management Committee and Ward WatSan Committee had been formed with the support of V2R project. In both committees CDMC members are included so that they can voice their need and requirement in those forums.

Challenges and resolution

* Dry well: To ensure supply of safe drinking water in the community 30 tube-wells (3/community) were installed last year. During the beginning of this year water supply receded in 14 tube-wells. Officials of local Department of Public Health and Engineering (DPHE) was consulted to resolve this problem. Joint team of BDRCS project engineer and DPHE officials conducted an assessment and found out two reasons of the scarcity of water (a) because of dry season water table receded in those areas (b) use of heavy duty pumps to withdraw water in the nearby community. Based the findings the DPHE official suggested an alternative arrangement (underground reservoir to store water) to ensure water supply in the tube-wells. The said technique has been introduced in some of the neighbouring communities and working well. So, it was agreed that as a trial this technique will be applied to two tube-wells in two different locations and if it works the same techniques will be applied to other tube-wells similarly. This activity is in progress.
* Management of communal latrine: Two double chamber washrooms (bathroom and toilet) separate for male and female were constructed in each of the communities. These washrooms are used by around 15-20 households. Management of these latrines seems to problem as these latrines are not entitles to any specific group of households. Considering the management issues of these latrines CDMC has discussed with the neighbouring household to formulate a guideline for latrine management. A guideline has been developed in consultation with the micro group members that is agreed and approved by the CDMC and PIC.
* Environmental sanitation: Water logging is the major hazard of the community and that causes in various problems. Water logging makes the movement of the people in and around the community difficult. Besides, the stagnant water results in different diseases like diarrhoea and skin diseases. To ease the problem some drainage has been constructed in the community though which was not enough. Considering the need of environmental sanitation mass cleaning campaign have been organized in the community where on an average 100 people along with city corporation ward councillor, cleaner of respective ward and CDMC members.