Support to Bangladesh Host Communities in the Rohingya Refugee Response

Government and Host Community Response to the Influx of Rohingya Refugees

• The Government of Bangladesh responded quickly upon the arrival of the 687,000 Rohingya refugees from Myanmar since August 2017, including allocating 5,800 acres of land.

• The host communities of Cox’s Bazar, and the District administration have made a significant and ongoing contribution to the life saving response for refugees under leadership of the National Government and with UN support.

• The international community recognizes the need to support affected host communities in coping with the impact of the influx and is working together with the Government of Bangladesh and local and national NGOs to try to help facilitate this support in Ukhia and Teknaf and to district level institutions.
Impact of the Influx on Host Communities

- The dramatic increase in population has strained resources, infrastructure, public services and the local economy. The most affected areas have been the Unions in Ukhia and Teknaf Upazilas, but impacts are being felt throughout the district.
- Increased pressures include rising food, firewood and transport prices, pressure on water, basic services and the environment and competition for jobs.
- Even before the influx, one in five households had poor food consumption patterns much higher than the national average.
- On average, 33% live below the poverty line and 17% below extreme poverty line.
- The current situation risks slowing – and even reversing – efforts towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in Cox's Bazar District and a higher level of economic prosperity.

Key Environmental Impacts of the Refugee Crisis

- Since August, 500 hectares of forest lost—equivalent to 4 football pitches per day.
- At current rate of firewood collection, estimated complete loss of forest by end of 2019 – 700 tons of firewood collected per day.
- 86% of drinking water wells contaminated with ecoli from unmanaged fecal matter—the incidence will worsen in rainy season potentially leading to cholera and other water-born disease.
- Agricultural land near camps suffering from siltation and contamination from fecal matter
- Irrigation wells no longer able to provide for rice crop irrigation due to watershed destruction and diminished water table (particularly acute in Teknaf which was already water scarce).
- Mass cooking fires and garbage burning lead to daily spikes in air pollution coinciding with morning and evening meals.
- Loss of critical habitat for elephants and other species, depleted marine resources due to overfishing and destructive practices.
Humanitarian support in Host Communities

• The JRP has a commitment of 25% of planned and funded activities for the affected host communities living in the proximity of the refugee camps and directly affected by the influx.

• The approach under the humanitarian response is inclusive and based on need. Critical programs of support are extended to the most vulnerable among the affected host communities, many of who are facing similar problems as new arrivals (household income, jobs, food and nutrition and poverty).

• Support is also provided to government institutions to mitigate the impact on service delivery and strengthen systems in health, nutrition, water and sanitation, education, agriculture, forestry and environment.

JRP Response for Host Communities operationalized through:

• Operational Projects Across all Sectors – implementing projects for refugees and host communities in partnership with national, international and local NGOs.

• Engagement with Host Communities and support for community to community engagement. Consultation with communities living on the edge of the camps and bringing the two groups together for dialogue.

• Institutionalizing engagement through Government – holding regular coordination and dialogue meetings with District, Upazila and Union level authorities and host community leaders.
Priority Areas of support under the 2018 Joint Response Plan

Under the Joint Response Plan (JRP) 2018, designed by the ISCG for the humanitarian community through consultation and supported by the Government of Bangladesh, host communities will be supported at district, community and household levels. Priority areas of support under the Joint Response Plan for Cox’s Bazar District are:

1. Environment and eco-system rehabilitation
2. Agriculture, markets and livelihoods support
3. Community and public infrastructure:
4. Health, nutrition and education

Plans to end of 2018 - Environment and eco-system rehabilitation

- Addressing deforestation and fuelwood depletion through reforestation and forest management systems support, including planting of fast growing tree nurseries and seedling production.
- The RRRC Energy Committee is undertaking a Clean Energy Program to promote alternative energy sources and curb the deforestation caused by firewood collection. This includes compressed rice husk distribution, biogas installations, improved cook stoves and LPG provision for communal kitchens and targeted communities.
- LPG gas stoves and gas bottles will be supplied to 23,000 households (20% for host communities) as a 6 month project. The distribution should begin in June.
Disaster Risk Management and Preparedness

• Support to 4 Union Disaster Management Committees and WDMCs of Bahachor, Teknaf Sadar, Hnilla and Sabrang Unions
• Establishment of early warning system in 4 schools, 18 WDMCs, 2 UDMCs for Bahachora and Teknaf Sador
• Support to Government’s Cyclone Preparedness Program
• Capacity Building of Disaster Risk Management structure and mechanism (including DMCs) through the provision of human resources, logistics, infrastructure and training support
Plans to end 2018

1. Agriculture, markets and livelihoods support

Livelihoods support based on vulnerability assessments, will include cash grants, training and support for small business development; fish, crops, agriculture and livestock support; and farmer field schools.

