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GBV Sub-Sector Coordination Updates ▶

- ❖ The **Service Audit**, initiated in May 2023, was concluded in Quarter 4, and the comprehensive findings have been disseminated among partners. This [interactive dashboard](#) allows for precise filtering of findings by location, specific partner appeal, or IPs. Consisting of four pages—Introduction, Technical Capacity, Referral Pathway, Case Management, Prevention, and Minimum Standards of Facilities—the dashboard offers a detailed breakdown of information for informed decision-making and assessment
- ❖ GBVSS actively participated in the **World Mental Health Day 2023** celebration, engaging in a profound discussion themed around "Mental Health as a Fundamental Human Right," orchestrated by Save the Children, WHO, and MHPSS WG. Simultaneously, they commemorated World Mental Health Day with adolescent girls (aged 12-17) at the camp level, partnering with various organizations. The session focused on validating emotions using the "Floating Feelings" exercise, emphasizing the synergy between physical and mental health, identifying signs of mental health issues, and fostering an open dialogue to encourage the sharing of emotions.
- ❖ On December 3rd, 2023, Cox's Bazar witnessed a collaborative initiative between GBVSS and organizations supporting Persons With Disabilities to mark the International Day of Persons with Disability (IDPD). Through diverse activities, partners reached approximately 497 Persons with Disabilities (M:212, F:285), fostering dialogue on creating an inclusive society with equal access for all
- ❖ Participating actively, the GBV Sub-Sector contributed significantly to the conclusive sessions of the Child Protection Sub-Sector and broader Protection Sector, finalizing the **Joint Response Plan 2024** on November 21st and from November 22nd to 23rd, 2023, respectively.



World Mental Health day celebration at Camp 2E

Capacity Building Events

- ❖ **15 - 18 October 2023:** GBVSS through the inter-agency coordination with UNHCR facilitated 2 days long 2 batches of collaborative workshops on **GBV Core Concept** bringing together 68 (M:31; F:37) legal actors and GBV camp focal points of 33 Rohingya refugee camps. The aim was to strengthen the communication and coordination, support to connect GBV survivors to appropriate, quality, multisectoral services in a timely, safe and confidential manner while

emphasizing adherence to GBV guiding principles, prioritizing survivor-centered approaches, and ensuring timely referrals.

- ❖ **26-28 November 2023:** With the support of UNFPA, GBVSS has organized the **GBVIMS+ V2 training** for the UNFPA partner organizations.
- ❖ **3-5 December 2023:** GBV Sub-Sector conducted **e-Referral Pathway training** in collaboration with UNICEF HQ and CO, a significant step as the v2 features were nearing completion. The team, including GBVSS, UNICEF staff, and PS IMO, embraced the new features, reflecting integration efforts. Training engaged 38 GBV Camp Focal Points and 30 case workers & case managers, collecting valuable feedback for app improvements. Discussions with UNICEF management on eRPW v2 revisions and post-January 2024 rollout support followed, incorporating insights from training. Progress updates were presented during the GBVSS monthly meeting, sparking discussions on future steps and concerns.
- ❖ **19 December 2023:** GBV Sub-Sector (GBVSS) facilitated a training on **GBV core concepts and referral pathways** for 44 CARITAS BD staff (F-27 and M-17)



Training on GBV Core Concept with CARITAS BD

Key Milestones

Joint Response Plan (JRP) 2023

GBV Sub-Sector organized a 2-days JRP 2023 peer review workshops on 19-20 November 2023 and the peer review team (PRT) comprehensively reviewed 19 project proposals as well as Gender Focal Point of GBV SS reviewed GAM (Gender with Age Marker) reports. Through a comprehensive review process and discussion with PRT members, nine (9) project proposals of UNFPA, UNHCR, Unicef, IOM, UN Women, Care, IRC, DRC, World Vision have been selected and these nine partners have been selected as JRP 2023 appealing partners of GBV SS. The JRP 2023 portfolio of GBV SS is 25.3 M USD targeted for 755, 626 people.

