Introduction

Since Mid-March 2020, Food Security Sector’s (FSS) Livelihood Working Group (LHWG) partners have been facing adverse impacts of COVID19 pandemic which led to sudden lockdown and forced closure of several project activities in Rohingya camps and host community. However, Bangladesh Government as well as Local Administration’s immediate response plan against COVID19 pandemic, recognised food security as top priority and granted permission to relevant sector partners to continue activities following protective measures while ensuring minimum footprints in both camps and host community. Nevertheless, partners involved with both agricultural and non-agricultural activities carried on with their work despite being faced with challenges like restriction mobility, limited transportation, etc. in order to serve the people in need of support during this difficult time. The initiatives undertaken by FSS/LHWG partners in response to COVID19 pandemic ensured continued production of food commodities as well as created opportunities for Rohingya and Host Community women to contribute to the response mechanism by engaging in income generating activities. Therefore, to learn about challenges faced by partners and to explore possible activity ideas, FSS/LHWG organized two workshops for two streams on 10-11 June, 2020, one being agricultural the first day and another being non-agricultural the 2nd day. The workshops successfully brought together 5 UN agencies, more than 30 national and international organizations and relevant Government counterparts like Department of Agricultural Extension, Department of Fisheries and Livestock. The workshops created a platform for open discussion on current activities, lessons learned and way forward with coordination support from Food Security Sector/ Livelihood Working Group.

Workshops Overview

Agricultural Activities (June 10, 2020)
Participation: 58 participants from 23 organizations
Overview: Follow-up from ad hoc meeting on agricultural initiatives held on May 13, 2020 (link to the presentation here). Reviewed ongoing national global approaches by the global FSC partners, pulling examples from the Global Food Security Cluster and national/ Cox’s Bazar resources as reference for current COVID19 context.
Inter-Sectoral Coordination Representation: Presentation by Energy and Environment Technical Working Group (EETWG) Coordinator, Todd Wolfchuck (eetwcoord.cxb@gmail.com).
Government Representation: Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), Department of Fisheries, Department of Livestock
Gender Inputs: Rimu Byadya (Rimu.byadya@wfp.org), the Food Security Sector Gender Focal Point provided partners with follow-up on gender inclusion perspective related to developing inclusive programming. A follow-up from a June 9th partner workshop on Gender and food security in COVID19.
Roadmap forward: The workshop concluded with a group exercise highlighting next steps for coordination and partners for the second half of 2020. See points highlighted on page two as well as links to all workshop presentation here.

Non-Agricultural Activities (June 11, 2020)
Participation: 78 participants from 36 organizations
Overview: Follow up on some of the action points from workshop on mask making initiative held on May 03, 2020 (link to the presentation here). In addition to highlighting national and global approaches to non-agricultural livelihood opportunities, partners discussed about possible activity plan for 2nd half of 2020. 
Day-1: Workshop on Agricultural Activities (Partner Presentations)

FAO and IOM Joint Initiative

Proposed Activity Overview: FAO and IOM Bangladesh are working on a joint initiative to provide comprehensive assistance for the beneficiaries. FAO will distribute rice and seeds to farmers in Ukhiya and Teknaf and IOM will distribute agro-machineries (i.e. power tiller, power thrasher) to the same farmers in order to provide comprehensive support for rice and seed cultivation. This joint initiative is being carried out in close collaboration with Bangladesh Government’s Department of Agricultural Extension, Department of Fisheries and Department of Livestock.

For more information contact FAO focal: Ahmed Ekzayez (Ahmed.Ekzayez@fao.org) and IOM focal: Patrick Charignon (pcharignon@iom.int)

Livelihoods and Self-Reliance Activities (Agriculture) of UNHCR during COVID19

Overview: UNHCR presented on two ongoing livelihood projects in the camps and host community implemented in partnership with Center for Natural Resource Studies (CNRS) and Mukti. In the host community the initiative focuses on improved agriculture while in the camps the initiative promotes horizontal and vertical gardening.

Target Area: More than 2700 HHs in host community and 1100 HHs in camps were reached with summer seeds by following door-to-door distribution modality.

Challenges faced in light of COVID19: Restricted mobility including access approval from Government authorities during lockdown period have hindered project activities to some extent.

