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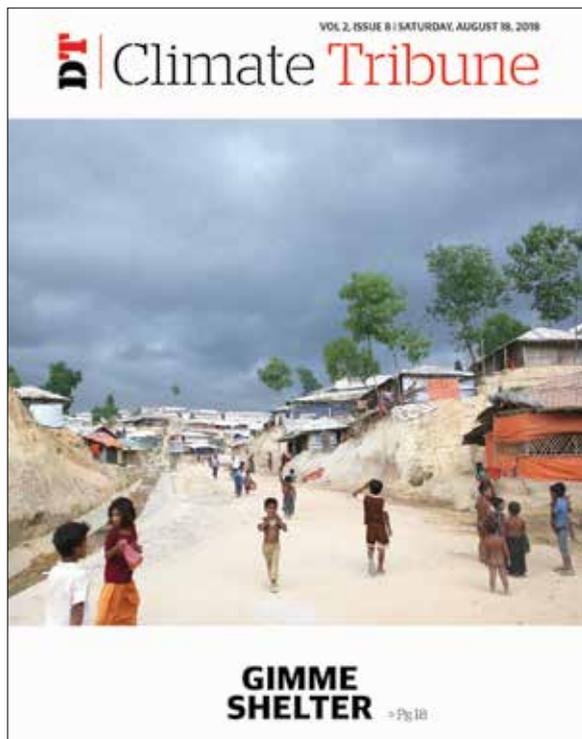
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Editor's note

They came in by the thousands, rushing our borders to flee unspeakable atrocities, and we let them in.

What does it mean when an environmentally vulnerable region plays host to a refugee crisis? For one thing, it is painfully clear that this isn't a storm that will blow over soon, and a long-term view is needed to prevent the crisis from turning into a disaster.

And that's where this month's Climate Tribune comes in. From a breakdown of the numbers involved in sustaining the refugee rehabilitation process, to discussions on mitigation from an environmental perspective, to the need to switch from emergency response to development approach, an attempt has been made to look at this unique situation from all angles and present the optimal solutions. ■

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

THE HISTORY OF PERSECUTION OF MYANMAR'S ROHINGYA



Rohingya Muslims fled to Bangladesh by the thousands

REUTERS

Engy Abdelkader

Some 420,000 Rohingya Muslims, a religious and ethnic minority community in Myanmar, have fled to neighboring Bangladesh since August last year.

The United Nations has called the Rohingya the world's most persecuted minority group and described the atrocities by Myanmar's authorities as "ethnic cleansing," whereby one group removes another ethnic or religious community through violence.

But the persecution of the Rohingya is not new. My research on the Rohingya Muslim experience in Myanmar shows that this pattern of persecution goes back to 1948 – the year when the country achieved independence from their British colonizers.

Here is their brief history.

The legacy of colonialism

The British ruled Myanmar (then Burma) for over a century, beginning with a series of wars in 1824.

Colonial policies encouraged migrant labour in order to increase rice cultivation and profits. Many Rohingya entered Myanmar as part of these policies in the 17th century. According to census records, between 1871 to 1911, the Muslim population tripled.

The British also promised the Rohingya separate land – a "Muslim National Area" – in exchange for support. During the Second World War, for example, the Rohingya sided with the British while Myanmar's nationalists supported the Japanese. Following the war, the British rewarded the Rohingya with prestigious government posts. However, they were not given an autonomous state.

In 1948, when Myanmar achieved independence from the British, violent conflicts broke out among various segments of its more than one hundred ethnic and racial groups.

Decades-long persecution

After independence, the Rohingya asked for the promised autonomous state, but officials rejected their request. Calling them foreigners, they also denied them citizenship.

These animosities continued to grow. Many in Myanmar saw the Rohingya as having benefited from colonial rule. A nationalist movement and Buddhist religious revival further contributed to the growing hatred.

In 1950, some Rohingya staged a rebellion against the policies of the Myanmar government. They demanded citizenship; they also asked for the state that had been promised them. Ultimately the army crushed the resistance movement.

Much like today's terrorists, the rebels at the time were called "Mujahid" or engaged in "struggle" or "jihad." It is important to point out that the international community has never agreed on how to define "terrorism." The legal definition could vary by country as politics dictates its contours. As scholar Ben Saul says, officials can use its meaning as a weapon against even valid political rivals. The lack of consensus, as Saul argues, reflects disagreement about what violence is legitimate, when and by whom.

In 1962, just over a decade later, a military coup culminated in a one-party military state where democratic governance was woefully lacking. During the next 60 years of military rule, things worsened for the Rohingya. The authorities saw the minority group as a threat to nationalist identity.

Calling them foreigners, the army killed, tortured and raped. They closed Rohingya social and political organizations. They also transferred private Rohingya businesses to the government, debilitating the group financially. Further, the Rohingya suffered forced labour, arbitrary detention and physical assaults. In 1991 and 1992, more than 250,000 attempted to escape to Bangladesh.

Rohingya 'statelessness'

In 1977, when the army launched a national drive to register citizens, the Rohingya were considered illegal. More than 200,000 Rohingya fled to Bangladesh at the time because of further atrocities. Authorities pointed to their flight as purported evidence of their illegal status.

