

International Rescue Committee Bangladesh: Strategy Action Plan



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IRC2020 GLOBAL STRATEGY OVERVIEW

The International Rescue Committee's (IRC) mission is to help the world's most vulnerable people survive, recover, and gain control of their future. The aim of the IRC's global strategy, IRC2020 (see right), is to make measurable improvements in health, safety, education, economic wellbeing, and decision-making power. Therefore, the IRC has made investments to design more effective programs, use resources more efficiently, reach more people more quickly and better respond to beneficiaries' needs.



BANGLADESH OVERVIEW

Bangladesh has made significant progress in poverty reduction and human development over the last decade, having maintained an annual growth rate above 6% and reaching lower-middle income country status in 2014. However, development challenges and pockets of poverty and inequality do still exist. Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated countries in the world and much of the country is in low-lying areas making it highly vulnerable to natural disasters such as recurring floods, cyclones and long ranging effects of climate change. One of Bangladesh's biggest recent challenges has

been the influx of over 725,000 of Myanmar's Rohingya into Bangladesh since August 2017, following decades of state persecution in Myanmar. Joining approximately 213,000 Rohingya already in Bangladesh from previous waves of displacement, 919,000 of the total Rohingya population are now living in the Ukhaia and Teknaf Upazilas (sub-districts) in Cox's Bazar District almost entirely reliant on humanitarian assistance. Severe congestion in the camps is restricting humanitarian access and hurried and crowded construction of settlements along uneven terrain has compounded

disaster risk. The influx has created a strain on local services and livelihoods and heightened tensions within the host communities of Cox's Bazar where poverty rates, malnutrition, health status, and food insecurity were already at crisis levels. Bangladesh's open border policy has been well received, however the Rohingya do not have refugee status, freedom of movement, and access to basic public services. While there have been recently agreed on steps for Rohingya repatriation, conditions in Myanmar remain unfit for return, rendering this a protracted crisis in need of long term solutions.

IRC'S STRATEGIC PROGRAMMING

The IRC started operating in Bangladesh in October 2017 in response to the large influx of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar in August 2017. The IRC has recognized there are longer term needs both in relation to the Rohingya crisis and in the wider context of Bangladesh and as such an IRC Bangladesh country office has been established. Official government registration to operate in Bangladesh was given in March 2018 and the IRC Bangladesh has now created its first country Strategic Action Plan (SAP) for the period January 2019 to September 2020, in line with the IRC's global strategy cycle.

The IRC Bangladesh aims to reach approximately 290,000 beneficiaries in refugee camps and host communities in Cox's Bazar by September 2020, with a specific focus on women, children and youth in response to the greater needs identified for these groups. The IRC will focus on the two key upazilas - Ukhia and Teknaf - where the organization is already present and where the most critical needs exist. Within these upazilas, the IRC will aim to expand its existing work in the refugee camps and will enter three priority unions (the lowest administrative unit in Bangladesh) in the host community as a first priority. Longer term, the IRC has identified the need for further expansion within the Cox's Bazar district and into other areas of Bangladesh to respond to the needs of particular populations most affected by poverty and other vulnerabilities, including those most at risk from multiple natural disasters.

The IRC's vision in Bangladesh is *to protect and promote the rights and serve the needs of the most vulnerable populations through leadership in women and children's health and protection services, and effective response to those affected by conflict, disaster and poverty.* This will involve:

- expanding and improving the quality of health and protection services already being delivered, including extension of the IRC's existing facility based support model to include community based approaches (thus improving service supply and demand);
- entering into linked sectors to enhance the overall response including WASH, Education and Livelihoods;
- becoming a thought leader in the Protection sector with a reputation for program quality and innovation;
- increasing emergency response capacity and preparedness through mobile responses and an active role in coordination mechanisms; and
- increasing work through partnerships based on well-defined added value for refugee and host community clients.

