

Simulation in Brief

Cyclone simulation is a form of field demonstration which is an effective way of spreading warning messages and disaster awareness among rural communities. By creating such an ambience during a cyclone, and dramatically reenacting communities' reaction to it is a practical and entertaining way of conveying life saving messages. Wind speed is mimicked, water is splashed across the field assuming that there is a strong surge and people run for their lives; all of which imitate a storm-struck village in coastal Bangladesh. It is a role-playing demonstration that inclusively represents all members of a rural community and what they should or should not do during emergency. BRAC's emergency response system, its presence at all district and sub-district and the humanitarian assistance efforts are displayed by BRAC staff throughout the demonstration.

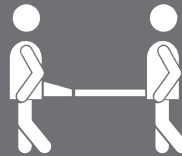


BHP Achievements

Total Outreach

500

Approx. Volunteers



4,500

Community Audience

Areas Reached

Chattogram, Sadar, Kolapara, Satkhira,
Potuakhali, Pathorghata, Borguna, Shyamnagar,
Shoronkhola, Bagerhat

Partnership

CPP - Cyclone Preparedness Programme GoB

Our Approach to Cyclone Preparedness

BRAC Disaster Risk Management Programme (previous Humanitarian Programme) works alongside the government, non-governmental organisations and communities across Bangladesh to build disaster resilience. Reducing disaster risks is one of DRMP's focus; preparing community with the knowledge of disaster can help to save lives and livelihoods. Even though early warning messages are regularly disseminated to the people, many underestimate the destructive power of cyclones. Only those who have survived such catastrophe, know the actual horror of cyclones. Many who do not know, still resort to not participating in evacuation, taking shelter and preparing their households against the hazard.

Communities living in the coastal areas of Bangladesh are at the forefront of devastating impacts of cyclones. Tidal surges and high winds have claimed lives, damaged households, assets and livelihoods. To withstand these repeatedly, vulnerable communities need to be prepared; knowledge on warning signals, significance of flag hoisting, and taking shelter can reduce the risks during emergency. Involving a village community in the preparations and demonstration of a cyclone emergency catalyses imprinting important messages over to participants; not only the rural community but the volunteers and disaster response workers gain a practical experience of humanitarian response. DRM conducts community-based simulation to build awareness among vulnerable people living in exposed coastal locations and to build capacity of first-line responder staff.

What We Learned

Effectiveness: As a result of few rounds of simulations that BRAC facilitated in November 2019, community showed a positive attitude towards evacuation to shelters during Cyclone Bulbul and Cyclone Amphan in the following years. BRAC's emergency response staff themselves were better prepared with fresh understanding on their roles and actions in emergency.



Best Practices

Partnership: This is very important part of conducting simulation in community. Stakeholders such as other disaster response agencies, volunteers' groups, and government should participate or be invited to watch the simulation. This not only improves liaison, participants' skills for inter-agency coordination but also improves during an actual crisis.

Communication: The simulation date, time and location should be well communicated to the community through speakers in order to ensure that maximum spectator comes to watch the event. Venue must be accessible friendly for elderly, women, children and persons with disability. Event timing should be during leisure. Conducting the simulation event right before cyclone season refreshes the memory of community on preparedness measures for necessary for cyclone.

Community Involvement: Since the participants also act and watch the simulation, it is important to consult the community first to know cultural acceptability, appropriateness and other local contextual matter which should be reflected in the simulation script and planning.

Entertainment Value: Having music, dance, and humor in the script of the simulation helps to gain attention of spectators, grasp on to their attention and in the process penetrate their minds with important live saving messages.