

Evaluation of SHRC Project's Interventions  
implemented by three partner organisations in Teknaf  
Sub-district of Cox's Bazar District

GIZ

*Submitted to:*

**Mr. Alexander Betz**

**Mr. Swapan Kumar Sutradhar**

**GIZ, Dhaka**

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Submitted by

Capacity Building Service Group (CBSG)

4/2 Block B (4<sup>th</sup> Floor), Lalmatia

Dhaka 1207, Bangladesh

Phone: +88 02-913 1027, 5815 5672

Cell: +8801737345361, +8801819245994

[www.cbsg-bd.org](http://www.cbsg-bd.org)

Email: [info@cbsg-bd.org](mailto:info@cbsg-bd.org)



## List of Abbreviation and Acronyms

AIS	Agro Input Support
AT	Asset Transfer
BDT	Bangladesh Currency (Taka)
BDT	Business Development Training
BRAC	Building Resources Across Communities
CAPI	Computer Assisted Personal Interview
CBSG	Capacity Building Service Group
CT	Cash Transfer
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBA	Gender-based violence
GIZ	The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HH	Household
ICCO	Interkerkelijk Coördinatie Commissie Ontwikkelingshulp
IGA	Income Generating Activity
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ML	Market Linkage
MPCG	Multi-Purpose cash Grant
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PNGO	Partner Non-Governmental Organization
SDT	Skill Development Training
SHRC	Supporting Host and Rohingya Communities
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WFP	World Food Programme
WV	World Vision

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- CBSG Evaluation Team

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## Executive Summary

GIZ commissioned evaluation of SHRC project just immediate after completion of the 13 months project in January and February 2021. The project intervention included livelihood development support and emergency COVID assistance to targeted host communities of three Union in Teknaf Upazila under Cox's Bazaar district. Capacity Building Service Group (CBSG), a professional service provider in monitoring and evaluation areas, conducted the evaluation. It adopted a mixed method investigation technique that includes in-person interview of randomly selected 222 beneficiaries, FGDs, semi-structured interview with selected key stakeholders of the project.

The project was implemented by three credible NGOs, namely BRAC, ICCO and Sushilan, when Rohingya refugee influx had made a significant impact on the host communities living in Cox' Bazaar district, especially the one who were already in impoverished condition. Their livelihood opportunities reduced resulted income loss, they suffered from lack of physical space, lost control over productive land and other resources, faced insecurity and threat from Rohingya community. This situation had further pushed by COVID-19 leaving the challenging subsistence of vulnerable host communities.

GIZ came forward with SHRC project, as part of larger global programme to achieve international development goal - 10 different support services in the form of financial support, training, and counselling to secure livelihoods of 2074 most vulnerable beneficiaries.

The evaluation team is under the impression that GIZ supported SHRC Project appeared to be one of the Projects from where selected and vulnerable host community received most livelihood supports after Rohingya influx came to their area. The beauty of the Project was that the supports were provided responding to the needs and preference of the beneficiaries in this case, cash grants to meet subsistence needs and assets directly helping to their most desired income generating activities.

The project has extended both software (training and linkage) and cash and kind supports to 2,074 beneficiaries of highly concentrated Rohingya refugees' camps of three unions where host communities become minority (38:62) and who lost their traditional livelihood opportunities due to Rohingya influx.

The Project had taken 98% female which could be deemed as positive discrimination towards female to bring about gender equality. In the context of the Project area, women were far behind in terms of equitable access to resources, income opportunities and other social indicators compared to male. Although the Project beneficiaries were women, but the male members of their families were engaged in almost all cases except for males who were working outside their homes for example wage labor and trades.

The project strategy to provide livestock as an income generating activity for the beneficiaries, was found appropriate considering geographic, climatic, and economic context of the beneficiaries.

MPCG in one installment was much appreciated by the beneficiaries, as they could better budget and utilize potential savings in procuring asset. Adequacy of resources in both Asset and MPCG proved to be effective. Many of the beneficiaries could add own money to asset grant to get their intended asset (almost 80%). Project flexibility in this respect contributed to gain beneficiaries satisfaction.

All 3 partners transferred multiple assets to the beneficiaries which created more income sources for them. By this approach SHRC Project facilitated the risk sharing mechanism for the beneficiaries and reduce their vulnerability.

Project delivered Assets and Skills training to the beneficiaries which created work opportunity for them and to their family members. This happened mainly in agriculture and livestock as these were part of household farming systems.

The market linkage component of the project could not bring adequate attention to the beneficiaries and market players in the value chain mainly due to short duration of the project.

The project within its short duration tried out innovations. ICCO hired “Liter of Light” – an agency to train the youth on producing light and electric wiring. This initiative proven not to be useful as livelihood support for many youths. BRAC initiative looked appropriate for limited number of beneficiaries but not scalable!

Training allowance and seed capital contributed to youth appeared to have no or little scope of future sustainability. Our impression is “little ambitious try-out” in such a short duration of the project.

The SHRC Project did not have enough time to have focused activities on GBV prevention. As a result, no visible change has been observed in home-based violence, polygamy and child marriage including (boy child).

Assets and cash transfer were elements of the project which was done mostly following project criteria and in a timely manner. COVID lockdown does have affected the planned delivery of assets, in the end all planned assets were delivered to the intended beneficiaries within the project period. This itself a big accomplishment given the emergent challenges of that time.

COVID pandemic disrupted the very objective of the project for sustainable livelihood as mobility, economic life of the community and basic service delivery were worst affected and largely stopped. The project made available additional fund to provide multi-purpose cash grant support to the tune of BDT 4,500.00 per month for six-months has been very timely and appropriate.

This is needless to say that the influx of Rohingya have created enormous socio-economic challenges to the host community. That said, they have not come only with problems, indeed some benefits can also be noticed for the host community. The First and foremost, scarcity of day labour in this region have been alleviated to a great extent. This also brings down labour wages from around 500 Taka per day to 300 Taka now. However, this may disproportionately affect various groups in the host community. Poor day labourers are negatively affected as their wage has gone down. However, local agriculture and business have been particularly benefitted. Besides, Rohingya influx has created huge humanitarian and economic activities in the host community and thus generated many jobs for the local high school and college educated youths. Many of them actually have got their first job with the Rohingya related activities.