16 Days of Activism 2023

The GBVSS, in collaboration with 67 partners, including UN agencies, NGOs, and government stakeholders, inaugurated the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence on November 23, 2023, through a two-day event. The occasion featured art activities advocating against GBV, followed by a fair and cultural program. Additionally, over 800 camp-level events organized by GBVSS members, impacting tens of thousands of individuals across various demographics. The UNiTE campaign spotlighted "Invest to Prevent Violence Against Women & Girls," highlighting strategic actions beyond mere financial commitments. These collective endeavors have been documented in the 16 Days of Activism Advocacy Report¹



Uniting Voices to End Violence towards Women and Girls: Launching of 16 Days of Activism

¹ [16 Days of Activism Advocacy report](#)

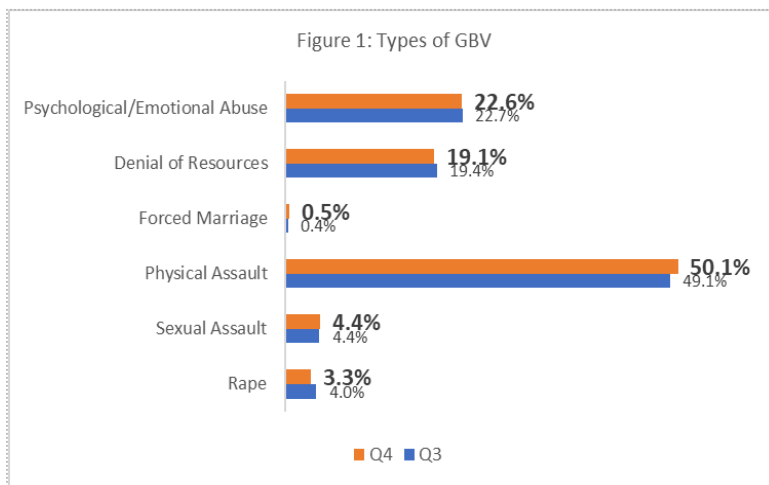
GBV Trends in Q4 2023:

Insights from the GBVIMS & Focus Group Discussions with GBV Camp Focal Points

In Q4 2023, GBVSS facilitated focus group discussions (FGDs) with GBV camp focal points to assess prevailing trends and risks of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in the camp. The discussions were later triangulated with the GBVIMS findings for in-depth understanding of the GBV situation below.

Among all reported incidents through GBVIMS in Q4 2023, **Physical assault** is the most common type of GBV reported, accounting for 50.1% of the incidents, followed by **Psychological/Emotional abuse** (22.6%) and **Denial of resources** (19.1%).

According to the GBV camp focal points, although **Sexual violence** accounted for around 7.7% of the reported in Q4 2023 (rape for 3.3% and sexual assault for 4.4%), this particular type of GBV remained severely under-reported.



By case context, **Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)** remains the major type of GBV, comprising 76.5% of the total reported incidents in Q4 2023.

Upon triangulation with the GBV camp focal points, who directly work in the field with women and girls on a daily basis, ***Child marriage and threats for sexual abuse/rape by Rohingya Armed groups (particularly adolescent girls)*** are the other 2 types of GBV that raised heightened concerns in Q4 2023.

In addition to the established GBV risks, camp focal points identified several emerging challenges within Rohingya communities during Q4 2023 which underscore the complex dynamics of GBV within Rohingya communities, highlighting the need for comprehensive interventions to address both reported and under-reported forms of violence, and to support vulnerable populations in more targeted manner:

- **Decreasing food rations** were linked to increased tensions within households, contributing to intimate partner violence and instances of child marriage.
- Notable **increase in polygamous marriages** among Rohingya men, attributed to fewer legal restrictions within the camp environment.
- GBV survivors, predominantly women seeking divorce from abusive partners, faced rejection and further vulnerability within the community.
- **Heightened unrest and security concerns** directly impacted the safety of women, girls, and other vulnerable populations, particularly adolescent girls, single women, widows, and persons with disabilities.

Progress made at community level

Improvements of GBV situations were observed in the areas below:

- Increased awareness among women and girls about their rights, particularly regarding protection against sexual assault, attributed partially to programs like Girl Shine, signifies positive progress.
- Furthermore, a perceived decline in child marriages in various communities was observed, with potential linkages to perceived reduction in negative coping mechanisms achieved through ongoing livelihood and skills-development initiatives facilitated by GBVSS partners such as Save the Children and Prantic Unnayan Society, along with the efforts of women support groups and community mechanisms.

Challenges and recommendations

When providing lifesaving response services to survivors, GBV camp focal points (CFPs) reported challenges in the **lengthy legal processes** required for cases, **shelter referral obstacles** (lack of child care for children of survivors) among others. While for GBV prevention, the **lack of GBV awareness/ understanding of community and religious leaders** (e.g. Imams) and non-GBV actors, **limited male engagement** are the major challenges collectively identified.

Resources & Data

- ❖ GBVSS published the [GBVIMS Q3 2023 factsheet](#).
- ❖ For more information on GBVSS Coordination, please visit this [site](#).