COVID19 Adjustments: Having considered limitations due to COVID19, UNHCR prepared a comprehensive guideline for ensuring effective door-to-door distribution while following protective measures.

For more information contact UNHCR focal: Subrata Chakrabarty (chakraba@unhcr.org)

Innovative Market System: An Initiative of HELVETAS for Addressing Livelihoods of Host Communities

Overview: HELVETAS presented on three initiatives which promote agricultural production and selling through creation of market linkage. First initiative: community market system which brings together farmers and community buyers in an established market for selling and buying fresh produce. Second initiative: group marketing which allows more than 1800 farmers from approximately 70 producer groups to sell their vegetables through designated group marketing points to traders. Third initiative: supporting individuals to become vegetable traders through which 40 individuals successfully became traders. These traders purchase vegetables from more than 1200 farmers.

Target Area: Ukhiya Upazila, Cox’s Bazar

Challenges faced in light of COVID19: In light of Government of Bangladesh (GoB) Directives on movement restrictions, some markets have on an ad hoc basis, relocated to non-market locations (e.g. beaches) which pose as challenges to maintaining social distance.

COVID19 Adjustments: HELVETAS has kept the collection centres close since March considering health and safety of the beneficiaries. For more information contact HELVETAS focal: Zahid Hasan (Zahid.Hasan@helvetas.org)

Update on Planting Trees by Energy and Environment Technical Working Group (EETWG)

Overview: The working group coordinator shared plans of collecting GPS data of planting locations, map verification, getting approval from forest department and preparation of planting sites over 4-6 months, starting from August 2020.

Way Forward: The emphasis was put on preparing plantation proposal with support of partners, IOM and UNHCR in particular who manage the camps and the representative urged partners to ensure quality planting materials. For more information please contact EETWG Coordinator, Todd Wofchuck (eetwgcoord.cxb@gmail.com)

Inputs from Gender Focal Points for both Agricultural and Non-Agricultural Workshops

Overview: The Gender focal point for FSS/LHWG stressed importance of gender inclusion from the start of programme design and encouraged partners to always consider the issue, to not keep it limited to COVID19 situation. Participants were equally concerned about it and provided their feedback on matters associated with gender inclusion.
Challenges and Way Forward: Majority of the participants mentioned that ensuring access to resources, especially for women, is an ongoing challenge. Considering the complexity of access to resources in rural Bangladesh, participating partners stressed the importance of program designs targeting population group while keeping sex, age and gender in mind. For more information contact FSS Gender focal: Rimu Byadya (Rimu.byadya@wfp.org)

Coordination and Information Needs/Gaps Overview & Road-Map Forward
In conclusion, based on lessons learned and partner input throughout the workshop – partners participated in drafting a road-map forward for agricultural activities.

- Build capacity (both partner and sector capacity) to address additional coordination and information needs
- Continue thinking about Gender impacts and operationalization of Gender-sensitive programming
- Further discussion on strengthening market linkages/systems
- Adapting communication/delivery mechanisms to ensure continuation of agricultural livelihoods while mitigating health risks (e.g. WhatsApp, door-to-door delivery)
- Further understanding access and challenges (both HC and Refugees) related barriers and advocacy
- Seek to incorporate more private sector linkages
- Strengthening coordination between Implementing partners, ISCG, Government counter parts, donors.

More photos of agricultural activities shared by partners

Day-2: Workshop on Non-Agricultural Activities (Partner Presentations)

WASH Sector: Soap and Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) Materials in Cox’s Bazar Response
Overview: As part of WASH response the sector coordinates distribution of two types of standard hygiene items to individuals in Rohingya camps. One is hygiene kit and another item is called menstrual hygiene management (MHM) kit (for specific content list please see here and for WASH sector MHM Strategy see here) The recipients of this kit are women of reproductive age (11 to 49 years old or around) who receive the kit once in every 3 months. The WASH sector encourages partners to conduct a scoping exercise before implementation that considers issues such as safety, local practice and use, availability of materials, cost and shelf life during production.

