Presentation on
Addressing Threats towards Female Staff and Volunteers in Humanitarian Response through Strengthening Accountability

Supported by
The Global Women’s Institute
THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
JNUS
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Outline of the Presentation

Brief on JNUS
Mission, Vision and Focus Area

Project Brief
- Objective, Outcome and Methodology
- Research Objectives and Questions
- Research Findings
- Recommendations
Brief on JNUS

1. Women-led Community Based Organization
   Established in 2009

2. **Partners:** Women groups and networks, local community actors, NGOs, government and development organizations.

3. **Activities:** Campaign, training, research and advocacy, livelihood activities and right-based intervention

4. **Core Values:** Gender Equality, Impartiality, Humanity, Dignity, Human Rights, and Respect for Diversity

5. **Target Group:** The poor, marginalized and vulnerable women and girls
JNUS Vision, Mission and Focus Area

**Vision**
To bring an end of all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls irrespective of gender, race, religion and culture.

**Mission**
To promote a just, inclusive and democratic society where the women and girls will take the leadership for sustainable development.

**Focus Area**
- Gender Equality and Women Empowerment
- Preventing Violence against Women
- Climate Justice and DRR
- Social Cohesion and Peace-Building
- Health
- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
Project Brief

Name: "Enhancing Protection to Female Staff and Volunteers in the Humanitarian Response in Cox's Bazar."

Duration: 
- **First Phase:** 1 May 2021 – 31 August 2021
- **Second Phase:** 1 September 2021-31 August 2022
- **Third Phase:** 1 September 2022 – 31 August 2023

Target Group: **Female Volunteers and Staff**

Project Outcome

- Guideline for Strengthening Protection of the Female Staff and Volunteers in Humanitarian Response in Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh
- Research Report to Contribute to GBV Evidence

Methodology: Qualitative Method (40 Key Informant Interviews (KII) and 16 Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Analysis through Dedoose

Scope of the Study

Limits its scope by only focusing on the external aspects of risks, threats and vulnerabilities facing by the female staff and volunteers but did not focus on any internal issues of the respective organizations for respecting the privacy issue.
Research Objectives and Questions

Objectives

• To develop a better understanding of the trends in vulnerability, risks and threats towards female staff and volunteers
• To generate actionable recommendations for the stakeholders with an aim to contributing to a sustainable community support for ensuring safety and security of female staff and volunteers

Research Questions

• What is the current vulnerabilities, risks and threats towards female staff and volunteers?
• What measures need to be taken to mitigate these problems?
• Which stakeholders and actions need to be engaged in the prevention efforts? How?
• What are the gaps available in the existing mechanisms to provide security for female staff and volunteers? How should these gaps be addressed?
• In what ways can stakeholders play an effective role strengthening accountability to ensure their safety and security?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Threats</th>
<th>Harmful Gender Norms and Values</th>
<th>Feeling of Insecurity</th>
<th>Harassment and Bullying</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - Verbal Abuse and Physical Assault and torture, pressure and intimidation from organized criminal groups/gangs and victims of drug and human trafficking; | - IPV, Force for adopting gender-stereotyped roles,  
  - Control and domination (restrictions on the freedom of movement) | - Harassment while using wash facilities.  
  - Feeling of fear while leaving refugee camps after work.  
  - Travelling local transports after sunset.  
  - Anxiety while crossing security check-posts | - Incidences of Harassment and Bullying in the Local Transport  
  - Gender insensitive behavior from responsible and important actors  
  - Conservative attitudes towards dress-up  
  - Character Assassination and Bullying - Pressure and Intimidation from powerful elites and personalities, |
| - Victim of extortion | - Negative attitudes towards working women | | |
Target Groups and their Exposure to Vulnerability

Female Staff from Outside Cox’s Bazar
- Mostly holding upper managerial post.
- Availing the institutional protection but having limited capacity tackling risks at the local level independently.
- Moderately vulnerable to security challenges

Female Staff and Volunteers from the Host Community
- Mostly holding lower ranked managerial post and volunteer positions.
- Capable of managing risks and challenges leveraging local connections.
- Female staff Less vulnerable to security challenges but volunteers more prone to vulnerability.

