



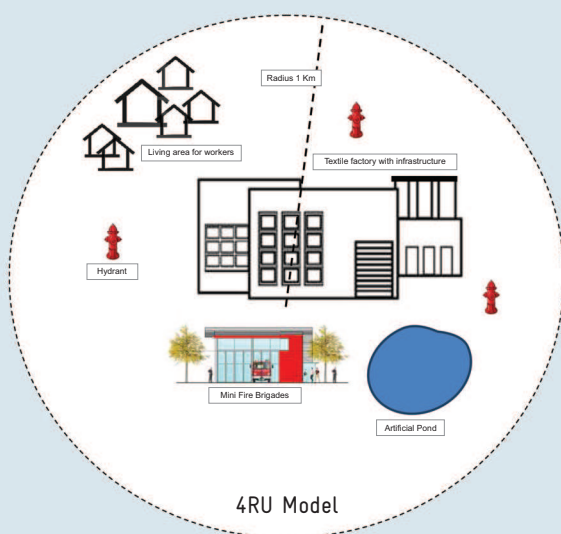
## Responding rapidly with Mini Fire Brigades

Bangladesh is currently the second largest ready-made garments manufacturer after China. With a growing industry, many challenges arise: a number of recent fire incidents and collapsed buildings have shocked the international community. The authority tasked with preparing for and responding to these crises is the Department for Fire Services and Civil Defence. As the department lacks firefighters as well as fire stations, its efforts often fall below what is required. Also, providing emergency services in a timely manner becomes more difficult due to the locations of the existing factories – narrow roads and heavy traffic are barriers for fire trucks.

To sustain the garment industry, workplace safety has to be addressed. In addition to the existing fire services, a Mini-Fire Brigade or more specifically a Rapid Response and Risk Reduction Unit, in short 4RU, could contribute to building and fire safety in the industry. The aim of establishing such a unit is

to both advise the factory management on risk prevention and fire safety aspects and to respond rapidly to industrial fires, building collapses and other severe incidents within the operational range of the 4RU. In order to save lives, to keep fires within manageable limits and bridge the critical time until additional firefighting units enter the scene, the 4RU must be stationed directly in the area where garment factories are located. 4RUs are not meant to substitute existing firefighting forces, but to support them. The concept is based on three types of staff: professional fire fighters, auxiliary fire teams from the factories and volunteers from nearby communities.

Especially for those factory clusters with narrow access roads and that are a long distance from fire stations, the 4RU can be crucial to avoiding severe losses and heavy damages.



The Rapid Response and Risk Reduction Unit (4RU) is implemented to prevent fires and building collapses. The unit also responds to those incidents that cannot be prevented. Staffed 24 hours a day, the response time will be within the critical 10-15 minutes after the incident. Therefore, the operational range of the unit has to be limited to about one kilometer.

Major tasks of the unit include:

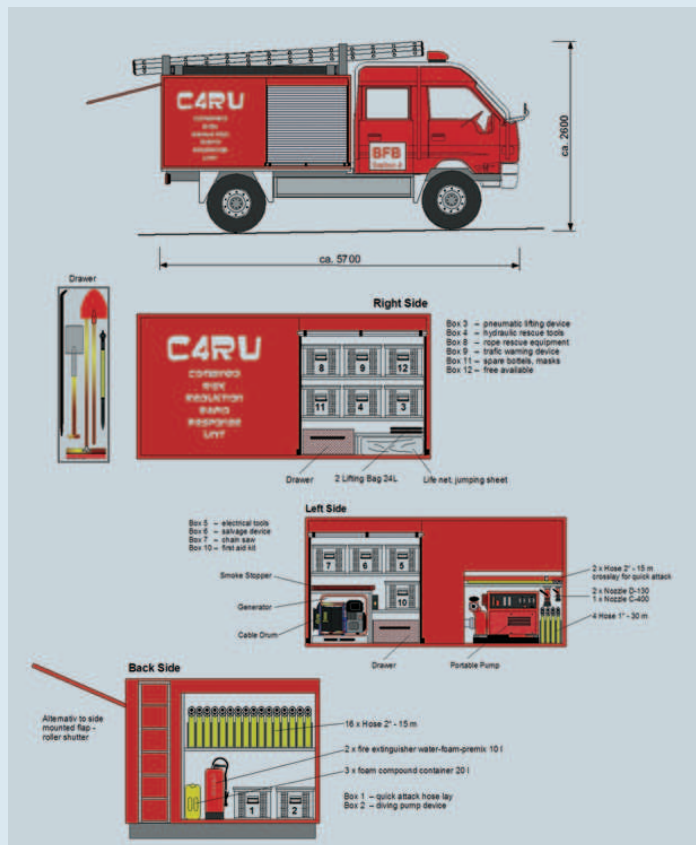
- Advising factory management on risk prevention and fire safety
- Training of factory fire teams.
- Saving lives and administering first aid.
- Extinguishing smaller fires and preventing the spread of fires.



## The pilot project: setting up a Rapid Response and Risk Reduction Unit – 4RU – in Dhaka

A first 4RU will be established in a Public-Private Partnership between the Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defence Directorate, the Fire Brigade of Bonn (Germany), the Dulal Brothers Limited (DBL) group and GIZ. The Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defence Directorate will provide full-time firefighters and will ensure adequate training for all full-time and voluntary members of the 4RU in cooperation with German firefighting experts. As the private project partner, the Dulal Brothers Limited (DBL) group will provide land for the establishment of a 4RU. They will also set-up the infrastructure with at least one roofed vehicle parking spot and station building. Together, the partners will equip a specialized vehicle with different extinguishing systems, a hydraulic cutter and spreader, which will enable the 4RU Team to operate effectively.

Are you interested in a partnership with GIZ to establish more 4RUs and thereby save the lives of Bangladeshi workers? Please contact us.



The 4RU concept and the pilot project have been developed within the framework of the Global Initiative on Disaster Risk Management (GIDRM) and in close cooperation with the "Promotion of Social and Environmental Standards in the Industry" (PSES) project implemented by GIZ.



Launched by the German Ministry for Economic Development and Cooperation (BMZ), the aim of the Global Initiative on Disaster Risk Management is to bring together German and regional experts from the public and private sectors, civil society and the academic and research community, to facilitate mutual learning across national boundaries as well as to develop and pilot innovative disaster risk management solutions.

**Contact**  
 Md. Manjur Morshed  
 Promotion of Social and Environmental  
 Standards in the Industry (PSES)  
 Senior Social Compliance Advisor  
 German House  
 House 10A, Road 90, Gulshan 2  
 Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh  
 T +880 2 882 30 70, 988 75 67 ext. 199  
 F +880 2 882 30 99  
 E manjur.morshed@giz.de  
 I www.giz.de/en

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**Registered offices**  
 Bonn and Eschborn

GIZ Office Dhaka  
 German House  
 Road 90, House 10/C  
 Gulshan 2, Dhaka 1212  
 Bangladesh

T +880 966670 1000  
 F +880 02 8823 099  
 E [giz-bangladesh@giz.de](mailto:giz-bangladesh@giz.de)  
 I [www.giz.de/bangladesh](http://www.giz.de/bangladesh)

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