

## SITUATION OVERVIEW

- Coronavirus is spreading across the world at a greater speed, affecting 177 countries and claiming 30,857 lives. There are approximately 665,616 confirmed cases worldwide. The US now has the highest number of confirmed cases, recording more than any other country, including China and Italy. Europe has also seen a surge in cases.
- Contrary to what's happening globally, in Bangladesh, the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research ([IEDCR](#)) announced zero increase in confirmed cases since Friday after 109 new tests were done during the last 24 hours. One new testing centre is getting started in Chittagong and 8 more to be set up in divisional cities in the next 2 weeks as per the ministry briefing.
- 7 'corona like' deaths were reported in local media from different parts of the country in the last 24 hours. At the same time, there is news of people being refused treatment on corona suspicion with growing fear of social ostracization of ill patients across the country. A temporary hospital being built in Tejgaon met resistance by a mob of 25000 people and was rampaged. There were similar stories like these across the country. Some DCs have also started putting a red flag in returnee migrants' houses creating a new kind of profiling
- Bangladesh has stopped all international flights till April 15th and US and UK have asked all its citizens to leave the country and are arranging chartered planes for their departure.
- A major debate is raging about PPEs. While on one hand there is government claim of sufficient PPEs procured or in the pipeline, doctors are reporting lack of any protection from around the country. An informal survey by BRAC Executive Director saw close to 200 hospitals, including some major public hospitals, reporting need for PPE. There is also lack of understanding of who needs the PPE resulting in misallocation. There are media reports of sharp drop in doctors' attendance in public hospitals as a result of this insecurity.



- After 4 days of unofficial lockdown like situation around Dhaka and other major cities, the daily wage earners and slum dwellers are in an extremely vulnerable situation and in need of immediate help. Support announced from government is not enough. The local telecom authority announced that close to 11.5 million people, half its population, left Dhaka since the general holiday was announced.

## VIEWS FROM THE FIELD



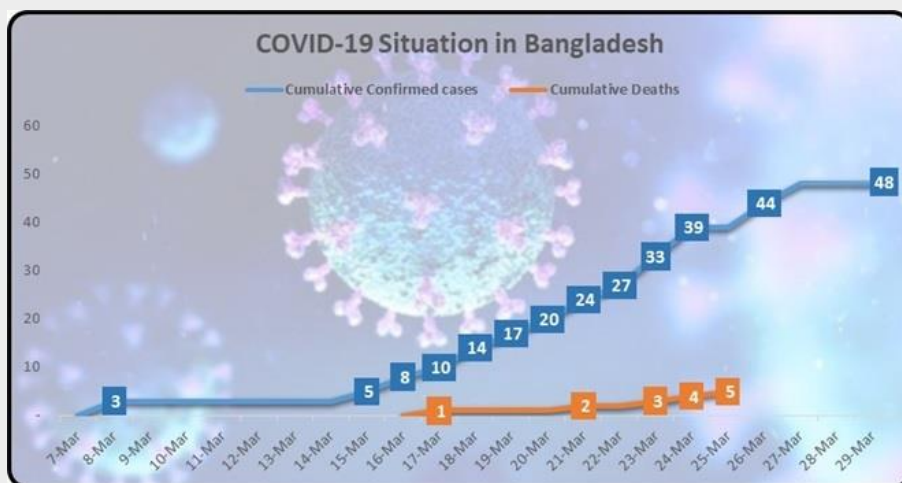
- The concept of social distancing is not working so well. People gathered as usual at Friday prayers in the mosque, and are continuing to gather at tea stalls for socialising. BRAC Field staff are creating circles in front tea stalls which seems to have an impact.

- The fear of block wide lock down and social ostracization has created fear in the community about reporting

symptoms and asking for covid 19 tests. Similar views were echoed from other development partners. This may result in under reporting of actual cases of transmission.

- Our community groups are reporting increased violence against women during lockdown.
- Covid-19 is taking toll on people's mental health because of increased uncertainty, fear and panic.