CARE Bangladesh: The "Centrality of Protection in Protracted Crises" project, operating in Camps 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, and the Jaliapalong Host Community in Cox's Bazar, aims to prevent, respond to, and mitigate the impact of gender-based violence (GBV) through comprehensive initiatives. These include raising awareness, offering psychological support services to survivors, implementing preventive measures, advocating for policy changes, ensuring early response to GBV cases, providing education on menstrual hygiene management (MHM), delivering life skills-based training for women's empowerment, and fostering a culture of respect and equality.



Key Highlights:

- ❖ **3317** individuals' women, men, girl's & Boy's through different activities including **81** Persons with disabilities and **26** Gender diverse groups participated in the 16 days campaign to eliminate GBV.
- ❖ **6135** Individuals women, men, boys & Girls participated in different kinds of activities inside the WGSS to build self-reliance and mitigate GBV through GBV outreach program.
- ❖ Respond to cyclone "Hphoon" where WGSS used as an emergency shelter service for affected people including women, girls, and children and provided PSS/PFA support on persons' needs.
- ❖ Partnership agreement has been signed with PNGO MUKTI- Cox's Bazar for CARE IP partner to Implement GBV program aligned with JRP 2024.
- ❖ Total 115 dignity kits distributed to women and girls through CARE IP MUKTI Cox's Bazar at camp 12 on 23 November 2023.

Major Activities

Training on Women-Led in Emergency (WLiE): In October – November 2023, CARE Bangladesh organized a Women-Led in Emergency (WLiE) training on Women's Leadership approach to integrated in GBV program and **training on GBV**



Core concept, PSS, PSHEA relating to partner staff to enhance and response to support and capabilities in GBV cases.

Australian High Commissioner visits at AHP IV GBV Program

It was an honor to host delegates from the Australian High Commissioner at Cox's Bazar, where they observed the impactful work of the AHP DFAT IV program. The visit aimed to witness Australia's support for relief efforts in Cox's Bazar Rohingya and host communities, alongside engaging with humanitarian partners. As a dedicated AHP partner, CARE reaffirms its commitment to serving vulnerable populations, prioritizing social inclusion and gender equality.



Strategic Planning Workshop by CARE Bangladesh

A strategic workshop has been organized by CARE Bangladesh aimed at planning for organizational strategy including CARE GBV humanitarian response. CARE's Deputy Country Director -Ram Das, Head of



Cox-Roberts Sila, all program sectoral focal, program relevant staff gathered to discuss and define strategic objectives, identified challenges, and outlined actionable plans.

Seamless Integration: UNFPA's Integration of Mental Health into the GBV Program

United Nations Population Fund leads in integrated mental health services, pivotal for humanitarian efforts enhancing community-based activities and capacities to provide mental health services. Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) programming is central to UNFPA's Gender based Violence, Sexual and Reproductive Health, and Adolescent & Youth programmes.



Amidst the Rohingya refugee crisis, UNFPA delivers specialized and survivor-centered MHPSS services through community-based mechanisms, including Women Friendly Spaces (WFSs) - known as "Shanti Khana" - and Women-Led Community Centers (WLCC) in camps and host communities.

Key Achievements

UNFPA Pilot: Mobile Community Response Team (MCRT) → UNFPA is piloting community-based mental health services through the MCRT. This team conducts workshops addressing mental health issues, reaching 10,357 community members, including host and Rohingya communities. Topics covered include mental health discussions, stress management, and more.



MCRT conducting MHPSS awareness session



Women discovering their skill through empowerment training

UNFPA's Women Empowerment Initiative →

UNFPA remains committed to advancing women empowerment through module-based leadership and empowerment training, alongside the distribution of empowerment kits as motivational tools. In the reporting period, a total of 187 women successfully completed both the training sessions and received the accompanying empowerment kits.

UNFPA's Commitment to Staff Well-Being → At UNFPA, staff well-being is a top priority, and knowledge sharing is integral to delivering quality services. The organization honors events like Suicide Prevention Day and World Mental Health within its premises, fostering awareness among staff. This initiative encourages open dialogue, enabling team members to support each other and cultivate a workplace culture that prioritizes mental health.



Cultivating gratitude: Focusing on self and others

Breaking the Silence: A Journey from Misunderstanding to Mental Health Awareness

In Sabrang, Teknaf, Soma (not her real name) faced anxiety and isolation when her husband left for work abroad. Rumors and loneliness took a toll on her mental well-being, leading to sleepless nights and troubling dreams. Traditional remedies failed, but help arrived through a women-friendly service center. Sessions with a mobile community response team changed her perspective, debunking supernatural beliefs and deepening her understanding of mental health. Soma embraced self-care, prioritizing meals, outdoor activities, and communication. Opening up about her struggles, she found relief and strength. Today, she advocates for mental health awareness, aiming to educate and inspire her community.



