

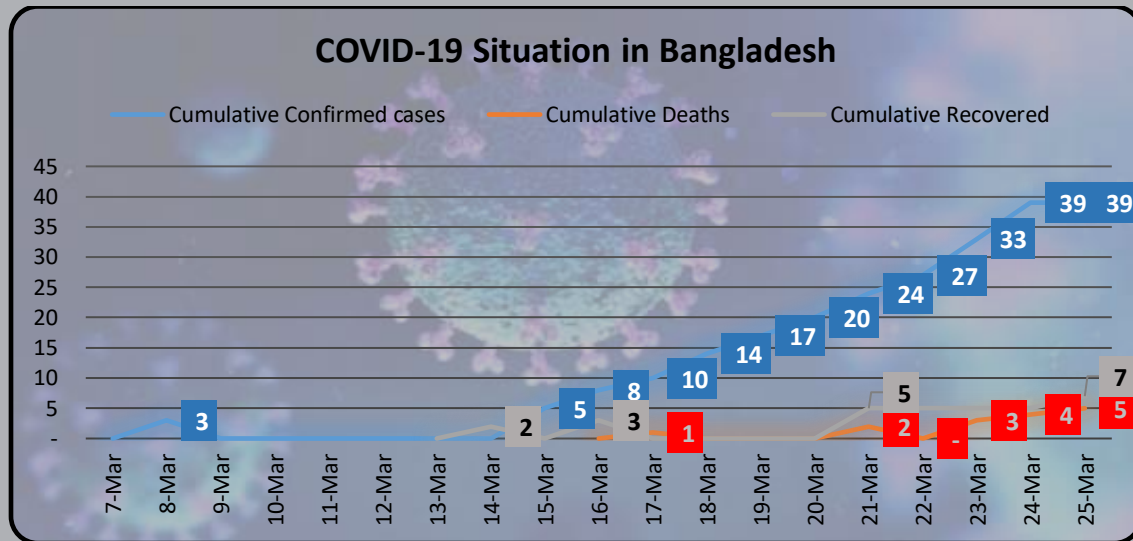
SITUATION OVERVIEW – BANGLADESH

- [WHO](#) confirms that **375,498 persons** have tested positive for COVID-19 across **196** countries. There are **16,362** deaths reported globally till 25th March 2020, 03:53 GMT+6.
- The [IEDCR](#) (Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research) confirms **39 cases** of COVID-19 in Bangladesh with no new cases in the last 24 hours. The current death toll is 5.
- According to IEDCR, Bangladesh is poised to enter the third phase of the pandemic when the number of people infected is expected to increase sharply. However, it continues to claim that there is no proof of community level transmission as yet.
- Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has addressed the nation for the first time on 25th March evening on this issue.
- She announced a stimulus package of Tk 5,000 crore for export-oriented industries. This stimulus will only be disbursed in the form of salaries and wages for employees and workers of the affected industries.
- Although the Prime Minister did not declare a 'Lockdown' or issue any 'Mandatory Stay Home Order', she urged the people not to leave home unless it's an emergency. She gave details of the preparation taken to tackle Corona outbreak.
- Passenger trains, water vessels and domestic flights have been suspended indefinitely since Monday night. Public road transport will be suspended for 10 days from 26th March till 4th April. Heavy pressure of homebound people today has created long gridlocks and zero social distance for hours on major highways.

VIEW FROM OUR FIELD STAFF

- Staff movement in the field is becoming increasingly difficult. Resistance from community is coming in typically migrant prone areas where there is increased fear of transmission. BRAC is keeping its entire operation open during the national holidays. To mitigate this risk, it has now secured a letter of approval from the government's health ministry to continue operation during the national holiday.
- Social stigma around corona is increasingly becoming a challenge for staff and community.
- BRAC has suspended the field level installment collection from microcredit borrowers till April 2nd. Aarong, its biggest Social Enterprise, is closed till April 4th.
- The field is rife with rumours which sometimes prevents people with covid-19 like symptoms to come out and seek treatment. We are collecting these unfounded rumors from our field staff and will have them refuted by experts through online videos.

BANGLADESH TIMELINE:



BRAC'S COVID-19 RESPONSE

BRAC's overarching focus for the COVID-19 response in Bangladesh is to prevent community level outbreak as much as possible in the next few days. It is mobilizing the community with the help of its 90 thousand field staff and community health volunteers to reach 5 million household by April 5th with information, videos, leaflets and behavior changing communication materials. BRAC also plans to start a mass media campaign shortly.

Our immediate COVID-19 response has a three-pronged approach as outlined below which will be followed by long term livelihood support work for the economically affected families.