The Citizenship Act of Myanmar, enacted in 1982, formally denied the group citizenship rights. This law required that a person's ancestors belong to a national race or group present in Myanmar prior to British rule in 1823, to become a citizen. The Rohingya were still classified as illegal immigrants allowed in by British colonizers. As Human Rights Watch has noted, however, their presence actually dates back to the 12th century.

Today, the Rohingya are the single largest "stateless" community in the world. Their "statelessness" or lack of citizenship increases their vulnerability because they are not entitled to any legal protection from the government.

Without citizenship, they are deprived of basic rights such as access to health services, education and employment. The

illiteracy rate among the Rohingya, for example, is a staggering 80 percent.

Additionally, they have been denied the right to worship freely. They also face restrictions on the right to marry, move freely and own property because of their religious and ethnic identity.

Even though Rohingya population growth has slowed down, anxieties not only persist but are codified in law: Rohingya couples are allowed no more than two children.

Those who break the law risk imprisonment, and the government blacklists their children. Without legal status, they cannot go to school, travel or buy property. The police can also arrest and imprison them.

The current crisis

Despite Myanmar's recent democratic transition, the persecution persists.

The current humanitarian catastrophe ostensibly began with an assault on police posts by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army, a new insurgency group.

Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh told Human Rights Watch that Myanmar government forces had carried out armed attacks, and burned down their homes. In addition, they beheaded men, raped women and murdered children. Tens of thousands of Rohingya have become internally displaced. Even prior to this crisis, 120,000 displaced Rohingya had been living in internment camps.

Amnesty International said there were indications that authorities in Myanmar have also placed illegal landmines at locations commonly used by refugees. Among those killed were two children. What is more, international humanitarian aid has been blocked, preventing necessities like food, water and medicine from reaching a quarter of a million people.

Aung San Suu Kyi and human rights

The Myanmar Army, meanwhile, denies any wrongdoing. Despite the global outcry, they claim to be conducting "counter-terrorism" operations. Due to the severity of the human rights crisis, however, the British government decided to stop its defense engagement and training of the military in Myanmar.

None of this criticism, however, has made Aung San Suu Kyi, Myanmar's de facto leader and Nobel laureate, acknowledge the plight of the Rohingya. Amid international criticism, she canceled her visit to last year's U.N. General Assembly in New York. In her speech to Myanmar's parliament, she denied that there had been any "armed clashes or clearance operations" since September 5.

Tragically, her actions signal there will be no end to the persecution of Rohingya anytime soon. ■

Engy Abdelkader is a scholar at Rutgers University. This article was originally published at The Conversation on September 21st, 2017.



SAMIRA SIDDIQUE

WHAT DOES DEVELOPMENT MEAN FOR THE STATELESS?

Samira Siddique

Currently, there are upwards of one million Rohingya refugees living in Cox's Bazar. For all the talk of moving the Rohingya elsewhere, such as Bashan Char Island, or repatriating them to Myanmar, it is almost certain that they will remain where they are for an indefinite period of time.

History has shown that the average age of a refugee camp is 12 years. Like most other refugee camp situations, this one will likely last for at least another decade.

Many NGOs and aid agencies that are working on Rohingya issues realize that this is not temporary, and are starting to take a longer-term view of the camps. The shift from emergency relief to development has begun, underscoring the fact that the refugee crisis has huge long-term implications for how development operates beyond state citizenship.

The Rohingya crisis is a useful case study to understand how refugees are slowly being brought into the traditional development framework. The scope of facilities and programs set up by the International Organization for Migration (IOM),

UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), and the hundreds of NGOs working in the camps over the past year is remarkable.

They have built camps from the ground up and organized them into zones with basic roads and latrines, tubewells, health facilities, and community centers. However, the separate institutions that are in place to deal with longer-term development and emergency relief are not aligned in their goals. This affects the extent of aid given, the type of facilities that are built, and of course the economic and political rights and social support that the Rohingya have.

A strong indication of the shift toward development in the Rohingya camps is the recent investment from the World Bank and Asian Development Bank (ADB), of \$480 million and \$100 million respectively. Traditionally, these two institutions have invested in long-term development projects and supported governments in capacity building. In the past few years, they have created a relief fund for emergency situations exactly like the Rohingya crisis.

One of the investments from the World Bank and ADB is in renewable energy in the Rohingya camps. The investment in energy access shows a gradual shift toward longer-term, or at least medium-term, planning in the camps. Compared to international aid funding in every other sector—water and sanitation, health, shelters, etc.—energy had no allocated funding at the beginning of the Rohingya influx.

This is largely because energy is not seen as essential to emergency relief, which is arguably an outdated view from the aid industry, as energy access is linked to more positive health effects and gender safety and equality. Now with the World Bank and ADB's investment plan, there is a portion allocated to set up some solar mini-grids in 2019, as well as constructing more solar lamps and distributing solar lanterns.

Historically, there has not been a systematic approach to energy supply in conflict settings because they are thought to be shorter term. Most of the energy is supplied ad hoc by individual NGOs or international aid agencies, usually through diesel generators. The move toward renewable energy shows increasing interest in long-term development because it is inherently sustainable and simple to use. A solar mini-grid offers a cleaner and more consistent alternative to diesel generators, and can potentially be used to anchor local mini-grids if the refugee camps are present in the longer term.

