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Protecting Rohingya Refugees: Addressing Evolving Protection Needs

REPORT ON ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

Round Table Panelists

Photo: Tasbir UI Islam, IRC.

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Protecting Rohingya Refugees

Addressing Evolving Protection Needs



Shabira Sultana Nupur, Head of Advocacy & Communication, IRC

BACKGROUND OF THE RTD

Despite the high volume and consistent increase in protection incidents reported in the Rohingya refugee camps and host communities in Cox's Bazar, the gap between the funding required and the funding available to protect the Rohingya refugees is widening. As the situation continues to evolve into a protracted crisis, so too do the vulnerabilities of those living in the camps and adjacent host communities. Supported by ECHO, the round table discussion gathered experts and stakeholders to identify the protection needs of refugees and develop innovative solutions to provide better safety, security, and assistance to the Rohingya community.

Entitled *Protecting Rohingya Refugees: Addressing Evolving Protection Needs*, the objective of the RTD was to share information about protection risks and the changing nature of protection trends, identify sustainable solutions to best address the concerns, reflect on the importance of protection monitoring, and finally to identify expertise within the consortium and amongst protection stakeholders.

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Samuel Komakech, Senior Integrated Protection Coordinator, IRC.

MAJOR POINTS OF THE PRESENTATION



Sumitra Mukherjee, Country Director, DRC

- *Protection risks and violations* relate mostly to lack of access to services, and safety and security, and are being exacerbated by recent cuts in food rations.
- Extortion, detention, and abduction are the *top protection trends* with human trafficking the most common *protection risk in population movement*.
- Gender-based violence (GBV) is a serious protection affecting 1 in 3 women and adolescent girls screened by IRC in 2022. *GBV trends* indicate main types are physical assault, denial of resources, psychological abuse.
- *Child Protection data* indicate most common types are child neglect, physical abuse and chronic medical conditions.
- Barriers to legal services include lengthy process, demand for money and threats from perpetrators.
- Evictions, informal shelter transactions and disputes over pathways and shared resources constitute the main Housing, Land and Property (HLP).
- Challenges to addressing HLP issues include lack of capacity and a reluctance to intervene, limited referrals and weak advocacy and coordinated responses to evictions.

Consortium Partners:





Hasina Rahman, Country Director, IRC

TOP FIVE ASPECTS FROM THE PANEL DISCUSSION

1. The Criticality of Nuanced Protection Monitoring

- Inclusive and based on robust gender and diversity disaggregated data.
- Action and result-orientated, thus contributing to evidence-based decision-making and multi-level advocacy.

2. Addressing Protection Concerns requires facilitating Rohingya voice and agency

- There is an urgent need to draw on Rohingya expertise and opinions of women and men leaders through meaningful consultation and participation, as they are part of the solution.

3. Critical analysis must include gendered understandings of the socio, political and historical contexts

- The changing nature of land and property issues, safety and security, the environment and natural resources and the decades-long patron-client relations.
- The root causes of criminal gang activity and its links to human trafficking, smuggling, child labour and school dropouts.
- The impact of criminal activity on the affected population.

4. Immediate solutions addressing protection concerns are about basic needs

- Ensuring law and order across all camps and adjacent host communities.
- Strengthening the self-reliance of the affected population particularly women and people with disabilities.
- Increasing refugees' employment opportunities, both locally and overseas.

5. Consensus and social cohesion between stakeholders and across communities relies on

- Clarity around the status, identity, and rights of the Rohingya population.
- Meaningful coordination between protection stakeholders (the Government of Bangladesh, UN, NGOs, INGOs, and most importantly the Rohingya population).
- Multi-level advocacy informed by solutions put forward by the Rohingya via community consultations.

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RECOMMENDATION FROM THE RTD FOR THE FUTURE COURSE OF ACTION



Wendy McCance, Country Director, NRC

For the Government of Bangladesh

- Broaden the scope for refugees to generate an income to ensure family survival.
- Increase law enforcement to ensure safety and reduce criminal activities in camps.
- Increase the number of female staff and help desks in the camps.

For Donors

- Conduct multi-level advocacy to develop durable solutions for refugees.
- Ensure sustainable funding to address protection and HLP concerns and prevent escalation of armed violence and criminal activities.
- Promote equal opportunities and inclusive programming.

For the Protection Sector, UN, ISCG

- Strengthen protective environment to prevent massive human rights violations.
- Increase protection mainstreaming and integrated community-based protection service delivery.
- Increase GBV and CP interventions including availability of life-saving services and behavioural and attitudinal change interventions.
- Extend Protection Monitoring to all 33 Camps and also to the Host Communities.
- Engage the Government of Bangladesh to end violations and address HLP issues.
- Ensure multi-level advocacy and durable solutions monitoring.
- Strengthen capacity to address HLP issues including eviction management.

Consortium Partners:

