

ICCG - ISCG DIALOGUE

Knowledge Sharing, Lessons Learned and Best Practices
for Emergency Preparedness and Response



Date: 29-30 April 2024

Jointly Organized By:
Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG)
Inter-Cluster coordination Group (ICCG/HCTT)
Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)



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Acronyms

5W	Who, What, When, Where, and Why	IMAWG	Information Management Analysis Working Group
AOR	Area of Responsibility	IMWG	Information Management Working Group
AA	Anticipatory Action	INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
AAP	Accountability to Affected Populations	IOM	International Organization for Migration
APBn	Armed Police Battalion	ICCG	Inter Cluster Coordination Group
BDRCS	Bangladesh Red Crescent Society	ISCG	Inter Sector Coordination Group
BMD	Bangladesh Meteorological Department	J-MSNA	Joint Multi Sector Needs Assessment
CAIPP	Centralized Automated Information Processing Platform	JNA	Joint Needs Assessment
CFM	Complaints and Feedback Mechanism	JRP	Joint Response Plan
CHT	Chittagong Hill Tracts	MHPSS	Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support
CiC	Camp-In-Charge	MoDMR	Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief
CPP	Cyclone Preparedness Programme	MHRP	Multi-Hazard Response Plan
CSO	Civil Society Organization	NAWG	Needs Assessment Working Group
DC	Deputy Commissioner	NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
DDM	Department of Disaster Management	NPM	Needs and Population Monitoring
DDMC	District Disaster Management Committee	OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
DMC	Disaster Management Committee	PIO	Project Implementation Officer
DMU	Disaster Management Unit	PSEA	Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
DRM	Disaster Risk Management	RC	Resident Coordinator
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction	RCRC	Red Cross and Red Crescent
DRRO	District Relief and Rehabilitation Officer	RRRC	Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner
EAP	Early Action Protocol	SCCM	Shelter & Camp Coordination and Camp Management
EOC	Emergency Operation Centre/Emergency Control Room	SEG	Strategic Executive Group
EPR	Emergency Preparedness and Response	SIMEX	Simulation Exercise
EPRWG	Emergency Preparedness and Response Working Group	SOD	Standing Orders on Disaster
EWS	Early Warning System	SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
FSCD	Fire Service and Civil Defence	SUV	Safety Unit Volunteers
FOST	First On-Site Teams	UN	United Nations
GBV	Gender-Based Violence	UNCT	United Nations Country Team
GoB	Government of Bangladesh	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
HAG	Humanitarian Advisory Group	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
HCC	Humanitarian Coordination Cell	UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
HCTT	Humanitarian Coordination Task Team	UNRCO	United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office
HDP	Humanitarian Development Peace	UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan	UP	Union Parishad
ICCG	Inter-Cluster Coordination Group	VMT	Volunteer Management Tool
IEC	Information, Education and Communication	WFP	World Food Programme
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent	WG	Working Group

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) - Inter Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) Dialogue was convened over two days on 29-30 April 2024, featuring a comprehensive workshop at Sayeman Beach Resort in Cox's Bazar, followed by a field visit to the Rohingya camps and host communities. The primary objectives of the dialogue were to facilitate mutual understanding of humanitarian coordination structures, exchange experiences and best practices between Cox's Bazar and Dhaka and enhance coordination across humanitarian efforts.

The workshop, jointly organized by ISCG, the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRCO), and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and involved the participation of 59 representatives from the Humanitarian Coordination Task Team (HCTT), ISCG, and OCHA. The event was inaugurated by ISCG Principal Coordinator, Mr. David Bugden, and the UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Gwyn Lewis (online).

Designed to be interactive, the dialogue fostered open discussion and exchange of ideas among ISCG and ICCG participants. Key sessions included presentations on national and Cox's Bazar humanitarian coordination systems, lessons from Cyclone Mocha on preparedness and response, proposed roles for future preparedness, and identifying next steps for collaboration. During these sessions, participants pinpointed several action areas for improved collaboration.

The field visit on 30 April enabled participants to observe best practices and identify cross-learning opportunities within the Rohingya camps and host communities in Ukhiya. Eight projects focusing on emergency preparedness and response were showcased. The visit concluded with a debriefing session at the ISCG compound, utilizing mentimeter.com for participant feedback.