Out of all the Rohingya camps, it is striking that the only one that is connected to the national electricity grid, and thus situated for longer term, is a camp in Teknaf, where some Rohingya have been around for many years and have essentially assimilated into the surrounding community. Perhaps the thought here is that there is “value added” if the Rohingya contribute economically, so it makes sense to invest in electricity lines. However, this situation is exceedingly rare, as the vast majority of Rohingya cannot move freely outside the camps and thus are unable to be economically independent.

While the notion of development is important for improv-

ing livelihoods, the development itself must be done differently for the stateless. Traditional forms of economic development do not work for stateless people who have no means to gain employment. Though there are some cash-for-work programs and recreation facilities set up by aid agencies, the vast majority of Rohingya have nothing to do during the day; their routines are often set around food and aid distribution schedules. They are recovering from unimaginable trauma. The camps will only continue to grow: Rohingya are still crossing the border, though at much lower rates, and there are projected to be 50,000 babies born this year. No amount of aid distribution or traditional notions of development will fix these facts of life for the Rohingya.

Part of the difficulty in streamlining development efforts

“Historically, there has not been a systematic approach to energy supply in conflict settings because they are thought to be shorter term”

is the institutional power structure of the camps. Since the exodus began in August 2017, the Bangladesh government has not officially labeled the Rohingya as “refugees.” Without this label, UNHCR could not head the emergency relief operations in the camps, as they normally would when refugees are involved. Thus, IOM took over camp operations. Within a few months, UNHCR was allowed to work in the camps and it started co-leading operations with IOM. The two humanitarian stakeholders now oversee relief operations in about 10 sectors and work alongside the government's response to the crisis, which includes different government agencies and the Bangladesh army. This web of agencies does not have mutually exclusive goals, but since they do not normally collaborate in this way it has been challenging to settle on long-term goals.

NEW PARADIGMS

Another challenge is that there is no direct guiding principle globally for how to integrate stateless people, let alone how to develop communities with them in mind. One of the main guiding principles for long-term sustainability planning is the UN Sustainable Development Goals, a set of 17 goals that aim to end poverty with strategies that build economic growth and address a range of social needs including education, health, and environmental protection. None of the goals explicitly address development for stateless persons.

There are currently about six million people in protracted displacement situations globally, and even more migrants, who are not officially given economic and political rights by the state. Crises like this will only continue to happen at varying scales, whether through ethnic cleansing, environmental disaster, economic crisis, or something else. The UN, development agencies, NGOs, and some governments are only just beginning to rethink how we prioritize refugees and migrants and integrate them into existing development frameworks.



SAMIRA SIDDIQUE

International NGOs and the UN could adopt a more explicitly rights-based approach to development, especially as more refugee crises and mass migrations are projected to occur in the future. This approach would combine different existing concepts of international development, such as capacity building, human rights, participation, and sustainability. The goal would be to empower the group that cannot exercise full rights and to strengthen the capacity of institutions and governments obligated to fill these rights. However, the main criticism against the rights-based approach is that it merely incorporates the language of human rights with development, but does not change the programs being implemented. In order for change to take place, governments must be willing to accept refugees and migrants, and hold other countries accountable for the processes that lead to refugees in the first place. Many governments that receive refugees, whether willingly or not, are not capable of developing long-term communities for the refugees in their own country.

There will be many lessons to learn from the Rohingya crisis for years to come. A likely one will be how to conceptualize development for those that have been systematically “othered” and persecuted. ■

Samira Siddique is a PhD student in the Energy and Resources Group at the University of California, Berkeley.

PRICE OF FREEDOM

STATISTICS PROVIDED BY THE INTER SECTOR COORDINATION GROUP (ISCG) SHED LIGHT ON THE SCALE OF THE RELIEF OPERATIONS, AND THE COST OF MOVING TOWARDS A MORE SUSTAINABLE, LONG-TERM APPROACH

FOOD SECURITY

PEOPLE IN NEED	Bangladeshi Host Communities	Refugees in Camps & Settlements	Refugees in Host Communities
FOOD SECURITY 1,200,000 _{ppl}	40,000 _{ppl}	1,200,000 _{ppl}	25,000 _{ppl}
NUMBER OF ORGANIZATIONS	12	15	6
PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATION			REQUIREMENTS (US\$)
ACT Alliance / Christian Aid			455,000
ACT Alliance / World Renew			767,000
Action Against Hunger			9,276,943
Agrajatra			946,322
Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee			3,369,909
Caritas Bangladesh			888,758
COAST Trust			389,035
Concern Worldwide			194,015
Food & Agriculture Organization of the United Nations			9,800,000
Handicap International			1,140,000
International Organization for Migration			5,980,000
Non-Governmental Organization for National Goals to be Obtained and Retained			99,710
OXFAM GB			1,632,385
Protyashi			335,830
Relief International			450,000
Save the Children			1,490,094
Solidarités International (SI)			395,294
United Nations Development Programme			1,475,911
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women			910,000
World Food Programme			198,157,239
World Vision International			2,403,120
WorldFish			300,000
TOTAL			340,856,565



REUTERS

5 QUESTIONS WITH GIORGI GIGAURI

MOVING TOWARDS A HUMANITARIAN-DEVELOPMENT RESPONSE TO THE ROHINGYA REFUGEE CRISIS

Meraz Mostafa

Giorgi Gigauri is the Chief of IOM-UN Migration Agency's mission in Bangladesh. This interview has been edited for clarity.