Way Forward: The WASH Sector encourages LHWG partners to support in production of menstrual hygiene materials considering comfort, affordability and cultural acceptability within programme implementation. The LHWG further connected with WASH Sector to establish links between production and distribution during the June 22 WASH Sector meeting (Presentation here)

For further information on initiatives of WASH sector please contact Hygiene Promotion Specialist, Mariangela D’Adamo (mdadamo@unicef.org)

NGO-Forum for Public Health: Self-Reliance Activities in Selected Camps for Refugee Women Empowerment
Overview: With fund support from UNHCR, NGO Forum is implementing a project in Rohingya camps with two major activities, production of reusable sanitary pads and jute bags. The target beneficiaries of this project are approximately 300 Rohingya women who will be trained to produce the products enabling them to earn income and become financially independent.

Target Area: Camp 5 in Ukhiya and Camp 17 in Teknaf

Challenges in light of COVID-10 and Way Forward: Due to COVID19 complications, there was shortage of raw materials and slowed down logistic support. As a result, NGO forum was forced to postpone training of the women and production for almost 3 months. With an improvised plan, the organization is looking forward to resuming activities from July 2020.

To know more about their production and business strategy please contact the Project Coordinator Ataur Rahman via (ngoforum.coxsbazar@gmail.com)
**Youth Working Group Overview**

**Overview:** Youth working group (YWG) was created under Education Sector to work as knowledge sharing platform for 20-25 organizations who implement projects in Rohingya camps targeting 10-24 years old. YWG actively advocates for creation of youth centric activities as well as collaborates with other relevant sectors to help the youth learn, around 80% of whom are out of educational opportunities.

**Way Forward:** The working group plans to develop learning materials for youth in response to COVID19 in addition to localizing interagency youth guidelines. For more information on youth activities, please contact Education Sector Coordinator Sharmila Pillai *(spillai@unicef.org)*, Deputy Coordinator Ralph Zireva *(Ralph.Zireva@savethechildren.org)*, YWG Representatives Mostan Zida Alnoor *(mostan.alnoor@savethechildren.org)* and Md. Ashrafur Rahman *(mdrahman@unfpa.org)*

**WFP: Emergency Multi-Sector Rohingya Crisis Response Project (Component 2– Strengthening Community Resilience)**

**Overview:** WFP is going to work on strengthening resilience of Rohingya community by improving safety and living conditions which is one of 4 components of $165 million grant project implemented by Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), Department of Public Health and Engineering (DPHE) and the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR).

**Target Population:** 154,000 Rohingya households (Phase 1) and 100,000 Rohingya households (Phase 2)

**Timeline:** Phase 1 (June to September 2020), Phase 2 (October 2020 to August 2021)

**Way Forward:** In 1st phase, the project will cover targeted households with conditional transfer of $2 value of food per individual every month. In 2nd phase the project will prepare 40,000 community workforce targeting 18-59 years old, who will contribute towards site management and improvement by building pathways, bridges and planting trees. To know more about this project please contact the WFP project focal Diane Broinshtein *(diane.broinshtein@wfp.org)*

**ICCO Cooperation: Livelihood and Enterprise Promotion for the Host Community Households in Teknaf**

**Overview:** With support of MoDMR and two technical partners, ICCO is implementing a project covering 677 households aiming their livelihood improvement by helping them develop small businesses. Moreover, 25 youths have been provided with training on solar light production which is part of a social enterprise called *Litre of Light* that started in Philippines in 2011. This global initiative aims to design low-cost light tube that refracts solar light to provide daytime interior lighting for dwellings with dim lighting. All materials required for this product are locally available and promote opportunities to recycle.

**Target Area:** Teknaf Upazila, Cox’s Bazar

**Way Forward:** The lights produced by host community youth have been distributed in Rohingya community and ICCO plans to continue doing so which facilitates social cohesion Between the Host Communities and the Rohingya through Enterprise Promotion and addressing Energy Poverty. For more information about solar light production in Teknaf Cox’s Bazar, please contact Silvia Rovelli *(S.Rovelli@icco-cooperation.org)*

**IOM COVID19 Response: Local Production of Hand Sanitizer**

**Overview:** IOM with implementing partners Green Hope and Prottyashi, are involved in production of hand sanitizer by following WHO guideline (link here) as COVID19 response. The project engaged 100 beneficiaries with a production target of 100,000 bottles (200ml) of hand sanitizer for an estimated 50,000 beneficiaries.

