Social Impact Assessment of the Rohingya Refugee Crisis into Bangladesh

Key Findings and Recommendations (6th December 2017)

An estimated 626,000 refugees have fled violence across the border from Myanmar into Cox's Bazar and the Chittagong Hill Tracts since 25 August 2017. The Government of Bangladesh has triggered wide response across Ministries to deliver basic assistance and medical services, coordinate private donations, and register the refugees. Humanitarian partners, in close coordination with the Government, are delivering basic food assistance, shelter, water, emergency latrines, and informal education to Rohingya refugees. Nevertheless, the influx has overwhelmed existing response capacities, and has put immense strain on local livelihoods, ecosystems, and basic services in already deeply vulnerable communities.

In light of the above, UNDP and UN Women are supporting the Government and the humanitarian system to ensure that the crisis response is informed by recovery and development needs, and that economic, environmental and social risks are addressed and recovery actions are initiated. Based on a request for support from the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief in mid-October, the agencies' global mandate and expertise, and the Humanitarian Country Team's call for augmented response capacity, the two agencies have carried out a **development impact and recovery needs assessment** to inform response actions, and to prepare for mid- to long-term interventions in the affected area. The assessment objectives were:

    i.   To identify the impact the influx on the development situation of affected districts, including economic, social and environmental impacts;

    ii.   To make recommendations for critical action, new programming and reprogramming projects and response to support early recovery.

The assessment began on 24 October 2017 and will result in three reports currently being finalized; a social impact assessment report, a rapid environmental assessment report, and a host community conditions report.

The present brief outlines the key findings and recommendations of the Social Impact Assessment report. The full report is currently being finalized and will be shared with all response stakeholders through established coordination and information sharing mechanisms.

Key Findings and Recommendations

Finding	Recommendations
1. The Rohingya are atomised, traumatised and angry. They lack political leadership, suffer from a lack of education and have endured extreme deprivation. Many say they will not return to Myanmar without citizenship and guaranteed security.	a) Work with CSOs to build mediation capacities and foster cohesion within and between the communities b) Pre-empt escalation of tensions via creation of community-based early warning and response systems c) Strengthen support to stakeholders working to heal traumas, particularly for women and children.
2. Tensions are already rising between the host population and the refugees. Locals feel under threat as they are outnumbered. Prices are up, wages for day labourers are down and there has been much environmental and other damage. Sympathy is fading fast. Urgent action is needed to assist a mostly impoverished host community that bears an excessive burden from the crisis.	a) Urgently address tensions at the livelihood and environmental levels, as per the recommendations of environmental and host community assessments. b) Create an evidence-based framework and system for measuring satisfaction, perceptions, track trends, etc.
3. The most significant human security problems are trafficking and gender-based violence targeting women and children. This has long been an issue in Cox's Bazar and the arrival of a large and very vulnerable population may amplify it.	a) Support existing NGOs working on legal protection for victims for trafficking and domestic violence b) Expand Women's Development Forums to camps to provide a mechanism of engagement between communities, a means to address issues of gender-based violence, a method of disseminating information to women, and potentially to serve as an early warning mechanism for conflict.
4. Extremism is a limited risk in the near term. Rohingyas are unlikely targets for global jihadi groups – they are mostly illiterate and follow a very traditional form of Islam. Lengthy stays in squalid camps will raise the appeal of joining an insurgency in Rakhine or even international groups; improving conditions and security for both refugees and the host population is the best way to prevent the emergence of violent extremism in the form of either an insurgency or global jihadi violence.	a) Supporting a protection agenda should be a priority, as one of the best ways to prevent violent extremism is to promote the protection of human rights. Supporting human rights organisations that can work in both the refugee and host communities offers away to build up protection capacity across the area. A full humanitarian and protection operation that is sufficiently funded is the best buffer against any emergence of violent extremism.
5. The host community almost universally has negative views of the Rohingya even though they are sympathetic to their plight in Rakhine: many see them as uneducated, coarse and potentially	a) In all engagements, seek to address the anti-Rohingya narrative that is emerging while education on human rights. b) Develop inter-communal approaches to working together on shared areas of concern,

