

ISC PROJECT EVALUATION REPORT

Date: January-December, 2022



Implemented by: COAST Foundation

Supported by: UNHCR

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Background of the project:

Since 2019, COAST has implemented peace building/peaceful coexistence activities among the youths of both refugee and host communities, Union Parishad members, local journalists, teachers, students and civil society. The project identified issues of social cohesion and facilitated the advocacy approach to promote peaceful co-existence among the host community and refugees. As a result, the sensitization of communities on peaceful co-existence, human rights, and refugee rights has resulted in positive changes. Notably, Union Parishad and Upazila Parishad are now aware of the complexities related to the repatriation process and are more interested in participating and assisting with peaceful coexistence activities between Rohingya refugees and host communities. In 2022, youths, teachers, community representatives, government officials, local government representatives, journalists, civil society, women leaders, religious leaders, and diverse groups of the Rohingya community participated and engaged with the project activities. Greater engagement of host communities created stronger linkage with local government and Upazila Parishad mitigated some of the root causes of problems between refugees and host community members. In 2022, three local clubs were engaged with project activities and arranged skill development training for unemployed host community youths.

Objective and Methodology:

The objective of the Evaluation:

The purpose of the evaluation is to provide a comprehensive analysis of the social cohesion and peaceful co-existence among Rohingyas and the host community with the below-mentioned perspectives:

- (i) The degree to which the project goals and objectives were achieved;
- (ii) How relevant the project activities were to the existing needs of the communities.
- (iii) What challenges are still lurking and need to be addressed?
- (iv) The sustainability of this project.

Methodology of the Evaluation:

The methodology used to develop this review report is as follows:

Desk Review of Relevant Documents:

A desk review was conducted of project documents including relevant project documents, outputs, narrative implementation reports, project planning documents, and performance reports. For a better understanding of the project activities and reports, an open discussion was held with the project field staff.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD):

3 FGDs are conducted with 27 members of different groups of beneficiaries and stakeholders to figure out their involvement with the project, achievement, and benefits of the social cohesion plan, interactive sessions, awareness sessions, conflict resolution projects, etc.



FGD with host community women at Whykong up_PC-Ahammad



KII with Bazar management committee and local businessmen at Unchiprang bazar_PC- Sabina

Key Informant Interview (KII):

To assess the immediate result of the project, 4 Key informant interviews were held with numerous direct and indirect stakeholders, donor representatives, project team and project beneficiaries in the period of January 2022 to December 2022. These interviews aimed to analyze the success or otherwise of the project in terms of reaching the objectives outlined in the project document.

Interviews were conducted with:

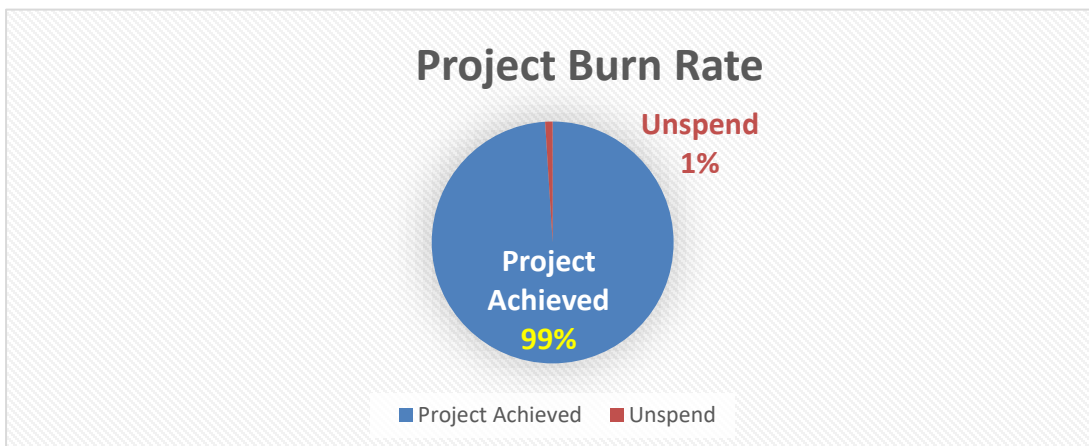
- (i) Improving Social Cohesion Project Team
- (ii) Community people
- (iii) Religious Leaders
- (iv) Union Parishad members
- (v) Youths from local clubs
- (vi) Bazar management committee and Peaceful Co-existence Committee