The project only completes training on livelihood options and training utilization still far from real, at this stage we would rather look at the strategic considerations for potential livelihood sustainability successes. Following provides a more focused analysis of various strategic considerations:

- Project livelihood training programme have been able to leverage beneficiaries existing skills and experiences and sharpen those with renewed technical (Skills development), managerial (Business dev.) and market competencies. This training package may help beneficiaries to scale up and graduate from current subsistence practices to viable income earning business options and thus engaging in sustained livelihood. Training contents and hands on follow up technique may still be inadequate for such successful graduation processes and need further consolidation.
- Access to and supply of inputs and services are key to sustainable livelihood. These may be available both in the government agencies and private firms. The project has been able to establish linkages between the beneficiaries and the government line departments to enable access to much needed services. Inclusion of government line departments in training and project implementation may provide critical support to livelihood sustainability.
- Strategically, asset and cash transfer are complemented with training proved to be good kick off point for starting livelihood option. This, however, may not necessarily ensure sustained livelihood. Certain level of cash flow on a sustained manner is the key. The project has not gone to this stage to follow up of training and asset transfer status, it needs a thorough review in the future.

### **Major Lessons Learnt:**

- Overall household income augmented most when both male and female members engage in active economic activities and earn. Income diversity in terms of sources and HH members are key to sustainable livelihood.
- Beneficiary selection for multi-agency implementation activities need well-coordinated effort to avoid duplication, overlapping and missed-targeting. Involvement of local government may provide better coordination and accurate targeting of beneficiaries.
- Asset transfer is a very effective tool for livelihood development. Apart from single asset, a mix of assets (multi-asset) transfer have proved to be more productive and provide for better risk mitigation options. Multiple assets create multiple income source and shared risk.
- Small business seemed to be less viable than productive asset option. Small business bear greater risk and need higher level of business management skills. Debt and bad loan poses main risk for the small businesses.
- Market linkage is important to optimize income from productive asset. However, it requires intensive engagement for effective market linkage which is quite difficult for such short-term project.
- Social awareness programme for such short-term project can be used a platform to disseminate information. However, creating lasting impact requires creating critical mass and social advocates at the community level.

### **Major Recommendations**

Short duration of the project is suited for quick impact initiatives. Cash transfer, as well as asset transfer provide quick respite for livelihood challenges and these tools are best suited for emergencies. However, sustainable livelihood development needs integrated approach with intense capacity support to the beneficiaries and building linkages with external actors. Therefore, the evaluation team suggests that such a livelihood development project should have been at least for 24 months duration to make any visible impact such as graduation process as exit strategy.

Targeting vulnerable host community avoiding overlapping and double NGO membership remains a key challenge in Teknaf and Ukhiya where INGOs and NGOs have widespread presence. It needs effective coordination with all actors to select beneficiaries. Involving Local government officials may be useful.

The project has committed around Tk. 80,000 per beneficiary. As such, value for money should be a key consideration for future project design and evaluation.

Enterprise development and market linkage should be integrated to livelihood development strategy. The evaluation team suggests that any future livelihood project should have a well thought out market linkage strategy with adequate resource commitment.

Family focused issues such as polygamy, child marriage and gender-based violence impact livelihood. Therefore, future project should consider inclusion of such social components in the livelihood project.

The project may use monitoring processes to improve learning and periodic improvements. Beneficiary based technical support must be need based and performance focused. Therefore, training contents and technical support elements need regular update – using monitoring and learning practices.

## 1. Introduction

Rohingya refugees from Myanmar started coming to Bangladesh since 1970s. In the 1990s, more than 250,000 resided in refugee camps in Bangladesh. These refugee camps were located in Teknaf Upazila, Cox's Bazar District. By 31 December 2019, the influx of an estimated 860,000 Forcibly Displaced Myanmar National (FDMN) entered Bangladesh and sheltered in different Upazilas of Coxes Bazar District mostly in Teknaf and Ukhia. Following

The current wave of Rohingya influx deteriorated socio-economic condition and context of local host communities in Cox's Bazar area. In particular, the poorer section of the host communities is experiencing difficulties in traditional livelihoods in-terms of work opportunities in agriculture and other traditional trades. Women are disproportionately engaged in low productivity livelihood activities (such as making fishing nets, gutting fish, homestead gardening, handicrafts, etc.) and therefore have lower earnings (District Development Plan for Cox's Bazar - Phase 1, 12/2019). Besides, limited agricultural land, social conflicts, grievance or mediation mechanisms. As a result, an increase in negative coping strategies like use of drugs, violence, crime and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) within and between respective communities. Since March 2020, the coronavirus pandemic has further aggravated tensions between Rohingya refugees and host communities, underscoring long-held grievances on the margins of the massive aid response by the international communities.

Considering the above situation GIZ implemented Supporting Host and Rohingya Communities (SHRC) Project in association with three NGO partners namely BRAC, ICCO and Shushilan from December 2019 to December 2020. An overall objective of the Project is "The use of services, which contribute to peaceful conflict resolution and the resolving of root causes between host communities and displaced Rohingya refugees is improved".

Supporting Host and Rohingya Communities (SHRC) was originally a Livelihood project designed to assist host communities with budget basket of BDT 168,895,676.8 equivalent to Euro 1,878,288 including both livelihood and COVID-19 support. By the end of first quarter of the Project COVID-19 pandemic struck the beneficiaries in the Project area and the country. In response to this pandemic GIZ made additional funds available to all 3 partners to include a much-needed COVID-19 response component for the last six months of the project. Hence, the SHRC Project concurrently implementing both Livelihood and COVID-19 activities till completion of the Project in December 2020.

The Project duration was for thirteen months starting from December 2019-December 2020 assuming that the month of December 2019 would be used as an inception phase of the Project. It was a noticeably short duration for a livelihood project to have a tangible result. Moreover, three months (April to June) befallen with no or limited activities, taken away by COVID-19.

A total of 2,074 host Community beneficiaries located in three Unions of Teknaf Upazila were supported by the SHRC Project. As revealed the average per beneficiary allocation of the budget was: BDT 81,343.