What is IOM's overall vision for on-going Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh?

Our overall vision is basically two-fold. The first is the humanitarian phase. So, before we speak of midterm, longer term returns, sustainability, etc. we have life saving, critical, emergency needs that have to be met right now. This is our number one priority.

The second is of course the long term, that is, to support the sustainable return of these refugees back to their homeland.

Obviously, the second vision is not just the IOM vision. It's

part of the wider UN vision, and the UN is here to support the government, not the other way around. The longer term vision of course requires many things to fall into place before it becomes possible. So while we are supporting the government and other players, our primary concern right now is the life saving, emergency needs. And the very complex emergency we are in right now.

What has led to the emerging paradigm that a humanitarian refugee crisis requires a development response?

Firstly, the humanitarian-development nexus is not really new. Academics and emergency practitioners have been talking about this for a while. What is new is that recently it has found its way into normative documents and has risen to the top of the agenda. The discourse around complex emergencies is changing, and we are beginning to see concrete action.

What do I mean by that? Let's look at the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Under SDG10: Reduced Inequalities, it recognizes the positive contribution of migration. It also acknowledges the multidimensional reality of migration and crisis and displacement. It recognizes how mass displacement can send your development plan back decades, especially when you talk about large scale displacements, refugee flows and so on.

So when we talk about the humanitarian response and development approach, the two come together when you look at it from a 360 degree or holistic perspective. You can pick whatever term you like. What it actually means is that you start from the beginning, not just look at the immediate needs but also consider transition and stabilization efforts and start thinking about longer term development interventions.

If you want to visualize it graphically, you draw a circle and inside the circle you have the refugees. A humanitarian focus looks inside the circle. A humanitarian-development focus looks inside the circle and around the circle; what is outside the fence, what is around the perimeter within which the circle exists. You see what I am saying? Basically, when you

apply a development approach to a humanitarian situation, it means looking beyond the immediate needs and looking wider around. This is very relevant to energy, environment and host community related work

When does a humanitarian response end and a development response begin? What does this mean in the case of Bangladesh?

Conceptually and thematically, we are still trying to understand where a humanitarian response ends and midterm or stabilization or even longer term development begin. This is an academic debate. For example, is reforestation – is that a response, or is that stabilization or is that development? I could find you reasons to categorize that activity in all three. Or how about roads to refugee camps? You can define that activity as falling under immediate response, because it provides safe access to provide life saving critical needs. I can define it as midterm, because it provides a midterm solution for transportation. And certainly a long term development goal even after refugees leaves for the communities in Cox's Bazar.

HOW MIGRATION IS REFLECTED IN THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Migration in the declaration

- Highlights impact of humanitarian crises and forced displacement of people on development progress.
- Calls for the empowerment of vulnerable groups, including refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants.
- Calls for access by all – including migrants – to life-long learning opportunities.
- Commits to eradicating forced labour and human trafficking and to end child labour.
- Recognises the positive contribution of migrants for inclusive growth and sustainable development.

Migration in the goal and target framework

Specific references						
	4.b SCHOLARSHIPS (STUDENT MOBILITY)	5.2 TRAFFICKING (FOCUS ON WOMEN AND GIRLS)	8.7 TRAFFICKING 8.8 MIGRANT WORKER RIGHTS (ESP. WOMEN MIGRANTS)	10.7 WELL-MANAGED MIGRATION POLICIES 10.c REMITTANCES	16.2 TRAFFICKING	17.16 GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP 17.17 PUBLIC, PRIVATE AND CS PARTNERSHIPS 17.18 DATA DISAGGREGATION (INCLUDING BY MIGRATORY STATUS)
Other entry points						
	3.8 ACHIEVING UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE	1.5 RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE EVENTS AND SOCIO ECONOMIC SHOCKS	13.1-3 RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE HAZARDS AND NATURAL DISASTERS	11.B CITIES IMPLEMENTING INTEGRATED POLICIES		



INTERVIEW | GIORGI GIGAURI

In many ways, a lot of things are being piloted in Bangladesh. I'll give you a couple examples. The World Bank refugee window, the way it is being applied here is very new. This is uncharted territory. Providing humanitarian funding through infrastructure -- how do we conceptualize that?

How do we integrate that in our humanitarian operations? Right now we are discussing with these giant players; these are titans in terms of funding of how they will coordinate with us even though the funding they are providing is more than we have. In a way, we should be coordinating with them. But this is humanitarian response so it is them that have to plug into the existent government-humanitarian response structure.

How do you plan development for a situation that is ultimately considered temporary or even “perpetually temporary”?

Well, this is the billion dollar question. The first thing to recognize is that this discussion does not take place in a political vacuum. We are discussing it within strictly defined operational parameters, set by the government of Bangladesh. And those right now are very clear: nothing permanent, nothing longterm. Given these parameters, we are doing what we can to first and foremost to ensure the life saving services are in place, and beyond that looking to building the resilience of the people.

