



Advancing Locally Led, Cost-Effective and Sustainable Humanitarian Response in Cox's Bazar and Bhashan Char

INTRODUCTION

Till 2025, the Pooled Fund for Localisation, managed by BRAC, demonstrated that true localization is not just about funding local actors but enabling them to lead, decide, and deliver. Through a systematic approach to organizational capacity development and inclusive governance, the Fund has not only strengthened local Bangladeshi NGOs (BNGOs) but has shifted humanitarian leadership to where it belongs — within the communities it serves.

This highlight captures the story of the Fund's prioritized activities in advancing local leadership and decision-making, anchored by strong results and impactful partnerships.

LOCAL ACTORS: CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE

The BRAC Pooled Fund initiated its work with 27 Bangladeshi NGOs (BNGOs) during 2022–2023 to build a

locally led, cost-effective, and sustainable humanitarian response mechanism for Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char. The localisation effort adopted a multidimensional strategy encompassing organisational capacity development, direct humanitarian funding, broader ecosystem strengthening, and risk management. By the end of 2024, four BNGOs that began their localisation journey in 2022 graduated from the programme.

In 2025, the Pooled Fund continues to support 21 partners implementing 23 projects—21 in Cox's Bazar and 2 in Bhasan Char, across education, WASH, and livelihoods sectors. These organizations were selected through a transparent Expression of Interest (EOI) process based on rigorous eligibility and capacity assessment criteria.

Each BNGO was categorized into three tiers (emerging, growing, matured) and received tailored sub-grants and extensive capacity strengthening.

AT A GLANCE

- Served 6,824 Rohingya learners (108 children with disabilities)
- 4,939 participants received training and input support
- 79% reported increased income after joining Livelihood projects.
- 605 out of 1,210 off-firm trainees earn 1,500–2,000 BDT monthly.
- 2,880 out of 3,630 on-firm participants sold 28.8 tons vegetables for 864,000 BDT.
- 102,733 people served with WASH services in Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char
- Produced 10.4 tons of organic compost
- Conducted 42,526 HH-level hygiene sessions and 132 Camp Cleaning campaigns

LOCALIZING WASH LEADERSHIP IN CAMP 5, UKHIYA, COX'S BAZAR

In 2023, the BRAC-managed Pooled Fund for Localisation achieved a major breakthrough by fully transferring WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) services in Camp 5, Ukhiya, to three Bangladeshi NGOs—DSK, JSK, and HELP Cox's Bazar. For the first time, all aspects of WASH for 28,381 Rohingya refugees are designed, managed, and delivered by local actors, redefining what locally led humanitarian action can achieve.

With BRAC's technical guidance, the partners established a comprehensive WASH system, including a piped water network, rehabilitated sanitation facilities, regular desludging services, structured waste management, and robust hygiene promotion activities.

"PF partners have achieved as much as any other partners who have worked on the response for many years." - Julian Graveleau, WASH Sector Coordinator, ISCG

Recognised by the Inter-WASH sector coordinator of ISCG for matching sector-wide standards, this achievement demonstrates the power of local leadership in delivering high-quality humanitarian services.



EDUCATION



LIVELIHOOD



WASH



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