



BANGLADESH RED CRESCENT SOCIETY
বাংলাদেশ রেড ক্রিসেন্ট সোসাইটি



Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS)

**Community Engagement and Accountability
(CEA)**

Annual Report 2024



March 2025



TOLL FREE HOT LINE
16226



feedback@bdracs.org



Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) is a way of working that recognises and values all community members as equal partners, whose diverse needs, priorities, and preferences guide everything we do.

We achieve this by integrating meaningful community participation, open and honest communication, and mechanisms to listen to and act on feedback, within our programmes and operations.

Introduction

Since 2010, the Bangladesh Red Cross Society (BDRCS) has been working to institutionalize CEA approach in all its programmes and activities. In 2021, CEA became a core component of BDRCS's 6th Strategic Plan (2021–2025), enhancing program delivery and strengthening community trust.

With support from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), IFRC membership and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), CEA integration has been reinforced through training, coaching, and technical assistance, improving participation, accountability, and effectiveness. In 2024, significant progress was made in mainstreaming CEA across humanitarian and development initiatives of BDRCS. This report outlines key activities, achievements, challenges from 2024, and future directions. This report also aims to provide insights for BDRCS management, partners, and project/programme/operation teams, serving as a strategic tool for decision-making and continuous improvement.

Key Highlights from 2024

Information, Education and Communications (IEC) Materials Distribution



10,000 Red Pocket Cards containing the information of BDRCS hotline number as well as government hotline numbers on child protection, sexual and gender based violence.

5,000 hotline stickers.

50,000+ posters, leaflets, and cards containing different awareness messages.

Community Radio Shows/Programmes



22 episodes

Reaching Over 2.4 million people

Six Community radio stations

Topics covered like dengue and disaster preparedness.

Training and Capacity Building

Developed **contextualized CEA training module**, supported by the Pilot Programmatic Partnership (PPP) with DG ECHO. Designed to align with BDRCS' socio-cultural and operational context, the module enhances communication skills, integrates community feedback, and promotes accountability and transparency.

With financial support from British Red Cross, ICRC, IFRC, and PPP, **11 trainings** were conducted in disaster-prone areas, including Sylhet, Rajshahi, and Dhaka districts. Key training topics covered **CEA, Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI), and safeguarding.**



CEA Review and Long-Term Planning

A consulting firm conducted a comprehensive review of BDRCS' CEA framework to assess its integration and effectiveness. The findings informed the development of a detailed CEA long-term plan for 2025–2027, aiming to further institutionalize CEA practices.

Reformation of the CEA Committee

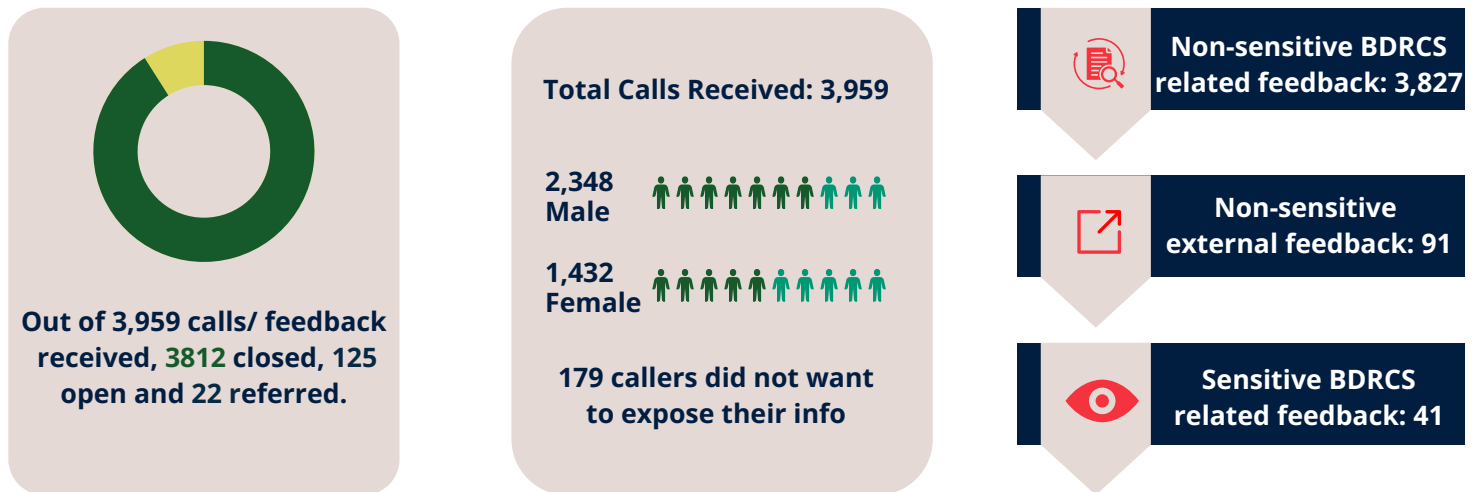
Recognizing challenges in CEA implementation, BDRCS restructured its NHQ-level CEA committee. It aims to enhance mainstreaming efforts and ensure a systematic CEA approach throughout the BDRCS activities.