To achieve this, the IRC will continue to build collaborative relationships with the Government of Bangladesh, international donors, and other humanitarian actors. The IRC Bangladesh will also strengthen its operational functions, and prioritize the capacity development and empowerment of national staff, creating a strong team, and building the IRC's profile as a leading actor in Bangladesh.

Figure 1: Signature Outcomes and Program Approaches

	Signature Outcomes in Bangladesh	Program Approaches
HEALTH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Women & adolescent girls are protected from and treated for complications of pregnancy and childbirth > Women & girls are protected from and treated for the consequences of gender-based violence (GBV) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Expand core programming in Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) and GBV, integrated with Protection programs > Provide more comprehensive maternal & newborn health services by introducing new BEmONC (Basic Emergency Obstetric & Newborn Care) facilities and ANC (antenatal care) > Increase community outreach to ensure the IRC is addressing both supply & demand aspects of health services
SAFETY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > People are safe in their homes and receive support when they experience harm > People are safe in their communities and receive support when they experience harm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Scale up response services -- Case Management and PSS (Psychosocial Support) -- for women, girls, and children in IRC and partner-run centers > Pilot new violence prevention approaches with adolescent girls, parents, and men & boys > Widen response by introducing protection monitoring, integrated community protection, and advocacy interventions

The IRC has also identified six core outcomes in Health (SRH, Non-communicable diseases, WASH), Education (6-14 years) and Economic Wellbeing that programs will contribute to in Bangladesh

COMMITMENTS FOR IMPACT

In order to maximize impact and achieve priority outcomes, the IRC in Bangladesh is making new investments to improve program effectiveness, use resources more efficiently, expand program coverage, react more quickly when crisis strikes, and be more responsive to beneficiaries. The IRC has made the following commitments to strengthen programming and improve the lives of the people it serves in Bangladesh with an emphasis on ensuring gender equality across all commitments.

Figure 2: Commitments to Ensure Impact

Effectiveness



- > Build evidence of IRC program quality, impact and leadership by embedding best practice design processes into new projects and generating concrete evidence of IRC contribution against own, donor and Bangladesh Joint Response Plan (JRP) indicators.
- > Invest in tools such as assessments, stakeholder and gender analysis, actor mapping, and regular context review to inform where and how the IRC should be responding, especially in relation to new areas where there is currently no programming such as the host community and other areas of Bangladesh.

Responsiveness



- > Increase the level of Client Responsiveness in programs by formalizing beneficiary feedback processes and rolling them out across all programs, as well as ensuring this data is regularly analyzed and acted upon.
- > Put in place mechanisms where clients can report or raise concerns around sexual misconduct, exploitation, and abuse by aid workers.