## BANGLADESH TIMELINE



## BRAC'S COVID-19 RESPONSE

BRAC's immediate short-term focus for the COVID-19 response in Bangladesh is to ensure staff protection and preventing community level outbreak as much as possible through community engagement, behaviour change communication and mass campaigning. After the recent shutdown, it is also planning to provide short term relief to the low-income urban poor. It is also currently building mid to long term strategy for economic revitalization of the very poor.



## 1. Protection of staff and community

**568,095** hygiene products distributed

9,688.648 Programme Participants reached

**127,761** Staff and volunteers oriented

**106,519** protective wear distributed

**670** hand washing stations installed in Cox's Bazar

**11 million** social media reach

- So far, BRAC has distributed **568,095 units of hygiene products** such as liquid soap, bathing soap and sanitisers to staff and the community. Until now, **106,519 units of protective wear** such as masks and gloves were also distributed.
- BRAC has produced **200,000 reusable masks** through hygienic domestic productions and has capacity to do more in the coming days.
- Until today, **9,688,648 programme participants**, including **50,966** persons with disabilities, were oriented on COVID-19 to ensure prevention and outbreak of the disease in communities. So far, **127,761 BRAC staff and volunteers** were oriented on COVID-19.
- BRAC's online courses on COVID-19 are live at <https://bracipedia.brac.net/> and have been included now in the government's open learning platform for certification.



## 2. Communication and mass awareness raising



- A major new print, digital and electronic media campaign was launched to complement the work on the ground featuring a very popular folk singer. A [music video featuring Kuddus Boyati](#) with behaviour changing messages in his song with mass appeal managed almost four million views in two days in facebook. The song is also being played through loudspeakers around all around the country and is also being aired in all the major TV channels, FM radio stations and in all the community radio stations.
- BRAC's social media campaign reach is now above 11 million through a total of 53 posts on various social media platforms (34 on Facebook, 6 on LinkedIn, 13 on YouTube).



- A total of [8 million leaflets](#) and 4 million stickers bearing simple yet crucial information on COVID-19 are in distribution. The field staff was at the field during the shutdown ensuring people have the correct information.



## Innovation for education continuity...

Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) has started giving lessons through Television from today for secondary students. BRAC is a contributor to the learning platform and has worked on designing content and lesson plans.

- BRAC has mobilised its existing workforce of more than 50,000 healthcare volunteers to reach 5 million households with behaviour changing messages on hand washing, basic hygiene and social distancing.



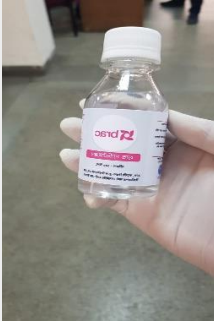
## 3. New Partnership

- BRAC is doing an informal need analysis of the PPEs in various hospitals and trying to make matches with local and international suppliers and donor. It has also donated 50 coverall, 1500 gloves, 200 hexisol, 50 shoe cover and head cover to Sohrawardy hospital, a major hospital in short of medical supplies.



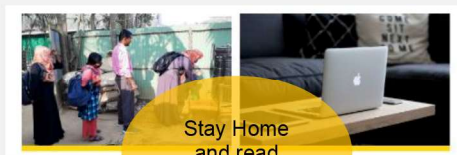
nationwide emergency tele-counselling platform. Anyone who is distressed and suffering from the panic, stigma and fear caused by the COVID-19 outbreak will be able to access the platform for counselling support.

- BRAC is facilitating the work of about 40 voluntary groups who are donating relief to the urban poor by supporting them in distribution and also with urban slum data to avoid duplication. The map and the website will be launched tomorrow.
- BRAC skills department partnered with BRAC University's Pharmaceutical department to produce hand sanitizers and bottled 1638 units and distributed across Dhaka's urban poor. The partnership is now being extended to engage 2 million members of Bangladesh Scouts.



## 4. Emerging Issues and shifting strategies

- BRAC Is rapidly put together an international urgent appeal to support the low income and poor families in urban areas who are facing severe economic crunch due to the economic shutdown.
- Cox's Bazar operations to support Rohingya refugees and the host community suffered a blow as all but emergency activities in the camp areas were stopped. Only 50% of the staff base are permitted to continue to work in the camp area as long as the threat of the virus looms.



### Partners:

