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Rohingya Influx in Bangladesh Continues

Strong and Effective Coordination in Relief Operation is Needed Media needs to be more careful with some sensitive issues

Along with the humanitarian supports for the Rohingya Refugees in Ukhiya and Teknaf of Cox's Bazar, COAST Trust is regularly producing update on the situation. This is the third update in this series. The previous two updates can be found from <http://coastbd.net/coast-immediate-responses-to-rohingya-crisis-in-coxs-bazar/> and <http://coastbd.net/coast-immediate-responses-to-rohingya-crisis-in-coxs-bazar/>

According to latest reports from various sources, the continuous Rohingya influx from Myanmar to Bangladesh is increasing the number of refugees. Since 25 August about 400 thousand Rohingya refugees have fled to Bangladesh to survive from the recent violence in Myanmar. Bangladesh government, INGOs, NGOs, local communities are providing various relief support for them.

Coordination Meeting of Local Administration in Cox's Bazar: Some Major Decisions have been taken

On 18th September, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Cox's Bazar organized the NGO Coordination meeting. The Secretary for the Ministry of Disaster and Relief, Mr. Shah Kamal was present as the chief guest. Among others Director for Relief of the same ministry was also present. NGOs and INGOs working in Cox's Bazar participated in the meeting. From the meeting, some important decisions were taken to make the relief operation for Rohingya refugees and to face some challenges arisen from this recent Rohingya influx in Cox's Bazar.

|| Government has so far calculated 84,000 Rohingya families fled from Myanmar. All refugees must be registered, unregistered refugees will not be allowed to get any support from any agency.

|| The district and Upazila administration will take strong punitive action against any illegal or unaccepted behaviors against Rohingya refugees.



|| Government will encourage humanitarian support activities like food distribution, family planning, sanitation, WASH, health service.

|| The DC office will work as the coordinator of all relief works for Rohingya refugees. Individuals or organizations interested to work in this regard must communicate with the DC office.

|| The World Food Program (WFP) will provide food for 220 thousand refugees and government will provide food to 120 thousand refugees. Government will recruit 400 volunteers for two new camps.

|| Upazila administration has already formed a Upazila based discipline management committee

|| The Bangladesh Border Guard will work to ensure law and order situation from 20th September, police will set security check points in various important places.

|| The DC office has opened a Bank Account. Anyone interested to make cash support must deposit the amount in this bank account number (33024625, Sonali Bank, Cox's Bazar branch). All relief must be gone to the Rohingya in coordination with the DC office, this is to avoid overlapping.



NGOs Coordination meeting in Cox's Bazar.



II For relief distribution, government have selected twelve spot. Spots are: Kutupalong camp-I & 2, Balokhali camp-1&2, Monner gona, Hakim para under Ukhiya Upazilla. Baharchora, Shaporirdip, Noya para and Whykong under Teknaf Upazilla.

II If anyone want to operate any health camp, prior approval from the Civil Surgeon office is must.

II District administration will form a gap analysis committee. Local some NGOs will involve this committee.

A new shelters will be set up

Bangladesh government has taken some decisions to tackle the Rohingya crisis. Government is going to set up 14,000 additional shelters on some 2,000 acres of land near Kutupalong in Cox's Bazar for Rohingya people who have fled to Bangladesh in the face of persecution by the Myanmar military forces in the Rakhine State. Six displaced Rohingya families would be accommodated in each shelter. WFP will construct 14 makeshift warehouses near the new shelters to preserve and store relief materials. The disaster management ministry and the local administration will coordinate necessary steps to ensure the safety and security of the warehouses. The Department of Public Health and Engineering will immediately build 500 temporary sanitary latrines while the UNHCR 8,000 more. The Local Government Division will deploy its officials and staffers in the area so that sanitation and water shortages can be addressed effectively.

The Power Division will immediately make a proper assessment for supplying electricity to the newly constructed shelters and the areas where the refugees are temporarily staying. Besides, 20 additional medical camps will start working in the camp areas. Vaccination will also start. A special unit will be formed for lactating mothers and the Department of Social Services must enlist the orphans and come up with a plan to take necessary steps for their welfare. (UNB, Daily Star).

COAST Humanitarian Responses

COAST is continuing its supports towards the Rohingya Refugees. From 8 September to 17th September COAST has distributed 22000 packets of cooked food, 48000 liters of drinking water. COAST has also provided health services to 25552 refugees.

COAST is trying to implement some effective strategies to make some important changes. The areas refugees have taken shelters have become very much loaded with various types of wastages. COAST recruited 10 Rohingya refugees to clean some areas. Thus, COAST made two outputs, ten Rohingya refugees have got some income, which will be helpful for them. On the other hand, the areas have become garbage and wastages free!

Strong Coordination is needed

It is really very tough to arrange the relief work in a very much orderly manner for this huge number of refugees. The number of refugees is going beyond the prediction and it is still counting! That is why a strong and effective coordination of the relief work must be established. Government should take the lead of monitoring and coordinating the relief operation. Here coordination means ensure the quality of the work, ensuring effectivity and avoiding duplication or overlapping.

From our observation, we have found that, In some areas people are getting more relief while in others they are not getting what they needed. There is nobody to assess the needs of the refugees. So, people are not getting what they need. It is essential for the government to understand their needs. They just don't need rice and biscuits again and again.

In some areas, refugees have now got enough food, but they need shelters, they need sanitation facilities. But support in this regard is still very inadequate.

Media Needs to be More careful with some sensitive issues.

So far, local communities have extended their supports towards refugees. But there are some ill motivations to make some confusions among the refugees and the local communities. Some vested quarters are trying to spread some negative rumors, which may harmful for the peace of the Cox's Bazar areas where the refugees have taken shelters. Media should be more careful in publishing or broadcasting news or views which can affect negatively.

