



Amidst COVID-19 Pandemic, FH Renews Commitment to Serve the Most Vulnerable

PHOENIX, Ariz. (March 12, 2020) – As the World Health Organization names the COVID-19 outbreak a global pandemic, Food for the Hungry is charting paths to strengthen health and hygiene messaging and vigilantly monitor the spread of the new coronavirus in our countries of operation. To date, FH has not had any reported cases of COVID-19 among staff, communities, or partners.

In places like refugee camps, where crowded conditions and poor hygiene can increase infection rates, FH is committed to preventing the spread of the COVID-19 disease to the most vulnerable populations on earth. FH is already working with Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar, running four health clinics and training community health workers alongside partner Medical Teams International on additional, preventative measures to prevent a COVID-19 outbreak.

FH is also working with Bangladesh's Ministry of Health and UNHCR to ensure the provision of supplies such as masks and hand sanitizer as needed. In case of a potential outbreak, preparations are already underway to accommodate for quarantine, the lab capacity to confirm cases, and house isolation units. In the meantime, the promotion of key health and hygiene practices will be shared by other community health workers and Rohingya refugees in ways that combat stigma and do not incite fear.

This Cascade Group model—in which health and hygiene messaging is taught and “cascaded” through community members—has long been a core part of FH’s health programming around the world for the prevention of diseases such as cholera, diphtheria, and more. In this time of uncertainty, FH urges further commitment to fighting this global disease and to shielding poverty-stricken countries from any COVID-19 outbreaks that could overwhelm health facilities and increase strains on already limited medical doctors, nurses, supplies, and hospital beds.

Internally, FH has also convened a dedicated Coronavirus Task Force to monitor the situation, inform organizational decisions, and provide internal ongoing updates and communications for maintaining staff safety and operational continuity amidst the outbreak. In an effort to limit non-essential travel, FH has postponed a key leadership conference and all non-essential travel.

FH will continue to monitor the situation and pivot its strategies in ways that most deeply address the needs of those in poverty worldwide.

ABOUT FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY

Food for the Hungry is a Christian humanitarian organization ending all forms of human poverty by providing life-changing development programs, disaster relief, and advocacy. Since 1971, Food for the Hungry has been going into the world’s hardest places with an exit strategy: to respond to human suffering and graduate communities of extreme poverty into self-sustainability, all within a decade. By creating context-specific solutions in education, agriculture, health, livelihood, clean water, and disaster risk reduction, the nonprofit focuses on transformational development, investing in children as the key to lift entire communities out of poverty. With 98% of staff working in their country of origin, Food for the Hungry works side-by-side with local leaders, churches, and families to implement innovative solutions. The organization currently serves more than 14 million people in over 20 countries worldwide. For more information, follow @food4thehungry or visit www.fh.org.



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