2. Community and public infrastructure:

Quick Impact Projects will be undertaken. These may cover improvements to infrastructure, public lands, markets, beaches, drainage, pathways, school rehabilitation, solid waste management; and public lighting.
JRP Plans - Health, Nutrition and Education

• 22% of JRP education targets host communities. School improvement grants. Training of teachers will be increased and education materials provided to students and teachers.

• **Cox’s Bazar district hospital, Teknaf and Ukhia health complex** will be further supported, strengthening disease-outbreak surveillance systems, establishing control rooms and rapid response teams, improving Lab and Diagnostic services at Medical College in Cox’s Bazar and strengthening of Health Care Waste Management systems.

• Further support for the treatment of Acute Malnutrition in Government Hospitals and Host community clinics, in coordination with civil surgeon office, is planned, including the delivery of malnutrition Prevention interventions i.e. *Micronutrient Supplementation*.

What has been done so far? Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

• **Comprehensive Water Resource Potential Assessment** of Ukhia and Teknaf Upazila is ongoing and water resource mapping for Cox’s Bazar district.

• **Central Water Quality Testing Laboratory** being established for the Cox’s Bazar district.

• **2,700 Household latrines** are being provided, **Water filter** (1,000) and **Hygiene Kits** distribution (1,050 households) is ongoing

• Water and sanitation support in **7 schools** is ongoing.
What has been done so far?
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

- Working with the Ukhia market management committee and the Union Parishad to clean Ukhia market area to support **solid waste collection and disposal**.

- **Installation and repairing 50 water points**, undertaking a hydrological survey and installing sanitary latrines in Rajapalong and Palongkhali in Ukhia and provision of a **contingency water supply** in Teknaf.

- Multiple sludge treatment management units are being constructed for Ukhia and Teknaf areas including for Ukhia main market.
What has been done so far?

Health

• Support is being given to Cox’s Bazar district hospital and Teknaf and Ukhia health complexes, including **strengthening of laboratory and diagnostic services** at the Medical College in Cox’s Bazar.

• **8 tons of medicines provided** to the Civil Surgeon Office and Sadar Hospital and health partners working with the MoHFP and IEDCR in **strengthening surveillance of infectious diseases** and improving capacity to respond to outbreaks and disease threats in host communities.

• Oral Cholera Vaccine for 135,000 people ongoing to May 13th

What has been done so far?

Nutrition

• Support has been given to 52 Outpatient Therapeutic Care centers in host communities to **treat and prevent Acute Malnutrition**

• 20,482 children screened for acute malnutrition, 52 treated in gov’t facilities

• 524 children treated for moderate acute malnutrition and 241 pregnant, lactating women with supplementary feeding

• 623 pregnant, lactating women provided micronutrient supplements and 7123 received child feeding counselling

• One nutrition survey in Ukyia and Teknaf to monitor nutrition of children affected by influx and analysis under guidance of center for disease control
Environment - Ongoing and Planned Activities

• 9 grass nurseries have been established in Ukhiya and Teknaf Upazila for slope stabilization, 5,450 vetiver clumps and 125,900 other grass seedlings will be produced

• Collaboration with the Forestry Department for production of planting materials for land stabilization works to be conducted in June and July (14 sites) seedlings ready for planting with rainy season.

• Introduction of Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) cooking fuels to curb dependency on firewood in camps and host communities – pilot work ongoing to 23,000 households with private sector partnership, 20% for host communities

• Environmental Impact Assessment of Rohingya Influx completed in December. Longer-term environmental planning with government partners, Watershed management and rehabilitation strategy development (5 year plan) underway;

• Market and supply chain research for major agricultural commodities conducted with Bangladesh Agricultural University of Mymensing and Dept of Agriculture

• Elephant habitat mapping, rehabilitation planning and human/elephant interaction awareness raising with the World Conservation Union technical support.

DRR Mitigation Activities

• Rehabilitation of 40 kms of connecting roads in Ukhia and Teknaf. Ukhiya (Rajapalong– ward number-5 6 8 9, Palongkhalı-ward number- 4 5 6), Teknaf (Whykhong - 1 2 3 5, and Nhila - 1 5 6)

• Assessment and upgrading of 20 public buildings for possible shelters: repair/replace roof, windows, doors, & improvement of water and sanitation.

