



Learning in the time of COVID-19 Pandemic

Following the Collaboration, Learning and Adaptation framework, USAID's SHOUHARDO III implemented by CARE Bangladesh conducted a Pause-and-Reflect session to check-in where the program's COVID-19 response is and the ways forward to continuously improve its interventions.

Overview and status of COVID-19 response as of end of May 2020



2.86 million USD reallocated from current fiscal year's resources



Distributed **multi-purpose cash transfers** to **6,130 ultra-poor households** (approx. 31,000 people)



Constructed **210 hand washing stations** in health facilities* of 10 most remote upazilas (sub-districts)



Disseminated **voice messages** and Public Service Announcement (PSA) over local radio to **73,222 participants**



* Community Clinics, Upazila Health Complex and Upazila Family Planning and Health Office



Lessons learned and adaptation plans

1

TAP INTO THE EXISTING NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS BUILT PREVIOUSLY. In addition to USAID's ample support, the Government of Bangladesh paved way for SHOUHARDO III to carry out its activities on the ground smoothly. CARE vehicles managed to move from one district to another without any issue that enabled staff to deliver the activities. Coordination with relevant stakeholders are more important now than ever.

2

TECHNOLOGY IS ONE OF THE PROGRAM'S BEST ALLIES IN THIS DIFFICULT TIME. These are the days when we cannot sit for meetings and our field travels are very limited, so it is important that we still know what is going on with every part of the response. It is time we took advantage of technology in communicating regularly especially our phones and emails to update the relevant staff on any progress made or issues that need to be discussed.

3

PROACTIVE COLLABORATION WITH PARTNER ON CASH TRANSFER MODALITY. Not all cash transfers will go smoothly - such as participants' mobile numbers may have changed and needs updating or the national ID of the registered recipient went missing. It is important that bKash (mobile financial service in Bangladesh) is onboard with the program in addressing issues so that those in need will receive their money that was intended for them the soonest time possible.

4

REMOTE DOCUMENTATION AND MONITORING ARE FEASIBLE AND CRUCIAL, BUT MAY NEED MORE EFFORT AND TIME. After laborious identification and verification of cash transfer participants, the program needs to proactively monitor the overall progress of the response. Complementary, qualitative documentation will be continuously done to identify the impact of the response. Regular engagement with participants can be done effectively over the phone.

One of the key takeaways from this learning conversation is to acknowledge widely that **this is not a normal emergency response**. SHOUHARDO III faced by **unique challenges** to which its staff responded too distinctively. It is a fact that **parameters keep shifting in humanitarian responses** and program staff should find ways to **approach their work innovatively and progressively**. Extreme choices need not be taken, as **practical options are available too**, the program staff just needs to look into each situation differently. **Adaptation will always come in handy** since SHOUHARDO III has always been challenged by unique circumstances to which the staff can learn from every time, and **make appropriate choices** whenever a difficult time like this comes.

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