So yes, it is midterm. But what is midterm? Like I said, there are a lot of activities you can define as humanitarian response and midterm. For example, shelter. Take bamboo shelter. It's officially categorized as a midterm shelter strategy approved by the government. What's the difference? There is still no cement, no concrete. But if you treat the bamboo, it becomes more resilient. On the face of it, it might even look the same to you. But by treating the bamboo, you are making it more resilient and long term; you've actually switched the shelter from emergency to a transitional shelter. That also buys you

“ Conceptually and thematically, we are still trying to understand where a humanitarian response ends and midterm or stabilization or even longer term development begin ”



the commitment of local government and local community, because if they are getting an upgraded health facility, and free health services and medicine. We call it the New Way of Working, but again it is about the humanitarian-development nexus.

How is the Rohingya refugee response different to other refugee crises around the world?

To me, a very important element of this crisis is that even though the government does not recognize the Rohingyas as refugees in line with the 1951 refugee convention, it is very important to emphasize that despite that, the Rohingya have received all the protections a refugee would receive without being labelled as refugees. And a step back from that, most importantly, the government has allowed them to come in and provided them with assistance and protection. In all but name, the government has been incredibly generous in making this happen.

Now compare this to the Mediterranean migration crisis, which is slightly different because there are mixed migration flows -- you have refugees and migrants. Yes some countries like Germany are taking in a lot. But if you look at Europe as a whole, the discussion is all about controlling migration; it's all about ensuring border control and ensuring return.

Here of course, it is no different in that sense the Bangladesh government wants Rohingya to go back as well; but the discussion around that is very careful because nobody is saying that these people should be returned by force. Everyone agrees it should be voluntary; everyone agrees it should be done in a systematic and sustainable way, learning from past mistakes. And of course the government wants the international community to maintain the pressure from Myanmar to take concrete action. ■

Meraz Mostafa is a research officer from ICCAD and manages content for the Climate Tribune.

FACT SHEET | COST OF HEALTHCARE

HEALTH

PEOPLE IN NEED	Bangladeshi Host Communities	Refugees in Camps & Settlements	Refugees in Host Communities
HEALTH 1,300,000 _{ppl}	90,000 _{ppl}	412,980 _{ppl}	90,000 _{ppl}
NUMBER OF ORGANIZATIONS	17	25	11

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATION	REQUIREMENTS (US\$)
ACT Alliance / Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh	1,600,000
Action Against Hunger	755,042
Agrajatra	794,528
Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee	8,884,177
CARE International	1,800,000
COAST Trust	726,667
Fasiuddin Khan Research Foundation	170,000
Gonoshasthaya Kendra	642,570
Handicap International	725,250
Health and Education for All	1,314,075
HelpAge International UK	1,130,437
HOPE Foundation for Woman and Children of Bangladesh	238,500
HumaniTerra International	586,025
Integrated Social Development Effort Bangladesh	134,145
International Organization for Migration	17,792,307
Migrant Offshore Aid Station	1,205,000
Peace Winds Japan	495,000
Protyashi	550,000
PULSE - Bangladesh	275,000
Relief International	3,000,000
Resource Integration and Social Development Association in Bangladesh	145,000
Samaritan's Purse	2,266,615
Save the Children	6,549,307
Terre des Hommes - Lausanne	748,926
United Nations Children's Fund	21,302,016
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	13,823,477
United Nations Population Fund	10,000,000
World Concern	477,650
World Health Organization	14,954,578
TOTAL	113,086,292



The information captured at a UNICEF information centre is just one of the sources of data, that helps humanitarian responders better understand the needs of people affected by the Rohingya emergency.

USING YOUR EARS TO DISCOVER WHAT MATTERS

Richard Lace

Regular summary of community feedback related to the Rohingya response is published in the What Matters? bulletin, which can be found at www.shongjog.org.bd/response/rohingya. The work described in this article is a joint initiative with Internews and Translators without Borders. It is delivered in partnership with IOM and is funded by the UK Department for International Development.

Imagine that you're in charge of the response to the Rohingya emergency right now. Daunting, right? For a start, you've got to make sure that hundreds of thousands of people get the basic services they need. By itself, that's a huge logistical and operational challenge, but at least your 'to do' list might seem pretty obvious: people need food, water, toilets, a place



BBC MEDIA ACTION

to sleep, and medicine. It might be big in scale, but maybe it doesn't feel so complicated.

Now throw in some of the quirks of Cox's Bazar: the hilly terrain which makes it difficult to move around; the threat of storms and landslides; and the uncertainty about how long people will stay in the area. All these things make it more difficult for you to provide support to the Rohingya community, but you're a committed, resourceful individual, so you make the best plan you can and start your task.

That's when some unexpected obstacles might appear. You've planned to distribute rice, daal and oil - but noone is taking the daal. You're helping people move their houses away from landslide-prone areas - but noone wants to go. You're providing vaccines to protect people from disease - but many of them are left unused.

What's going on here? If only there was a way to find out why your logical and well-planned activities haven't worked so well. Well, of course, there is: by listening to the people affected by a crisis, it's pretty straightforward to get back on track and avoid these sorts of situations in the first place.

Since the beginning of the Rohingya emergency, BBC Media Action has been helping humanitarian responders to listen more closely to the communities they are supporting. Working with lots of partners, we've found many different ways to hear what is being said - both in the camps themselves and in the towns and villages surrounding them. Whether it's through radio phone-ins, walk-in centres collecting face-to-face community feedback or direct discussions with affected people, there are now lots of channels through which people can raise their voice and express their worries and concerns. And when all this information - collected by many different relief organizations - is analyzed, we can build up a good picture of what people think and need.