The project was expected to contribute as a component of GIZ's larger programme worldwide to achieve international development goal - 10 different support services in the form of financial support, training, and counselling to secure livelihoods - provided for a total of 1,500 people (25% women) in host communities. The SHRC Project met the GIZ international development goal in terms of type of supports rendered and reaching out to the appropriate population who needed livelihood provisions.

### 2.1 Objective of the Evaluation

The overall objective of the evaluation is to assess the project strategies, overall achievements, quality of implementation and impacts of project interventions (livelihood and COVID response activities) with a view to draw lessons learnt for the way forward.

Specific objectives are but not limited to:



- Assess the relevance and consistency of the activities (livelihood and COVID response) and outputs of the project with overall goal, impact and the attainment of the objectives.
- Evaluate the project achievement status against planned results
- Identify the factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives
- Assess the extent of project impact of the project (both livelihood and COVID response activities) on beneficiaries.
- Assess the women participation in project activities
- Evaluate the sustainability to the project beneficiaries through the lens of socio-economic aspect.

## 2.2 Scope of the Evaluation:

Given the ongoing project, the scope, encompasses evaluation of project strategies, outputs and outcomes generated by three partner organisations. The target audience included project beneficiaries and other relevant stakeholders of three project unions under Teknaf upazila of Cox's Bazar. Specifically looking at project livelihood interventions such as training, cash/asset transfer, enterprise development, market linkage etc.) and COVID response activities (multipurpose cash grant support, awareness raising and hygiene kit distribution) of the project. In order to assess the project interventions, the evaluation focused on the

- Relevance and consistency of the project activities with outputs, goal, and impact.
- Effectiveness of the project strategies, implementation tools towards its goal and suggest future intervention strategies
- Efficiency of the project strategies in terms of resources – both financial, human resources, and timeliness of project interventions
- Sustainability of the project input and out comes at the beneficiary level, and draws lesson for future programming.

## 2.3 Methodology and Implementation of Evaluation

The SHRC project evaluation adopted a combination of quantitative and qualitative investigation techniques supplementing and complementing each other to generate information for analysis and assessment. Towards that several participatory approaches were followed for analysis and to draw conclusions.

**Desk Research and Observation:** Evaluation team reviewed project proposals, periodical progress reports highlighting the activities including different events, monitoring reports, and learning documentations of all three implementing partners. Besides, key consultants and CBSG in-house research staff observed field situation, project transferred assets being utilized by the project beneficiaries, and engaged with discussions with project stakeholders at field level.

**Sample Survey with the beneficiaries:** CBSG reached out 222 (selected randomly) project beneficiaries physically for in-person interview. We used computer assisted personal interview (CAPI) techniques to collect data.

**Key Informants Interview:** We conducted in-depth interview with a number of (14) project stakeholders.

**Focus Group Discussion:** We conducted focus group discussion sessions (7) with project beneficiaries.

The matrix below presents the methodology adopted for the evaluation:

Methods	Activities conducted
Investigation followed qualitative approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Key Informants Interview (semi structured nature) with Key project staff and important stakeholders, among others, they included officials of three implementing partners, UP</li> </ul>

Methods	Activities conducted
	<p>representatives, Government line department officials at Upazila level and local elites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Seven FGD sessions with beneficiaries.</li> <li>▪ Case studies with youth groups.</li> <li>▪ Observation: Growth monitoring of transferred asset and businesses, COVID hygiene kits, group business status of Sushilan.</li> </ul>
Investigation followed quantitative approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sample Survey using structured questionnaire and direct interview with the beneficiaries. About 11% beneficiaries (222) groups were proportionately sampled according to the number of beneficiaries of three implementing partners. Beneficiaries were selected from the respective beneficiary list of the partners.</li> <li>▪ Analysis of quantitative achievement against plan</li> </ul>
Followed a mixture of quantitative and qualitative approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Beneficiary profile review</li> <li>▪ Desk review of project documents, periodical progress reports, event reports of all partners.</li> <li>▪ Triangulation of data which were collected from multiple sources.</li> </ul>

## 2.4 Implementation of Evaluation

The SHRC evaluation officially begun just after signing the contract. CBSG evaluation team in collaboration with the implementing partners' personnel conducted the evaluation, in accordance with the agreement signed between GIZ and CBSG.

The desk review of relevant documents started from beginning of January 2021, followed by an introductory / inception meeting held January 6, 2021 through online platform. The evaluation team conducted a reconnaissance visit from 12-13 January to the project sites of all three partners. This visit provided us clear understanding about the field realities, evaluation implementation approach and beneficiary status.

The next task was the development of data collection instruments and implementation guides. All these tools were refined through field test in project site. Before the survey work, all the field enumerators were provided with one day training (both classroom and field training) at Teknaf. The fieldwork was undertaken with intensive supervision and required quality control mechanism installed at various levels. Key consultants made a number of field visits during the fieldwork.

On completion of the fieldwork, the data was processed and analyzed using computerized data management system. An online debriefing meeting on the draft report was held on 24 February 2021.

Following section gives more detail field survey and data processing.

### 2.4.1 Field investigation and data processing

The data collection took place between 31 January and 9 February 2021. A group of 8 enumerators – the field staff of CBSG were engaged to undertake the field investigation of the group members. Afterward field enumerators were divided into 2 teams and a supervisor cum quality controller guided each team. As a part of the quality control measures, field supervisors checked the completed survey questionnaire for any inconsistencies before departing from the field. The quality controllers while

guiding the enumeration team at the group level discussed with the group leaders and took information for group profiling.

A professional data management expert managed data analysis and processing. STATA software was used for data processing, tabulation, and analysis.

#### **2.4.2 Report structure**

The report is presented in four major sections. Besides an executive summary in the upfront that mainly contains major lessons learnt, sustainability and recommendations.

Section 1 encompasses the introductory section covering basic background, brief terms of reference with evaluation questions, methodology, and implementation of survey.

Section 2 included key findings and analysis presented under relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and positive impact of Rohingya influx

Section 3 describes project management, sustainability, lessons learnt.

