Infrastructure Fact Sheet

**Infrastructure Snapshot**

DRC was one of the largest providers of Shelter, WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene), and Site Development providing essential services throughout six camps and 17 villages in host communities.

**Shelter Program**

These projects included provision of materials and community engagement to assemble the structures. DRC constructed 11 communal structures, used as ‘safe havens,’ reinforced 28 buildings and installed 463 solar lights across the camps to improve accessibility at night. DRC has provided 1,800 risk assessments and facilitated safe relocations of refugees.

The shelter component of DRC, as of 2019, has endeavored to adjust the method to deliver shelter construction materials to the beneficiaries across camps 2 East, 2 West, 5 and 6. The objective is foster beneficiary led self-identification of materials needed to care and maintain their households via a voucher modality. This approach utilises a household assessment, conducted by DRCs SMS department, which denotes the condition of each household across the aforementioned camps into excellent, good, minor damages and serious damage. Through continuous dialogue with the target population an appropriate voucher value is determined to allow beneficiaries the opportunity to access materials needed to address the condition of their shelter. When the beneficiary is in possession of a voucher, the beneficiary selects from a ‘catalogue’ of available items at the distribution kiosk which can be obtained if there are enough credits on the voucher. Consequently, the voucher program parallels the market where higher value materials ‘cost’ more than the lesser.

There are two elements formulating DRCs voucher program; distribution of shelter materials and capacity building of the beneficiaries vis-à-vis shelter assessments. The former is handled by voucher assistants and the latter is spearheaded by structural engineering officers. The capacity building seeks to impart the basic skills needed to allow a beneficiary to make an informed decision when selecting materials form the distribution point. Moreover, the role of the technical unit will provide supervision for the construction of households for Extremely Vulnerable Individuals (EVIs) identified by DRCs Protection team. A key facet of the voucher program is to look into alternative measures which can be used to care and maintain shelters. For instance, methods to repair valuable tarpaulins, as opposed to distributing a new one, thereby increasing the stock available those really in need, or alternative means of repairs sections of the household using premade and ready-to-install wall sections for instance. The ready-to-go options is an activity which would build on Infrastructure’s existing inter-department scheme with DRCs Protection team, that provides much needed opportunities for work to EVIs.

**Site Development**

DRC improves access, infrastructure and facilities throughout the camps. During the first 3 months of 2019 DRC constructed around 1.8 km of interventions throughout six camps. This includes 750 m of drainage projects, 65 m of soil retention and slope stabilization projects, 298 m of stairways, 550 m in pathways, and 30 m of bridges.
DRC’s Site Operations team improves physical access to sites and living conditions, maintains key infrastructure, contributes to construction and maintenance of communal infrastructure (e.g., distribution centres), supports preparedness activities in coordination with the SMS, CwC, protection, environmental and shelter teams, supports decongestion and redevelopment of settlements (e.g., redeveloping available unsettled areas to make them suitable for shelter construction, and allowing decongestion of other areas as land is prepared).

DRC will implement plans for drainage, access (footpaths, steps, footbridges), stabilization (slopes and retaining walls) and community structures, through the established committees, wherever possible or as an alternative through established incentive worker teams. DRC will also provide support to other sectors by identifying and preparing plots and other related civil infrastructure as appropriate, and identify and mitigate physical risks associated with site infrastructure and access.

All site development works are being carried out by refugee labor force through Cash for Work program. For the selection of the labor force a profiling exercise of the households in the camps was done in coordination with CCCM, from which certain households will be selected and invited for work. Information gathered from this exercise was filtered and households with previous experience in construction, no income opportunities and large families were targeted and invited for work. 250 households are targeted per block with an almost equal representation from each sub-block. Selected households were requested to send one representative from their households in order to work with DRC site development department. The new selection procedure of CFW workers enabled the Site Development program to target labour force consisting of skilled people with construction experience, vulnerable households, block wise with a better gender balance since female headed households were given the ability to send a female representative of the household to work with DRC. Under this activity around 1200 individuals so far were hired for work.

**Pilot Women’s Lattice Project**

Female refugees face significant challenges with freedom of movement within the camps, and the humanitarian community have found it difficult to retain volunteers due to threats within the camps. By integrating Protection and Infrastructure programming, DRC engaged 414 women to be part of the lattice project which utilized leftover bamboo from the shelter projects. This enabled them to produce weaved bamboo lattice work from their homes. This included 68 Extremely Vulnerable Individuals (EVIs) who were referred by DRC’s Protection department. The lattice work was used essential soil retention activities and other protection programs including community gardens and vegetable projects.
WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) Program