Findings:

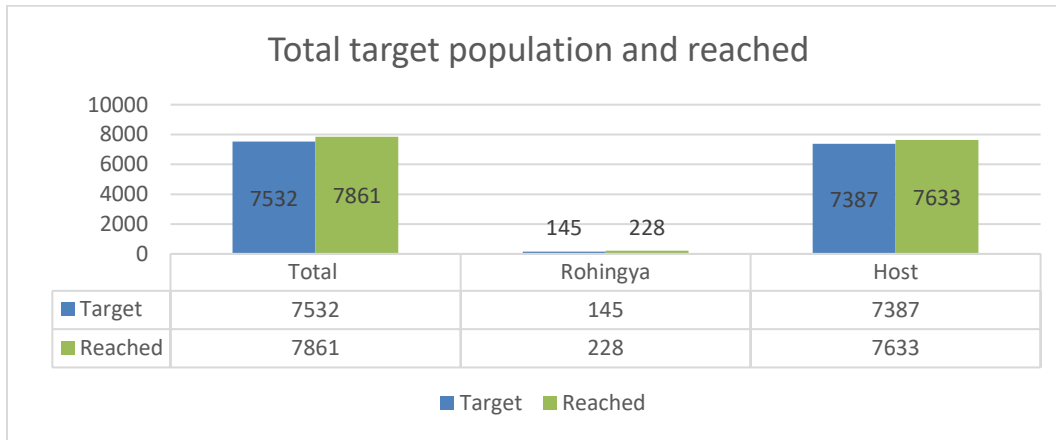
1. Due to delay of repatriation process and some unexpected incidents inside camps, the host community's attitude towards the Rohingyas turned negative day by day. During and after the intervention of this project a liberal and positive understanding is growing up about the importance of peaceful co-existence and social cohesion among both community people. In the early years of implementing the project, participants interfere and argue while we were talking about peaceful co-existence and social cohesion. But now it not happing. Now the community people come to realize the real situation because of our project intervention.
2. The project run an assessment among 40 journalists in Ukhia and Teknaf to understand whether they consider or not the sensitivity or negative consequences of any news on Rohingya. 70% of them responded as Not.
3. Peaceful co-existence committee members (PCC Members) and Union Parishad members (UP Members) think the project has less scope to address or advocate for solutions that prevails at the community level
4. Project activities certainly sensitizing on the issues but it required to reach more people.

5. Key stakeholders of the projects like PCC members, and UP members are afraid of talking or addressing the issues of peaceful co-existence and social cohesion because the administration of the Bangladesh government do not welcome project like this.
6. Influential key stakeholders living nearby camps influenced the host community people to make them understand not to increase anger toward Rohingyas. As a result, included in the social cohesion committee members of the Rohingya and host community, are sensitized and worked more effectively to identify the gaps and challenges in ensuring social cohesion and peaceful co-existence.
7. Host communities living inside and close to the camps were more concerned about insecurity. Through conducting peacebuilding meetings, a harmonious environment grew up between both communities that we have informed while running camp coordination meetings and conducting FGD inside camps.
8. Participants think, besides the awareness-raising initiatives it is mandatory to help host community people by providing them with food support, and health care under this project.
9. Engagement of local and Rohingya youths with project activities is much more appreciated by the community people. They think it is reducing the risk of youth's involvement in any illegal means or activities.
10. In this project year Government officials, local union parishad, journalists, and civil society members participated effectively in different project activities in terms of finding out gaps, challenges, and ways forwards.
11. The rate of publishing negative social media posts and news about Rohingya comparatively reduced other than the previous years.
12. 17 community support projects in the host and Rohingya communities in the last project years created a positive narrative about the Rohingya response management. 80% of the participants nodded that, it is one of the big positive activities for the support of the host community.
13. Only 30% of the participants who received different skill development training under this are now active and engaged with IGA.
14. 100% of the Rohingya respondents want to go back to their country and until that, they want peaceful staying here in Bangladesh.

