



POST-PROGRAM REPORT

#M88HELPSROHINGYAS:

Fundraising & Delivery of Aid to Rohingya Refugees in Teknaf, Bangladesh

1. INTRODUCTION

The Rohingyas are an ethnic group which originally resides in Rakhine, Myanmar. However, due to a recent ethnic cleansing campaign which was carried out by the Burmese Army drove more than 600,000 Rohingyas from their homes since July 2017. 50% of their villages were burnt to the ground and many innocent civilians were raped and killed in one of the worst humanitarian crisis in decades. The survivors then made their journey across the borders into Bangladesh, where they were relocated by the government to small camps spread over the border.

In light of this issue, Migrant88 organized a humanitarian aid relief project targeted towards helping the Rohingyas overcome major obstacles in obtaining basic necessities in their new homes.

2. PRELIMINARY OBSERVATION

There are plenty of camps alongside the main road from Cox's Bazaar to Teknaf. With each camp consisting of 15,000 to 75,000 people per camps; the aid distribution is scattered and irregular due to the high number of refugees to distribute the aid to.

The camp that we went to is Nayapara Camp, where the site consists of refugees that have arrived in the last 45 days to 3 months. These people have bare necessities in their camps – with one toilet per block (what they would term as sections in the camp) and no shower place for the women.

The condition of the camp is unsanitary as we observed that there are no proper systems in place for human excretion to be channeled to; and they end up in the same source of water that they use for consumption. Combined with a high-density population – an average of 8 children per Rohingya family, and no proper facilities for vaccination or healthcare, deadly but easily preventable diseases might break out in the Rohingya community. One particular example is Diphtheria, a highly contagious bacterial infection of the nose and throat, causing serious complication such as nerve problems, heart failure, and even death.

Water tanks are also extremely limited; with only 6 hours in a day where access is given to the refugees to get their supplies of water daily.



The access to the camps is also restricted, with each camp monitored by army officers and checkpoints along the road to the camps. The restrictions have been in place in the recent months due to the news that there are terrorist organizations masking themselves as NGOs to recruit refugees.

3. FUNDRAISING REPORT

The fundraising for this project begins in the middle of September up to the end of December. As projected in the proposal, we were tentatively supposed to deliver the aid at the end of November, but the project was delayed till end of December to allow for more time for fundraising – as well as obtaining approval from the relevant authorities to access the camp.

We first organized a charity drive to raise funds for our project. With the partnership of Azadi Association, the fund was then channeled towards obtaining basic necessities for the Rohingyas.

4. DELIVERY OF AID TO TEKNAF, BANGLADESH

Our Country Director, Khadijah Shamsul arrived in Bangladesh on 31st December 2017 together with the money gained from the fundraising. The subsequent two days were spent in Dhaka; finalizing the items to buy as well as confirming all the arrangements for Teknaf Bangladesh.

On the 3rd of January 2018, we began our journey by car to Cox Bazaar. We departed at 5.30am and reached our destination at around 8pm the same day.

The next morning, we departed early after breakfast to the military camp in order to confirm approval to enter the campsite to deliver the aid. After obtaining the necessary clearance and approval, we proceeded to the camp site to oversee the project.

Upon reaching the site, the water tanks that we ordered had already arrived. Clean water is vital in preventing deadly epidemics such as cholera and typhoid. Migrant88 recognized this issue and provided them with 2 water tanks of 5,000 litres each. The local men then unloaded the tanks, and carried them to the designated spots to be installed.

Work to install the toilets also started, where the locals dug the trenches where the septic tanks would be installed. Our programme director from Malaysia also handed out cookies and biscuits to the local children there.



The following day, the team departed to the Aid Distribution Centre, where the government carries out the distribution of aid to the immigrants, which were subsequently provided by NGOs. The center was distributing blankets and clothing as it was winter time, and the temperature would drop really low at night. We donated 300 bags of charcoal, each weighing 20kg. The idea is so that the refugees will be able to cook their own food in their own camp.



In the afternoon, we went back to the camp site to oversee the installation of the toilets. The original plan was just to build 8 toilets in total – that would last them for a year, or until the septic tank is full. And even when the septic tank is full, the toilet is designed in a way that you do not need to build new toilet, but just build another septic tank and redirect the piping to the new septic tank.

We successfully installed 2 toilets each at 3 different sites, along with 2 private shower rooms. The plan was altered due to requests from the refugee community for private showering areas for women as they do not have a private area to shower since they crossed the border to the camp.

The problem highlighted by the women living at these camps is that there is no toilet nearby. They are forced to walk a great distance to the nearest toilet, which are often at other camp areas which are foreign to them. Some of these women have been raped while they were travelling to the toilets at night. Having these toilets in strategic places nearby their living quarters, ensures not only easy access to sanitation, but also gives them a better sense of privacy and security. The toilets were built for long term sustainability with a minimum life span of one year. By installing septic tanks, new toilets do not need to be built when they are full. A new septic tank can be installed and have the toilet pipes redirected to them.

One problem we encountered during the building of the toilets is that the ground was found to contain rocks which made the job of digging the trenches much harder than anticipated. In spite of that, our contractors were able to finish the installation of the toilets, even though we ended behind schedule



To shed some light on the crisis, we managed to speak to the refugees in the camp. But one story struck the most than others.

Nurbahani (pictured on the right) escaped to this camp - along with her 4 children - after her husband was murdered by the Burmese Army. Story of trauma, having to fend herself and providing for her 4 young children have got her to lost her mind. Her ability to carry out her usual role as a mother and caretaker has been non-existent since her arrival to the camp, leaving her kids to fend for themselves. This story was told to us by a fellow refugee as she has been unable to speak or function normally ever since that horrific tragedy. These are the people that Migrant88 strives to protect.





5. CONCLUSION

The entire project took us about 1 month – inclusive of planning and execution on the ground. This includes building local network to assist with communication with businesses on the ground as well as assisting us in getting the necessary approval.

Our team from Bangladesh will be visiting the camp in one month from the date of building of the facilities; in order to check on the functionality of the facilities and if there is any other assistance we can provide. We will provide a follow-up report once we receive update from our team in Bangladesh.