We've discovered, for example, that most Rohingya people don't like the taste of daal; that some are worried about a lack of water and health services in the newer, more remote areas of the camps; and that there are concerns that having a vaccination might make people sick. We can also see how different groups of people have different worries. Women are much more concerned about sanitation and hygiene problems in the camp, for example. Some villages within the host community also have very specific concerns - about fishing rights, for example.

With this type of information, relief organizations can be much more targeted in how they support the community, making sure that what they provide is what is actually needed; addressing concerns as they arise; and making sure that the activities they provide are designed with affected people in mind.

It's not easy, of course. Collecting community feedback in the first place is difficult: Rohingya people speak a different language from most of the relief workers and most are not used to being asked for their opinion. Even once data is collected, some organizations are reluctant to share information which could contain some criticisms of their work. And even once we understand how the community feels and what they are worried about, changing relief plans that were made weeks or months in advance can be a difficult task.

We think it's critically important though, which is why we at BBC Media Action will keep making sure that all the relief workers and volunteers have access to the very best information from the communities themselves. It is, after all, those who are living day-to-day in camps and host communities across Cox's Bazar who best understand their own situation and what can be done to improve it. ■

Richard Lace is the Bangladesh country director for BBC Media Action.

FACT SHEET | COST OF SHELTER

SHELTER AND NON-FOOD ITEMS

PEOPLE IN NEED	Bangladeshi Host Communities	Refugees in Camps & Settlements	Refugees in Host Communities
 SHELTER & NFI 909,000 ppl	50,000 ppl	780,500 ppl	78,500 ppl

NUMBER OF ORGANIZATIONS	8	23	7
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PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATION	REQUIREMENTS (US\$)
ACT Alliance / Christian Aid	314,032
ACT Alliance / DanChurchAid	1,027,704
Action Against Hunger	1,492,923
ActionAid	660,170

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATION	REQUIREMENTS (US\$)
Agrajatra	2,189,511
Anando (Promotion of Culture and Youth Resource Development)	134,800
Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee	12,576,093
CARE International	973,945
Caritas Bangladesh	3,245,819
Friends in Village Development Bangladesh	1,613,465
Handicap International	1,540,000
Integrated Social Development Effort Bangladesh	373,579
International Organization for Migration	45,137,250
Mukti Cox's Bazar	10,418,965
OBAT Helpers	553,000
Resource Integration and Social Development Association in Bangladesh	931,000
Samaj Kalyan O Unnayan Shangstha	266,139
Save the Children	2,516,196
Society for Health Extension and Development	300,000
Solidarités International (SI)	2,038,073
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	45,118,608
World Concern	619,710
World Vision International	2,585,272
TOTAL	136,626,254

SITE MANAGEMENT

PEOPLE IN NEED	Bangladeshi Host Communities	Refugees in Camps & Settlements	Refugees in Host Communities
SITE MANAGEMENT 949,000 _{ppl}	65,000 _{ppl}	774,000 _{ppl}	110,000 _{ppl}
NUMBER OF ORGANIZATIONS	3	6	5

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATION	REQUIREMENTS (US\$)
Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee	3,000,000
CARE International	774,778
Danish Refugee Council	2,270,000
HELVETAS	558,334
International Organization for Migration	76,656,752
Solidarités International (SI)	223,629
United Nations Development Programme	1,239,316
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	43,622,175
World Food Programme	3,100,000
TOTAL	131,444,984



SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN

INTERVIEW

GIMME SHELTER

SEEKING REFUGE IN A CLIMATE VULNERABLE NATION

Interviewed by Meraz Mostafa

Dr Saleemul Huq is the director of the International Centre for Climate Change and Development at the Independent University, Bangladesh. The interview has been edited for clarity.



REUTERS

There is a general belief that climate change will cause mass migrations in the future. Did climate change play any role in the exodus of Rohingya refugees into Bangladesh?

No, there is no causal link to climate change. The exodus is completely political, caused by ethnic cleansing from inside Myanmar. A completely anti-humanitarian, anti-human rights campaign which pushed these people across the border.

However, what does it mean that the Rohingya have sought refuge in one of the most climate vulnerable countries in the world?

Well, Bangladesh has a brand new climate change vulnerability hotspot that didn't exist even a year ago. The country is already one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change because of both geography and poverty.

A recent study identified a number of very climate vulnerable hotspots in the country. The low-lying coastal region

was identified; the northeast flash-flood region, known as the haor region; and the drylands in the northwest.

But now to that list we will have to add the major Rohingya camps, Kutupalong and Balukhali, that house nearly a million people. They are living in very precarious conditions that are impacted by heavy rainfall in the monsoons. And if they continue to live there, they will certainly be impacted by the consequences of climate change.

continue to live there, they will certainly be impacted by the consequences of climate change.

What would a climate-resilient or adaptive humanitarian response look like?

In my view, a climate resilient humanitarian response needs to think about some long term aspects of housing and accommodating these million or so Rohingya refugees.

