

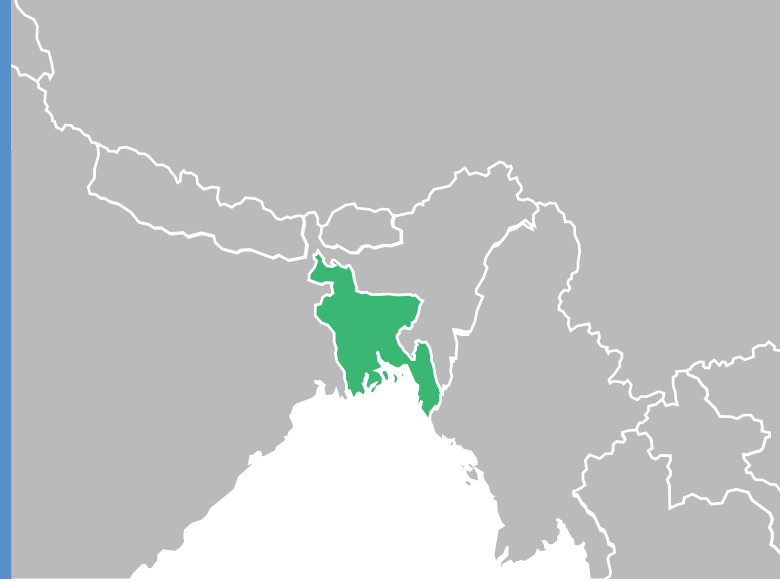
ECT WASH — Lessons Learned

Inclusive Preparedness and Immediate Response for Cyclone 'REMAL 2024'

Country
BANGLADESH

Organisation
CENTRE FOR DISABILITY
IN DEVELOPMENT (CDD)

Duration
—



BACKGROUND

The activity was implemented by the ECT-WASH project in Sarankhola sub-district, Bagherhat district, Bangladesh. Sarankhola is one of the most disaster-prone areas in the country, where access to clean water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services was critically lacking due to high salinity. The initiative aimed to address the disaster preparedness for cyclone REMAL, which struck on 26th May 2024, involving key partners such

as the Cyclone Preparedness Programme (CPP), Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, and Self-Help Groups of Persons with Disabilities.

The intervention incorporated key approaches such as Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), including the most at-risk groups, ensuring gender equity, and accessibility and participation for persons with disabilities.

KEY LESSONS LEARNED

Challenges:

Cyclone Remal, which struck Bangladesh in May 2024, underscored some challenges in disaster preparedness. Such as:

- **Accessibility Challenges:** Flooded and damaged roads impeded the movement of first responders and the delivery of essential supplies to affected communities.
- **Insufficient Shelter Accessibility:** Many evacuation shelters were not equipped to accommodate persons with disabilities, elderly individuals, or those with mobility challenges, leading to disparities in safety and comfort. For instance, many evacuation shelters do not have ramps, inclusive toilets, breastfeeding corners, and so on.

Successes:

Key Successes:

- **Early Warning Messages Dissemination with the engagement of Persons with Disability:** Timely early warning messages through multiple channels, including engagement of Persons with Disabilities from Self-Help Groups (SHGs). Engagement of Persons with Disabilities in disseminating early warning messages enhances leadership capacity and community acceptance of them.
- **Immediate Response to affected Community:** Supporting 300 most affected households through providing pure drinking water (8L), nutritious biscuits (1 family pack), Oral Saline (5 Pcs), and soaps (2 Pcs).

- **Capacity Building:** Partnering with the Cyclone Preparedness Programme (CPP) to strengthen last-meter early warning dissemination. Orienting first responders to assist in evacuation, first aid, and emergency WASH support.
- **Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration:** Effective coordination with local authorities, humanitarian agencies, and volunteers.

Key Learnings & Impact:

- **Inclusive disaster preparedness strengthens resilience** – Self-Help Group of Persons with Disabilities involvement ensured no one was left behind.
- **Early preparedness mitigates health risks** – Pre-distributed Orsaline reduced dehydration cases and waterborne diseases.
- **Stronger local response mechanisms** – Enhanced community ownership and inter-agency coordination.



Top – Orienting first responders (CPP) to assist in evacuation.

Bottom – Water is the most important thing for a woman's daily household work. Every task requires water. But if the water is contaminated with germs, it can cause serious problems. (Photo was taken on March 2025 by Rubinaa, woman with a physical disability, a resident of Chalitabunia village in Southkhali Union, Sarankhola Sub-district, Bagherhat District, Bangladesh).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Integrate Nature-Based Solutions – Promote rainwater harvesting, green infrastructure, and ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction.

Strengthen Coordination – Enhance collaboration between humanitarian agencies, local governments, and climate experts.

Adopt Renewable Energy – Use solar-powered water pumps and lighting in evacuation shelters.

Ensure Accessibility & Inclusion – Design interventions that cater to persons with disabilities, elderly populations, and women.

Avoid Short-Term Fixes – Avoid temporary solutions that do not contribute to long-term climate resilience.