ICCG and ISCG agreed on the following priority actions for the next six months, and beyond, to ensure enhanced coordination for emergency preparedness and response.

Priority Actions for the Next Six Months and Beyond

- **May:** Present the dialogue outcomes to the UNCT/SEG/HAG and ensure consensus for the proposed actions to commence implementation.
- **May:** Share the map of ISCG and ICCG's geographical areas of responsibility (AoR) for a decision by senior management on who coordinates what in Cox's Bazar/Chattogram given respective capacities, presence, etc.
- **May:** Start working on harmonized tools/templates for needs assessments, flash updates, situation reports, planning and response monitoring and reporting for natural hazards and extreme weather events.
- **May/June:** Establish evacuation plans and shelter management for Rohingya and host communities.
- **June:** Develop and agree on Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for seamless coordination on emergency preparedness and response (EPR) between ICCG and ISCG.
- **June:** Hold a coordination briefing on humanitarian architecture between Government counterparts and ISCG/ICCG.
- **As required:** Meetings between the Clusters, Working Groups and Sectors.
- **As required:** Mutual invitations and participation in ISCG and ICCG events.
- **Every six to twelve months:** Convene an ICCG-ISCG dialogue, at least once a year, to strengthen national and sub national collaboration.

[Attached Summary Note of the Dialogue](#)

2. THE ICCG-ISCG DIALOGUE

In 2022, as the humanitarian structure marked its tenth year, a series of consultations were held to understand the perception and evolution of the Cluster system in Bangladesh and to analyze potential adjustments in line with the changing context. This process, initiated by the UN Resident Coordinator (UN RC) in Bangladesh, coincided with a stated intention to strengthen the humanitarian capacities of the UNRCO and to ensure the process in Bangladesh aligns with the annual cluster review. This review requires Resident Coordinators to assess whether the clusters are “fit for purpose”, whether they should be left unchanged, expanded, streamlined, merged or deactivated.

The review included recommendations for changes to the existing structure, which was implemented in 2023. The cluster system now integrates a Humanitarian Advisory Group (HAG), clusters have been streamlined and there are currently ten clusters and six working groups (WG). Each of them has Terms of Reference which have been recently revised.

One of the recommendations from the 2022 consultation that was to be addressed was improving and strengthening knowledge sharing between the ISCG in Cox’s Bazar and the ICCG in Dhaka, particularly regarding operational planning during disasters. It was also recommended to share lessons learned and good practices between the ISCG and HCTT, to enhance their operations. As an example, in the ISCG humanitarian organizations have progressed on discussions of Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP), Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and trainings. On the other hand, HCTT have led on Anticipatory Action (AA) work.

Additionally, it was suggested that clusters from the HCTT and sectors in Cox’s Bazar should meet at least once a year to share best practices for better responses. This is also part of the roadmap set by the HAG in 2023. Consequently, a dialogue was proposed to bring together clusters in Dhaka and sectors in Cox’s Bazar.

After a series of discussions, the ICCG-ISCG Dialogue was held on 29-30 April 2024. The event featured a day-long workshop on 29 April 2024, at Sayeman Beach Resort in Cox’s Bazar, followed by a field visit to Rohingya camps and host communities on 30 April 2024.

Goal

The goal of this dialogue is to ensure a better understanding and information sharing between the humanitarian cluster system based in Dhaka, working at a national level, and the coordination system based in Cox’s Bazar for the Rohingya response in emergency and disaster preparedness and response. The aim is to improve coordination, including preparedness and response in disaster management (cyclones, landslides, floods, etc.), by considering best practices, identifying gaps, and attempting to address them.

Specific objectives

1. Ensure that all clusters, sectors, and cross-cutting issue leads have a comprehensive understanding of the different coordination structures.
2. Share lessons and best practices from ISCG and from ICCG, in order to learn from each other, enrich operations and improve interventions.
3. Ensure that all clusters, sectors and cross-cutting issue leads understand the roles of each structure and how they operate in emergency and disasters preparedness and response and explore opportunities for collaboration.

A total of 59 representatives from ICCG, ISCG, and OCHA participated in the dialogue, including representatives from UN agencies, and international and national organizations.