	criminal. Most locals also say that if they do not go home soon, they should be isolated in a closed camp.		such as livelihoods, environmental protection and restoration of damaged areas. c) Promote inter-communal cohesion through targeted programming (e.g. messaging, dialogue, bi-communalism etc.) that counters the dominant anti-Rohingya narrative d) Work with media to build capacity and increase availability of quality information to both communities. e) Work with media to build capacity and strengthen collaboration between local and international structures f) Produce and distribute quality information to both host and Rohingya communities. g) Create an evidence-based framework and system for measuring satisfaction, perceptions, track trends etc. on key social risk indicators.
6.	Host communities in particular, but also Rohingya, are demonstrating tensions flowing from insufficient or inaccurate information. These include cases of refugees finding difficulty in navigating systems that provide needed services, such as health and women safe spaces, to host communities being fed potentially inflammatory rumours.		a) Work with media to build capacity and strengthen collaboration between local and international structures b) Produce and distribute quality information to both host and Rohingya communities. c) Create an evidence-based framework and system for measuring satisfaction, perceptions, track trends etc. on key social risk indicators.
7.	Transitioning from a military-enhanced emergency operation to a civilian-led recovery system will require multiple layers of support, particularly given that local governance before the crisis was already weak to begin with. Incapacity, corruption, crime and opacity are terms used regularly to describe the processes by which both host and Rohingya communities are currently governed. As a consequence, risks exist that local authorities will be perceived as illegitimate and/or incompetent, with significant potential for tensions to escalate and erupt over time.		a) Support transition from in-kind emergency relief to a cash-based system. b) Build consensus on a midterm plan for regularizing the process and parameters of Majhi selection, including the selection of women Majhis. c) Offer support for Majhi mapping, expanded to include capacity gaps. d) Offer Majhi capacity building support based on assessed gaps. e) Identify bottleneck capacity deficits (e.g. project management, data gathering systems) constraining the quality and quantity of service delivery in local/international structures: offer training while integrating community engagement mechanisms. f) Women Development Forums inside the camps could also serve to increase women's participation in governance, and connections with WDF members outside the camps provide increased opportunities for shared skill building for Rohingya and Bangladeshi women.
8.	The scale of the problem and the extent of the international engagement will bring new and unpredictable risks. Few apart from the national staff working on the emergency response have experience in Bangladesh and therefore their understanding of political and conflict risks is weak. There are many aspects of this		a) Deploy a UNDP/UNRCO liaison officer to CXB, to begin immersing into local processes and establish working relations b) Provide targeted support to specific working groups (e.g. CWC) and ISCG c) Work with media to proactively share humanitarian/developmental information

crisis that are poorly understood. For example, what will be the response of the Rohingya diaspora? How long will the Bangladeshi military remain engaged? What will be the impact of crime? Will political forces seek to engage the Rohingya in 2018 election-related action? How are structures of social control likely to evolve in the camps? What sort of resentments will grow against the humanitarian community among the hosts?	

Rohingya Refugee Crisis in Bangladesh: Rapid Early Recovery Assessment of Host Community Impacts

Key Findings and Recommendations (8th December 2017)

An estimated 626,000 refugees have fled violence across the border from Myanmar into Cox's Bazar and the Chittagong Hill Tracts since 25 August 2017. The Government of Bangladesh has triggered wide response across Ministries to deliver basic assistance and medical services, and coordinate private donations. Humanitarian partners, in close coordination with the Government, are delivering basic food assistance, shelter, water, emergency latrines, and informal education to Rohingya refugees. Nevertheless, the influx has overwhelmed existing response capacities, and has put immense strain on local livelihoods, ecosystems, and basic services in already deeply vulnerable communities.

In light of the above, UNDP and UN Women are supporting the Government and the humanitarian system to ensure that the crisis response is informed by recovery and development needs, and that economic, environmental and social risks are addressed and recovery actions are initiated. Based on a request for support from the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief in mid-October, the agencies' global mandate and expertise, and the Humanitarian Country Team's call for augmented response capacity, the two agencies have carried out a **development impact and recovery needs assessment** to inform response actions, and to prepare for mid- to long-term interventions in the affected area. The assessment objectives were:

   i.   To identify the impact the influx on the development situation of affected districts, including economic, social and environmental impacts;

   ii. To make recommendations for critical action, new programming and reprogramming projects and response to support early recovery.

The assessment began on 24 October 2017 and will result in three reports currently being finalized; a social impact assessment report, a rapid environmental assessment report, and a host community conditions report.

The present brief outlines the key findings and recommendations of the Rapid Early Recovery Assessment of the impact of the Rohingya refugee crisis on host communities. The full report is currently being finalized and will be shared with all response stakeholders through established coordination mechanisms when ready.