DRC works in host communities across two unions, Rajapalong and Palongkhali, to support 17 villages including cash-for-work programming. In 2019, DRC has engaged 390 host community members which will expand to over 500 beneficiaries. As part of the monsoon preparation, DRC has identified areas in the villages that require rehabilitating. Both cash-for-work and skilled labour with construction experience will be engaged in the rehabilitation of access roads, bridges, stairs and drainage systems to address flood water in the neighborhoods surrounding the camps. Additionally, in preparation for the monsoon season DRC has planned to distribute over 3,000 hygiene and dignity NFI kits to the host communities living in flood prone areas. DRC conducted a needs assessment in the host community and found that the community’s key needs focused on lack of water (for irrigation and consumption) and poor sanitation. Given these needs identified, DRC has offered the provision and testing of safe water and latrine. DRC has identified suitable water supply technologies based on the recommendations made by the hydrological consultant hired and DRC is in the process of installing these structures in pre-identified locations in Rajapalong and Palongkhali Unions. To ensure that people have access to safe water for domestic use (i.e. drinking, cooking and personal hygiene), DRC will conduct water quality testing for each of the water technologies being implemented.

Key Achievements

- Constructed 50km of interventions ranging from pathways, stairs, drainage, soil retention, and bridges.
- Engaged 9,759 unique volunteers to work in 6 camps 2E, 2W, 5, 6, 7 and 8E and 390 cash for workers in the host community across 17 villages
- Worked 431,167 days in maintenance, soil retention, stairs, pathways, shelter, guards, distributions, drainage, portering, materials, cash for work
- Facilitated 336 sessions on 5 key Hygiene Promotion messages for 1600 persons
- Formed disaster management communities in 4 villages across Palong Khali and Raja Palong and together with DRC developed the community contingency planning in case of a disaster

DRC Innovative Projects

Pilot Cash and voucher programming

DRC established a pilot voucher program in March 2019. This included constructing a distribution kiosk to provide shelter materials, identifying additional distribution kiosks in the remaining camps and distributing 45 vouchers to 45 households to pilot the scheme in camp 2w to with the highest level of damage based on DRCs Site Management Support household profiling. The voucher pilot has facilitated the distribution of 698 pieces of shelter materials. Whilst piloting the voucher project, it has also continued to address pressing shelter needs in the camp by distributing materials (29,721) and constructing shelters for 19 Extremely Vulnerable Individuals under the 2018 system, which will gradually phase out as the voucher program becomes online.

Key Gaps and Challenges

- Government policy preventing refugees from engaging in formal livelihood opportunities
- Limitation of 16 days per person for cash for work
- Ensuring harmonized standardized approach across all camps AND across host communities/camps
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- Engaging female volunteers with movement restrictions within the camps
- Upcoming Monsoon, relocations within camp and island
- Different int standards not upheld

DRC 2019 Strategic Priorities

- **Cash-based/market-based initiatives**: DRC Bangladesh will strengthen market-based interventions and explore collaborations with the private sector.
- **Disaster Risk Reduction**: DRC will enhance infrastructure (community centers), preparedness and capacity building
- **Social cohesion**: DRC will elaborate approaches to strengthening social cohesion within camps and between refugees and host community members which will be integrated and multi-sectoral, address the negative impacts of the influx and associated humanitarian response and root causes of tensions and conflicts between different groups within camps and between refugees and host community members.
- **Energy and Environment**: DRC will expand it programming to encompass environmental regeneration and increased self-reliance which is a Government of Bangladesh priority. This work will be closely linked with DRC’s programming in livelihoods, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. for instance, vegetation cover through bag and vertical gardening with trainings and support on small space horticulture, replanting along access and/or riparian routes with forestry department-approved trees, among others.
- **Livelihoods**: DRC will increase livelihoods, income generation and livelihoods-related skills development opportunities across its programming within host communities and within the camps; and advocate with the government for livelihood programming for refugees. DRC will continue to support access to income/cash through environmental restoration and DRR programming relating to protection, shelter and site improvements.
- **Advocacy**: DRC will drive an advocacy campaign on livelihoods, including the cash for work initiative, independently and jointly with partners, NGOs and the UN to engage with the GoB on livelihoods, transitional and durable solutions.
- **Regional**: Asia Displacement Solutions Platform will enhance sub-regional advocacy on mid-term solutions and social cohesion initiatives in host communities and camps (DRC, IRC, NRC and RI)

**Pilot Bamboo Treatment Center**

With about 240,000 displaced Rohingya families taking shelter in the camps in the Cox’s Bazar area of Bangladesh, the demand for bamboo to address urgent humanitarian shelter needs is outpacing supply — putting enormous pressure on the local environment. According to a recent study by the Shelter/NFI sector in Cox’s Bazar, over 22 million sticks of bamboo have been used by humanitarian actors for construction to date. Because of dwindling supply, much of this bamboo has been low quality with viability of only 8mths to 2 years, meaning that it will have to be replaced within the next 20 months.

To address this problem, DRC is piloting the construction and operation of an environmentally friendly Bamboo Treatment Plant in Cox’s Bazar in May 2019 that also will serve the needs in treated bamboo of other humanitarian agencies. The treatment process increases lifespan of borak type bamboo, which is used for load-bearing support in shelters, to 8-10 years by protecting it from insects, fungi and other biological and physical elements.

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