1. Protection of Staff & Community

<p>7,670 Hygiene products distributed</p>	<p>3,053,687 Programme participants reached</p>
<p>46,581 Staff oriented</p>	<p>17,932 Protective wear distributed</p>
<p>653 Hand washing stations installed in Cox's Bazar</p>	<p>50,000 Health workers being trained</p>

- BRAC's online courses on COVID-19 are live at <https://bracipedia.brac.net/>. Three Video Tutorials (Introductory, Office Etiquettes, and Protection at home) have been created for BRAC staff and community's orientation are open for download.
- BRAC is currently producing **200,000 reusable masks** through hygienic domestic productions and has capacity to do more in the coming days. Large scale production of standardised Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is being explored to meet the needs of healthcare providers.
- BRAC has already distributed **7,670 units of hygiene products** such as liquid soap, sanitisers, and soaps and **17,932 units of protective wear products** such as masks and gloves to staff and communities.
- Until today, **3,053,687 programme participants**, including **3,473** persons with disabilities, were oriented on COVID-19 to ensure prevention and outbreak of the disease in communities. So far, **46,581 BRAC staff** were oriented on COVID-19.



2. Communication and mass awareness

- A webinar is tentatively scheduled for peer NGOs on March 28th
- BRAC's COVID-19 social media campaign reach is now above **11 million** through a total of 53 posts on various social media platforms (34 on Facebook, 6 on LinkedIn, 13 on YouTube). There were more than 6 million engagements through likes, shares and comments on these posts. BRAC's videos with contents regarding COVID-19 have 3.2 million views. The [webportal dedicated to COVID-19](#) has 72,000+ hits so far.
- Due to increased demand, BRAC is boosting up its IEC material distribution. An increased number of stickers and leaflets are being redesigned to convey improved and simplified messages on COVID-19. More than **2.5 million leaflets** and **500,000 stickers** with awareness messages on COVID-19 are already in distribution through the country.
- BRAC has mobilized its existing workforce of more than **50,000 health care volunteers** to reach **5 million households** with behaviour changing messages on handwashing, basic hygiene, social distance and covid-19.
- Wide coverage of BRAC's COVID-19 response activities in 58 print and digital media and 3 television channels. One special business report was published highlighting BRAC enterprise's initiative to make masks and PPEs. Various BRAC leaders participated in a number of television talk shows advocating the immediate public health priorities to tackle the situation.

Innovation

Protective eye wears are being prepared by BRAC's Social Innovation Lab in partnership with 8 fab labs of various universities.

3. New Partnerships for Prevention, Detection, & Response

- BRAC has secured a partnership with Channel I, the most popular TV channel, to start a mass media campaign. Channel I will contribute airtime and content support.

- BRAC is in conversation with A2i, to design a new mechanism of quicker response for testing at the union level across the country. It has offered its 6500-community health worker network to support this work.
- BRAC has offered its learning centre in Uttara to be considered a possible quarantine centre.
- BRAC is currently developing its second comprehensive proposal with a view to reducing the risks of COVID-19 in Bangladesh. The proposal is focusing on both health interventions and socio-economic challenges.
- UK Aid and BRAC are in partnership to comprehensively combat the immediate crisis.
- Standard Chartered Bank and BRAC are in talks in delivering emergency relief support in urban areas. Through this collaboration, some economic relief will be provided to those who are badly impacted by the shutdown.
- BRAC has deployed 5 doctors at the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) and 20 doctors to assist with the IEDCR hotline.
- BRAC is also partnering with Psychosocial Health and Wellness Centre (PHWC) and Kaan Pete Roi, in launching a nationwide tele counselling platform soon, titled "Kaan Pete Roi," for improved mental health during the pandemic.



4. Potential Hotspots

Dhaka Urban:

BRAC Urban Development Programme (UDP), in collaboration with City Corporations, Municipalities, Deputy Commissioners, and District Civil Surgeons is sanitising pedestrians and passengers with hygiene products and disinfecting the most congested points in 20 hot spots. It has also partnered with Unilever to distribute 500,000 soaps in slums.

Rohingya camp & host community in Cox's Bazaar:

Cox's Bazar is a potential high-risk zone due to its high population density. BRAC's Humanitarian Crisis Management Programme has installed 653 hand washing stations in offices and camp areas. BRAC also conducted a training session on COVID-19 for Cox's Bazar-based staff and community health workers in Whykong, Teknaf. Read more [in this blog](#). Currently the programme is in discussion with UNHCR to set up a 150-unit Isolation facility.

Supporting of sex workers:

BRAC Urban Development Programme in collaboration with Faridpur Municipality distributed food products among the residents of Rothkhola brothel which is currently under lockdown as a part of the Corona prevention measure