Knowledge hub
-
Collection of best practices

Summary of the best practice

1. Title of the best practice (e.g. name of policy, programme, project, etc.) *

Education in Emergency Project for FDMN and Host Community

2. Country or countries where the practice is implemented *

Bangladesh

3. Please select the **most relevant** Action Track(s) the best practice applies to *

☑ Action Track 1. Inclusive, equitable, safe, and healthy schools

☐ Action Track 2. Learning and skills for life, work, and sustainable development

☐ Action Track 3. Teachers, teaching and the teaching profession

☑ Action Track 4. Digital learning and transformation

☐ Action Track 5. Financing of education

4. Implementation lead/partner organization(s) *

   VSO as a lead partner; Shushilan as implementing partners.

5. Key words (5-15 words): Please add key descriptive words around aims, modalities, target groups etc. *

   Peer to Peer Learning, Marginalized and Vulnerable Refugee and nearby Host community, Community Volunteer, Offline content, VSO School app, Capacity Building.

6. What makes it a best practice? *

The project has completed its ninth phase of implementation in 2021, which started in 2018 in Cox's Bazar district of Bangladesh, where 110 women aged between 18 and 32 volunteered as 'Big Sisters or Big Mothers. Along with 09 community volunteers mentoring them, which expanded to support more than 6000 marginalized children from forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals at the refugee camp and nearby host community in Bangladesh. VSO implements an innovative home-based Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) program following the 'Sister to Sister' model. Where older girls and young women ("Big Sister/Mother") were selected from the community (Rohingya and Host), who act as ECCE facilitators for children of 3-5 years old. They are being trained and monitored by the ECCE center supervisor/ Community Mobilizers who are received ToT from VSO's international and national volunteers. Big Sisters use their own homes as a learning center and follow VSO's ECCE curriculum developed in partnership with MESHGuide and 'VSO School App' developed in partnership with USTAD Mobile. This home-based ECCE tackles the challenge of inadequate and safe spaces for implementing center-based education. Family Booklet has been developed for the Big Sisters who are trained to produce and use low-cost/no-cost locally available learning. As VSO is implementing this project with national partner NGO "Shushilan" we have skilled Community volunteers who are engaged to deliver activities and quality education to our targeted beneficiaries. They are working field level with expertise by reviving capacity development training by VSO national and international volunteers and Cox's Bazar education sector. Volunteer supported for inclusiveness, people-first development, and personalized social support services. Other adults serve as Big Sisters/Mother. VSO introduced its own "School app to this project first time at the refugee camp and then extended the support to the host community to build the capacity of community volunteers and Big sister/mother. Which enables us to intergrade education technology through our ECD intervention. VSO School app was launched within 6months after completing its design and the developer company was USTAD MOBILE. VSO has empowered its users' knowledge and competency by using technology rather than studying in books. VSO not only empowered VSO users' knowledge but also generates a workforce to develop digital content by the primary actors. 'VSO School App' content like songs, poems, stories, and teaching methods where children, parents, and community members participate in recording those locally available learning materials. VSO School app empowers teachers' competency and practical knowledge, even those in the most challenging circumstances. VSO School app enables teachers to access and share the content offline using their mobile phones. VSO School app has many features which allow the creation of content like songs, poems, stories, teaching methods, attendance trackers, educational games, and videos. It has a unique peer-to-peer sharing feature that requires no Internet, local network, or any additional hardware, enabling content to be shared at high speed directly from one device to another using WiFi direct technology. It will be possible to support VSO staff, educators, and teachers to create, curate, access, and share educational materials in the VSO School app. This project creates sustainable social networks within and/or between community groups to facilitate mentorship and knowledge exchange while improving social cohesion and a sense of belonging.

Description of the best practice

7. Introduction (350-400 words)
   This section should ideally provide the context of, and justification for, the practice and address the following issues:
   i) Which population was affected?
   ii) What was the problem that needed to be addressed?
   iii) Which approach was taken and what objectives were achieved? *

This project leveraged the skills and efforts of the community, national, and international volunteers and parents, teachers, and Ministry of Education stakeholders in a holistic, multilevel effort to address barriers – such as education mobilization, psychosocial issues, sexual reproductive health and rights, child marriage and other cross-cutting issues – that keep children and adolescents in Refugee camp and host community to complete their education. The program aims to provide accessible Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) for Rohingya and host community children following the ECD curriculum in collaboration with mesh guides. Also, providing education support through the learning center for Rohingya children in a safe environment following Cox's Bazar Education sector LCFA (Learning Competency Framework and Approach) curriculum. VSO program also includes life skills and Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) activities as a crosscutting issue. Also, intergraded safe vegetable gardening for families under ECCE intervention at host community to ensure basic nutrition and to involve the adolescent and youth in income generation initiatives. This project is designed to contribute significantly to gender equality and equity.