I think while the aspiration to have them go home to Myanmar is fine, the practicality and likelihood of that is very low. Hence we are going to have to think about housing them and looking after them for the long term.

Another major factor in my view is the fact a large number of them are actually children. They are young

kids and so, in a sense, we are their parents now and we have to bring them up and look after them. We have to ensure that they become good citizens of the world.

We don't necessarily have to give them Bangladeshi citizenships, but we have to mould them into good citizens by providing them with education. Right now, we are mostly giving them safe shelters. We are giving them a little bit of education, but not much. I think that needs to be factored into the future.

The final element is where they are going to be located. It is a very precarious long term proposition for them to remain in the camps. We need to think about allowing them to relocate in different parts of the country. Older waves of Rohingyas have been able to do that, and have settled mainly in the Cox's Bazar region. I think that's something we need to think seriously about. Confining them to the camps was alright in the short-term, but it is a questionable practice in the long term. ■

LOGISTICS

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATION	REQUIREMENTS (US\$)
Handicap International	280,000
World Food Programme	3,346,042
TOTAL	3,626,042

EMERGENCY TELECOMMUNICATIONS

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATION	REQUIREMENTS (US\$)
World Food Programme	1,200,000
TOTAL	1,200,000

COMMUNICATION WITH COMMUNITIES (CWC)

PEOPLE IN NEED	Bangladeshi Host Communities	Refugees in Camps & Settlements	Refugees in Host Communities
CWC 913,000 ppl	252,000 ppl	663,750 ppl	300,000 ppl
NUMBER OF ORGANIZATIONS	3	4	2

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATION	REQUIREMENTS (US\$)
ACT Alliance / Christian Aid	380,000
Alliance for Cooperation and Legal Aid Bangladesh	179,000
Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee	799,922
BBC Media Action	1,610,793
COAST Trust	400,000
International Organization for Migration	1,250,000
United Nations Children's Fund	1,250,000
TOTAL	5,869,715

COORDINATION

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATION	REQUIREMENTS (US\$)
International Organization for Migration	2,811,491
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women	148,000
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	1,858,077
United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT)	740,000
TOTAL	5,557,568



'PEOPLE NEED TO LIVE WITH SOME SEMBLANCE OF BASIC DIGNITY'

IN CONVERSATION WITH SUMBUL RIZVI

Interviewed by Meraz Mostafa

Sumbul Rizvi is the senior humanitarian coordinator assigned on behalf of the broader humanitarian community to coordinate the response to the Rohingya refugee crisis in Cox's Bazar. The interview has been edited for clarity.

The Joint Response Plan for the Rohingya refugee crisis was launched earlier this year, requiring USD 951 million to provide humanitarian aid to the Rohingya refugees and local host communities. What are some of the challenges in implementing this plan?

Well, there are two challenges. One is the policy. There is a significant number of policy decisions that need to occur to make this a sustainable response.

For example, reducing available land is not going to help anybody; neither the refugees nor the host communities nor the government of Bangladesh. People need to live with some semblance of basic dignity. In this sense, the vision requires policy shifts including issues of space and so on.

The other challenge is funding. The availability of funding is a constant issue. We are working with a whole range of donors who generously contributed during the early phase of the situation. However, we require more funds. And when I say we, I mean the entire response itself requires more funds.

Whether it is to ensure that some greenery is restored, or that basic facilities are provided to the refugees such as- basic water, sanitation, and shelter. What you see now are just plastic sheets and bamboo that are not sustainable, and are highly risky in a disaster prone area such as Cox's Bazar.

Traditionally, when people think about humanitarian assistance to refugee camps they focus on the refugees themselves. Why is it important to invest resources both into the refugee camps and the host communities?

It is absolutely natural that when we look at the situation of the refugees, we must also alleviate the impact that such a large influx has had on the immediate nearby host communities.

This is an innovative way of thinking. Normally, in refugee scenarios, this thinking starts to come forward several years after the refugees have been living in the country - after the damage has already been done.

We have learnt our lessons from the past. We don't need to wait to see that impact. We are already in a country that has a high population density.

How can we facilitate social cohesion from the start? It can happen only if we understand the needs and the challenges of the community that is hosting the refugees.

Is there any concern that by focusing on the environmental impacts of the refugee influx, it will worsen their marginalization - by portraying them as the cause of such environmental degradation?

I don't think the assumptions in this question are correct. Focusing on the environmental impact is critical: The refugees know it; the local communities know it; we know it. I see both refugees and local communities being equal partners in environmental rehabilitation - and the good part is that we are starting now.

I've been in many, many refugee contexts where it is only later in time that plans to address environmental degradation are initiated. In Cox's Bazar, this has just happened and it is just the first year of the crisis. We can overcome it. It will take a little time and joint partnerships between us all but we can overcome it. And it will be for the mutual benefit of all.

Given the specific traumas the Rohingya refugees faced last year, what does that mean for the way in which development and humanitarian responses are planned at the camps?

Well in most refugee situations, you usually see a lot of people fleeing with some of those having faced direct persecution. In this situation, however, the majority of the people have been subjected to direct persecution themselves or to their immediate families. They have either lost family members or been tortured or horribly subjected to all kinds of abuse and/or have seen their own family members subjected to horrific violence. People are obviously traumatized.