Enhanced Feedback and Complaints Response System

A software-based digital feedback management system initiated with the support of PPP initiative. This upgrades improved caller reach, monitoring, and response efficiency.

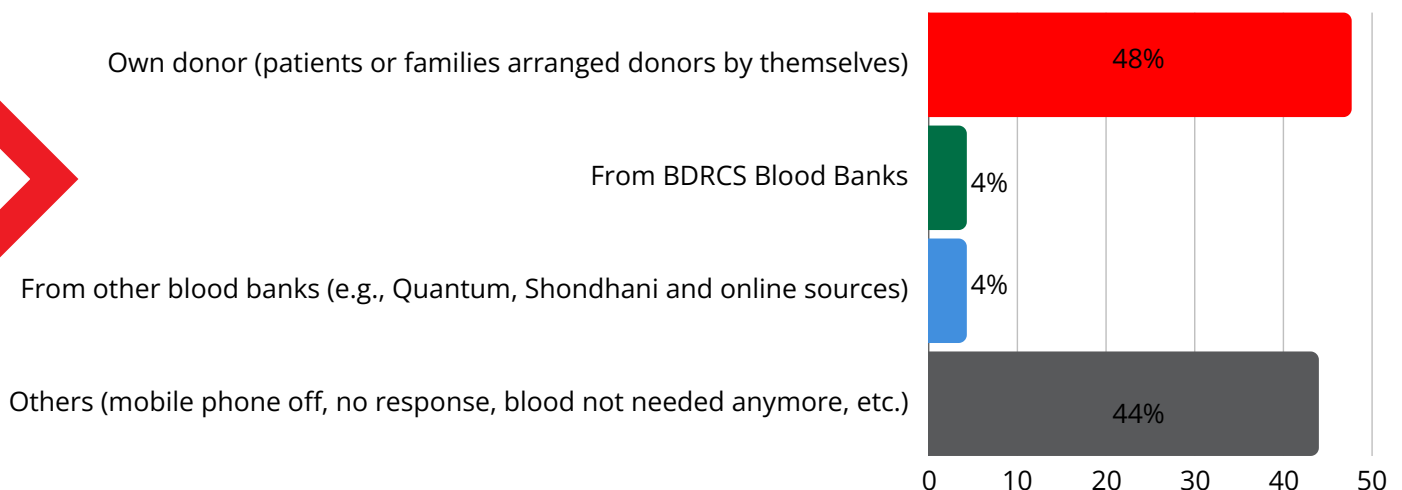
Feedback and Complaints Response Mechanism (FCRM)

Total 3,959 calls/feedback received by the BDRCS central CEA team at NHQ. Some basic breakdown of these calls given below.



FCRM in Blood Requests

BDRCS hotline received 100 calls regarding blood service requests. Calls were made by individuals requesting blood. BDRCS CEA team at NHQ referred them to nine BDRCS Blood Banks throughout the country. Where they are not available, the callers were referred to other blood donors including other organisations. Some highlights of the received calls regarding blood donations, data is in percentage.



CEA Internship Program: To enhance professional skills, and contribute to ongoing projects that support community resilience and disaster preparedness, in 2024, BDRCS provided opportunities to **2 (two) CEA interns** supported by PPP.

Coordination and Collaborations:

In 2024, BDRCS actively engaged in various coordination and collaboration initiatives to strengthen CEA in humanitarian and development efforts. Key activities include:



Regional Knowledge Sharing Workshop (24-26 January, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia): BDRCS CEA Manager participated and engaged in discussions on strengthening community participation in decision-making processes under the CEA framework. The workshop organised by the IFRC, aimed to contribute to a regional roadmap for CEA in the Asia-Pacific, focusing on amplifying community voices, fostering partnerships, sharing best practices, enhancing CEA skills, and connecting various humanitarian sectors.