We have been building the capacity of the community volunteer such as the ECCE supervisor, Big sister, and Big mother with different training like basic ECD concepts, low-cost learning material development, lesson plan orientation, parenting, safe vegetable gardening, physical support, life skills, VSO School app training, and other cross-cutting issues. 'Big Sisters' also shared advice on sexual and reproductive health. For example, they helped girls and their families overcome taboos about menstruation and providing practical assistance.

We are working closely with Cox's Bazar education sector and other national platforms for system strengthening and policy advocacy through different working groups. Mapping education technology, disaster risk management, and ECD. Providing inputs to develop standards and framework of ECD with international and national expert volunteers. Additionally, the project introduced gender-sensitive teaching methodologies, and management systems to facilitate girls' active participation in education. It developed the skills and capacities of stakeholders throughout the education system and in the community to effectively implement, monitor, and expand improvements in girls' education.

8. Implementation (350-450 words)
Please describe the implementation modalities or processes, where possible in relation to:
i) What are the main activities carried out?
ii) When and where the activities were carried out (including the start date and whether it is ongoing)?
iii) Who were the key implementation actors and collaborators? (civil society organizations, private sector, foundations, coalitions, networks etc.)?
iv) What were the resources needed (budget and sources) for the implementation?
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Building capacity of volunteers through various training. National volunteers train up the community volunteers and the community volunteers engage with Big Sister/Mother through peer-to-peer training.
• Learning materials development workshop on low cost/no-cost locally available learning materials.
• VSO school app training for tech-based education and capacity building.
• Teachers' Professional Development (TPD) training following curriculum, gender-transformative education, and life skills.
• Training on PSS and Numeracy.
• Training on Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights.
• Training on courtyard safe vegetable gardening.
• Training on Basic ECD concepts, child protection, safeguarding, lesson plan orientation, refresher training, and parenting.
The above activities were implemented with the following modalities:
Capacity Building: VSO is continuously supporting partner NGO staff and community volunteers by providing capacity-building training to improve the quality of programme delivery as well as for their personal development. Following the sister for sister approach, these community volunteers are carrying forward the learnings and building capacity to the facilitator at the community level. VSO national and international volunteers are closely working with the community volunteer following the V4D framework and pathway and monitoring the need, progress, and required support. VSO is providing need-based contextualized technical support to Community volunteers and continuing capacity building during this pandemic also. Community volunteers are doing parental engagement to aware and mobilize education and different cross-cutting issues following the VSO core approach.

International and National volunteer expertise: International volunteers are supported by providing a guideline for material development and quality improvement for the programme following the curriculum. Building capacity of community volunteers by providing training with the help of a national volunteer to inclusive teaching methodologies that are tested and proven in other contexts. National volunteers are engaged with field-level community volunteers to support, monitor, and deliver the programme and Also provide technical training and coaching in core development approaches like inclusion, social accountability, and resilience.
Conditions for Learning: The project leveraged access to education for the marginalized and vulnerable children in the crisis context. It enables the learner within a safe learning environment and inclusive education practices. The learners have access to educational supplies and hygiene materials. The learning area is being improved by quality delivery of the parogramme and a good curriculum. Improved community volunteers' and facilitators' capacity to work closely with a support mechanism to enable them to transcend their learning. VSO national and international volunteers were supporting community volunteers to deliver training.
Leadership and Management: Supported to develop sector plan and worked closely with the

government on national priorities especially education system strengthening, gender inclusion, and child protection. Working with SB2S to bring back dropout learners due to covid-19 through digital campaigns and advocacy. Working with local education cluster and technology task team to map and smoothen education technologies in the crisis context like refugee camps in Bangladesh.

