Celebration of World Mental Health Day by RTMI-UNICEF Team

Every year 10th of October is celebrated as ‘World Mental Health Day’ worldwide to raise awareness about mental health around the world and to mobilize efforts to support those experiencing mental health issues. The World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH) announced the theme for World Mental Health Day 2022, which is ‘Make mental health for all a global priority’. Whilst the pandemic has, and continues to, take its toll on our mental health, the ability to reconnect through World Mental Health Day 2022 has provided us with an opportunity to re-kindle our efforts to protect and improve mental health.

This year, RTMI-UNICEF MHPSS team has observed ‘World Mental Health Day’ for the first time within the FDMN camps. The team regularly provides mental health services as part of the RTMI MESP project at three primary health care centers (PHC) in Camp 05, 17 and 18; and two health posts (HP) in Camp 10 & 17 simultaneously. The long day celebration was organized with different types of events including Art Event and Henna Festival for the children and adolescent beneficiaries; and also awareness session was conducted for the Rohingya volunteers and facility staffs. We were overwhelmed to see the enthusiastic participation from 88 children & adolescent beneficiaries; 81 facility staffs and 65 community volunteers in the event.

❖ **Art event:** Art is one of the most powerful tools for self-care and mental health. Studies have shown that expression through art can help people with depression, anxiety, and stress and refresh their minds. On this special occasion, RTM International has arranged art events for the children and adolescents at our 5 facilities. 60 children attended art events at 4 health facilities. They drew different things and refreshed their mind by showing their creativity through art.
❖ **Henna Festival:** RTM International arranged a henna festival at their health facilities for children and adolescents as well. Children and adolescents were really happy especially adolescent girls when they used henna on their hands. It put them in a jolly mood. They made various designs on their hand to decorate them. Snacks and chocolates were distributed among the young participants in the end of the event.

❖ **Awareness Session:** To create awareness about Mental Health Well-being among the Rohingya community, MHPSS team conducted sessions and workshops with Rohingya volunteers. Session topic was anger management and self-care. The volunteers of our 5 facilities participated in this session and workshop. Finally, the MHPSS Team had a session with all of the facility members. The topics of the sessions included stress management, anger control, and self-care; they also practiced breathing exercise.

Mental Health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel and act. It also helps to determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life from childhood to adolescence and throughout the adulthood. RTMI-UNICEF MHPSS team celebrated the World Mental Health day to raise awareness of mental health issues in the Rohingya community and also as a special reminder for the service providers to keep them mentally healthy.