Meeting with Child Helpline, Ministry of Social Welfare (25 February 2024, Dhaka): The BDRCS CEA team held a strategic meeting with UNICEF-supported Child Helpline 1098 and the service provider to explore opportunities for enhancing hotline services, including the promotion of BDRCS' short code (16226) and improving call monitoring, assessment, rescue/counseling, and referral mechanisms. Discussions highlighted key hotline assets such as the resource directory, call records, SMS capabilities, and advanced call management features.



AAP Capacity Strengthening Workshop (3-4 March 2024, Dhaka): BDRCS joined and participated in a workshop at Dhaka aimed at fostering a common understanding of Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) principles, frameworks, commitments, protocols, and standards. The training, facilitated by the UNICEF Regional Office of South Asia (ROSA), the United Nations Resident Coordinators (UNRC) Office, and the AAP Working Group in Bangladesh, focused on integrating AAP in humanitarian and development programming and disaster response.



AAP Working Group Meeting (9 June 2024, Dhaka): CEA Manager participated in an AAP working group meeting organized by UNICEF to reinforce the integration of AAP principles in humanitarian and development responses across Bangladesh. The session, facilitated by ROSA, UNRC, and the AAP Working Group, provided a platform for knowledge exchange and strategy development.



CEA Webinar – Community of Practice Organized a CEA-focused webinar in collaboration with the Danish Red Cross, fostering peer learning and experience-sharing among practitioners.



IFRC CEA Asia Pacific Regional Calls: BDRCS joins this call regularly to exchange best practices, stay updated on emerging trends, and strengthen coordination with CEA stakeholders across Asia Pacific and other regions.

Way Forward

Strengthen Capacity Building & Leadership: Implement regular CEA training programs at NHQ and unit (branch) levels to enhance skills and leadership capabilities.

Improve On-time Response: Establish systems for faster response times to community feedback, with senior management facilitating timely actions.

Upgrade Hotline System: Invest in digital infrastructure to modernize the hotline operation and enhance its efficiency.

Integrate CEA with Health Services: Strengthen collaboration between health and the CEA team at NHQ to incorporate community engagement strategies into health programs, ensuring a holistic approach of CEA in health services.

Enhance Internal Coordination: Improve inter departmental communication and coordination to address community feedback promptly.

Expand CEA Integration: Broaden CEA activities to encompass both health and emergency response services, fostering stronger community involvement.

Priorities for Strengthening CEA in 2025

Strengthening the Position of CEA: In line with the recommendations from the CEA mainstreaming review, it is proposed that CEA be formally established as a dedicated wing, team, or unit under the Office of the Secretary General (SG) or a high-level executive. This approach will ensure its independence and effectiveness, while also facilitating its integration into the revised organizational structure, ensuring that CEA principles are fully embedded within the organization.

Capacity Building for CEA Implementation: It is crucial to develop and implement comprehensive training programs on CEA methodologies for all staff and volunteers. Additionally, CEA responsibilities should be embedded in job descriptions and performance evaluations to ensure consistent application and accountability.

Integration into Strategic Documents: CEA principles must be included in all strategic planning documents and policies of BDRCS, ensuring that community engagement is a central part of BDRCS' operations and decision-making processes.

Enhancing Leadership Commitment: Securing visible commitment from BDRCS leadership is key to advancing CEA initiatives. This commitment will ensure the necessary resources and support are provided to maintain and expand CEA approach.

Review of CEA Policy, Guidelines: A review and update of CEA policies, feedback management guidelines, and operational directives is necessary. This will enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the feedback and complaints response mechanism, ensuring timely and meaningful engagement with communities.

Establishment of Digital Call Centre: The launch of mobile platforms and Interactive Voice Response (IVR) systems will streamline the collection of feedback, enhancing the organization's response capabilities and ensuring that feedback is gathered in a timely and accessible manner.

Improvement of CEA Documentation and Publications:

To ensure continuous learning and knowledge sharing, it is important to document and publish experiences and lessons learned from CEA activities. This will contribute to better practices and foster an environment of growth and improvement.

Ensuring Sustainability of CEA Practices: Continuous monitoring of CEA progress is essential for timely adjustments. Regular collection, analysis, and integration of community feedback into decision-making processes will help sustain and improve CEA practices over time.

Dedicated Resource Mobilisation for CEA: Considering the growing need to strengthen CEA within BDRCS, the CEA team has developed a proposal seeking funding support from the British Red Cross and the American Red Cross, IFRC, ICRC and Swedish Red Cross for the year 2025. However, it is recommended to have some core funding support from BDRCS revenue budget.

Contact Info

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