Section 4 presents conclusion and recommendations.

### 3 Key Findings and Analysis

This section analyzes/synthesizes and presents key findings, challenges, and results of project interventions generated from different methods applied in accomplishing the evaluation. More specifically, here the performances of the 13 months project, the achievements vis-à-vis the project outcomes are critically analyzed, keeping into considerations of, but not limited to:

- Achievements with reference to outputs and outcomes including evaluation questions
- Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness of the project including COVID response, and Sustainability

Based on the findings of various methods, observations of the study team and formal and informal discussions with the stakeholders, the conclusions are made, in some cases adding value judgment of the evaluation team members. It should, however, be mentioned that judgments and conclusions could be treated as participatory as all stages of the evaluation process, partners implementation project staff were actively involved. The findings and key issues were also shared with the GIZ key project officials in a presentation session.

#### 3.1 Relevance:

The extent to which a development intervention conforms to the needs and priorities of target groups, how urgent are the interventions from the point of view of the target group, are related to 'relevance'. This has been mainly considered in terms of consistency between objectives and benefits; and also, GIZ's country and global priorities. In line with these issues' evaluation team has found that the projects activities are highly relevant to generate livelihoods of the vulnerable host communities in three selected unions of Teknaf Upazila.

It starts with the selection of appropriate and relevant host community households. The project has extended both software (training and linkage) and cash and kind supports to 2,074 beneficiaries of highly concentrated Rohingya refugees' camps of three unions where host communities become minority (38:62) and who lost their traditional livelihood opportunities due to Rohingya influx.

The initial work plan of SHRC Project was to support the poor families with income generating activities those who were affected from Rohingya influx. When the COVID 19 struck the Project area GIZ provided additional funds to help the Project beneficiaries with pandemic prevention materials and cash grants to meet subsistence. The evaluation team found it a timely response for immediate subsistence of vulnerable beneficiaries.

Beneficiary selection criteria were set by the respective Partner. Each Partner had their unique way to select beneficiaries. It appeared that the GIZ was flexible and supported the Partners to implement the Project activities as it was most appropriate for them to bring the expected results. BRAC took a longer time to kick-start the project activities for their stringent beneficiary selection criteria while ICCO and Sushilan beneficiaries were enrolled from their previous project. As a result, beneficiary overlapping cases for Sushilan and ICCO observed, not only between them but also with IOM, WV and UNDP, perhaps due to not involving local union parishad in the selection process.

Overall, 98% beneficiaries were women. Among the 222 interviewees under this evaluation 95% of the women fall under the ever-married category. Among them 13% were either widow or separated from their husband and more vulnerable economically and socially.

Shushilan enrolled 100% women beneficiaries while BRAC 93% and ICCO 97%. Only 2% of the total beneficiaries were male under youth population supported by BRAC and ICCO. All these youth were unmarried and engaged either study or remained unemployed. BRAC and ICCO selected them from the same villages where the female resided. In case of ICCO some of the youths were selected from the same household as female beneficiary. This made the Project assistance going to the same family instead of supporting another family. On the other hand, BRAC had carefully selected youth from a new family hence, a new household was benefitted from the Project.

The Project had taken 98% female which could be deemed as positive discrimination towards female to bring about gender equality. In the context of the Project area, women were far behind in terms of equitable access to resources, income opportunities and other social indicators compared to male. Although the Project beneficiaries were women, but the male members of their families were engaged in almost all cases except for males who were working outside their homes for example wage labor and trades.

About 72% of the beneficiaries expressed their employment opportunity reduced after the Rohingya refugees came to their area. An earning loss happened to 98% of the beneficiaries. Demands for essential commodities increased which resulted a price hike for 77% respondents.

Female headed household was 29% across the partners. The number of female headed household here were more than double the national average female headed household (14%). This increased happened due to the design of the Project in which the female headed households were particularly targeted. BRAC and ICCO also piloted with non-traditional and skill-based livelihood options by including about 2% male youth as target beneficiary. These youths were from the same area.

Two third of the Beneficiaries depend on traditional livelihoods - working in the agricultural field. 54% beneficiaries of Shushilan worked in field and 25% in home-based work surpassing BRAC and ICCO beneficiaries.

Average family size of the beneficiaries was 5.2. Dependency ratio in the family was 1:4 which was more than national ratio (1.3). This showed the vulnerability of beneficiaries in this area.

More than 50% of Shushilan beneficiaries had monthly income over BDT 5,000 in January 2020, while the ratio for BRAC and ICCO is about 45%; meaning Shushilan enrolled beneficiaries were a-bit well off.

All implementing partners given attention to include HH having physically or mentally challenged persons. The field survey showed that an average 14% beneficiary households had physically and mentally challenged persons in their families.

Increased incidence of theft and Robbery in the area had been reported by 35% of the respondents. Not only Rohingya people, but the Host communities were also involved in theft and robbery due to unemployment situation.

Almost everyone had homestead land of 2-3 Decimals. Only 36% had cultivable land ranging from 1 Decimal to 60 decimals. Among them 6 had land up to 60 decimals. The remaining 84% of the beneficiaries had no cultivable land. Altogether, 62% were engaged in vegetable and crop cultivation in share cropping/lease of land arrangement. Project has rightly kept provision of land lease as livelihood opportunity.

The above scenario portrayed that SHRC Project was very timely response from GIZ for the people who were vulnerable not having any tangible asset to support them. Their condition deteriorated further when there was any adverse situation arose such as COVID in this case.

### **3.2 Effectiveness**

Effectiveness relates to the extent to which development interventions have achieved their objectives. The tangible benefits stemming from interventions and physical achievements such as soft skill for business and asset management, creation of employment for both men and women, empowering women, reducing conflict and violence within the family and community as well, extent to which identified results are due to the project interventions rather than other external variables/factors.

The evaluation team witness the progresses in development projects bringing about changes that influenced the livelihood development and employment creation towards well-being of host communities in general and of the beneficiaries in particular. In-spite of COVID, and with a few exceptions, all the planned activities have been implemented in line with the project documents,

periodical progress reports of the projects, and financial reports that provided details of planned activities and accomplishments.