2.1. Opening and Introduction

Mr. David Bugden, Principal Coordinator, ISCG

Mr. David Bugden, Principal Coordinator of ISCG, welcomed colleagues from the OCHA Regional Bureau, the humanitarian cluster system in Dhaka, and the coordination system for the Rohingya response in Cox's Bazar. He acknowledged the long-term involvement of many participants in the Rohingya response and expressed hope that this dialogue would be the first of many opportunities to share learnings and connect with affected communities.

Mr. Bugden highlighted that Cox's Bazar is one of the most disaster-prone districts in Bangladesh, frequently impacted by natural hazards and extreme weather events such as cyclones, flash floods, landslides, fires, windstorms, and heavy rainfall. These events severely affect both the Rohingya camps and the host communities. He noted that recent cyclones, including Mocha, Hamoon, and Midhili, have increased safety and security concerns for the Rohingya refugees, emphasizing the need for collaboration and collective efforts to address natural hazards and extreme weather events. He also emphasized the importance of effective coordination between Dhaka and Cox's Bazar, as funding for the Rohingya response has been shrinking significantly in recent years.

He emphasized that the dialogue offers a valuable opportunity for participants to understand the two coordination structures, exchange experiences, lessons, and best practices, and improve coordination. This improved coordination is crucial for better supporting the government in preparing for and responding to natural hazards and extreme weather events.

Mr. Bugden also noted the significant role of OCHA in leading emergency responses globally and appreciated their participation as facilitators in the dialogue. He concluded by thanking the organizers and wishing everyone a successful event.



Ms. Gwyn Lews, UN Resident Coordinator, Bangladesh

Ms. Gwyn Lewis, UN Resident Coordinator, participated online and welcomed all participants from Dhaka and Cox's Bazar to the ICCG-ISCG Dialogue, marking the first face-to-face meeting between the humanitarian cluster system in Dhaka and the coordination system for the Rohingya response in Cox's Bazar. She emphasized the significance of this event, particularly noting severe weather events like

Cyclone Mocha in May 2023, which affected 965,461 people, including 429,337 Bangladeshi and 536,124 Rohingya refugees. Ms. Lewis also mentioned other significant extreme weather events in 2023, such as Cyclone Hamoon, Cyclone Midhili, and flash floods in the Chattogram Division.

She stressed that while the damage from Cyclone Mocha was relatively limited, there is a need for better preparedness for more severe disasters in the future. It is crucial for all clusters, sectors, and working groups to understand each other's roles and collaborate effectively in emergency and disaster preparedness and response, benefiting vulnerable populations regardless of their status as refugees or citizens. Ms. Lewis outlined the primary goals of the ICCG-ISCG dialogue: to provide a unique opportunity for participants to meet and understand each other's coordination structures, to exchange experiences, lessons, and best practices between Cox's Bazar and Dhaka, and to improve coordination between the two systems.

Ms. Lewis emphasized the importance of this dialogue for fostering closer collaboration, especially in emergency preparedness and response, to better support the government in meeting the needs of the people during emergencies. She also highlighted the need to explore opportunities for collaboration and strengthen operational planning during disasters to use resources more efficiently. Ms. Lewis encouraged open dialogue, knowledge sharing, and active participation to achieve the dialogue's objectives. She expressed gratitude to the clusters, sectors, and working groups for their participation and contributions, thanked ISCG for the joint organization with UNRCO, and acknowledged OCHA's significant involvement and contributions. She concluded by wishing everyone constructive discussions, useful exchanges, and an instructive field visit over the next two days.



