



UN
DP



ANNUAL REPORT

PARTNERSHIPS FOR A TOLERANT, **INCLUSIVE BANGLADESH PROJECT**

REPORTING PERIOD: 01 JAN 2019 – 31 DEC 2019

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PROJECT INFORMATION



PROJECT/OUTCOME TITLE:

Partnerships for a Tolerant, Inclusive Bangladesh (PTIB)

Atlas ID:

00086326

RELEVANT UNDAF/ CPD/ SP/ SDGs

BANGLADESH UNDAF OUTCOME 1 & COUNTRY PROGRAMME DOCUMENT (CPD)

CPD Outcome 2:

Develop and implement improved social policies and programmes that focus on good governance, reduction of structural inequalities and advancement of vulnerable individuals and groups.

CPD Output 2.1:

Civil society, interest groups, relevant government agencies and political parties have tools and knowledge to set agendas and to develop platforms for building consensus on national issues.

UNDP STRATEGIC PLAN:

Outcome 3:

Strengthen resilience to shocks and crisis.

SUSTAINABILITY DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDG):

Goal 16:

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Output 3.2.1:

National capacities strengthened for reintegration, reconciliation, peaceful management of conflict and prevention of violent extremism in response to national policies and priorities.

TARGET

SDG target 16.1:

“Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere”;

SDG target 16.6:

“Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels”;

SDG target 16.7:

“Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere”;

Country: Bangladesh

Region: Asia-Pacific

Date Project Document

Signed: 3 June 2018

Project Dates: Start: 26 January 2017
Planned end: 31 May 2022

Project Budget: USD \$5.18 M

Funding Source: Denmark, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, UK, USAID

Implementing Party: UNDP





DHAKA
BANGLADESH



Cover Artwork:
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

KEY TAKEAWAY:

2019 was the year the Partnerships for a Tolerant, Inclusive Bangladesh Project began to truly deliver on its potential. New initiatives, coupled with thoughtful and evidence-driven changes to existing activities, gave the project new reach and momentum. New partnerships, whether with new international supporters, domestic government stakeholders, civil society partners, or internal team members, prompted new ideas and improved execution. Insightful new research repeatedly shifted the perspective of the project team and its network, leading to imaginative engagement activities which met a real and pressing need.

2019 Achievements: UNDP's Partnerships for a Tolerant, Inclusive Bangladesh project works to promote peace and tolerance by preventing violence, hate speech and extremism in Bangladesh. In 2019, the project both strengthened additional initiatives, and launched new ones:

STRENGTHENING ESTABLISHED INITIATIVES:

- 01** **Digital Khichuri Challenges (DKCs):**
Over 12 million Bangladeshis were reached with messages promoting peace, social cohesion, and improved critical thinking;
- 02** **Bangladesh Peace Observatory (BPO):**
Following a successful mid-term evaluation in February, additional data and graphics specialists were hired, data quality procedures overhauled, and Bangla-language versions of reports published;
- 03** **Cox's Bazar Analysis & Research Unit (CARU):**
CARU improved the quality and reach of its weekly reporting, for improved scenario-planning and early-warning;
- 04** **Violent Extremist Social Media Reporting:**
Reports now circulated monthly rather than quarterly, due to popular demand;
- 05** **Support for the Dhaka Metropolitan Police:**
Five youth dialogues at universities allowed the Dhaka Metropolitan Police's Counter-terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit to refine its prevention of violent extremism policy, leading to the launch of its new strategy in December 2019.



The first session of our vibrant **Peace Talk Café** was held on 28 August 2019. This was later followed by 4 more installments, having established itself as a prominent yet engaging platform for the youth.

LAUNCHING NEW INITIATIVES:

Digital Peace Movement:

01

Building on the online network the project has cultivated through the Digital Khichuri Challenges, the project expanded its online presence into a full portfolio of creative online activities which promote digital literacy and tolerance. New activities include:

- **Peace Talk Café Series:** An interactive discussion series which gives youth the chance to directly interact and ask questions of prominent cultural, academic and social leaders on issues of peace and tolerance;
- **Quizzes for Peace:** Online tests for youth on subjects related to diversity, peace and critical thinking;

02

Diversity for Peace:

An innovative grants programme to showcase grassroots Bangladeshi diversity through interactive, colourful events and media campaigns;

03

PVE Stocktaking Workshop:

Supporting a new way for technical partners to share their insights into this challenging and sensitive field;

04

Support to Migrant Workers:

New UNDP research highlighted how Bangladeshi migrants abroad are vulnerable to disinformation – project support boosted the reach and focus of both new and established civil society groups working on this issue.



Male migrant workers discuss challenges facing Bangladeshi migrants abroad with **Digital Khichuri Challenge** participants, December 2019

BANGLADESH IN 2019: **TRENDS**

Violent Extremism in 2019:

Despite no major violent extremist attack in Bangladesh since 2016 and a decline in the number of related incidents, UNDP-sponsored research continued to indicate that extremist groups were active in strengthening their networks in 2019, especially online. Extremist groups and their sympathizers continue to occupy a growing niche in Bangladeshi cyberspace, as their production quality and media strategies evolve. Counter-terrorism initiatives in India targeting Muslims had spillover effects across the region in 2019, for example, and perceived persecution featured heavily in Bangladeshi violent extremist narratives.

Other Forms of Violence in 2019:

Drawing on data produced by the Bangladesh Peace Observatory, violent deaths decreased in 2019 compared to 2018, especially in major cities like Dhaka and Chattogram. Deaths categorized as violence against minorities, 'gunfights', and drug-related violence all decreased in 2019 from the previous year, though the number of arrests remained constant. However, reported instances of mob violence against individuals, violence against women (VAW), youth violence (primarily related to gangs and petty criminality), and violence against children all rose. VAW in particular saw a dramatic increase in the number of incidents publicly reported by media, with 154% more rapes reported in 2019 and 176% more cases of sexual harassment reported than in 2018.