The following is a review of these reports, findings and analysis of data collected through multiple processes, and actual observation that elucidate the effectiveness of the project components.

### **3.2.1 Training: Business and Skill Development training**

In all 3 partners 100% beneficiary received training on livelihood areas. The training courses were chosen based on the *beneficiaries'* livelihood options and needs. There was little or no scope of training follow-up in the Project, mostly it was a one-off intervention. Business and Skill development training was refreshed after COVID by ICCO and BRAC but for *Sushilan* the volunteers did follow-up of the training with supplementary information. The Enterprise development and skill training were complementary to one another and found an effective strategy applied by the Project. Shushilan beneficiaries were simultaneously involved with group IGA which created a scope for peer learning.

Over 1,898 (92%) beneficiaries received skill and enterprise development training on the three major trades namely Livestock and Poultry, agriculture and small businesses.

BRAC provided skills training to 88% beneficiaries on Livestock and Poultry while ICCO offered Agriculture training slightly higher number of beneficiaries as their working union had more plane land. BRAC delivered this training to lesser people because of hilly land. *Sushilan's* training to the beneficiaries were more evenly distributed.

The project strategy to provide livestock as an income generating activity for the beneficiaries, was found appropriate considering geographic, climatic, and economic context of the beneficiaries. They also had scarcity of cultivable land to undertake agricultural activities. Women chose Livestock because they would have more control over the profit from it as in most cases, they were selling the produce such as milk, eggs, poultry birds. Traditionally women already had the know-how about rearing of Livestock. The Project beneficiary considered Livestock had high profit margin - Think for big; other family members could easily support them in rearing thus, it became a family venture. *Sushilan* not preferred small business as their beneficiaries were already involved in group IGA including poultry, goat, pig. For Livestock training and health care, a sustainable support system prevailed at government departments.

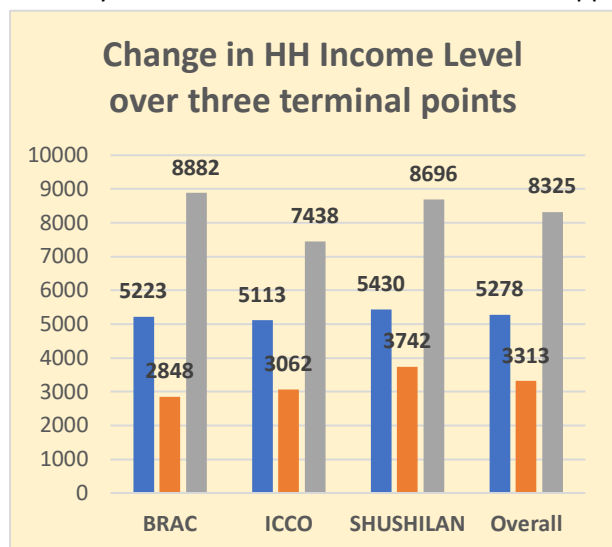
Among three partners, BRAC and *Sushilan* had inhouse resource persons for training while ICCO hired third party resource organization. Here the questions remained for sustainability, ICCO lost the opportunity to link beneficiary with government line departments for future training assistance.

### **3.2.2 Effectiveness of Livelihood Support:**

As part of livelihood support, *Shushilan* did direct cash transfer to both in group and individually that contributed to increased household income of their beneficiaries. Each of the 686 beneficiaries out of 997 received BDT 7,500 for individual IGA and BDT 7,500 was deposited in their name to the group fund to implement group IGA.

Among 3 Partners only *Shushilan* gave a monthly allowance of BDT 1,050 to all 997 beneficiaries from the start of the project for a period 6 months. This financial support proved to be effective to handle immediate household needs including food scarcity. The evaluation team observed food intake of *Sushilan* beneficiaries was little higher compared to BRAC and ICCO. BRAC and ICCO had no direct cash transfer for food or asset purchase.

Monthly MPCG in one installment was much appreciated by the beneficiaries, as they could better



budget and utilize potential savings in procuring asset. Adequacy of resources in both Asset and MPCG proved to be effective. Many of the beneficiaries could add own money to asset grant to get their intended asset (almost 80%). Project flexibility in this respect contributed to gain beneficiaries satisfaction.

Factors that increased HH Income level:

The income earned by women beneficiaries effectively added to their household income. The information from FGD showed that some of the beneficiaries were earning between BDT 1,500-BDT 4,000 a month (January 2021) especially from poultry, vegetable cultivation and handicrafts. Some of them were not able to

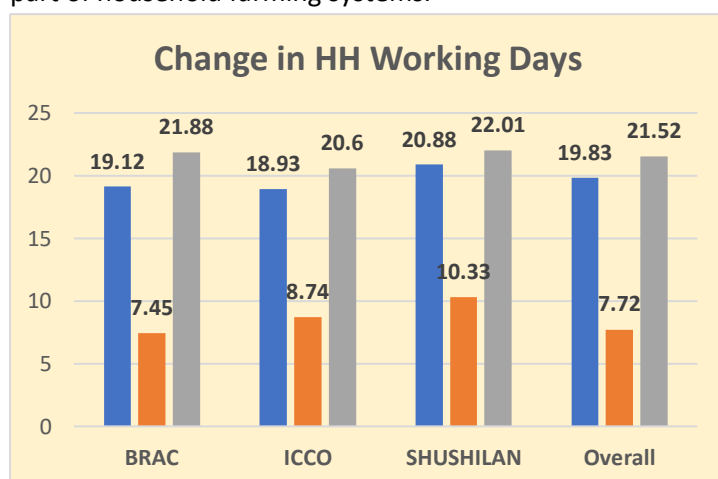
earn an income for example, the livestock keepers whose income were yet to come.

The beneficiaries of Sushilan had received two-folds Livelihood support including group and individual activities which contributed to increase an income. An assessment of an income earned by these beneficiaries should be done by implementing Partners/GIZ after one year of completion of this Project.

All 3 partners transferred multiple assets to the beneficiaries which created more income sources for them. By this approach SHRC Project facilitated the risk sharing mechanism for the beneficiaries and reduce their vulnerability.

