

# Preventing a COVID-19 Garment Sector Health and Supply Chain Crisis in Bangladesh



GBV training in the community. © CARE

Strengthening community and garment factory health and Gender Based Violence (GBV) systems in response to the COVID-19 crisis in Bangladesh. This project will focus on COVID-19 and GBV awareness for factory workers and community people, training for health champions and committees, supporting the functioning of satellite clinics, and setting up digital wellbeing centres, behavioural change, and capacity building across 25 factories and 15 communities.

<b>Countries:</b> Bangladesh
<b>Sector:</b> Garments
<b>Lead Partner:</b> CARE International UK
<b>Partners:</b> CARE Bangladesh, Marks & Spencer
<b>Total budget incl. partner contribution:</b> £813,970
<b>Donor:</b> FCDO, <b>Facility Manager:</b> Mott MacDonald



"At M&S we have a robust approach to ethical fashion - we know we're only as strong as the communities where we operate, and we're committed to helping improve the lives of workers in our supply chain through collaborative initiatives. We're proud to be partnering again with FCDO and CARE to strengthen healthcare systems and services in our factories in Bangladesh and the wider community."

**Fiona Sadler, Head of Ethical Trading, M&S**

"Businesses have an important role to play to ensure people within their operations and value chains are safe, treated with dignity and can prosper. COVID-19 poses a critical threat to Bangladesh garment workers, with hundreds of thousands of people in dense areas at risk. We are excited to continue to work with Marks and Spencer in partnership with FCDO to ensure workers and communities have access to relevant information, facilities and services to reduce the spread of COVID-19."

**Laura Hawkesford, Head of Private Sector Engagement, CARE International UK**



## Challenge

- COVID-19 is disproportionately impacting low-income families living in urban communities.
- In Bangladesh, women and girls bear the burden of this crisis as negative gender norms, which already limit women's decision making over health and access to health services, are compounded.
- CARE's rapid assessment showed 33% of women reporting physical abuse, lack of COVID-19 safety awareness, 100% indicated increased mental pressure, health services including ante and post-natal care have reduced by up to 87%.

## Initiative

- Deliver immediate and medium-term health interventions that build on the successful approach and infrastructure of the 4-year HALOW+ project.
- Increase access to primary health care services through strengthening the urban primary health care system in garment factories and communities, including establishing digital well-being centres and by facilitating linkages with health service providers.
- Conduct situational analysis for assessing factories, and training on health, hygiene, COVID-19, and GBV to factory workers, health champions, factory management, factory medical teams, government frontline health workers, community people and committees at factory and community level.
- Strengthen community and factory approaches to addressing GBV in the context of COVID-19 through capacity-building of prevention and response mechanisms.
- Strengthen community platforms and empowering communities by developing their leadership and management capacity to lead community activities in the long term and maintain SRHR integrated WASH infrastructure.
- Collect success and human stories, organise workshops, and share best practices.

## Expected Results

### Win-win for vulnerable people and responsible businesses:

- 80,000 garment workers in 25 factories have increased awareness of COVID-19 and GBV.
- 300,000 people living in 15 low-income communities indirectly reached.
- 10,000 beneficiaries visit digital well-being centres.
- Improved knowledge on health, hygiene or risk messaging on COVID 19 which will reduce vulnerability to health crisis as well as increased access to (and use of) primary health services for the factory workers and community people.

### Gender and social inclusion:

- Increased uptake and confidence in GBV support & reporting systems by the workers and communities.
- Strengthened community resilience and support systems for low income population in 15 communities to address emergency health crisis.

Mott MacDonald Limited is the Facility Manager for the Vulnerable Supply Chain Facility. We have partnered with 16 UK retailers supporting 84 small and medium sized businesses across Africa and Asia, which supply to the UK. The Facility will lead to economic, social, and health benefits for around 1 million women and men directly and indirectly.