International Rescue Committee: Women Protection and Empowerment- Working with and for Women and Girls collaboratively with Boys and men to eliminate threats, harm, violence and promote prevention, response, protection and empowerment. Provide specialized services as per the needs and ensure GBV services are inclusive, available and accessible to all.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS / HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ **IRC, supported by the PRM Grant**, has gained RRRC approval to operate in Rohingya camps through ten GBV service facilities that have been handed over to 3 local partners (AID Comilla, Nari Maitree, BNPS) for case management services in multiple camps starting December 2023. Partner organizations facilitated meetings with community leaders, while new initiatives like **EMAP, Listening Group, and Girl Shine** reached 4,117 individuals with GBV prevention activities. In November 2023, IRC trained 35 staff members on various topics including Girl Shine, early marriage curricula, SASA Together! and EMAP to enhance support for Rohingya communities.
- ❖ **Under CRF Fund** 1200 dignity kits were distributed in camp 5,18 and 25 and RatnaPalong Union.
- ❖ **With BHA-USAID support**, YPSA, aided by IRC, conducted a three-day training on case management supervision for six workers and six supervisors from November 21st to 23rd, 2023. Concurrently, YPSA reached 800 women and 560 girls in Ramu and Ukhiya through Women and Girls Safe Spaces and Multipurpose Community Centers, offering information on DRR, child protection, legal services, and GBV support. Additionally, from November 12th to 14th, 2023, 25 participants from Mukti Cox's Bazar and IRC attended a three-day training session focused on sexual and reproductive health services.
- ❖ **Under the UNFPA grant**, IRC collaborated with UNFPA and SRH Technical Working Group to train 27 participants (5 Midwife Supervisors, 21 Midwives, and 1 Pharmacy Officer) for 5 days on **Clinical Management of Rape (CMR) and Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)**. The training aimed to equip midwives from Women Friendly Spaces with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively address survivors' needs. Additionally, IRC conducted 2 monthly meetings with WPE Community Groups at Camps 3, 6, 13, and 22 Women and Girls Safe Spaces (WGSS), where members discussed strategies for raising awareness and promoting gender equality. As a UNFPA implementing partner, IRC made progress in GBV prevention and response services in camps 3, 6, 13, and 22, along with 12 health facilities, providing GBV case management and Psychosocial Support (PSS) to women and girls. In camps 6 and 22, IRC continued the implementation of **the SASA! Together** approach, facilitating positive changes to norms perpetuating violence against women (VAW). During November 2023, IRC conducted 4 bi-weekly meetings with local activists and 2 monthly meetings with community leaders at camps 6 and 22. In November, IRC organized 2 batches of **Self- Care events** for the WPE staff with a view to encourage them to become more strength full, dedicated toward quality input, and supportive of each other in every aspect of our activity.



Training Session- CMR to staff members



Self-Care Event



SASA TOGETHER! Awareness Phase training- Organized by Nari Maitree in November 2023

Jago Nari Unnayan Sangstha (JNUS) - A community based women-led organization in Cox's Bazar Bangladesh, is mandated to prevent and respond to any form of violence against women and girls irrespective of race, religion, and culture and is committed to promoting justice and human rights by building networks, alliances, and supporting advocacy.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS / HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ Launched a project entitled, “Empowerment of women in Fishing community in Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh for increasing their Rights in Livelihood” funded by the DFATD, Canada on 10 October 2023. This project would contribute to strengthening the livelihood of 200 vulnerable women being affected by disaster and climate change.
- ❖ Sensitized local CSOs, Human Rights Defenders and women representatives of local government to advance the women peace and security agenda as part of supporting the National Action plan on women peace and security holding a dialogue session on 31 October 2023.
- ❖ JNUS, in association with the Global Women’s Institute (GWI), presented the findings of a research on Addressing Threats towards Female Staff and Volunteers in Humanitarian Response through Strengthening Accountability on 12 December 2023, at Holiday Inn, Bangkok at the Regional Humanitarian Partnership Week 2023.
- ❖ Formed ten women groups, twenty in each, comprising 200 indigenous women (Rakhine Community) at Chaufal Dandi Union of Cox’s Bazar Sadar Upazila, Cox’s Bazar during the month of November 2023 to protect their gender rights in livelihood.



Women Gathering on Climate change and GBV: Celebrating 16 Days of Activism with Indegenous Women (Rakhaine Community) at Sagarmoni High School, Chowfaldandi, Cox’s Bazar on 28 November 2023