About the Host Communities

The majority of the Rohingya refugees fleeing from Myanmar to Bangladesh are, as of 5th December 2017, sheltering in refugee camps, makeshifts settlements, new settlements, and host communities in Cox's Bazar district. A significant portion of these refugees entered Bangladesh through Bandarban district, which also continues to host a small population of refugees in new settlements. In the most-affected sub-districts of Cox's Bazar – Ukhiya and Teknaf – the Rohingya influx has led to a radical change in population demographics. As of November 26th, the size of the refugee population in Ukhiya was 271% compared to the Bangladeshi population, while the size of the refugee population in Teknaf was 59% compared to the Bangladeshi population.

Both Cox's Bazar and Bandarban districts are characterized by high baseline levels of poverty and environmental vulnerability. The poor and the very poor are largely dependent on daily labour as their main source of income. The majority of settlements are rural, with villages and agricultural plots interspersed with government forest, plantations and Ecologically Critical Areas. Geographical location produces a multi-hazard environment where recurrent extreme weather events undermine households' resilience and livelihoods. Compared to the rest of Bangladesh, Cox's Bazar and Bandarban are ethnically and religiously diverse districts, and there have been instances of communal violence in both districts.

Key Findings and Recommendations to the UN system, Government of Bangladesh and other stakeholders

Findings	Recommendations
Host Communities and the Emergency Response	
1. Despite having provided laudable initial help and support for the Rohingya refugees in the initial stages of the influx, host community sympathy is fading and tensions rising. **Anxiety about being outnumbered, environmental degradation and livelihood and basic service pressures are feeding grievances.** Women from host communities are exposed to sexual harassment from checkpoints and are thus facing mobility restrictions our of safety concerns This is compounded by a lack of information about the response and perceived lack of support to the host communities.	a) Immediate efforts should be made to mitigate tension and impact on vulnerable host community households by addressing pressure on local livelihoods, environment and services. b) In all engagements, urgently seek to address the anti-Rohingya narrative and communicate widely regarding support for host communities as part of the joint response, to both men and women. If possible, design activities and programmes involving men and women in both communities.
2. Programmes for host communities and in support of local government or local civil society are cross-cutting issues and relate to all sectors. However, **coordination and information collection on host community**	a) Ensure that crisis response actors consistently apply a do-no-harm approach when it comes to host communities and their resources, and screen for host community impacts in planning of 2018 humanitarian

support is not as systematically organized as the coordination on programmes targeting the refugee population.	interventions. b) Set up a working group on host communities within the response architecture to support planning and coordination of activities targeting the host communities within the framework of the joint response plan. c) Introduce clear disaggregation between number of targeted Rohingya refugee beneficiaries and targeted host community beneficiaries in 2018 planning for response activities. Ensure that data is sex-disaggregated.
Extent of Crisis Impact	
3. **Very poor and poor host community households are currently the most affected within the host communities**. Local markets have the capacity to meet the increased demand for basic commodities, and checkpoints limit the mobility of Rohingyas and their ability to access employment. Nevertheless, some increase in the prices of basic staples has taken place, and daily labour wages have fallen – although reports conflict by how much. The low agricultural productivity of Cox's Bazar makes the poor and very poor reliant on daily labour income to buy staples. Impact on the poor and very poor are severe enough that negative coping mechanisms have already been observed: selling of small assets and livestock, taking loans, temporary migration to Cox's and Bazar Township. Among the poor and very poor, women, girls and other marginalized and disadvantaged population groups may be expected to be disproportionately affected.	a) Target the poor and very poor for activities supporting livelihoods and employment, ensuring equitable inclusion of women beneficiaries. b) Consider additional targeting criteria to ensure equitable inclusion of households affected by additional marginalization or disadvantage. c) Ensure that programmes and activities are implemented in ways which address the particular needs of minorities and women (e.g. provide child care support so that they can take advantage of livelihoods and employment opportunities that may be created through host-community support) in participating. Include wider consultation and sensitization with family and community members so that the activities that may challenge the traditional gender norms do not put the woman at risk of gender based violence, including sexual exploitation and abuse.
4. Host community consultations confirm that **disruptions and damage due to the influx and the response are perceived most keenly in unions hosting refugee camps and settlements**. This includes not only unions in	a) Include host communities in both Cox's Bazar and Bandarban in 2018 joint response planning.

Cox's Bazar, but also in Bandarban, where approximately 20,000 refugees are staying in a settlement in Naikhyangchari Sadar.	b) Utilize union profiles (to be provided in full report) in planning and programming for 2018.