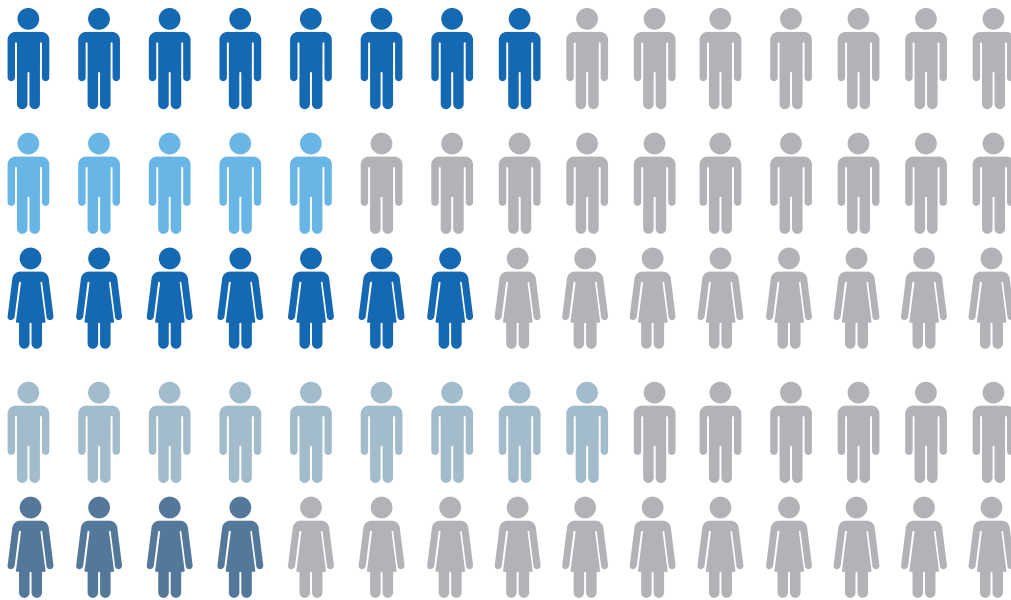
Rohingya and Cox's Bazar:

UNDP's Cox's Bazar Analysis and Research Unit noted increased security risks for the Rohingya refugees and host communities in Cox's Bazar compared to 2018. 224 Rohingya-related violent incidents were reported in Bangladesh in 2019, double the 2018 rate. Homicides of all types increased by 48% in Cox's Bazar in 2019, with the security forces seizing an estimated 16.52 million yaba tablets (55% of total yaba seized across Bangladesh) in continuing escalation of drug-related violence and cross-border violence in the region.



Related Online Trends:

Fake or malicious internet posts have led to violence, murder, riots, and targeting of vulnerable communities and individuals. Evidence from UNDP’s social media monitoring demonstrates that violent extremist narratives often overlap with other forms of violence, targeting female empowerment, minorities, and other vulnerable groups, reflecting a need for greater grassroots engagement on the broader issue of diversity in Bangladesh. With over 100 million Bangladeshis with internet access as of the end of 2019, most Bangladeshis have never been encouraged to question the messages they consume online. The Bangladeshi online presence is evolving and shifting quickly, with the total number of Bangladeshi internet users increasing by an average of 750,000 - 1 million users each month. In 2019, UNDP research revealed that Bangladeshi migrant workers in countries across Asia only engage seriously with social media for the first time once abroad - research suggests Bangladeshi social media usage increases 500% in foreign countries. Further, 60% of migrants using social media do not verify news before sharing it, while at least 28% do not know how to verify it, leaving migrants especially vulnerable to manipulative or inciteful messaging.



All data available in the Bangladesh Peace Observatory’s annual report for 2019, available at: http://peaceobservatory-cgs.org/#/peace_report

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Objectives:

This project uses cutting-edge evidence to help promote authentic and resonant Bangladeshi narratives of diversity and tolerance. It structures its learning and research to be far more integrated and responsive to emerging trends than more traditional UN projects, using three distinct data-collection and analysis teams to produce the data which allows for evidence-based programming and messaging. The project contributes substantially to objectives outlined by the United Nations Country Team, the Rohingya Joint-Response Plan, and the Bangladeshi government.

PROJECT STRUCTURE: THE PROJECT HAS 3 KEY OUTPUTS



Research Facility:

Improve knowledge, understanding, and provide insight into the drivers of violence in Bangladesh;



Citizen Engagement:

Enhance inclusivity and tolerance through social engagement activities, both on and offline, with a focus on youth, women, migrant workers, religious leadership and marginalized communities;



Government Engagement:

Sensitize government agencies to emerging global best practices when developing policies that promote social inclusion and tolerance.

International Agreements:

This project responds to the UN Secretary General's 2015 call for every country to develop a coherent and contextual strategy for the prevention of violent extremism (PVE), while reaffirming the need for inclusive institutions, transparent politics, and a commitment to fundamental human rights.



After the conclusion of a fruitful annual board meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the PTIB-UNDP team bids farewell to Ms. Nahida Sobhab, DG UN, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ms. Shahanara Monica, Director - UN, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and thanks them for their valuable support.

SUMMARY OF PROJECT STRATEGY

Evidence-Based and Open-Source Intelligence:

While most projects have a learning component, to better understand the issue being addressed, the PTIB project structures its learning and research to be far more integrated and responsive to emerging trends than more traditional UN projects, feeding directly into new programming and messaging. This involves expanded, comprehensive and independent monitoring and data collection to help close the violence data gap in Bangladesh. The project does this using three data collection teams: 1) The Bangladesh Peace Observatory, based at the University of Dhaka, which collects and analyzes nationwide statistics on violent incidents; 2) The Cox's Bazar Analysis and Research Unit (CARU), UNDP's in-house monitoring team, which tracks violent incidents in regions affected by the Rohingya emergency; 3) and Social Media Monitoring, conducted by the Canadian strategic data and analysis company SecDev, which collects data and analyzes engagement with sources of disinformation and incitement on Bangladeshi social media. Building on this data and evidence, the PTIB project works with Bangladeshi local partners to promote critical thinking and support targeted but authentic expressions of Bangladeshi diversity both on and offline.

Support to Digital Literacy:

One way the project addresses complex issues of identity and inclusion is by promoting a digital literacy model. Digital literacy is not a measure of standard literacy, or whether someone can read or write. Digital literacy reflects a person's ability to critically engage with Bangladesh's online environment, to identify and question any misleading or incendiary online content they may encounter. This is done by supporting the development and strengthening of Bangladesh's 'online immune system' to improve citizens' ability to independently counter and question misinformation and incitement tactics. UNDP activities rely on superior monitoring and analysis of online trends, as well as an adaptable communications strategy and programme design. Specifically, a focus on promoting digital literacy and safe use of online platforms (like Facebook) can help vulnerable communities (including minorities and women) to identify and speak out against incitement and violence that might disproportionately affect them. This decentralized, critical-thinking approach is more transparent, effective and democratic than simply removing online posts or directly limiting online speech.



Transgender dance group, "Essence of Soul" left more than 600 audiences mesmerized with their performance at **Boichitrer Oikotan**, a dance program organized on 28 February 2020 to inspire and uplift the transgender community of Bangladesh.

