



LAUNCH OF DEPP INNOVATION LAB BANGLADESH

Finding fresh solutions to help communities prepare for disasters

October 17, 2017, Dhaka, Bangladesh: At an event in Dhaka today, the DEPP Innovation Lab Bangladesh was launched in the presence of esteemed guests.

Rashed Khan Menon, Honourable Minister, Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, stated “We stand with you on this enormous challenge you have decided to take on. As disaster risks in Bangladesh continue to grow, new solutions are required to help communities increase preparedness and resilience.”

For rapidly urbanising, populous and highly disaster-prone, South Asia faces a wide variety of risks. For Bangladesh, in particular, climate change impacts are only exacerbating these challenges. The lab seeks to scout and support ideas to address these needs, building safer communities. It will examine and improve solutions focussed on the interface of emergency health and the built environment, which plays such an important role in disaster-prone communities.

The lab is hosted by Dhaka Community Hospital Trust, a Bangladeshi community hospital and medical college and a consortium of partners.

Prof. Dr. Quazi Quamuruzzaman, Chairman, Dhaka Community Hospital Trust said: *“The lab will run out of a community that is globally known for its vulnerability. This is a completely new idea in disaster preparedness and risk reduction in South Asia. We believe that the region has immense capacities, which need to be tapped into in an organised way, recognised, and developed. We hope these scouted innovations will not only help the local community but will also be replicable and scalable to solve similar problems elsewhere.”*

This lab is part of the global Disasters and Emergencies Preparedness Programme (DEPP) labs which work to develop humanitarian response capacity in disaster affected communities. This programme is funded by UK Aid and managed collaboratively by the Communications with Disaster Affected Communities (CDAC) and Start Networks.

As Neil Townsend, DEPP Innovation Programme Manager, commented: *“This programme is truly innovative. It is a real chance to support locally-driven change within the humanitarian system and to channel meaningful support to the people most affected by disasters.”*

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