Factors that increased employment / monthly work days:

Project delivered Assets and Skills training to the beneficiaries which created work opportunity for them and to their family members. This happened mainly in agriculture and livestock as these were part of household farming systems.



In most cases men in the family came forward to assist their female counterparts. Engagement of male created more work opportunity for the whole family.

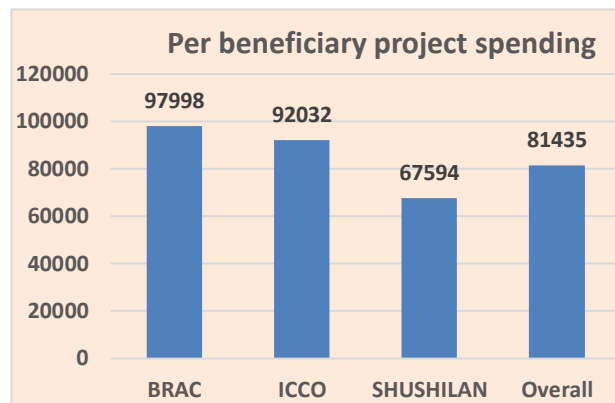
Corona Pandemic situation seemingly improved, and job demand increased in the agricultural field. The other fields were also gradually opening for the male members of the beneficiaries' family.

### 3.2.3 Market Linkage:

Market linkage intervention was mostly event based. ICCO organised two market days. BRAC and Shushilan took few beneficiaries who were in group poultry rearing (Shushilan), fish selling (BRAC), to the market and introduced them to whole sellers and buyers. This component could not bring adequate attention to the beneficiaries and market players in the value chain mainly due to short duration of the project.

### 3.2.4 Youth Group Experimentation:

BRAC and ICCO experimented skill-based livelihood options for the youths. These Partners included 50 youth each in their Projects as BRAC 28 male and 22 female, and ICCO 17 male and 33 females. BRAC focused on employable skill in job market such as tailoring, salon, and mobile repair, while ICCO tried with innovative product and technical skills. BRAC placed the youth in respective shops as an apprentice to acquire the skills.



ICCO hired “Liter of Light” – an agency to train

the youth on producing light and electric wiring. This initiative proven not to be useful as livelihood support for many youths. BRAC initiative looked appropriate for limited number of beneficiaries but not scalable!

Training allowance and seed capital contributed to youth appeared to have no or little scope of future sustainability. Our impression is “little ambitious try-out” in such a short duration of the project.

### 3.2.5 Project response to Gender Based Violence

The SHRC Project did not have enough time to have focused activities on GBV prevention. BRAC had discussed about this issue along with other subjects when coming to the Project areas for regular visits. This issue needed longer term and structured awareness sessions to bring any changes.

At the HH level, polygamy was on the rise in Project area as opportunity for men from host community to marry Rohingya Bride increased. Overall, the livelihood opportunity for men declined hence, men mostly stayed home, feeling anxious and helpless that resulted tension in the family leading to gender-based violence.

Child marriage in the country below 15 years of age appeared 22% mostly among girls, the field data showed that before Rohingya influx the child marriage was above 19% and after Rohingya refugees came in their area the increased closed to 24%. It was observed in the Project area that child marriage among boys was increasing more than girls due to availability of child bride among Rohingya community.

At the community level, Eve Teasing in the form of sexual harassment among the school going teenagers increased, 40% girl children were harassed on the way to school and going in public. Polygamy increased, 11% respondents mentioned there were incidence of polygamy in the community. The main reason cited was that Rohingya Girls were found easily to marry and the men of the host community took this opportunity. Among the beneficiary families physical torture on women had increased to 27% compared than earlier figure of 25% before Rohingya came to this area.

## 3.3 Efficiency

Efficiency measures prudent and productive use of human and financial resources that the project employed. The evaluation team suggests that the project resources are in general used prudently and productively towards realizing its objectives. Even after seriously affected by the COVID lock down, SHRC implementing partners have mostly completed their planned activities and accomplished target households. This provides the best measure of overall efficiency.

The total budget of the Project was: BDT 168,895,676 equivalent to Euro 1,878,288 that include livelihood and COVID-19 support. A total of 2,074 host Community beneficiaries located in three Unions of Teknaf Upazila were supported by the SHRC Project. Average per beneficiary allocation of the budget was: BDT 81,343. This allocation is significant given the relatively short period of the



project. Shushilan had the highest number of beneficiaries of the three NGOs and its per beneficiary allocation was lower than ICCO and BRAC. On the other hand, BRAC had distributed multiple assets to the beneficiary and its per beneficiary allocation was higher than other partners. These statistics make sense from the productive resources use perspective. In case of Shushilan, management overhead cost was minimized due to larger beneficiary size. For BRAC, larger allocation per beneficiary make sense for it spends significantly higher on the direct project expenses such as give out high value assets to beneficiaries.

Financial and human resource management of the project was done incongruence with the financial manual of the respective partner NGO's. This helped the partners to rapidly mobilize and kick start the project without spending lot of time for initial preparation and mobilization activities.

All the 3 partners had full time Admin and Finance Officer to monitor the expenses. In terms of logistical support to the project, partners had necessary provisions, such as transportation facility for field staff. Staffing plan of BRAC, ICCO and Shushilan provides for adequate human resources to complete their respective activities on a timely manner and also ensure necessary follow-up and monitoring activities.

A total of 71 people were employed together by three PNGOs. 29 of them were drawn from the partners' regular staff and had close link with their respective NGOs. This helped the partners to maintain their respective organizational standards in field implementations. On the other hand, 27 local volunteers helped bridge the project with the local communities and geared for rapid implementation.

Shushilan had maximum number of staff (35) as they had the largest number of beneficiaries (997). On the other hand, BRAC had the minimum number of beneficiaries (400) but their number of staff were 20 where ICCO had only 17 staff to serve 675 beneficiaries. Though staff to beneficiary ratio was the highest for BRAC, this justifies because of its intensive implementation strategies with transferring multiple assets to single household.

Assets and cash transfer was elements of the project which was done mostly following project criteria and in a timely manner. COVID lockdown does have affected the planned delivery of assets, in the end all planned assets were delivered to the intended beneficiaries within the project period. This itself a big accomplishment given the emergent challenges of that time.