Bangladeshi Voices, Bangladeshi Ownership:

Sustainable change, especially on complex issues of national and community identity, cannot be effectively promoted by internationals. PVE in Bangladesh means analyzing the current trends and cultivating or coordinating local partners to help act on this information. These include a range of Bangladeshi academic, civil society and government partners, many of whom would not have been able to start working on these issues without UNDP support. The project's implementation through national partners has ensured that peaceful and inclusive messages retain their essential Bangladeshi character, drawing on lessons from Bangladeshi history and cultural memory.



Youth express their concerns and questions directly to Dhaka Metropolitan Police in youth dialogues supported by UNDP.

CHALLENGES

IN 2019

Shifts in Project Alignment:

In 2019, the project was encouraged by partners to expand its scope to address additional agreements and forms of violence, recognizing that extremist violence arises in part as a result of broader dehumanization and hate speech. In response, the project now also contributes directly to the following agreements:

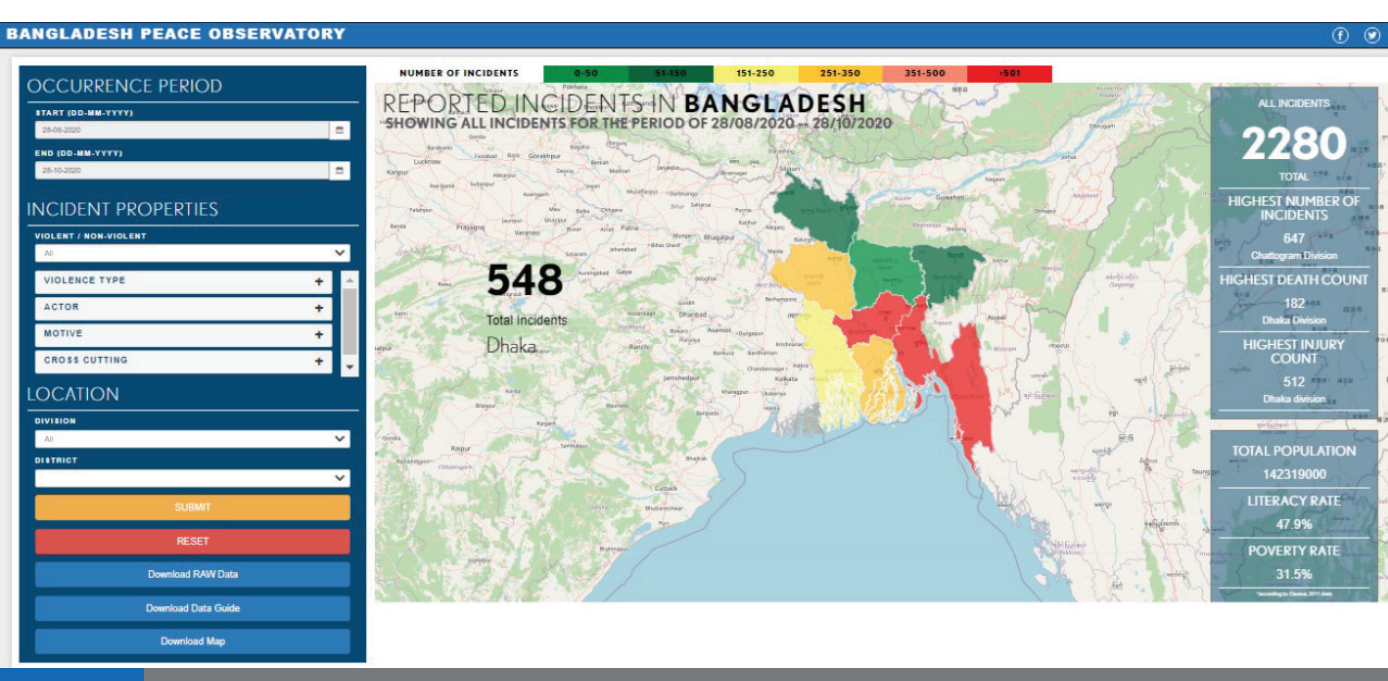
- **The Secretary General's Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech (2019):**
This plan focuses on the need to reduce incitement of all kinds, recognizing hate speech to be a precondition for violence;

Support to Digital Literacy:

Where the “Digital Peace Movement” has covered the project’s online portfolio, in 2019 the project sought to expand its offline presence at the grassroots level. The project’s core documents refer to numerous grassroots activities from project inception, but the mechanisms for implementing such sensitive strategies at the local level have been challenging to establish. In response, the project launched its “Diversity 4 Peace” initiative in late 2019. The project conducts a rigorous selection process to identify promising local Civil Society Organizations, provides training in financial management, reporting and monitoring, and then helps amplify positive messages produced on PVE or pro-diversity themes. Though this initiative had only just started by the end of 2019, it represents a major category of interventions within the project and expansion of its core activities.

BPO Midterm Review:

As examined in the next section, the BPO underwent a mid-term review which identified numerous key challenges. Actions taken throughout 2019 helped to address these challenges and motivate UNDP to upgrade its capacity across its data-collection teams.



A snippet from the *Bangladesh Peace Observatory (BPO)*, an Open Access Data platform collecting different streams of publicly available data, regularly updating the platform with newer incidents, conducting research and providing education opportunities to better understand the state of violence and promote peace.

(OUTCOME 1)

**RESEARCH
FACILITY**

BANGLADESH PEACE OBSERVATORY

The Bangladesh Peace Observatory (BPO):

The BPO catalogues, aggregates, maps and visualizes nationwide statistics on violent incidents using a combination of open data and media reports. Based at the University of Dhaka and supported by UNDP, the BPO produces targeted analyses and updates, identifying new avenues for research. A variety of qualitative (micronarrative) and quantitative methods (media monitoring) are used to help identify violent trends.

THE BPO SUCCESSFULLY ACCOMPLISHED THE FOLLOWING IN 2019:



BPO Mid-Term Review:

The BPO underwent a mid-term review in February 2019, which identified numerous strengths but also some core challenges facing the platform, and recommended strategies for improving the BPO's data quality, presentation, written reports, internal organization, and overall impact;



Working group approach:

Following the review, the BPO adopted a working group approach to ensure the recommendations were applied. Five working groups have been formed and meet periodically to advise and oversee improvements on the following themes: data systems and analysis, research and engagement, capacity building and training, communications and outreach, and organization and development. The members of each group included BPO advisors and researchers, Dhaka university faculty and relevant PTIB experts and staff. Each group has produced work plans to work towards key targets and results.



