

UNDERSTANDING THE ROHINGYA CRISIS¹ : MAY 2019

SUMMARY SHEET



This Summary Sheet² is produced by TorqAid – www.torqaid.com for people wanting to better understand the Rohingya crisis, as this affects the Rohingya in Myanmar and Bangladesh, and host communities in the latter country. It is regularly updated and can be accessed from the TorqAid website on <http://www.torqaid.com/understanding-rohingya-crisis>.

Target Audience

The intended audience of this Summary Sheet on ‘Understanding the Rohingya Crisis’ includes Global Development or Humanitarian Practitioners; tertiary and secondary students; and volunteers or individuals wanting to raise a combination of awareness and funds relating to the Rohingya crisis.

Overall Humanitarian Situation for Rohingya in Bangladesh

Background Information to Rohingya Crisis

Since August 2017, a total of over 745, 000 Rohingya refugees³, or what the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) call ‘Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals’, have fled from mainly northern Rakhine State in Myanmar, into Cox’s Bazar (CXB) District in Bangladesh. Together with earlier Rohingya arrivals, this means there are now around 910,000 Rohingya in this geographical area, this including around 7,000 living in Bangladeshi host communities. The largest concentration of refugees (see map at Appendix A) is at the Kutupalong Balukhali Expansion Site, which is home to around 628,000 people.

The GoB and Government of Myanmar (GoM) signed a repatriation agreement in November 2017, on the voluntary, safe, and dignified return of displaced persons back into North Rakhine State. This was complemented by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the 6th June 2018 between the GoM and the United Nations (specifically UNHCR and UNDP) on assistance to facilitate this process. The GoB and UNHCR are currently carrying out a Joint Verification Exercise, registering Rohingya refugees, and providing individual documentation for them⁴.

The reasons behind the forced displacement of Rohingya from their homes in mainly north Rakhine State are complex. The 2017 Final Report of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State, chaired by former UN Secretary General Kofi Anan, entitled ‘Towards a Peaceful, Fair & Prosperous Future for the People of Rakhine’⁵, gives a good overview of this. In September 2018 the UN Human Rights Council publicised its report on the independent fact-finding mission to Myanmar, this covering the situations in Kachin, Rakhine and Shan states since 2011. In September 2018 also, Ware and

¹ A link to this can also be found at <http://www.torqaid.com/understanding-rohingya-crisis>

² See <http://www.torqaid.com/bangla-boat> for an explanation of this Bangladeshi fishing boat

³ These figures being reported in the 2019 Joint Response Plan (JRP) and Snapshot (see page 3 for this reference); as well as in the ISCG March 2019 Situation Report

⁴ By the end of Feb 2019, over 90,000 individuals had been through this process – see Jan 2019 ISCG Situation Report (see page 3 for this reference)

⁵ Note this reference at the end of this Summary Sheet

Laoutides also released their publication entitled 'Myanmar's Rohingya' Conflict, which in turn presents a detailed, clear and nuanced analysis of this complex scenario.

Humanitarian Operations in Bangladesh

The United Nations (UN) released in February 2019, a Joint Response Plan (JRP) for the Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis covering the period January-December 2019. This replaces the 2018 JRP which covered the period March-December 2018. The 2019 JRP focuses on providing humanitarian assistance for 1,245,000 people in need, these including 910,000 Rohingya refugees, and the rest, Bangladesh host communities. There are three overarching Strategic Objectives for JRP 2019:

- SO 1: Collectively deliver protection to refugee women, men, girls & boys
- SO 2: Provide life-giving assistance to affected populations
- SO 3: Foster Social Cohesion.

The JRP 2018 budget of USD 951 million was funded to the tune of 69%. The current 2019 JRP has a budget of USD 920.50 million, with 16% funding pledged by the 7th April 2019. To implement this overall large-scale humanitarian program, the international community, led by the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG), is working in close cooperation with key Government of Bangladesh (GoB) stakeholders. These include the Cox's Bazar District level Deputy Commissioner (DC); the Refugee, Relief and Repatriation Commission (RRRC); relevant national line ministries and departments, and the Bangladesh military.