3. REFLECTION OF SESSIONS

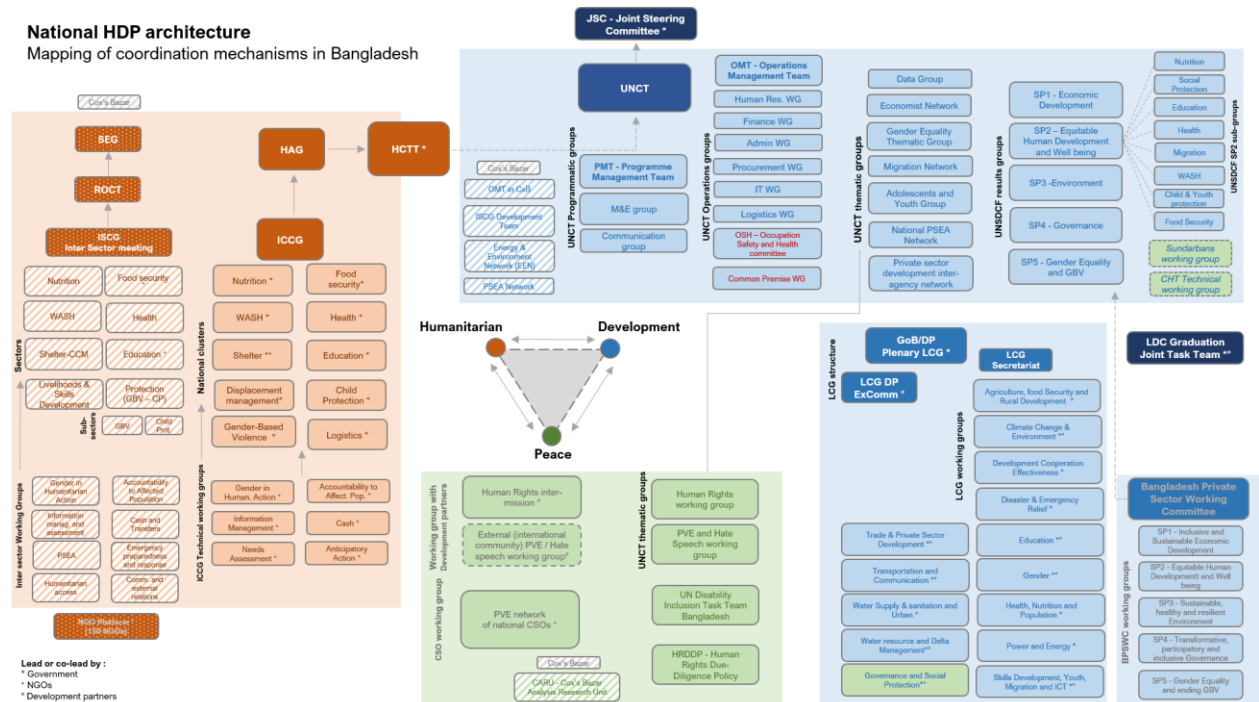
The dialogue employed interactive and participatory approaches and methodologies, providing opportunities for open discussion and the exchange of ideas, feedback, and suggestions from the ISCG and ICCG. The dialogue comprised four participatory sessions, which included:

1. Presentation of national and Cox's Bazar humanitarian coordination systems
2. Lessons learned from Cyclone Mocha on preparedness and response
3. Roles and responsibilities during emergency preparedness and disaster response
4. Next steps for future collaboration