Improvements in Data Quality and Validation:

In 2019, the BPO recorded 26,038 additional incidents from across Bangladesh. By the end of 2019, the BPO had entered an additional 36 months of present and retrospective data, bringing the total number of incidents tracked in the database to over 68,000.



Data Visualization:

The BPO team received training every week on how to better create charts and graphs, and how to support tell a more compelling story using the available data. 5 additional research and data analysts were hired to support the BPO, contributing to an increase in quality and timeliness. The improved accuracy and accessibility of the Peacegraphics have made the BPO's website more intuitive and attractive, and have also been a major factor in the BPO's increasing media coverage.



Bi-Monthly and Annual Reports:

In 2019, the BPO produced 5 bi-monthly reports and an annual report. Throughout the year, some reports were produced in both English and Bangla for the first time, which helped them in reaching a broader institutional and public audience.



Engagement:

Over 2000 people from 10 countries visited the BPO platform online in 2019.

(BPO Continued)



Participants at the 2-day Data Visualization Training, organized to improve the capacity of 14 data analysts at the Bangladesh Peace Observatory (BPO).

Improving the BPO's Data Quality - Steps Taken:

Following the mid-term review, the project hired an experienced data scientist to further transform the BPO's capacity and improve the quality of its data and graphics. The BPO's data validation process was updated to more actively identify and correct for inaccuracies, introducing extra safeguards to validate key incidents at the end of the month. By the end of 2019, 30% of the BPO team now actively reviews the BPO's data to check it is accurate and has been entered correctly, BPO now also conducts 3-4 data quality assessments each year, to ensure that the team is following the new procedures and eliminating gaps in the data. As a result, when BPO data is now compared to other sources, BPO data aligns far more frequently.

The Bangladesh Peace Observatory's Annual State of Peace Report, 2019

COX'S BAZAR ANALYSIS & RESEARCH UNIT

The Cox's Bazar Analysis & Research Unit (CARU):

CARU is UNDP's in-house monitoring team, tracking violent incidents in regions affected by the Rohingya emergency, and producing weekly updates for international and Bangladeshi partners. Through external reports and internal notes to file, CARU has developed a digital archive of critical trends and events. By reporting on media narratives, CARU provides insight into highly sensitive but critical issues relating to the Rohingya population across the country.

CARU SUCCESSFULLY ACCOMPLISHED THE FOLLOWING IN 2019:

Weekly Reports:



CARU's publications received such intense interest from partners that the project continued to produce a significantly greater volume of reports than originally planned – the project shifted quickly from bimonthly to monthly and then to weekly report production, which it continued throughout 2019. The data suggest that single email signatures sent to partners are sometimes opened dozens of times, suggesting that the reports are being circulated widely within international partner organizations and reopened for useful data and review.

Support to Partners:



CARU has also responded to specific requests for additional information by government, diplomatic and NGO partners on the ground;

Early-Warning:



CARU runs a whatsapp group for UN partners which provides them with essential information as it develops. Though this group was started as a communication side-option, it has evolved into a useful tool which is widely used by humanitarian partners.



CARU organised consultation meeting for the Norwegian mission with five Rohingya CSOs in the camps in April 2019. Immediate past Norwegian Ambassador Sidsel Bleken was part of the Norwegian delegation.

EXAMPLES OF CARU EARLY-WARNING AND SCENARIO-PLANNING:

Hate Campaign Against the Rohingya:

CARU was the first to detect the spread of a specific hate campaign against the Rohingya across Bangladesh painting the Rohingya as child-kidnappers. This rumour led to people being assaulted or killed across the country on suspicion of being Rohingya. CARU identified and then amplified attention given to this series of events, to help refute the false messaging.



CARU team visiting Rohingya CSO leaders for data collection in December 2019.

Road Traffic Accidents and Preventable Deaths:

CARU's collection of gender-diasaggregated data on fatalities from road accidents in 2019 has been used by partners, including the World Health Organization, to assess a broad range of risks and threats to Rohingya and host communities across the region.

Human and Sexual Trafficking in the Rohingya Camps:

CARU reporting has also helped to raise early warning on women's issues in the Rohingya camps. The project has helped to document sexual assault, and while CARU itself may not be able to directly help stop these abuses, CARU helps ensure the UN, the international community and the Bangladeshi government can share information and collaborate on human trafficking and violence against women. CARU helps ensure these stories do not go unheard, passing them on to protection colleagues and creating joint research opportunities, particularly with UN Women.

SOCIAL MEDIA MONITORING

Violent Extremist Social Media Monitoring:

UNDP Bangladesh has commissioned specialist data-centric risk consultancy SecDev to assess and analyse violent extremist narratives on popular online platforms like Facebook and Twitter. This information is used to identify and promote peaceful counter-narratives on key themes in real time. This research has provided essential information on Muslim-Hindu dynamics online, treatment of secularists, attitudes towards LGBT issues, and much more.

THE SOCIAL MEDIA MONITORING SUCCESSFULLY ACCOMPLISHED THE FOLLOWING IN 2019:



Shift to Monthly Reporting:

Responding to popular demand, the Social Media Monitoring shifted from a quarterly reporting format to a monthly reporting format in October 2019.



Broader Circulation:

These monthly reports have been circulated to a range of international and domestic partners, including Bangladesh Government counterparts.



Support to the PVE Working Group:

Presentations regularly updated UN agencies and international partners on PVE developments online.



PVE Stocktaking Workshop:

Presentations to this strategic workshop in April 2019 helped coordinate knowledge management across the PVE sector in Bangladesh, with contributions from government, diplomatic and academic specialists. 7 International embassies, 3 government agencies, and a range of academic, NGO and specialist partners took part.

MIGRANT WORKER RESEARCH



Migrant Worker Research:

UNDP partnered with the University of Dhaka's Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU) to conduct a dedicated study on digital literacy and online behaviours among migrant workers who had returned to Bangladesh. Some key findings include:

- Only 11% of male migrants and 4% of female migrants had exposure to social media before they left Bangladesh;
- 65% of migrant men and 35% of women used social media while abroad. Of these, 60% admitted that they did not verify the legitimacy of news stories online before sharing, while 28% did not know how to verify online information they encountered.

Migrant Worker Digital Literacy:

Knowing now that migrant workers faced significant digital literacy challenges, UNDP organized a Digital Khichuri Challenge to engage young Bangladeshis to help develop solutions which would improve digital literacy and critical thinking among migrant workers. As a result of the study and the digital khichuri challenge, digital literacy among migrants is now increasingly understood to be a critical problem for the Bangladeshi diaspora, one which requires dedicated new interventions. Numerous government counterparts, including the Bureau for Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) and the Dhaka Metropolitan Police have since expressed interest in training migrants in digital literacy before they leave Bangladesh.



An open discussion conducted by **YY Ventures** with the participants to familiarize them with the competition and the challenge they had to tackle for DKC 2019 edition.

(OUTCOME 2)
**CITIZEN
ENGAGEMENT**

DIGITAL PEACE MOVEMENT & DIGITAL KHICHURI CHALLENGES



Digital Khichuri Challenges:

PTIB's highly successful hackathon series, the "Digital Khichuri Challenges" have become an established brand in Bangladesh with a reach of over 12m people, while many of the platforms which emerge from these hackathons have developed an even greater reach. Each hackathon is themed to a subject that has recently been prominent on Bangladeshi social media, using UNDP's online research. The DKCs are administered by UNDP through a local event management company, Bitopi, while the YY Ghosti company provides mentorship and additional support to winning teams for at least 6 months after the hackathon event.



DKC SYLHET

MAY 2019



Participants and judges at the closing ceremony of the Sylhet 2019 Digital Khichuri Challenge.

- **Recruitment Campaign:**
UNDP supported a broad campaign encouraging youth to apply. UNDP and its implementing partner, Bitopi, met more than 10k students at 5 different universities during the Call to Action campaign. The most promising 7 teams were ultimately selected from 123 applications;
- **Elite Mentorship:**
The mentorship period after the event was led by specialists with SBYA Global, a leader in promoting social entrepreneurship;
- **Winning Idea:**
The winning idea was to gamify the process of digital literacy, to produce a digital game called 'Digital Vaccine' that would help promote the concept of fake news and the need for critical thinking online;

² Like Bangladesh itself, khichuri is a traditional Bangladeshi rice dish that is a mixture of many different ingredients.

DKC FOR PROMOTING DIGITAL LITERACY AMONG MIGRANT WORKERS, DHAKA 2019



Female migrant workers at the Idea Lab of the *Digital Khichuri Challenge*, sharing their experience of the challenges facing migrant workers abroad.

- **Theme:**
The theme of this DKC was selected following UNDP research suggesting that Bangladeshi migrant workers are especially vulnerable to fake news and incitement when abroad (for more details, see “migrant workers research” section above).
- **Direct Mentorship:**
Male and female migrant workers joined the DKC to help mentor youth directly on the types of online platforms which could appeal to Bangladeshis abroad. Migrants shared their experiences in vivid detail, prompting many DKC participants to radically rethink their initial ideas. Additional mentorship and support from government agencies, including those responsible for migrant skills development and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, helped to further ground the participants and strengthen their ideas.
- **Winning Ideas:**
4 winning teams were selected, from 2 categories: One set of teams were all-new platforms, the other consisted of existing startups wanting to refine their business model.

- **Government Commitment:**

The State Minister for Internet and Communication Technology, the Director of the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET) and the Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs all attended the final selection ceremony and helped select the winning teams and ideas.

- **Total Reach:**

Online and offline messaging associated with the DKC event itself reached 741,663 people with 268,910 engagements online. (Platforms produced by the winning teams later went on to reach over 18 million Bangladeshis in 2020).



Digital Khichuri Challenge Dhaka cohort winners on stage during the closing moments alongside guests, judges and organizers.

“ WE NOW SEE EVEN LITERATE PEOPLE FALLING PREY TO FAKE NEWS. WHAT WE NEED IS NOT JUST LITERACY, BUT ALSO AWARENESS TO INFORM EVERY ONE OF THE SAFE USE OF THE INTERNET. ”

- **Nurul Islam**, Director

Bangladesh Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training

Improvements to the DKCs in 2019:

The project learned after the first year that the key to a great Digital Khichuri Challenge was not the quality of the event itself, but the quality of the follow-up. The hackathon events themselves are just the beginning. Bootcamps after the event help the winners to set and achieve goals against performance indicators, helping the winners to further refine their business plans. Teams also receive 1-to-1 mentorship with experts and community meetups. As a result of this support, 83% of participating teams successfully graduated from the DKC mentoring program. Teams from the Sylhet DKCs raised over 2.2million BDT in funds and started earning revenue of 350,000 BDT within their first three months of UNDP-supported mentoring. The result is that UNDP has actively launched successful social enterprises and helping to expand civil society one new organization at a time.



Participants and mentors in brief discussion during **Digital Khichuri Challenge Dhaka bootcamp**.

PEACE TALK CAFÉS



Peace Talk Cafes:

By allowing youth to interact directly with experts, government officials, and noteworthy figures on important subjects, the Peace Talk Cafes have taken a radically different approach to social engagement when compared to what is traditionally done in Bangladesh. The Peace Talk Cafes create an informal, approachable, and even cozy atmosphere in local environments. 2 Peace Talk Cafes were held in Bangladesh in 2019:

Digital Peace Movement:

Building on the network produced by successive years of Digital Khichuri Challenges, in 2019 the PTIB project launched a broader Digital Peace Movement, aimed at promoting digital literacy and tolerance online. Digital Khichuri Challenges are now supplemented by PeaceTalk Cafes, Peace Quizzes, and other forms of digital engagement online.

PEACE TALK CAFÉ 1

Date:

August 28, 2019
Promoting **Peace and Tolerance**

Audience Reach:

6,606,546



Participation:

Assembled an anthropologist, popular musician, and founder of an online learning platform to discuss how to help amplify cultural messages of peace and tolerance;



Preparation:

To maximize participation, the event was organized in Dhaka's central Dhanmondi District, and eliminated opening and closing speeches to be much more conversational;



Reach:

The pilot Peace Talk Café was a resounding success, engaging 6,606,546 people over social media;



Peace Talk Café attendees pose with Ayman Sadiq, panelist during the first Peace Talk Café on August 28, 2019

PEACE TALK CAFÉ 2

Date:

August 28, 2019

**Cybercrime and Online Violence
Against Women**

Audience Reach:

1,586,369



Theme:

Held during UN Women's "16 Days of Action against Violence Against Women", this discussion assembled a popular columnist, female social media celebrities, and female entrepreneurs to discuss organized online harassment of women in Bangladesh;



Reach:

The second iteration of the Peace Talk Café reached 1,586,369 people over social media;



Peace Talk Cafe attendees and PTIB-UNDP team smile for the camera after the successful conclusion of the first Peace Talk Cafe.

“MUSIC PLAYS A TREMENDOUS ROLE IN OUR CULTURE,
IT CAN BE A WEAPON AGAINST ANY NEGATIVE FORCE.”