9. Results – outputs and outcomes (250-350 words)
   To the extent possible, please reply to the questions below:
   i) How was the practice identified as transformative? (e.g., impact on policies, impact on management processes, impact on delivery arrangements or education monitoring, impact on teachers, learners and beneficiary communities etc.);
   ii) What were the concrete results achieved with regard to outputs and outcomes?
   iii) Has an assessment of the practice been carried out? If yes, what were the results? *

   The project goal is "Marginalized and vulnerable Community (Children, Adolescent and Youth) enjoy rights and access to services through integrated programme and VfD Approach."It applies the Big Sister approach focusing on girls who have proved hardest to reach through other interventions."
   • To provide access to early childhood education and transitional learning opportunities with life skills for children and youth from Rohingya and host community in a safe environment.
   • To increase coordination and collaboration among stakeholders to improve the quality of education provision for Rohingya and host community children and youth that is aligned with government ministries (MoE and MoPE) and education sector standards.
   • To improve educator's and teacher's knowledge and teaching skills to deliver education services in emergency settings.
   The concrete changes achieved through the project include the following:
   • The capacity of big sister mother has been increased 70-80%.
   • 90-95% of parents are satisfied with big sisters/ mothers' qualification
   • More than 98% of parents are satisfied with the cleanliness, location and safety of the home-based centres.
   • Most of the parents and teachers have positive opinions regarding children's learning and behavioural changes that came through home- based ECCE.
   • Data from ISCG show that multiple interventions in the camp have made a big difference to refugee children as the percentage of 3-14 years old without access to education has reduced to 16.11% in July 2019.
   • 88% big sisters/mothers said that, they have no problem while using the tablets and VSO School app.

10. Lessons learnt (300 words)
    To the extent possible, please reply to the following questions:
    i) What were the key triggers for transformation?
    ii) What worked really well – what facilitated this?
    iii) What did not work – why did it not work? *

    The blended volunteering model is effective and has proven by research which was accepted by the community and appreciated. Parenting involvement also empowered the learning access in the community. Education technology was accepted and efficient for learning to the facilitators and community volunteers which is a sustainable approach. Study on the VSO school app continues to measure the outcome and effectiveness is enabled to help the future improvement of the technology.
    What worked well:
    • Volunteers embedded in communities, and integration of international volunteers into local structures and policy level, helping leverage the power of volunteering and community voices.
    • Creating sustainable social networks within and/or between community groups to facilitate mentorship and knowledge exchange while improving the education of girls, social cohesion, and sense of belonging.
    • Using the VSO School app for self and peer-to-peer learning for the community volunteers.
    • Improved knowledge of numeracy and literacy through the VSO School app.
    • Working on storytelling content which is targeted to use at ECCE for developing the learning competencies for the early-aged children through Big Sister/Mother.
    Although Big Sisters/Mother was initially seen as more of a 'delivery mechanism' they also ended up as key actors. The role of Big Sisters is commendable in reducing social barriers – in this context. The evidence is used to influence the inclusive education guidelines and Edu-Tech integration.

11. Conclusions (250 words)
    Please describe why may this intervention be considered a "best practice".
    What recommendations can be made for those intending to adopt the documented "best practice" or how can it help people working on the same issue(s)? *

    Finally, it was found that home-based intervention is preferred by the stakeholders over learning centers for the ECCE intervention of this specific age group considering the issues of child protection, shortage of space in the camp situation, and weather extremities. The model has proven to be effective in terms of increasing the access, participation, and transition for early-aged learners. Community and local governments are also receptive to the model and have supported and cooperated with such mentoring models.

12. Further reading

Please provide a list and URLs of key reference documents for additional information on the "best practice" for those who may be interested in knowing how the results benefited the beneficiary group/s. *

https://www.vsointernational.org/news/press-releases/vso-releases-an-application-to-strengthen-learning-for-rohingya-children-in-bangladesh
https://www.jagonews24.com/en/national/news/46361
https://www.vsointernational.org/our-work/inclusive-education/education-in-emergencies/supporting-rohingya-child-refugees
https://www.vsointernational.org/news/blog/creating-smiles-in-a-rohingya-refugee-camp
https://www.vsointernational.org/news/blog/meet-the-teacher-volunteering-in-the-rohingya-refugee-camps
https://www.vsointernational.org/news/blog/helping-rohingya-children-get-their-childhoods-back
https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/vso-releases-application-strengthen-learning-rohingya-children-bangladesh
https://www.daily-sun.com/printversion/details/418240/App-for-Rohingya-kids