

The online catch-up and review meeting held on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April discussed three questions.

### 1. How have COVID-19 challenges affected your progress with the project?



Most projects had just been gearing up for implementation after initiating baselines, introductory meetings and inductions. For the work based around ECD centres, which are all closed, most activities are suspended with staff working from home. There is some work being done - hotlines, providing or designing online resources for parents, providing food, supporting public awareness raising activities around hand washing and sanitation either through materials or community volunteers - but largely projects are on hold.

### 2. Have these circumstances highlighted emerging issues, new perspectives or opportunities for the project?

- a. Recognition that we are all human – from community members, organizational heads, to government officials – bringing out strong demonstrations of empathy and kindness to one another.
- b. Demonstrating the resilience and strength of our own organisations in responding to the situation.
- c. Raising the importance of having contingency and emergency plans built into projects.
- d. Strengthening synergies and collaborations with many organisations – both government, NGOs and CBOs.
- e. New stakeholders to work with such as private sector.
- f. The power of social media and online platforms to reach home-bound groups such as CwD
- g. Wealth of online resources and ECD platforms.
- h. Focus on hand-washing and sanitation strengthens hygiene and will benefit the project in future.
- i. Opportunities to support young mothers and youth around production of masks and sanitisers, and demonstrate to them that their enterprises can succeed.

### 3. Moving forward, what long term changes might this situation have on your project?

- a. Will reduce what is feasible for projects in terms of outcomes and extent of change originally planned.
- b. Integrating emergency planning in projects and risk registers.
- c. More extensive use of technology while considering limits to access because of poverty and gender.
- d. Maintaining and expanding synergies and networks of partners that have emerged.
- e. Maintaining awareness of sanitation and hygiene amongst the communities.
- f. Risks that as parents' livelihoods are threatened, their priorities become survival and their capacity to engage in ECD may be very much reduced.
- g. Government resources will be swallowed up in recovering from the pandemic which may dry up resources for other areas, such as ECD.

### Emerging areas of learning?

1. How can we best employ technology to implement our project even with the presence of COVID-19?

2. How can we strengthen the resilience of community members?

3. How can our project support and integrate effective hand washing, sanitation and hygiene interventions?

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