

BACKGROUND

Since 1992, Cox's Bazar District in Bangladesh has received people fleeing from Rakhine State in Myanmar. Beginning in early summer 2017 a deterioration of the situation between the Rohingya population in Rakhine State and the Myanmar authorities has resulted in a massive new influx of Undocumented Myanmar Nationals (UMNs) into Bangladesh. An estimated 655,000 crossed into Cox's Bazar District since 25 August 2017 and, coupled with the existing refugee populations, has put the total caseload at approximately 865,000 UMN's and refugees as of January 2018.

The Government of Bangladesh's (GoB) National Strategy on UMN's and Refugees will provide basic assistance, which is further complemented and supported by assistance from the humanitarian community through immediate lifesaving emergency activities across all sectors. In line with GoB's National Strategy on Undocumented Myanmar Nationals and Refugees, the humanitarian community is scaling up its operation to support the national government's response.

Those international humanitarian organisations that are present in Cox's Bazar District are also playing a pivotal role in managing the growth in existing refugee settlements, and are providing similar support extending into makeshift sites as well. Clearly the size and complexity of the operation requires a well-integrated and coherent inter-agency response; this is even more critical given the uncertainties surrounding the possibility for return of the affected population to Myanmar in the short-to-medium term.

Given the current circumstances it also seems clear that the displaced population, both refugees and UMN's will require assistance in Bangladesh for an extended period; and, in parallel it can be expected that there will be a continuing aid/relief material requirement to be met by responding governments and humanitarian organisations.

LOGISTICS SITUATION ANALYSIS

There is a general shortage of warehousing in Cox's Bazar District: excess commercial warehousing is limited, most government facilities are fully occupied, and existing dedicated emergency and disaster management infrastructure is close to capacity. Storage options become more limited further south in Cox Bazaar District, towards Teknaf. Available land for the construction of new storage facilities is extremely limited due to the rugged terrain and agricultural land use in the District. Seasonal high winds and flooding impose additional limitation, making locating suitable facilities and/or land to augment storage capacity a challenge.

The primary road network connecting major cities (i.e. Dhaka to Chittagong to Cox's Bazar) is typically effective, and widely used for the movement of commercial goods; conditions are generally favourable and no security issues have been reported to date. Roads are accessible and in overall good condition but with a suggested truck capacity of 3-5 MT maximum for transport within the district of Cox's Bazar. However, with the rapid expansion of refugee settlements and makeshift sites across Cox's Bazar District, and specifically in the vicinity of Ukhaia, heavy road congestion is often reported and visible particularly in the southern half of the District.

Limited secondary transport infrastructure has been established within the main refugee settlements and makeshift sites in Cox's Bazar District. Footpaths and tracks are relied upon for the movement of almost all materials/goods to large areas of the main settlement at Kutapalong, but the network is insufficient to the needs and vulnerable to rains. Similarly, the main road in Kutapalong is potentially vulnerable in the event of severe and/or prolonged rains.

Cox's Bazar District experiences some of the highest annual rainfall in Bangladesh, and there is potential for severe flooding during the rainy season (June to October). In addition, just before the onset (April and May) and at the end of the rainy season (September to December), Bangladesh is at risk from tropical storms and cyclones that form in the Bay of Bengal. While the majority of the storms which directly impact Bangladesh typically make landfall along the coastline between Chittagong and Kuakata, several large cyclones have affected Cox's Bazar District directly over the last decade. Damage to infrastructure from high winds can be severe, and intense flooding can limit movement and restrict road access.

LOGISTICS GAPS AND BOTTLENECKS

Based on the above analysis, the major logistics constraints limiting humanitarian operations in Cox's Bazar District currently are:

- A lack of available storage capacity;
- Congestion along road infrastructure leading to refugee settlements and makeshift sites;
- Poor and insufficient vehicle access within refugee settlements and makeshift sites;
- Minimal availability of logistics facilities, assets and infrastructure capable of remaining fully functional throughout the up-coming storms and rainy season (from April to December 2018).