Local Economy

5. All markets, and especially bazar markets close to camps, such as **Kutupalong bazar and Balukhali bazars, have seen the volume of transactions rapidly grow since the crisis. However, the increased cost of transport has reduced small producers/traders margin of profit**. Men from both host and Rohingya population have been able to establish small shops around the camps, but women have not.	a) Identify and strengthen value chains that can benefit from the crisis, for instance for products that are in high demand in the camps. Support small traders involved in such value chains, particularly opportunities for women. Findings indicate that promising avenues include vegetables, shelter and NFI items. b) Provide market linkage support to host community women grocery shop vendors and traders to sell nearby camps, including through establishing a women's corner in the market spaces inside the Rohinyga camps.
6. **Economic sectors relying on the sea have all been affected by the influx**, although in differing ways. Tourism to St. Martin Island, cross-border trade between Bangladesh and Myanmar, and fishing on the Naf river have all declined due to restrictions. With an increase in the number of available day labourers, labour for the fisheries sector has increased. Increase in the illegal practice of catching shrimp fries from the Bay has been reported.	a) Advocate for restoration of fishing activities in the Naf river, if necessary by limiting these activities to specific sections or areas along the river. b) Take counter-measures against depletion of fish and shrimp stock, such as awareness programmes and development of alternative livelihood options for fish-dependent communities.
7. While hosting smaller Rohingya camps and settlements, **Teknaf sub-district is experiencing a disproportionate economic impact**, due to increased transport costs and time, decline in sea-based economic activities, and a smaller increase in demand than in Ukhia.	a) Ensure that host community support programmes taking into account the economic impact in Teknaf despite distance from the larger Rohingya camps and settlements.

Local Livelihoods

8. The vast majority of very poor and poor host community households as well as Rohingya households have very little technical or vocational skills	a) Conduct more in-depth survey on household economic and livelihoods

and therefore rely on non-skilled daily labour. Consequently, **both communities are competing on the same unskilled daily labour market**, with a serious deterioration of employment opportunities for poor and very poor host community members. Daily labourers are now accepting lower rates and taking on one- or even half day opportunities.	opportunities and barriers to inform livelihood programming. b) Support development of livelihood opportunities in the transport sector through incentives in the transport sector, which is currently in high demand. c) Examine the possibility and potential of establishing local employment offices for daily labour at Union level (acting as a center for supply and demand of daily labour opportunities in the Union) d) Examine potential for training and start up grants for the small mechanics and other jobs currently in demand.
9. Host communities in the Ukhiya-Teknaf peninsula are also to a large extent self-employed in the field of agriculture, livestock and fishing. **Deforestation linked to the influx have deprived or reduced host communities' access to firewood, timber for housing as well as forest fruits and other non-timer forest products, and communities are extremely worried about the depleting water** table and the potential effects of this situation on their livelihoods	a) Urgently assess and manage ecosystem pressures and risks resulting from the influx and crisis response. b) Support the most marginal / subsistence men and women farmers including distribution of inputs, training and strengthened value chains and access to markets.
Local Infrastructure	
10. The **construction, use and abandonment of transit settlements have caused damage to the environment and infrastructure** in those sites. This includes uprooted vegetation, ground and slope disturbance, contamination of ponds, and solid waste left behind. Sites include now-damaged schools and school yards, and landslide-vulnerable hills.	a) Immediately rehabilitate damaged, polluted and contaminated abandoned settlement sites to allow for resumption of regular use, utilizing gender-sensitive Cash for Work approaches to create emergency employment. b) Immediately restore damaged grounds and hills to facilitate later replanting and slope stabilization, utilizing gender-sensitive Cash for Work approaches to create emergency employment. c) When seasonally appropriate, replant damaged vegetation and plant

	slope stabilizing vegetation to mitigate risks to the environment and community members.
11. Daily movement of a large number of Rohingyas, aid workers and humanitarian relief vehicles, on the roads leading from the host communities to the camps is causing **substantial wear and tear on roads**, including footpaths and link roads. 37 kms of damaged roads have been reported.	a) Rehabilitate damaged link roads and paths to allow for resumption of regular use, utilizing gender-sensitive Cash for Work approaches to create emergency employment. b) Provide support to local government to restore damaged roads and paths, including additional structural reinforcement in preparation for the 2018 rainy season.
Local Governance Functions	
12. The regular **work of the Union Parishads has been complicated and in some cases disrupted** by the increased workload associated with the response and the utilization of their office spaces for response purposes. Shortcomings in the provision of regular programs are likely to appear or become more evident in the coming months.	a) Provide temporary support to local government institutions in order to resume or stabilize regular programmes. b) Consider setting up temporary structures to increase available office space.
13. Under Bangladesh disaster management law, local disaster preparedness and evacuation is a local government responsibility, while the Cyclone Preparedness Programme supports early warning and evacuation. While **disaster management plans and capacities exist at the local and district level, they have been developed for the pre-influx context and will not be adequate in 2018.** While some sectors in the crisis response have begun mapping and planning for cyclone and landslide preparedness, coordination on disaster risk management is limited both between sectors, and between Government and the response architecture.	a) Urgently establish a coordinating mechanism on disaster risk management within the crisis response architecture; b) Urgently develop a multi-hazard preparedness plan for upazilas hosting camps and settlements, involving local government and crisis response actors. Support local government and response actors to jointly update the district Disaster Management Plan before the beginning of the 2018 cyclone season. c) Provide targeted support to specific sectors and working groups to support linkages between local government and response actors, to ensure preparedness for the 2018 cyclone and rainy seasons. d) Provide capacity enhancement support to disaster management