The Humanitarian Response in Bangladesh, together with the ReliefWeb Response in Bangladesh, websites⁶, provide a detailed picture of the humanitarian operations being carried out in Cox's Bazar District. ACAPS also produces regular, high quality, research material on the Rohingya response. The latest monthly ISCG Situation Report⁷ provides an overview of the humanitarian situation in the Rohingya communities, outlining both highlights as well as gaps and constraints. It covers progress made by each of the main sectors and Working Groups (WGs)⁸, these including Inter-Sector Coordination; Emergency Preparedness & Response Task Force (EMPRTF): Protection; Shelter; Site Management; Water, Sanitation & Hygiene; Health; Food Security; Nutrition; Education; Logistics; Emergency Telecommunications; Child Protection; Gender Based Violence; Protection from Sexual Exploitation & Abuse (PSEA); Host Communities; Communications with Communities Working Group (CWC WG); Cash & Markets Working Group (CMWG), and Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group (GIHA WG). The CwC WG produces, on the Shongjog website, a regular humanitarian feedback bulletin entitled 'What Matters?', which records the results of qualitative surveys with both Rohingya refugee and Bangladeshi host communities⁹. TorqAid (author Piper) produces an overview of the 'What Matters ?' reports.

⁶ The details of both of these are provided at the end of this Summary Sheet

⁷ See the March 2019 Situation Report

⁸ For a full list of these Sectors and Working Groups see also

www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/bangladesh

⁹ See Shongjog and Piper links on page 3

Humanitarian Operations in Myanmar

Included at the end of this Summary Sheet are some key references relating to the humanitarian situation in Myanmar. These include ongoing operations by the Government of Myanmar (GoM), supported by the international community, in preparing for and responding to natural disasters, as well as material on the complex humanitarian emergency situations developing in some of the border areas. Within Australia, the Australian Myanmar Institute (AMI) – <http://aummi.edu.au> meets monthly in Melbourne to discuss a wide range of Myanmar-related issues and developments.

References

Background Information to Rohingya Crisis

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- ACAPS & others. (2018). *Briefing Notes and Thematic Reports relating to the Rohingya population in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh*. Retrieved from <http://acaps.org/country/bangladesh/special-reports#container-1123>. This includes:
 - *Rohingya Influx Overview: Pre-Cyclone & Monsoon Season Analysis (Apr 2019)*
 - *Lessons Learned: Needs Assessments in Cox's Bazar (Apr 2019)*
 - *Key Issues & Needs of the Rohingya population in Cox's Bazar (Nov 2018)*
 - *Rohingya Crisis. Governance & Community Participation (June 2018)*
 - *Rohingya Crisis: Host Communities Review (Jan 2018)*

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Further Information/Training

This 'Understanding the Rohingya Crisis' Summary Sheet¹⁰ is produced by TorqAid¹¹. The TorqAid Director has a long history of working in Bangladesh; speaks some Bengali; and worked with the UN in Cox's Bazar for three months in mid 2018. He currently also acts as Global Humanitarian Adviser (GHA) for three agencies either involved or interested in supporting humanitarian work across Bangladesh. The Rohingya situation is covered as a case study in the TorqAid accredited Disaster Risk Management (DRM) workshop¹², as well as in the online accredited DRM program¹³.

Chris Piper, TorqAid Director
pipercm@iprimus.com.au
www.torqaid.com, May 2019



¹⁰ A link to this can also be found at <http://www.torqaid.com/understanding-rohingya-crisis>.

