

RESULTS SUMMARY

Milestone of Core Humanitarian Standards Compliance

Author: Caritas Denmark (CDK, 2025)

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PROJECT	Title:	Milestone of Core Humanitarian Standards compliance
	Partner:	Caritas Bangladesh (CB)
	Country:	Bangladesh
	Period:	2022-24

CHANGE	<p>Since 2019, with support from Caritas Denmark (CDK) and then other Caritas members, CB set out to develop a strong safeguarding system. A UNICEF assessment rated CB's PSEA capacity as "Full" in March 2024, demonstrating that CB's perseverance had yielded results and its PSEA capacity had improved significantly. Ultimo 2024 - primo 2025, CB decided to go for verification against the Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS), which will increase and cement CB's capacity for delivering rights-based and people-centered humanitarian support.</p>
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CONTEXT	<p>CB is a Catholic humanitarian organisation with 3200 staff and 1950 volunteers, working in the central office in Dhaka, in eight regional offices, three social enterprises and 96 development and humanitarian projects (2023-24), including the Rohingya crisis intervention in Cox's Bazar. CB's management approved a safeguarding policy in 2019, but practical implementation of the policy across the organisation was a huge undertaking, involving new structures, systems, training and induction of existing and new staff and volunteers.</p>
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CONTRIBUTION	<p>As a CHS certified organisation, CDK initiated a dialogue with CB on the various standards immediately after their partnership started in Cox's Bazar in 2019 and shared good practices from other CDK's partners. CDK, CB and other partners formed a steering group in 2020 to fund and further a Safeguarding Mainstreaming Project, which has enabled CB not only to roll-out their safeguarding policy but also to progress on other key areas of humanitarian programming, resulting in CB taking the steep to go for official verification against the CHS.</p>
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IMAGES	 <p>Safeguarding training in Teknaf, Cox's Bazar. Photo credit: Caritas Bangladesh</p>	 <p>IEC training material. Photo credit: Caritas</p>
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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACTIVITIES

In 2019, at partnership inception, first dialogue about policies in place at CB,- 2020, Creation of steering committee for Safeguarding Mainstreaming Project of CB, Action Plan for compliance of Safeguarding Policy - 2021 CDK has invited CB to use and adapt IEC from Caritas Uganda to the local context. These IEC have then been adapted and used during several years for awareness raising trainings by CB. CB has, among others, led surveys to identify Internal Reporting Channels of Safeguarding and Training of Trainers (TOT) on the Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding & Complain Response Mechanism – 2022, CIMS assessment conducted with high scores, including for safeguarding. -2023 – Roll-out continues.-2024 UNICEF assessment is now “full” as safeguarding focal points and committees exist in each region and under each programme. Regular onboarding trainings for all volunteers and staff about code of conduct, safeguarding of vulnerable adults. The central office’s safeguarding team is bigger and the complaint handling committee is well trained.

LESSONS

Caritas Bangladesh’s safeguarding work became more effective after they started to integrate gender awareness in safeguarding. Regular assessments provide the partner with the opportunity to reflect on its own capacities and organisational culture. Confidential handling of sensitive complaints requires close integration with data protection policies. Full accountability to the complainant must be reconciled with HR procedures (e.g.confidentiality). The involvement of the whole organisation / management is necessary to create a culture of safeguarding, not only on programme level. Also, mainstreaming of safeguarding demand organisational core cost investments. Ongoing dialogue and coaching from CDK was essential, proactively sharing good practices, ideas, including from other ownerships to CB. The support of the Caritas Confederation and its platform “Baobab” was key to collect learning and best practices, and kick-start the pilot planning and adjust method to context

EVIDENCE

CB worked hard and worked hard and determined on safeguarding and protection, supported and guided by CDK (e.g. several visits per year, online support from CDK programme coordinator, and technical exchanges between CDK and CB safeguarding focal points) paving the way for the good result of the UNICEF’s PSEA capacity assessment in 2024. The assessment of the common standards of the Caritas confederation, CIMS (2022), gave CB a baseline on where they stood, and milestone informing if they were on track. The continuous dialogue between CDK, CB and other CI partners (safeguarding mainstreaming steering committee) helped to maintain focus and safeguarding on the agenda in the organization, as reported in Annual safeguarding mainstreaming progress reports (2022-23-24) from CDK’s monitoring visit. During the last monitoring visits, end of 2024 and primo 2025, based on their high level of compliance, CB confirmed that they are in process of CHS verification.

DOMAINS

Development strategy priorities:

Insert strategy priority

Changes in the lives of people facing poverty, marginalisation or vulnerability

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Changes in laws, policies and practices that affect people’s rights

X

Changes in the capacity of organisations and communities to support rights

X

Changes in partnerships and collaborations that support people’s rights

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Changes in participation of groups facing poverty, marginalisation or vulnerability

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Changes in local leadership of development and humanitarian work

X