OBJECTIVES

Based on the needs identified and expressed by the humanitarian community the Logistics Sector aims to support the Government of Bangladesh-led response and facilitate access to critical logistics services, consolidate and share key information on logistics capacities and the operating environment, and to enhance the capacity of the responding organisations to maintain an uninterrupted supply chain of life-saving relief items.

The following objectives were formulated to address the identified logistics gaps and bottlenecks through undertaking specific activities, in the following areas of support/intervention:

1. COORDINATION

The Coordination capacity put into place by the Logistics Sector is responsible to support Logistics and Operations managers working to implement relief programmes: to provide a venue to identify and address common problems; to ensure effective engagement with key inter-agency and/or cross-sector forums; to promote sharing of technical expertise; and to engage in advocacy to highlight operations/implementation challenges.

1.1 Relevant support is consistently available to supply and logistics personnel working to meet material demands of relief programmes:

- Mobilisation of technical expertise within humanitarian logistics community to re-evaluate the logistics situation, identify emerging issues and concerns, and support improved operations planning and implementation.

1.2 Critical constraints and logistics challenges are highlighted at a strategic level, and response managers are kept informed and briefed on implications for operations:

- Advocacy bilaterally with key stakeholders, and with ISCG to address political and administrative issues that create bottlenecks within the humanitarian supply chain.

1.3 Improvement of access within refugee settlements and makeshift sites, up to distribution points:

- Technical support and advice through the ISCG and Site Management groups concerning logistics access requirements, and potential solutions.

- Advocacy through ISCG and with Donor Governments for construction and maintenance of critical logistics support infrastructure within major refugee settlements to improve access.

1.4 Improve the resilience of logistics infrastructure and local emergency management & response capacity:

- Advocacy and technical advice to support the Government of Bangladesh to establish cyclone/flood resistant logistics facilities and infrastructure in Cox's Bazaar area.
- Knowledge transfer and training to augment logistics emergency management and response capacity of national actors.

2. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

The Information Management capacity put into place through the Logistics Sector is responsible to collect data and information in support of humanitarian logistics operations, and to ensure transparency of all Logistics Sector activities.

2.1 Humanitarian logistics personnel and operations managers can make informed decisions concerning the movement of relief materials:

- Collect, consolidate and make available (in English and Bangla) data and information on locally available goods and support services, infrastructure capacity and vulnerabilities, access limitations and ongoing rehabilitation projects, and Sector response activities and planning.

2.2 Response managers understand logistics requirements for emergency operations and prioritize resiliency of key transport infrastructure in construction and rehabilitation projects:

- Collect, consolidate and make available (in English and Bangla) data and information on usage of Sector services, pipeline of humanitarian partners, presence of humanitarian partners, lead time for aid delivery, and seasonal impacts on transport infrastructure.
- Knowledge transfer and training to augment information management and data analysis capacity of national emergency response actors.

2.3 Logistics Sector is fully accountable to all stakeholders:

- Collect, consolidate and make consistently available (in English and Bangla) records of all Sector activities, project documents, meetings and decisions taken.

3. LOGISTICS SERVICES

The services managed through the Logistics Sector are not intended to replace the logistics capacities of individual agencies or organisations, but rather to fill identified gaps in the humanitarian supply chain and supplement the response of the humanitarian community. The Logistics Sector moreover does not aim to replicate logistics services already commercially available.

3.1 Humanitarian organisations have access to temporary storage space for aid/relief material:

- WFP, as a Logistics Sector Service Provider, to establish and operate approximately 1,200 m² of covered temporary storage space in Ukhiya.
- From May 2018, storage space at Ukhiya to transition to Madhu Chara where WFP, as a Logistics Sector Service Provider, to establish and operate approximately 2,640 m² of covered temporary storage space.
- Common Storage Services at Ukhiya Logistics Hub will phase out upon completion of construction and ensuring continued and uninterrupted access to the Logistics & Engineering Hub.
- HI/Atlas, as a Logistics Sector Service Provider, to establish and operate approximately 480m² of covered temporary storage space in Teknaf.
- Secure a stock of 20' intermodal shipping containers to have available for loan to humanitarian organisations managing distribution points, to serve as contingency storage space as needed.

ANNEX I – CONOPS MAP