**Adjustments in light of COVID19:** To ensure 100% protection, a strict guideline on safety practices for production is followed. IOM and partner organizations also follow formal procedure of production which are mixing, filling and sealing, labelling and packaging, and finally monitoring and quality control by following WHO guideline with permission from Department of Narcotics Control.

**Way Forward:** This initiative in times of pandemic has been appreciated by local community and the local administration has asked IOM to increase the production in order to reach more population in camps and host community. To know more about this locally adapted initiative to fight COVID19 pandemic, please reach out to Sukhee Chae from IOM Bangladesh *(schae@iom.int)* and Shahid from Prottyashi *(prottyashi.ctg@gmail.com)*

**OXFAM Bangladesh: Re-programming to Ensure Involvement of Vulnerable Groups**

**Overview:** “Stay at home” directive from Government and closure of business due to COVID19 left many vulnerable people without options of earning income and maintaining their livelihood. With this in mind, OXFAM carried out situation and risk analysis to explore ways for considering alternative income opportunities for most vulnerable groups by keeping sectoral guidance and donor flexibility in consideration. They saw a good possibility in cloth masks production and repurposed their project resources.

**Adjustments in light of COVID19:** OXFAM engaged Rohingya men and women for the activity, giving them chance to generate income during this difficult time. Currently the production is ongoing where engaged beneficiaries are regularly being made aware about COVID19 protection issues.
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Way Forward: The masks and soaps produced from the initiative are going to be distributed to wider Rohingya community in 1 or 2 months. OXFAM is also going to conduct post distribution monitoring to assess the impact on target population.

To know more about this mask and soap production during COVID19, please contact Khodeza Akhter Jahan Rume from OXFAM Bangladesh (Khodeza.rume@oxfam.org)

Coordination and Information Needs/Gaps Overview & Road-Map Forward
Like workshop on agricultural activities, at the end FSS/LHWG team and partners concluded the workshop by discussing about current gaps and possible activities to be carried out in 2nd half of the year. All partners agreed on the following action points as road-map forward for non-agricultural activities:

- To establish further linkage with sectors like Education and WASH and Youth Working Group;
- To ensure continued coordination on mask production and distribution;
- To ensure operationalization of gender-sensitive programming;
- To promote livelihood initiatives to local authorities for further support.

FSS/LHWG: Mask Making Initiative
Overview: Since more than 20 donor and partner organizations embarked upon reusable cloth mask production as COVID19 response following design approval from Cox’s Bazar District Civil Surgeon and District Commissioner, FSS/LHWG was given the task of coordination by Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) for ensuring harmonized mask production and systematic distribution in camps to avoid gaps as well as overlaps. For an effective facilitation of this coordination, an workshop on mask making initiative was organized in 1st week of May 2020 to share approved mask design and to urge partners to share updates about production and distribution with LHWG through an online tracker so that as many population in camps and host community as possible can be reached with cloth masks to reduce the risks of being infected with COVID19. Until now more than 170,000 individuals in camps and 85,000 individuals in host community were reached with 515,000 reusable cloth masks. For more information about the initiative, please see a recent factsheet in English (here) and in Bangla (here).

Production Target: Estimated 2 million reusable cloth masks by local tailors and 3 million factory made reusable cloth masks by September 2020

Projected Coverage: Individuals aged from 5 to 60+ years in 34 Rohingya camps

Sectors and Working Groups: Inter Sectoral Coordination Group (ISCG), Shelter and Non-food Items (SNFI), Site Management and Site Development (SMSD), Communications with Communities Working Group (CwC WG), Health Sector

Partners: United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), United Nations International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), OXFAM, Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), ActionAid Bangladesh, Care Bangladesh, United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), Mukti, Prottayashi, Migrant Offshore Aid Station (MOAS), Nongor, International Rescue Committee (IRC), Christian Aid, Dustho Sasto Kendra (DSK), World Vision International (WVI), Swedish Red Cross (SRC), Turkish Red Crescent (TRC), Resource Integration Centre (RIC), Technical Assistance Incorporated (TAI), Humanitarian Assistance Program (HAP), Ayesha Abed Foundation (AAF), ICCO Coodominated and Information Needs/Gaps Overview & Road-Map Forward

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