Burn Rate and Project Achievements:



The project achieved a 99% burn rate of its total budget. In 2022, the project has targeted 7532 host and Rohingya community people through 144 advocacy initiatives comprising 53 sensitization meetings, 44 human rights and peacebuilding sessions engaging community people of different categories and professions, 5 community support projects implementation, 3 dialogues between host people live within the camp and UP, strengthening 40 local youths through skill development training on graphics design, awareness raising activities, sports, and cultural competitions, 3 Journalist workshop, World Refugee Day, 12 radio program broadcasting, and Human Rights Day observation, 16 days of activism against Gender-Based Violence and other social awareness raising activities.



From January to December 2022, the project reached 7861 (104%) of the total targeted program participants 7532 and implemented 92% (133) advocacy initiatives of the total targeted 144 initiatives. Among the participants 65% (5110) are male and 35% (2751) are female. Among the total program participants, 228 participants are from the Rohingya community and 7633 are from the host community engaged with the project activities. Among the total program participants, 23 people with disabilities were also engaged in the project activities. Through the targeted 1 sensitization meeting of the social cohesion promotion committee, both Rohingya and host community leaders meet each other and discussed the existing problems in ensuring social cohesion and peaceful co-existence. 25 participants from both Rohingya and host communities including camp CiC, ACiC, and site management were present in this meeting. 2 meetings with the bazaar management committee of Balukhali and Kutopalong sensitized on human rights and peaceful trading system, that ensures the conflict-free and harmonized relationship between Rohingya and host community in those bazaars. Conducting 6 sensitization sessions with 90 religious' leaders of the host community sensitized on and spread the messages of social cohesion, human rights, and social peace through their religious sermons. 2141 adolescents and youths of educational institutions are reached through 12 interactive sessions on peacebuilding, Social Cohesion, Human Rights, and PSEA. On the occasion of World Refugee Day 2022, the objectives of the day observation are disseminated among the 14 host community leaders, 21 youth and women leaders. 106 youths from local clubs are supported through the planning meetings to contribute to social welfare and peacebuilding activities. With the support of Radio Saikat, the project produced and published 2 content on social media and broadcasted those on Radio Saikat. These contents have been creating positive narratives among the host community. 1189 people in different categories received the monthly newsletters. Strengthened the capacity of 30 village police to resolve community-level conflicts. The project implemented 5 community support cohesion projects involving both communities in a platform through 3 dialogues. 40 host community youths received

skill development training on graphics design. 2 sports competitions connect both Rohingya and host community youths making them more positive to increase social peace and social harmony. 100 club members of local youth clubs observe 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, they became more aware of and committed to work stop gender-based violence at their community level. Moreover, the awareness-raising campaign on road safety has created awareness among pedestrians, transport workers, and owners.



Sensitization meeting with SCPC and SCPG at camp 27. PC_Ahammad



World Human Right Day observation at Whykong union. PC_Ahammad

Project location area:

| Sl | Name of Union | Name of Upazila | Name of Camp |
|----|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 01 | Rajapalong | Ukhiya | - |
| 02 | Whykong | Teknaf | - |
| 03 | Hnila | Teknaf | 27 (Jadimora) |

The project location is Rajapalong, Whykong, and Hnilla unions of Ukhiya and Teknaf Upazila, and Camp 1 East, 1 West, 21, 26, 27. The project got the approval for implementing project activities in camp 27 only. Government authority did not provide approval for camps 1 East, 1 West, 21, 26. activities of these camps have been postponed and those activities shifted to the host community area near the camps location. The project has engaged host community people who live inside the camps as well.

Effectiveness and Efficiency of the Project:

Targeting influential community leaders, the project started working with people of different professions and categories who are directly or indirectly engaged with the communities. The following institutions are considered as the unit of the project implementation;

- Upazila Parishad
- Union Parishad
- Educational Institution
- Religious Institution
- Relevant Government Office
- Rohingya Camps
- Local Clubs

During the interview with local community leaders, said that they have given shelter to the Rohingyas considering humanity and sympathy. But now, they are very much worried and frustrated due to the delay of the Rohingya repatriation, criminal activities by some Rohingyas etc. But it is true that until repatriation, social cohesion is mandatory for their safety and security. The importance of social cohesion and peaceful co-existence becomes clear through the participation of different seminars, sessions, meetings, dialogue and camp visits. To sustain a peaceful environment the initiatives or the activities are very effective. Most of the teachers of educational institutions of Ukhiya and Teknaf acknowledged that their students developed extra-curricular activities and enriched their knowledge of human rights through the project activities in educational institutions.

Sustainability of the Project:

COAST Foundation in collaboration with UNHCR successfully launched a discourse on the level of social cohesion between Ukhiya and Teknaf in 2019, and thus the project team utilized the experience and learnings during the design and implementation of the project in 2022. A critical part of various stakeholders involved in project events and discussions, in their turn, utilized the social cohesion understanding to recommend the best ways. The stakeholders who participated in project activities expressed their commitment and interest in further developing the understanding and incorporating the social cohesion aspect to improve peaceful coexistence. Simultaneously to further exploration and development of the social cohesion approaches, the project team planned to focus on youths and local government who are considered the most influential and effective units to sustain the efforts.

The key stakeholders think that the activities should be continued broadly as the risk of conflict among both communities is increasing day by day. The relationship between the communities is getting worse as the Rohingya repatriation is delayed. On the other hand, most of the Rohingyas are passing their time idle instead of engaging in work which also created a risk of their involvement with illegal activities. At this moment, they should be sensitized continuously.

"It's important to create awareness, not just in certain people, but in everyone. And the people who have been affected by the Rohingya crisis need to be made aware of peaceful coexistence as well as other assistance. We want peaceful coexistence until repatriation. There is no other way. And more people from both communities should continue to be aware of this". - Amir Ali-Religious Teacher

Major Learnings:

During the project implementation, there were some learnings and the project strengthened its capacity from the learnings and identified some weaknesses. The learnings are;

1. Effective community engagement makes the strategy of project implementation easier.
2. Providing skill development training to local youths reduces the anger and frustration of the host community, which arises due to the Rohingya influx.
3. Youth club engagement with project activities increases a positive sense of NGO activities.
4. Advocacy on the findings identified by the dialogues and meetings can mitigate the gaps between both communities and improve social cohesion.
5. Engagement of the law enforcement unit with the project activities creates a good impression among the community people.

6. Youths of host and Rohingya communities are at risk of engaging in illegal activities. Their involvement with the project activities accelerates social cohesion and peacebuilding.
7. Working with and involving media in the social cohesion discourse could be considered a priority to spread understanding of social cohesion and promote relevant concepts.
8. The ideas and approaches of social cohesion should be broadly spread and discussed with other governmental entities, development agencies, international organizations, and CSOs.

Major Challenges:

- Limitation of human resources and budget to reach a huge number of people.
- Negative attitude of government officials towards social cohesion and peaceful co-existence.
- Unexpected occurrences in the camps create fear and anxiety among the host community people.
- Limitation of engaging both community people in a single platform.
- Limitations in continuing advocacy to solve the issues arise in different dialogues and meetings from the participants.
- Negative outlook of camp management about social cohesion hinders to implementation of cohesion activities in the camps.
- Sudden plan change.

Major Recommendation:

1. The involvement and participation of COAST high-level staff is required in different project activities.
2. Different advocacy initiatives must be taken under this project to address the issues of Peaceful Co-existence and social cohesion.
3. Liaison and communication with donors in terms of project expansion and budget.
4. Training is required for field staff on communication, facilitation, report writing, and CHS.

Review Team

All the project staff are involved in this project evaluation process. Names and designations are given below

| SI | Name of Staff | Designation |
|----|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| 01 | Zahangir Alam | Project Coordinator |
| 02 | Md. Eakub | Finance and Admin officer |
| 03 | Tanjir Uddin Roni | Advocacy & Communication officer |
| 04 | Julfikar Hossain | Field Coordinator |
| 05 | Ahammad Ullah | Field Coordinator |
| 06 | Md. Sahazahan | Union Coordinator |

Conclusion:

To sum up the review, it can be mentioned that the community engagement with the project activities is satisfactory but it can be improved.