PNGOs purchased livestock from the local market to minimize cost and ensure better quality. During asset transfer, partners have given preference to the choice of beneficiaries. Beneficiaries expressed high level of satisfaction with the quality of support they received from the project.

However, duration of the project was inadequate. To achieve sustainable livelihood, 12 months was not an enough time. For the limitation of time, implementing partners could not conduct adequate follow up which was imperative for sustainable livelihood development. COVID lockdown for the implementation of the project as almost 3 months were lost from the project duration. Besides, training and awareness sessions were held maintaining social distancing, as a consequence session are organized with a smaller number of participants while increasing in the number of sessions

BRAC has started their activities from July where other 2 partners had started their activities from December 2019. So BRAC has accomplished their core activities in a very rapid period and didn't get time for follow up though they had a strong organogram

### **3.4 COVID -19: Consequences and Project Response**

COVID pandemic and government-imposed lock down have affected the project implementation. It crippled the economy, thrown millions of people out of job, and put numerations households in food insecurity. Host community of the project area was no exception. They were already under livelihood stress and the Government imposed lock-down further aggravated their economic situation and led them in a situation of complete melt-down. It disrupted the very objective of the project for

sustainable livelihood as mobility, economic life of the community and basic service delivery were worst affected and largely stopped. Cox's Bazar had been one of the worst affected districts due to high density of people and a Tourist Place.

Evaluation revealed that about 8% beneficiaries were infected from COVID-19 but no fatality had been reported till the evaluation period. In response to the emergent situation, project activities remained suspended for 3 months. In addition to livelihood activities, the project undertook emergency measures with cash transfer to the beneficiaries from July 2020 while simultaneously continuing livelihood assistance. The project made available additional fund to provide multi-purpose cash grant support to the tune of BDT 4,500.00 per month for six-months has been very timely and appropriate.

All implementing organizations – BRAC, ICCO and Shushilan – provided MPCG (BDT 4,500 per month per HH) to every beneficiary. BRAC distributed the money in two installments per month (2,500 at the beginning of the month and 2,000 at the middle of the month). Hygiene kits were distributed 6 times

- Family food In-take for thrice a day were reduced from 25 days to 22 days.
- Workdays reduced from 20 days to 8 days a month.
- Monthly Income was reduced from BDT 5,000 to below BDT 3,000.
- MPCG had been proved to be adequate and effective to raise income and ensure food security and most importantly avoid hunger.
- Adequate Hygiene Kits were provided by 3 partners which were still found in stock

during the Project period. Adequate safety materials were provided to the beneficiaries and their family members. Some of the materials were enough to meet the needs of the beneficiaries for a year like masks (BRAC), hand washing soap (ICCO).

COVID awareness trainings were also conducted by the implementing organizations. Training was arranged and delivered to the small group of beneficiaries (10-15 members) in their own area. The evaluation found that wearing mask and frequent had washing are important messages that over 90% of the participants could recall. All organizations installed hand washing stations for

ensuring the hygiene practice of the beneficiaries. BRAC alone had installed 400 hand wash stations for the beneficiary HHs.

#### 4 Project Management:

SHRC project implemented a range of activities supported by budget and resources, work-plan and reporting systems. Management and coordination relied on the strategic overview and direction by Senior Officials of GIZ. Information to them was made available through monthly progress reports, activity/event reports, online meetings and phone calls, and prior to the COVID-19 pandemic out-breaks through field visits.

The implementation was directed by the field-based offices of all partners, and GIZ also maintained a sub-office at Cox's Bazar district. All three implementing partners deployed one dedicated project management person (Project Manager) at Cox's Bazar district, and under them there were field operational staff. At the last mile beneficiary level, the project intervention services were delivered by the locally recruited volunteers, with secondary level of Education. The evaluation team noted that the inclusion of local volunteer was one of the best practices that maintained cultural sensitivity and communication with beneficiaries using local dialect. Overall, ratio volunteer beneficiary ratio was found at 1: 77, while lowest for BRAC (1:33) followed by Sushilon (1:111) and ICCO (1:113). The operational staffs engaged in project implementation activities have had prior experience of working in humanitarian crisis and livelihood interventions.

Although the selection of implementation partners and their respective project locations were done in one go, but implementation could not be started simultaneously by all three partners. Sushilan began immediately after it was awarded the Project by GIZ followed by ICCO, while BRAC took a longer

time to start the field implementation. The delay to start by BRAC have had bearings on implementation quality and limited the scope for follow-up activities.

#### Planning and monitoring

SHRC project design had a built-in activity and output monitoring with the logical frameworks for all three partners. Planning and monitoring, perhaps originated from LFA, appeared simple and straight forward to implement the project. Moreover, an adequate budgetary provision existed to conduct field level monitoring.

SHRC project's reporting from partners to GIZ was initially set monthly and later made bi-monthly basis. The implementing NGOs generated information on the project progress and challenges periodically, and shared through their respective review and/or internal reflection sessions. Therefore, lessons learned were documented and addressed through re-planning in a roll-over plan process. The implementing partners had learning-sharing documentation process, however it remained within the individual partners, as there was no learning-sharing and/or coordination meeting was organized by GIZ. Consequently, beneficiary overlapping was detected between two implementing partners - ICCO and Sushilan, and also with other development organizations' such as IOM, UNDP and World Vision. The absence of coordination and learning-sharing in the project design, perhaps a missed opportunity for learning not only for the SHRC project but also future programming of livelihood intervention for participating implementing partners.

#### 4.1 Sustainability

Scope and duration of the SHRC project are limited especially with respect to ensuring sustainable livelihood of the beneficiary people. The project has archived successes to provide quick relief to the beneficiary through cash and asset transfer. However, successes on sustained livelihood in the areas that the project promoted needs some time to look at. At this stage, we may only assess emerging signs of the beneficiaries' behaviour for prospects of sustainable livelihoods and livelihood security.

Given that the project has promoted three core livelihood options such as poultry & livestock, small businesses, and agriculture for potential livelihood development, poultry and livestock option clearly have drawn larger response from the beneficiaries than other two options. This is because most participants (76%) are familiar with the basics of poultry rearing and livelihood practices and for its better profitability. Training effectiveness study also has rated relatively high for this option. Other two options have drawn less interest from the participants and training effectiveness also found to be less for those options.