	committees and the Cyclone Preparedness Programme, including targeted support to facilitate women and girls' participation. e) Implement awareness programmes on hazards and disaster within the programmes, utilizing existing IEC materials from Bangladesh. f) Establish multi-hazard disaster management volunteer groups including both men and women within the Rohingya camps and settlements, utilizing existing volunteerism models from Bangladesh.
14. It is of particular concern that reportedly, the added pressure on local governance institutions and civil servants has led to the **suspension of social safety net programmes for Bangladeshi citizens** such as the Vulnerable Group Feeding.	a) To prevent disproportionate negative impact on the extreme poor and disadvantaged households enrolled in these programmes, the extent of social safety programme suspensions should be determined. b) Provide temporary support to Government of Bangladesh to resume implementation of these programmes and advocate for making change to the less manpower-intensive cash transfer modality in the affected areas.
15. Humanitarian agencies searching for local partners are **creating a high level of demand for CSO and NGO involvement and implementation of response activities.** These major national and local NGOs may be reaching their capacity limit or face challenges sustaining a high level of capacity in Cox's Bazar over time. At the same time, there is a large number of very small, local NGOs or CSOs that would like to be involved in the humanitarian response but currently lack the capacities to do so. NGOs and CSOs representing women and marginalised population groups are often further under-resourced and stretched and face additional access and capacity barriers to engaging in the humanitarian response.	a) Increase training in humanitarian response management for local NGOs. b) Create an inter-agency incubator center for local NGOs in order to support access to basic equipment and joint training for building core capacities. c) Prioritize capacity building support and engagement with CSOs, NGOS, CBOs representing women, girls and the most marginalised and disadvantaged population groups.

Union Impact

A selection of unions in Cox's Bazar and one union in Bandarban were assessed in the main stage of the assessment, while assessment of an additional three unions in Bandarban was initiated at a later stage in response to additional information. The criteria below have been applied to the findings to produce an impact ranking:

1) Proximity of the Union to Rohingya camps and settlement, particularly large ones.

2) Damage made to infrastructure by the transit or the temporary presence of the 2017 influx

3) Severity of impact as described in Key Informant Interviews with the Union's leadership as well as in Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews at community levels.

The below table provides an impact rating for all unions, on a scale of 0 (not affected) to 7 (most affected).. For reference, information about whether the union has been suggested by the ISCG for inclusion in the 2018 Joint Response Plan is also provided.

District	Sub-District	Union	Impact Rating	Nearby Camps and Settlements	Suggested by ISCG for 2018 JRP
Cox's Bazar	Ukhia	Palongkhali	7	Thyangkhali Hakimpara Jamtoli Moynarghona Bagghona/Putibunia	Yes
	Ukhia	Rajapalong	6	Kutupalong RC Kutupalong MS Balukhali Burmapara/Tasnimarkhola	Yes
	Ukhia	Jaliapalong	4	Shamlapur MS	Yes
	Ukhia	Haldiapalong	0		No
	Ukhia	Ratnapalong	0		No
	Teknaf	Baharchara	5	Shamlapur MS Chakmarkul settlement	Yes

Teknaf	Nhila	5	Leda MS Nayapara RC Mochoni settlement	Yes
Teknaf	Whykong	5	Unchiprang settlement	Yes
Teknaf	Sabrang	4		No
Teknaf	Teknaf	4		Yes
Teknaf	Saint Martin	0		No
Ramu	Khuniapalong	3		No
Ramu	South Mithachori	0		No
Bandarban	Naikhyongchari	Naikhyongchari Sadar	6	Rohingya Settlements in Boro Shonkhola -ward-6 Sapmara-Jhiri-ward-8 Fultoli, ward-8 Marma Aung Karbari Para, (Chakpara),ward-4	No
	Naikhyongchari	Dochhari			No
	Naikhyongchari	Sonaichari		Additional analysis ongoing	No
	Banaripara	Baisari			No