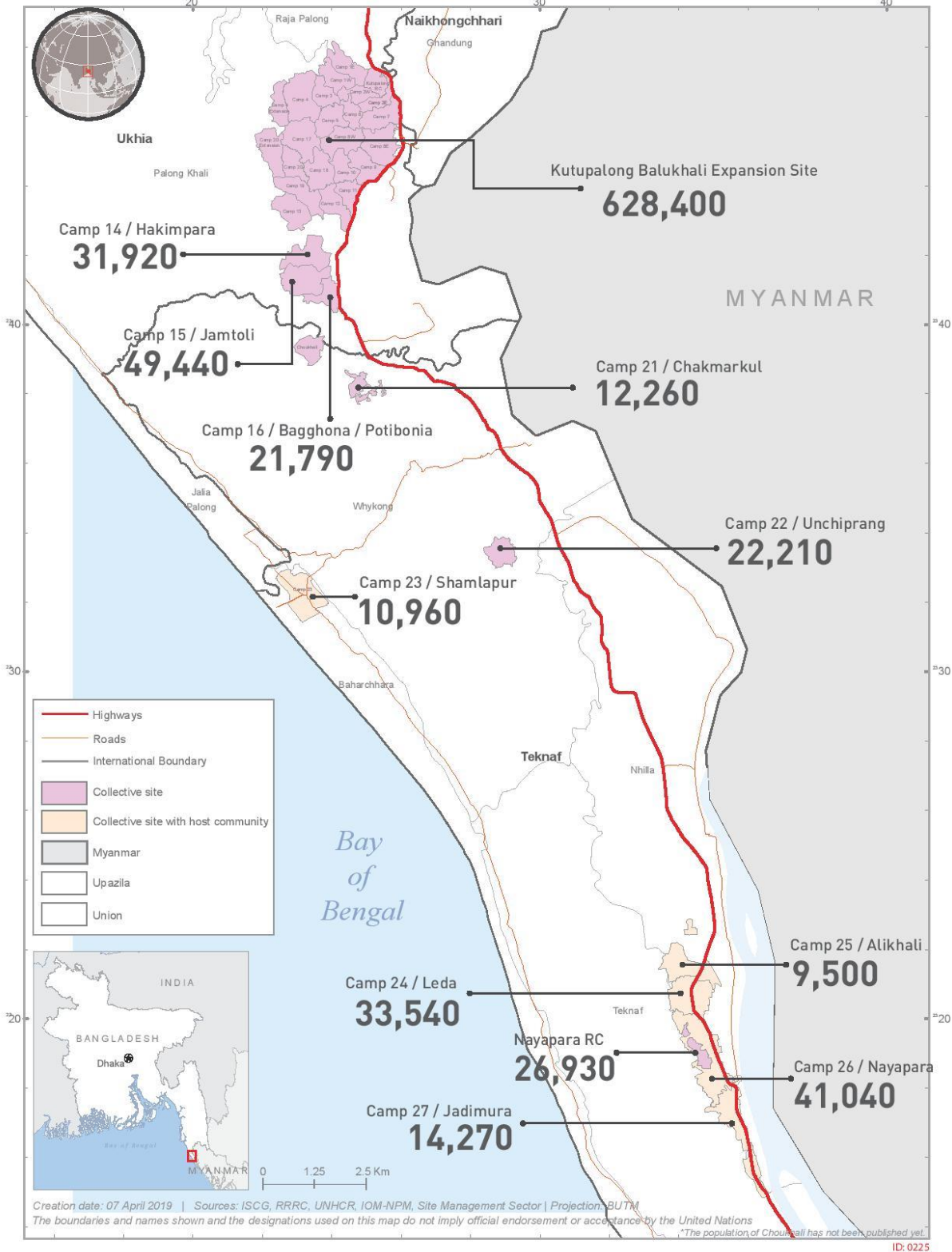
¹¹ An Australian based global humanitarian consultancy.

¹² See <http://www.torqaid.com/drm-generic>

¹³ See www.torqaid.com/online-drm-program. This is currently being reviewed, with a renewed program possibly re-introduced in September 2019

APPENDIX A: COX'S BAZAR ROHINGYA SETTLEMENTS, MARCH 2019

BANGLADESH: Cox's Bazar Refugee Population as of 31 March 2019 **ISCG** | INTER SECTOR COORDINATION GROUP



APPENDIX B: MYANMAR, RAKHINE STATE, DISTRICT MAP