Scale & Reach, Speed & Timeliness



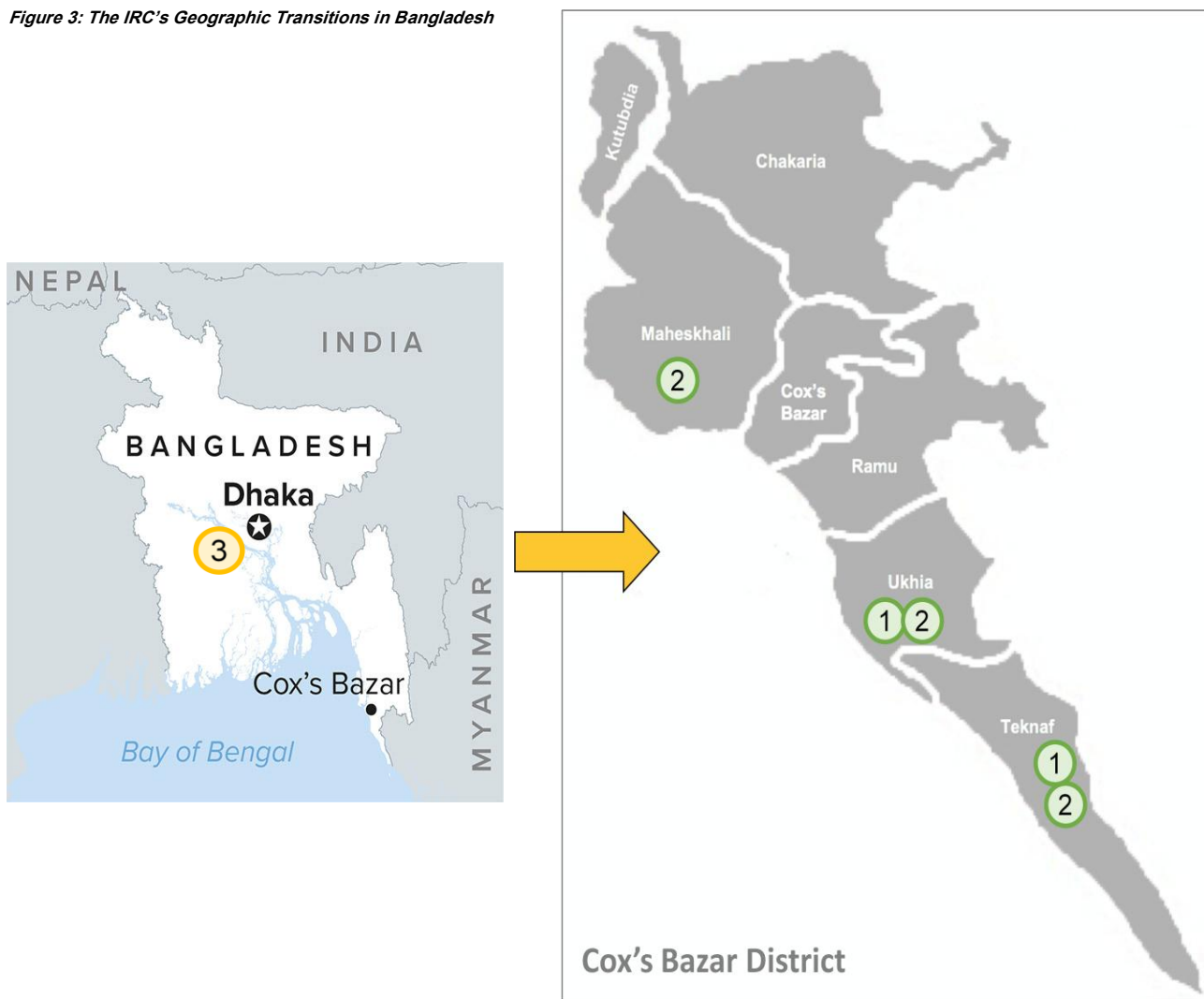
- > Enhance the IRC's Emergency Preparedness and Response capacity and capability in order to be a first responder when crisis hits, initially in Cox's Bazar but in the future within other areas of Bangladesh



IRC'S STRATEGIC PRESENCE

Through the end of 2020, based on an analysis of where the greatest need is and where the IRC can create the greatest impact, the IRC will expand its presence in Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar and enter the host community while preparing to enter other areas of Bangladesh in the future.

Figure 3: The IRC's Geographic Transitions in Bangladesh



Location	Geographic Transition
<p>1 Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar</p>	<p>Expand programming to ensure a comprehensive package of services is delivered in a consolidated number of camps while helping fill gaps in other camps by working with partners.</p>
<p>2 Host community in Cox's Bazar</p>	<p>Enter a few key host communities effectively with first priority unions being those closest to the camps where they are most affected by the Rohingya influx and a high proportion of refugee to host community members exits, as well as being in close proximity to where the IRC is already operating.</p>
<p>3 Rest of Bangladesh</p>	<p>Prepare for entry by identifying target locations highly vulnerable to multiple natural hazards and extreme poverty where the IRC (and/or partners) may be able to respond in the future. Understand the needs and gaps in the rest of Bangladesh for future potential development focused programming.</p>



The IRC in Bangladesh



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