-Bappa Mazumder
Musician and songwriter



Peace Quizzes:

Many of the project's most successful initiatives have taken-off because they engage youth and other target demographics in a fun or unorthodox way. Peace quizzes are consciously designed to be enjoyable and engaging, spreading positive ideas more easily and naturally. The Peace Quiz series engaged Bangladeshis to test their knowledge of relevant issues throughout the year – two of these quizzes were issued in 2019, with several more following in 2020. The two themes included:

QUIZ FOR PEACE 1

Date:

21- 23 September 2019
on the occasion of **World Peace Day**

Audience Reach:

379,311

QUIZ FOR PEACE 2

Date:

21-23 September 2019:
World Peace Day Quiz

Audience Reach:

379,311

Diversity for Peace:

Where the “Digital Peace Movement” has been the project’s online portfolio, Diversity for Peace covers the PTIB project’s offline, grassroots-level activities which respond to issues identified through the project’s analysis of online incitement on social media. Highlights from 2019 include:



Expressions of Interest:

The application process for Diversity for Peace asked for expressions of interest in either Bangla or English, which allowed more grassroots organizations to compete with larger, more established NGOs for UNDP support. The project received over 400 total applications from across Bangladesh, proposing to integrate PVE or diversity programming into an aspect of their existing activities.



Coaching:

Instead of immediately selecting the best ideas from the expressions of interest, the PTIB project then coached and helped promising candidates to refine their proposals through a series of orientation workshops in Chattogram, Rangpur and Dhaka. This provided additional training for dozens of local NGOs and non-traditional partners for how to set realistic budgeting and operational benchmarks, and how to integrate PVE principles into their anticipated activities. The applicants then rewrote and re-submitted their applications for final review.



Selection:

Nine finalists were then selected for funding, and given further training on project implementation, financial reporting, and other essentials during a 2-day workshop in Dhaka in November. Through this process, dozens of organizations were pushed to link their ongoing activities to diversity and to digital literacy – far more than the nine ultimately selected for UNDP funding.

INTER-FAITH



A practical session helping religious leaders to promote peace through social media.

Engagement with Religious Leaders:

In 2019, UNDP supported 50 Muslim religious leaders (including 10 women) to be trained on interfaith peacemaking dialogue and social media. The 4-day workshop gave participants a hands-on orientation on how to develop Facebook and YouTube content which helps counter hate speech and promotes meaningful dialogue from religious and human rights viewpoints.

Results:

Many participants in this year's training are now active in their own Facebook and Youtube channels, disseminating messages supportive of tolerance and coexistence in their sermons.

(OUTCOME 3)

GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT

GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT



Bangladesh Minister of State for Information and Communication Technology at the Closing Ceremony of a Digital Khichuri Challenge

Partnerships with Bangladeshi Government Agencies:

UNDP supported government agencies in Bangladesh to develop their understanding of PVE principles, to produce effective policy and meet their obligations under SDG 16.

Support to National Policies in Bangladesh:

UNDP's engagement with government counterparts has contributed to nearly every aspect of the project. Joint research between the police and the Bangladesh Peace Observatory has given academics and government partners access to key data for the first time, producing five joint research publications on the sources and expressions of extremism. Cooperation with the Dhaka Metropolitan Police's Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) Unit, then helped to integrate findings into the National Counter-Terrorism Strategy (developed by the CTTC with UNDP support), which emphasizes a preventive approach built on community participation. Through collaboration with **UNDP's Digital Peace Movement**, the ICT Division of Bangladesh Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications has also increased its influence and ability to help promote tolerant, unifying messages which diminish hatred and misinformation in the Bangla language online.



Monirul Islam, Chief of Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime, is addressing the participants at one of the youth dialogues organized by the Dhaka Metropolitan Police's Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime Unit.

Youth Dialogues with Dhaka Metropolitan Police:

Five youth dialogue sessions in 2019 allowed young people expressed their ideas directly to the Dhaka Metropolitan Police's Counter-Terrorism & Transnational Crime Unit. The dynamics of these discussions strongly influenced the CTTC's National CPVE Strategy produced at the end of 2019. Young people benefited from an improved understanding of violent extremist recruitment methods, while the police came away with a better understanding of youth concerns. Around 200 participants were present in each dialogue, for a total of around 1000 students directly engaged in 2019.



*Bangladesh Parliament Speaker **Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury**, International Affairs Advisor to the Prime Minister **Dr Gowher Rizvi**, UN Resident Coordinator **Mia Seppo**, U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh **Earl Miller** and CTTC Chief **Monirul Islam** inaugurating National P/CVE Conference.*

BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED IN 2019

UNDP's experience supporting Bangladeshis to promote peace and inclusion under conditions of considerable stress and fear is highly relevant to policymakers and organizations working across South Asia or around the world. The project has identified several lessons learned from throughout 2019 which may be highly transferable to other contexts and teams:

Keep Messaging Positive:

When addressing divisive rhetoric, the project made a deliberate decision to keep UNDP messaging positive – to focus not on “countering” extremist or hateful narratives directly, but to promote alternative peaceful, positive narratives. For example, if the project's data analysis teams identified a major narrative targeting the Rohingya as “thieves and criminals”, then the response should not simply be “the Rohingya are not thieves and criminals” as in responding to the negative frame, this in part validates it or makes it the default point of discussion. An alternative narrative would instead focus on an exclusively positive outlook, for example “Rohingya are good people in a difficult situation”, or “Bangladesh should be proud of being a welcoming nation”. Throughout, the project recognized that while deliberate incitement and hate speech did exist in Bangladesh, the best counter was not censorship but better arguments and better evidence.

Prevention of Violent Extremism and Prevention of Hate Speech are both Peacebuilding:

While UNDP internally applies the Prevention of Violent Extremism label to this work, in 2019 the project came to realize how adaptable this model is to addressing issues of hate speech being raised by the UN Secretary General. Though the means and manner of hate speech may be different, the dynamics and the implications are similar to that of extremist rhetoric.

Long-Term Change Requires Active Mentorship:

2019 reaffirmed the project's realization that one-off events do not work well. Extended follow-up and technical support is almost always required to promote lasting change. This can be difficult but is almost always necessary to prevent any tenuous momentum from dissipating. This was particularly evident to the PTIB project when following-up with winners of the Digital Khichuri Challenges. The challenge events themselves had to be the start of a process, not the end – the end was when the team had successfully launched their new platform, long after the lights and the media coverage of the challenge events had faded away. By expanding and institutionalizing the mentorship available to DKC winners, in 2019 the project maximized their chances of success. This same insight also led the project to train dozens of organizations before submitting their final proposals for UNDP's Diversity 4 Peace grants programme – by training interested applicants beforehand, the quality and actionability of the end proposals were greatly increased, even before the activities started or the funding was disbursed.