Now that the project only completes training on livelihood options and training utilization still far from real, at this stage we would rather look at the strategic considerations for potential livelihood sustainability successes. Following provides a more focused analysis of various strategic considerations:

- Project livelihood training programme have been able to leverage beneficiaries existing skills and experiences and sharpen those with renewed technical (Skills development), managerial (Business dev.) and market competencies. This training package may help beneficiaries to scale up and graduate from current subsistence practices to viable income earning business options and thus engaging in sustained livelihood. Training contents and hands on follow up technique may still be inadequate for such successful graduation processes and need further consolidation.
- Access to and supply of inputs and services are key to sustainable livelihood. These may be available both in the government agencies and private firms. The project has been able to establish linkages between the beneficiaries and the government line departments to enable

access to much needed services. Inclusion of government line departments in training and project implementation may provide critical support to livelihood sustainability.

- Strategically, asset and cash transfer are complemented with training proved to be good kick off point for starting livelihood option. This, however, may not necessarily ensure sustained livelihood. Certain level of cash flow on a sustained manner is the key. The project has not gone to this stage to follow up on training and asset transfer sustainability yet therefore, it needs a thorough review in the future.

#### **4.2 Lessons Learnt**

This project is short in duration and limited in scope. Still, it provides important insights and lessons for designing future projects especially in its host community context. Following provides some of the key lessons from the project.

- Overall household income augmented most when both male and female members engage in active economic activities and earn. Income diversity in terms of sources and HH members are key to sustainable livelihood.
- Implementing organizations were under stress for rapid implementation and burning funds which have impacted on implementation quality. COVID situation have put further stress on that. Project design should consider rapid kick off and implementation strategies for such short duration project.
- Beneficiary selection for multi-agency implementation activities need well-coordinated effort to avoid duplication, overlapping and missed-targeting. Involvement of local government may provide better coordination and accurate targeting of beneficiaries.
- Asset transfer is a very effective tool for livelihood development. Apart from single asset, a mix of assets (multi-asset) transfer have proved to be more productive and provide for better risk mitigation options. Multiple assets create multiple income source and shared risk.
- Small business seemed to be less viable than productive asset option. Small business bear greater risk and need higher level of business management skills. Debt and bad loan pose main risk for the small businesses.
- Market linkage is important to optimize income from productive asset. However, it requires intensive engagement for effective market linkage which is quite difficult for such short term project.
- Business management training is inadequate and limited in scope. This needs to be synergized well with the livelihood options for sustained income.
- Social awareness programme for such short term project can be used as a platform to disseminate information. However, creating lasting impact requires creating critical mass and social advocates at the community level.

#### **4.3 Positive Impact of Rohingya Influx**

It is needless to say that the influx of Rohingya have created enormous socio-economic challenges to the host community. That said, they have not come only with problems, indeed some benefits can also be noticed for the host community.

- First and foremost, scarcity of day labour in this region have been alleviated to a great extent. This also brings down labour wages from around 500 Taka per day to 300 Taka now. However, this may disproportionately affect various groups in the host community. Poor day labourers are negatively affected as their wage has gone down. However, local agriculture and business have been particularly benefitted.
- Rohingya influx has created huge humanitarian and economic activities in the host community and thus generated many jobs for the local high school and college educated youths. Many of them actually have got their first job with the Rohingya related activities.
- There has been significant government and donor investments to develop local infrastructure. This not only created additional economic activities but also improve the locality in the long

run. For instance, demand for agricultural input and raw materials has increased while greater turnover from small businesses resulted increased benefits to the host communities.

- Importantly, many donor agencies appreciate the pain and loss of the host communities for the sudden influx of the Rohingya and thus have responded positively by supporting the host community through economic, health, and social development activities. This will have a long-term impact on the host community.

## **5 Conclusion and Recommendations**

SHRC Project has made significant achievements in terms of supporting socio-economically vulnerable population those who are most in need for livelihood assistance. The Project has completed all its planned activities within a noticeably within the short time span. The beneficiaries have received substantial amount of cash and assets for subsistence and livelihood which is noteworthy compared to other projects of the same nature. GIZ as donor has been flexible and given the partners freedom to shape their respective programme as its suite to their beneficiaries most to secure their livelihood needs. Nonetheless, the Evaluation Team finds some areas are important to consider for better implementation and achieving higher results at the beneficiary level and GIZ as donor while supporting similar livelihood Project in future.

### **Recommendations**

SHRC project has drawn certain lessons from its limited project activities that may provide important insights for prospective future initiatives in similar context towards livelihood development.

- Short duration of the project is suited for quick impact initiatives. Cash transfer, as well as asset transfer provide quick respite for livelihood challenges and these tools are best suited for emergencies. However, sustainable livelihood development needs integrated approach with intense capacity support to the beneficiaries and building linkages with external actors. Therefore, the evaluation team suggests that such a livelihood development project should have been at least for 24 months duration to make any visible impact such as graduation approach as exit strategy.
- Livelihood development should be closely measured and monitored following cash flow approach. Sustained and positive cash flow will lead to successful livelihood development particularly for the host community.
- Targeting vulnerable host community avoiding overlapping and double NGO membership remains a key challenge in Teknaf and Ukhiya where INGOs and NGOs have widespread presence. It needs effective coordination with all actors to select beneficiaries. Involving Local government officials may be useful.
- The project has committed around Tk. 80,000 per beneficiary. As such, value for money should be a key consideration for future project design and evaluation.
- Enterprise development and market linkage should be integrated to livelihood development strategy. The evaluation team suggests that any future livelihood project should have a well thought out market linkage strategy with adequate resource commitment.
- Family focused issues such as polygamy, child marriage and gender-based violence impact livelihood. Therefore, future project should consider inclusion of such social components in the livelihood project.
- The project may use monitoring processes to improve learning and periodic improvements. Beneficiary based technical support must be need based and performance focused. Therefore, training contents and technical support elements need regular update – using monitoring and leaning practices.