• Construction of one major road/slope protection to ensure public access

• 10 bamboo footbridges and 6 footpaths protected with sandbags and with line ditches to guide or channel the water downhill in Teknaf ; Repair of drainage systems

• Dredging of main waterways ongoing. 10 KM canal SW of Kutapalong-Balukhali expansion site to Naf river being dredged.
What has been done so far?
Food Security, Livelihoods and Agriculture

- **28,944 Bangladeshi families** receiving livelihood support in Ukhia and Teknaf including income generating activities, vocational training and business plan development.

- 500 farmers in 24 groups provided with **power tillers, high-efficiency water pumps, sprayers and assorted seeds**. In addition, the distributions of micro-gardening and food safety kits has commenced for 25,000 people.

- **Training of Trainers** for the Department of Agricultural Extension in climate sensitive agriculture technologies and in High-Value Crop Production specific to the Teknaf and Ukhia markets is ongoing.

What has been done so far?
Food Security, Livelihoods and Agriculture

- **Cash-for-work activities** for 15,415 people participating in C4W for small infrastructure repair. For example, almost 2,000 people recently rehabilitated damaged roads, dams and school grounds.

- **4 microfinance branches** in Ukhia and Teknaf have been set up and support to women in Ukhia to produce handicrafts and embroidery.

- **School Feeding**: 144,022 students receiving fortified biscuits daily.
What has been done so far?

Education

• Support to 30,400 learners ongoing to 2020, schools in Ukhiya and Teknaf provided supplies, sports activities, libraries and reading
• All 137 primary schools in Teknaf and Ukhia receiving school improvement grants, additional classrooms, water & sanitation
• Equipment for district & upazila education offices
• 3,697 girls and boys received pre-primary and primary education
• Innovative project in 15 locations using smartphones to support out of school adolescent girls via open source learning & textbook tutoring

What has been done so far?

Protection, Child Protection and Gender Based Violence

• Mediation/conflict resolution facilitation with communities and local authorities
• Support for 50 social workers to respond to child protection in host communities and camps
• Gender Based violence referral pathway system established in host community locations and camps
• 3 women help desks established in local police stations
• Quick impact projects to improve public infrastructure to ensure equitable access and peaceful co-existence between refugees and local communities.
Communication with Communities

• ‘Betar Sanglap’ radio programs for host communities to discuss issues
• Training of journalists from Radio Bangladesh Betar and Radio Naf
• Host community education programs with focus on adolescents and radio listener groups
• Community based volunteers in Whykong promote engagement, needs assessments around Unchiprang and Nayapara camps
• Regular engagement and dialogue will help bring people together to address impacts on affected host communities through Rohingya and Host Community networks. This will facilitate Ukhia and Teknaf civil society, local authorities and international and national humanitarian workers for an open dialogue and support to each other.
Consulting with Partners and communities

- Consultation with partners through sector coordination structure and:
  - Environment and energy working group
  - Livelihoods working group
  - Communication with Communities working group
  - Gender in Humanitarian Action working group
- Series of consultations planned by ISCG with local government, humanitarian actors and host community leaders.
- Increase consultation and collaboration with local NGOs and foster greater participation of local NGOs in sector coordination.

Coordination with District and Upazila Authorities and Leaders

- Coordination meetings held:
  - Bi-weekly in Ukhia and Teknaf co-chaired by ISCG and UNO with ISCG sector representatives
  - Coordination cel planned with support from ISCG agencies
- With DC office- coordination cel planned with support of ISCG agencies
- Upazila Development Coordination Meeting – proposed forum for regular updates on host community programs/issues
Mobilizing Funding for the JRP and Host Communities

- The international community requires the support of donors, local authorities and community leaders to facilitate funding for the JRP so critical programs of support are provided in a timely manner to meet the needs of host communities affected by the influx.

- Additional funding for immediate and visible community projects and services is essential to reduce tensions and foster social cohesion and peaceful co-existence in the areas most affected by the refugee influx.

Engagement of Development Agencies

- More needs to be done for Host Communities and the entire district of Cox’s Bazar. Development agencies have an important role to play to expand and scale up coverage.

- Assessments are underway with office of Deputy Commissioner to identify district wide programs with medium term outlook. Development Programs can complement the host communities elements in the JRP and ensure district wide coverage.

- The World Bank and others are planning scale up of activities building on the work being done under the JRP.
Thank you and Comments welcome

• The international community requires the support of donors, authorities and community leaders to ensure mutual understanding of the support that the international community and Bangladesh partners can provide to the needs of affected host communities.

• Thank you and we welcome your comments.