ANNEX:

PARTNERSHIP FOR A TOLERANT, INCLUSIVE BANGLADESH (PTIB)

PROJECT FINANCIAL REPORT 2019

ACTIVITY	BUDGET (USD)	EXPENDITURE (USD)	% OF EXP.
ACT 1: Research Facility	989,122.85	817,747.86	82.67
ACT 2: Citizen/ Social Engagement	529,352.69	628,708.20	118.77
ACT 3: Govt. Engagement	94,704.35	100,033.27	105.63
ACT 4: Admin and Operation	67,350.21	51,696.95	76.76
TOTAL	1,680,530.10	1,598,186.28	95.10

ANNEX:

PROGRESS OF RESULT INDICATORS

INDICATOR	BASELINE	EOP TARGET (END OF PROJECT TARGET)	TARGET (2019), CUMULATIVE	PROGRESS (2019), CUMULATIVE	EVALUATOR'S ANALYSIS
Outcome 1: Research Facility; Improved knowledge, understanding, and insights into the drivers of conflict, violence, and extremism in Bangladesh, and inform public policy					
1.1. Total Number of Research Publications Produced	3 (2017)	55	36	23	PTIB's research components SecDev, & CARU are prolific producers of weekly, monthly, and quarterly reports. Due to the sensitivity of contents of the publications, it took the project time to agree with the government and UN/UNDP management on the distribution process. Therefore it remained behind the target.
1.2 Total Citations for Research Products	0 (2017)	60	25	NA	This indicator was held off considering the confidentiality and restricted circulation of research products.
1.3 Number of Times research products are presented at PVE conferences	2 (2017)	38	20	9	The number of PVE conferences the project attended was lower than expected. In total project attended 4 international and 4 national conferences and presented their findings there.
1.4 Number of instances media organizations reference Research Facility data in reporting	0 (2017)	40	25	8	BPO bi montly and annual peace report findings covered by media.
Output 1.1: MAINTAIN and UPDATE the Bangladesh Peace Observatory					
1.1.1 Number of months' data on various forms of violence available on the "Bangladesh Peace Observatory" website	43	72	67	60	BPO has been consistent in collecting, validation and uploading of current data. However, reexamining of previous years' data validation delayed the target meeting.

1.1.2. Number of people who have viewed the BPO website/platform	250	6,000 people, 16,000 views	3,000 people, 8,000 views	2,134 people, 6,513 views	After supporting the development of a social media plan for BPO, the number of viewers of its website and other online products was started increasing.
1.1.3 Number of online citations of BPO data	0	26	11	8	National news media outlets in their online versions referred data of BPO bi monthly and annual peace reports.

Output 1.2: RESEARCH Publications (4 types)

1.2.1 Scale: Research conducted on identified areas, and research findings shared to relevant audiences	4/4	76/4	48/4	10/4	Higher priority was given to having the database in order. BPO conducted 4 micronarratives, 1 studies under fellowship program, and 5 joint studies with CTTC. All these reports were shared with relevant audience (see footnote)
1.2.2 Number of citations for research products	0	26	11	8	While the number of research products was lower than planned, data and findings of BPO peace reports were referred in different media.

Scale from 0 to 4: (a) 1st point- research area identified (b) 2nd point- research done (c) 3rd point- report developed (4) 4th point- report shared to relevant audience

1.2.3 Number of times research papers are downloaded online	0	500	200	850	Peace Reports were downloaded 850 times from the BPO website
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Output 1.3: CAPACITY BUILDING to apply research

1.3.1 Percentage of attendees who felt the training was 'useful' or 'very useful' once the training session completed	N/A	80%	80%	N/A	Merged with output 3.2 TRAINING for government officials on PVE
1.3.2 Percentage improvement in scores from a test administered at the start of training when compared to a test administered at the end	N/A	60%	60%	N/A	Merged with output 3.2 TRAINING for government officials on PVE

1.3.3 Number of organizations adding a PVE element to existing programming as a result of training	N/A	25	13	N/A	Merged with output 3.2 TRAINING for government officials on PVE
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Output 1.4: LEARNING LAB (Independent M&E, Skills Training for UNDP)

1.4.1 Number of lessons learned and applied from conferences	N/A	40	25	7	Project staff attended 4 international conferences and took lessons on challenges of interfaith engagement, more effective use of Facebook for counter-narrative, and applied PVE research.
1.4.2 Number of recommendations implemented from independent monitoring or evaluation reports	N/A	23	13	15	Independent M&E- included (1) BPO review, (2) monitoring mission by project's Technical Advisor (PVE), and mapping of PVE research in Bangladesh. Recommendations were taken further including measures to improve BPO database and communications, increase project's focus on digital drivers of VE, blend social entrepreneurship approach in hackathons, and link academics with security agencies in PVE research.

Added/new output, not part of prodoc:

Output 1.5: Cox's Bazaar Analysis and Research Unit (CARU)

1.5.1 Number of bi-monthly updates on Monitoring Drivers of Social Tensions	0 (2018)	15	6	1 bi-monthly, 12 monthly and 73 weekly reports	CARU produced monthly, and weekly reports, instead of bi-weekly reports due to the growing demand for information.
1.5.2 Number of quarterly perception surveys to map and track perceptions among Rohingya and host communities, to understand possible shifts on issues of importance to social cohesion	0 (2018)	10	4	0	The procurement of the survey firm was delayed.
1.5.3 Number of Political Economy Analyses, building on themes identified in the monitoring reports	0 (2018)	12	4	4	

1.5.4 Number of scenario planning and reviews to share and review the information gathered with key partners, and receive feedback	0 (2018)	3	1	3 meetings at CXB level, 2 meetings at Dhaka	Periodical meetings are organized with highest level coordination committees at CXB (ISCG) and Dhaka (SEG)
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Outcome 2: Citizen Engagement: Enhanced inclusivity and tolerance of Bangladeshi society through social engagement activities, both on and offline

2.1. Total number of civil society organizations adding a PVE element (including diversity, peace, and tolerance) to existing programming, with support of UNDP grants, training, or information materials	0	25	13	13	PTIB has made consistent efforts to engage civil society organizations in PVE orientated activities. A component of Diversity for Peace has been introduced to achieve the target by end of project.
2.2 Percentage improvement in scores from a test administered at the start of training when compared to a test administered at the end	N/A	60%	60%	90%	Citizen training was conducted on CSO capacity building on addressing diversity, and social media usage for faith leaders.
2.3 Total number of beneficiaries who have come into contact with campaigns	N/A	18m	10m	12m	Over 12 million audiences were reached with Digital Peace Movement messages of promoting peace, social cohesion, and improved critical thinking.