Female Volunteers from the Rohingya Community
- Engaged as volunteers in the humanitarian response.
- Limited capacity to tackle risks and challenges at the local level.
- Highly vulnerable to security challenges.
Findings on the Vulnerability of Volunteers in the Rohingya and Host Community

Graph 1: I feel comfortable expressing any opinion in my family

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Host</th>
<th>Rohingya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feeling comfortable very much</td>
<td>35.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felling of fear</td>
<td>8.33%</td>
<td>23.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not feeling comfortable</td>
<td>3.33%</td>
<td>10.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat feeling comfortable</td>
<td>53.33%</td>
<td>66.10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings on the Vulnerability of Volunteers in the Rohingya and Host Community

Graph 2: I feel safe moving around in the locality

- Somewhat feeling safe:
  - Rohingya: 56.67%
  - Host: 56.14%
- Not feeling safe:
  - Rohingya: 11.67%
  - Host: 12.28%
- I feel danger:
  - Rohingya: 31.67%
  - Host: 0.00%
- Feeling safe very much:
  - Rohingya: 31.58%
  - Host: 0.00%
Findings on the Vulnerability of Volunteers in the Rohingya and Host Community

### Functional Community Support to Female Volunteers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No Support</th>
<th>Little Support</th>
<th>Better Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Host</strong></td>
<td>23.33</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>36.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Camp</strong></td>
<td>53.34</td>
<td>46.67</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BAR CHART: Comparison of functional community support levels between Host and Camp communities.
Aggravating the Vulnerability of the Female Staff and Volunteers

Context
Already strained community relations
Pressure on community resources
Rise of Armed Groups/Violent extremists
Weak and fragile governance

Security Providers
Multi-layered administrative system & overlapping institutional mechanism
Over-securitization and partisan outlook
Lack of fairness and transparency
No familiarity of security providers on gender responsive intervention

Community and Social Actors
Civil Society and Media
Polarization among development partners
Rise of violence across communities and institutions
Lack of trust on legal arrangements
Violent attitudes towards working women
Threats from powerful elites and local leaders

Cross Cutting Lens/Entrenched Structural Inequalities
Exclude women from decision making process and exercising rights
Make women more vulnerable to harmful gender norms and conflict
Disregard women as an active agency of humanitarian actor

Consequences: Weakens capacity of the female staff and volunteers, exposing them to increased vulnerability or insecurity
Risk and Challenges of Doing Research

**Safeguarding Issues**
- Debate among development partners regarding safeguarding matter as internal: Raising the privacy issue.
- Keeping the confidentiality of the information in a conflict prone environment

**Bureaucratic Hurdles**
- Securing permission from the appropriate authority
- Resistance from the Sectors
- Polarization
- Lack of support and appreciation

**Challenges at the Community Level**
- Lack of trust on enumerators of host community
- Rising violence and threat towards female volunteers
- Carefulness while interviewing GBV Staff and Volunteers
Recommendations for Strengthening Accountability

Need for a whole of society approach:
Inclusive Platform and responsible actors, holistic perspective.

Strengthening collaboration through multi-Sectoral platform: GBVSS, PSEA and Other Sectors.

Promotion of gender responsive decision making process: Accountability of the local authority and development partners.

Familiarization with multi-layer administrative and legal procedure

Gender responsive orientation for security providers

Strengthening Community, Feedback and Response Mechanism

Enhancing Trust and Confidence across Communities and Institutions.

Strengthening early warning and response mechanism

Increasing capacity of development organizations straightening their capacity and CFRM mechanism

Strengthening the effort of PSEA Network in promoting safe work environment
Recommendations for Strengthening Accountability

- Strengthen coordination and collaboration among various government and non-government actors.
- Research, Capacity Building Initiatives and Strengthening Policy Consultations to operationalize the protection regime.
- Provide concerted support toward female staff and volunteers victims of any forms of risks and challenges.
- Strengthening the Community Based Conflict Resolution Mechanism both in Rohingya and Host Community.
- Building Confidence on the Functionality of the Protection Mechanism increasing its familiarity among all actors.
- Preventing Gender-stereotyped Messages against Female Staff and Volunteers with Alternative Set of Positive Messages.
Thank You