In this regard, the camps are meant to be safe spaces. A

“ How can we facilitate social cohesion from the start? It can happen only if we understand the needs and the challenges of the community that is hosting the refugees ”

safe space is meant to provide access to support, which includes catharsis measures like the ability to speak to each other, to nurture yourself and the community and to bring yourself back from the brink to a normal life.

Camps are supposed to be spaces where you have safe access to services; especially for those in need. These include health - psychosocial and physical care, food security, education, nutrition, protection services. We need the child friendly spaces, women friendly spaces, and support for the disabled. We need interactive spaces for the refugee boys and girls themselves. We need to support the refugees as they become the channels of their own.

What efforts have been made to involve the Rohingya refugees in the planning and development of the camps?

Until recently, a “Majhi” system has been in place, that had developed when previous Rohingyas had sought refuge in Bangladesh. It was not very democratic. Currently humanitarian actors are working on establishing an alternative - to set up elected committees that represent the diversity of the of the Rohingya community.

The objective is to ensure that the community takes charge of their own decision making process. This is what we do in refugee camps around the world, and this is what we are trying to establish here.

A successful pilot was undertaken last month. Half of the elected committee were women and there was a range of ages involved.

It is quite different from the system that was previously in place, but we can't dismantle a system in the absence of another one. So the alternative is being created now, a democratic system is being created so that we can actually abolish the previous one. It is a work-in-progress, but certainly refugees have to play a part in the planning and development of the camps and their own lives. ■

Meraz Mostafa is a research officer from ICCAD and manages content for the Climate Tribune.

FACT SHEET

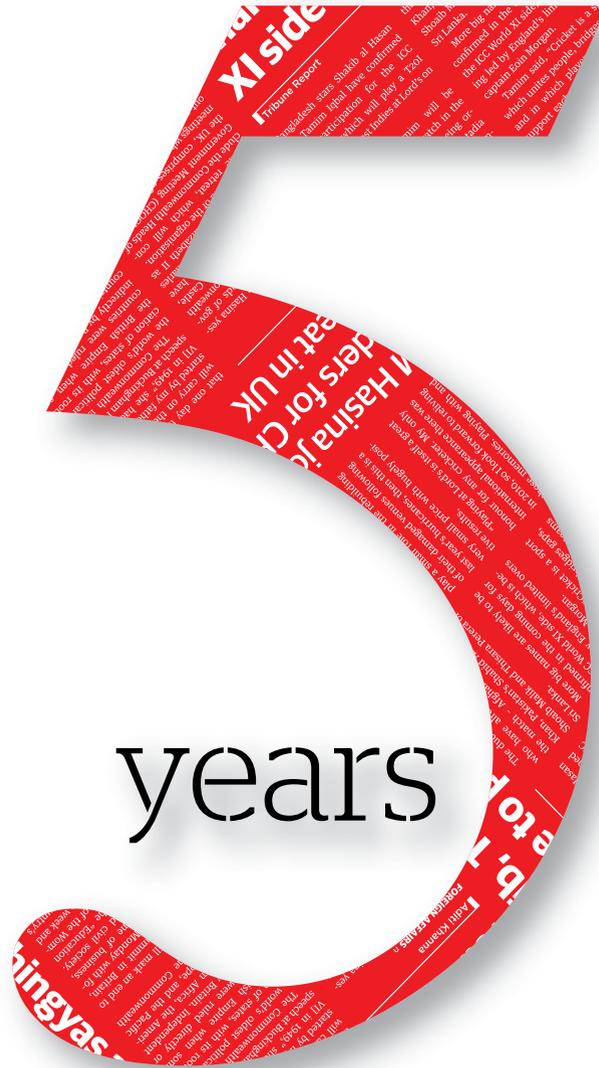
EDUCATION

PEOPLE IN NEED	Bangladeshi Host Communities	Refugees in Camps & Settlements	Refugees in Host Communities
EDUCATION 540,000 _{ppl}	115,000 _{ppl}	410,000 _{ppl}	15,000 _{ppl}
NUMBER OF ORGANIZATIONS	9	10	4
PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATION			REQUIREMENTS (US\$)
ACT Alliance / DanChurchAid			583,924
Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee			3,463,159
COAST Trust			349,771
Danish Refugee Council			700,000
Dhaka Ahsania Mission			499,914
Friends in Village Development Bangladesh			144,817
Plan International			1,252,257
Save the Children			5,323,500
United Nations Children's Fund			25,146,753
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees			9,108,512
Voluntary Service Overseas			747,000
TOTAL			47,319,607

NUTRITION

PEOPLE IN NEED	Bangladeshi Host Communities	Refugees in Camps & Settlements	Refugees in Host Communities
NUTRITION 318,778 _{ppl}	68,500 _{ppl}	242,492 _{ppl}	7,786 _{ppl}
NUMBER OF ORGANIZATIONS	5	9	1
PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATION			REQUIREMENTS (US\$)
Action Against Hunger			3,259,686
Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee			200,760
Concern Worldwide			124,757
Gonoshasthaya Kendra			236,950
Relief International			250,000
Save the Children			2,283,143
United Nations Children's Fund			18,930,503
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees			5,421,464
World Concern			765,057
World Food Programme			25,000,000
World Vision International			249,782
TOTAL			56,722,102

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