Output 2.1: RESEARCH into online extremist narratives (This output was shifted under Outcome 1: Research Facility)

2.1.1 Scale: Research conducted on identified areas, and research findings shared to relevant audiences	4	48	28	NA	This indicator was aligned with Outcome indicator 1.1
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Scale from 0 to 4: (a) 1st point- research area identified (b) 2nd point- research done (c) 3rd point- report developed (4) 4th point- report shared to relevant audience

Output 2.2: DIGITAL KHICHURI Challenges

2.2.1 Number of Applicants, per event, for Digital Khichuri Challenges	350	700	700	834	DKC gained more attention than expected.
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2.2.2 Number of viewers the night of a challenge vote	N/A	23,000	13,000	9,323	Set up of DKC has changed. Instead of voting at night, people could vote after the presentations during the final day. Since this was during day time, it had fewer followers and voters than expected.
2.2.3 Number of Facebook likes for Digital Khichuri page	0	25,500	10,500	37,200	As a result of improved social media campaigning DKC gained more attention than expected. Especially activities like the peace talk café has increased the the number of followers significantly.
2.2.4 Number of visitors to Challenge winners' websites and platforms after 6 months	0	12,000	5,000	NA	Considering not all winners were running websites and platforms, this indicator was not tracked.
2.2.5 Low viewer bounce/exit rate from websites produced as a result of Digital Khichuri	0	10%	10%	NA	Same as 2.2.4
Revised/added indicator 2.2.6 Number of viewers reached online through Digital Khichuri Challenge/Digital Peace Movement campaign	0	113,500	900,500	2.8 million	PTIB activities as part of its Digital Peace Movement have proved adept at reaching online audiences with new and innovative content that contains messages of inclusivity and tolerance.
Revised/added indicator 2.2.7 Number of DKC winner teams engaged in Peace/Tolerance/PVE content development	2	14	12	10	In 2019 project had delay in contracting of mentoring firm, it therefore coul only organized 2 DKCs instead of 3. Therefore it engaged with less number of teams

Output 2.3: PVE and GENDER

2.3.1 Percentage of women who felt training was 'useful' or 'very useful' once training session completed	N/A	80%	80%	N/A	Project analyzed that instead of limiting to training on PVE and gender, a more comprehensive approach would be required. Instead of training, PVE and Gender are addressed in the Diversity for Peace Low-Value Grants initiative in support of CSOs.
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2.3.2 Percentage improvement in scores from a test administered at the start of training when compared to a test administered at the end	N/A	60%	60%	N/A	Same as 2.3.1
2.3.3 number of female beneficiaries attending training sessions or discussions	N/A	1800	600	N/A	Same as 2.3.1
2.3.4 number of listeners to media campaigns promoting female historic figures from minority backgrounds	N/A	9m	3m	NA	Same as 2.3.1

Output 2.4: MIGRANT WORKERS

2.4.1 Percentage of migrants surveyed after a workshop who felt the training was 'useful' or 'very useful' once completed	N/A	80%	80%	N/A	Study into vulnerability of migrant workers has shows that a more comprehensive approach is required to support Migrant workers. Instead of training migrant workers, a hackathon (DKC) was organized, and 3 organizations selected/supported to build digital literacy among migrant workers
2.4.2 Percentage improvement in scores from a test administered at the start of training when compared to a test administered at the end	N/A	80%	60%	N/A	Same as 2.4.1
2.4.3 number of workers given training or materials to recognize and defend against extremist recruitment tactics	N/A	9000	3000	N/A	Same as 2.4.1

Output 2.5: YOUTH

2.5.1 number of youth organizations adding a PVE or digital literacy element to existing programming	N/A	25	10	N/A	This indicator was aligned with output indicator 2.2.7
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2.5.2 number of listeners to a campaign on digital literacy, or number of clicks on the advocacy website	N/A	4m	3m	N/A	This indicator was aligned with output indicator 2.2.6
2.5.3 number of youth trainers in digital literacy trained	N/A	240	80	N/A	Related activities were not carried out/repurposed.

Output 2.6: RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP

2.6.1 number of religious organizations adding a PVE or digital literacy element to existing programming	N/A	25	10	N/A	The project could not identify appropriate organizations to support, therefore it trained religious leaders as individuals.
2.6.2 number of religious leaders given training or materials to recognize and defend against extremist narratives in their communities	N/A	9000	3000	150	Since project could not work through organizations but it had to work direct with individuals, the scale was lower than planned. 100 religious leaders attended in the interfaith workshop, and 50 participated in a social media training.

Output 3: Government Engagement: Enhanced sensitization of the government to international best practices that promote social inclusion and tolerance.

3.1. Number of government agencies adding a PVE element to existing programming as a result of all engagement activities	0	10	3	3 (CTTC, ICT Division, MOFA)	PTIB has essential relationships with CTTC on youth, ICT Division on promoting digital innovation, and MOFA on the “culture for peace” agenda.
3.2 Total number of policymakers (civil servants, military, politicians) who participated in PVE training or engagement activities	20	370	100	40	BPO provided training to a total 40 govt. officials, including CTTC (17), Police (1) DGFI (4), military (6), MOFA (7), and BISS (5). Since PVE has not become a high priority for the Government of Bangladesh, there were limited agencies to work with, hence less people to train.

Output 3.1: Conference fund for government to attend conferences on PVE

3.1.1 number of presentations made by Bangladeshi delegates, or documents submitted to conferences	N/A	21	6	4	MOFA and CTTC representatives presented at 2 international and 2 national conferences.
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Output 3.2: TRAINING for government officials on PVE

3.2.1 Percentage improvement in scores from a test administered at the start of training when compared to a test administered at the end	N/A	80%	80%	N/A	The training was conducted by BPO. Participants were not tested.
3.2.2 number of government agencies adding a PVE element to existing programming as a result of training	N/A	10	3	N/A	Government agencies participating were already involved in PVE Since PVE has not become a high priority for the Government of Bangladesh, there were limited agencies to work with.

Added/revised Output 3.3: National PVE Policy (for 2020)

3.3.1. Share and discussion on National PVE strategy: 2 sharing meeting	0 (December 2018)	3	1	1	PTIB supported National PVE Conference where the National PVE Strategy was presented and discussed.
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