3.1. Session 01: Presentation on the coordination structures (HCTT-ISCRG)

1. Presentation on National HDP Architecture:

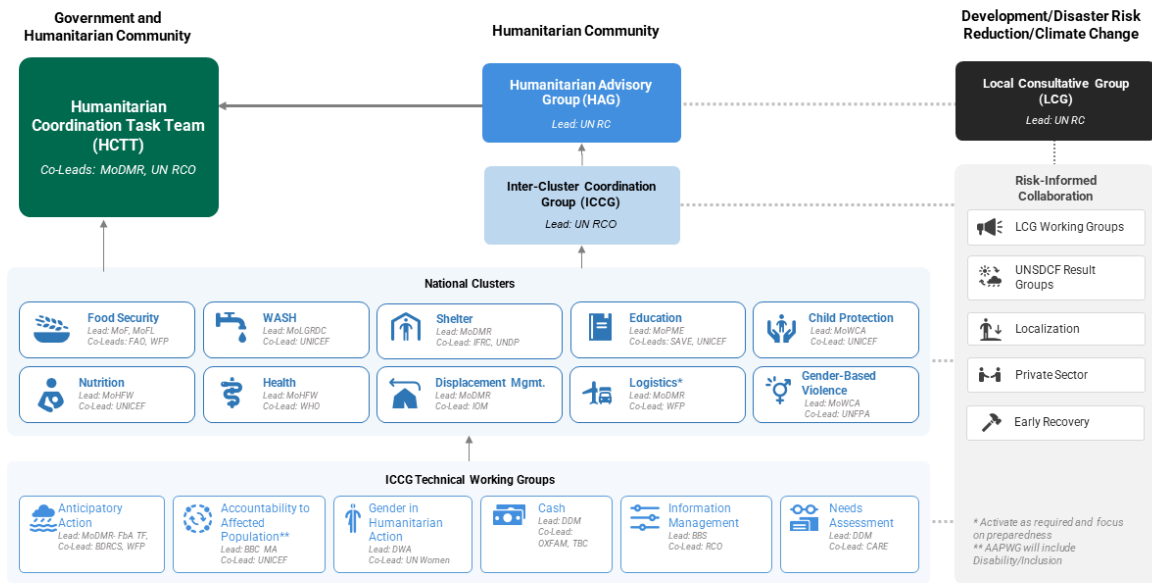
Mr. Olivier Dumont, the Humanitarian Officer (Nexus and Refugee response), provided a [brief presentation](#) on all the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) architectures in Bangladesh, including the government's development working groups, the Local Consultative Group (LCG), and the humanitarian architectures at both the national and Cox's Bazar levels. The mapping of coordination mechanisms in Bangladesh demonstrated that more than 100 clusters, sectors, and working groups are functioning to facilitate collective efforts for humanitarian, development, and peace initiatives. He highlighted one thematic area, namely Nutrition, which has 11 coordination bodies across the country. Similar coordination bodies exist for other thematic areas as well. He also pointed out that the same agencies often represent different coordination groups and bodies.



2. Presentation on the Humanitarian Coordination Task Team (HCTT):

Ms. Aleyda Valdes, the Humanitarian Affairs Adviser at the UNRCO, briefly presented the [national humanitarian coordination architecture](#) known as the HCTT. Bangladesh adopted the humanitarian cluster system, referred to as the HCTT, in 2012 following a consultation process between the humanitarian community and the government. Through this cluster approach, the international community coordinates emergency preparedness and responses with the government in an agreed manner, complementing the government's emergency and disaster efforts. The HCTT is co-chaired by the Secretary of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR) and the UN Resident Coordinator. In 2019, the government formalized this cluster system in its Standing Orders on Disaster (SOD). As of September 2023, the HCTT comprises ten national clusters and six working groups. The UN Resident Coordinator also leads the HAG, a network of humanitarian organizations that supports and advises the HCTT. The Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) – composed of cluster and working group coordinators and led by the UNRCO – develops and implements the HCTT's work plans. The national clusters and working groups are co-led by representatives from seven ministries and their related departments, eight UN agencies, and six national and international organizations. Besides its co-chairs, the HCTT includes cluster and working group leads/co-leads, three INGO representatives, one local NGO representative, and two donor representatives. Overall, the humanitarian coordination system comprises over 50 organizations working in the humanitarian and disaster risk reduction (DRR) sectors.

Humanitarian Coordination Architecture (As of September 2023)



3. Presentation on the Coordination Mechanism for the Rohingya Humanitarian Response:

Mr. David Bugden, Principal Coordinator of the ISCG, provided a brief [presentation on the coordination mechanism for the Rohingya humanitarian response](#) in Bangladesh. He highlighted that around one million Rohingya refugees are residing in 33 camps in Ukhiya and Teknaf Upazilas of Cox’s Bazar District, as well as on the island of Bhasan Char. The international community has been supporting the Government of Bangladesh (GoB), with the Office of the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC) as the leading government agency, in managing the Rohingya humanitarian response.

In Dhaka, the Rohingya refugee response is led by the Strategic Executive Group (SEG) Co-Chairs, comprising the UNHCR Representative, the UN Resident Coordinator, and the IOM Chief of Mission. The SEG Co-Chairs convene the SEG in Dhaka, which provides strategic direction and oversight of the refugee operation and ensures a principled, timely, and effective response. The SEG comprises members from the UN, international and Bangladeshi NGOs.

In Cox’s Bazar, the ISCG Secretariat, headed by the Principal Coordinator who reports to the SEG Co-Chairs, ensures the overall coordination of the response at the Cox’s Bazar level. This includes liaising with the RRRC, the Deputy Commissioner (DC), and government authorities, along with all humanitarian partners in Cox’s Bazar.

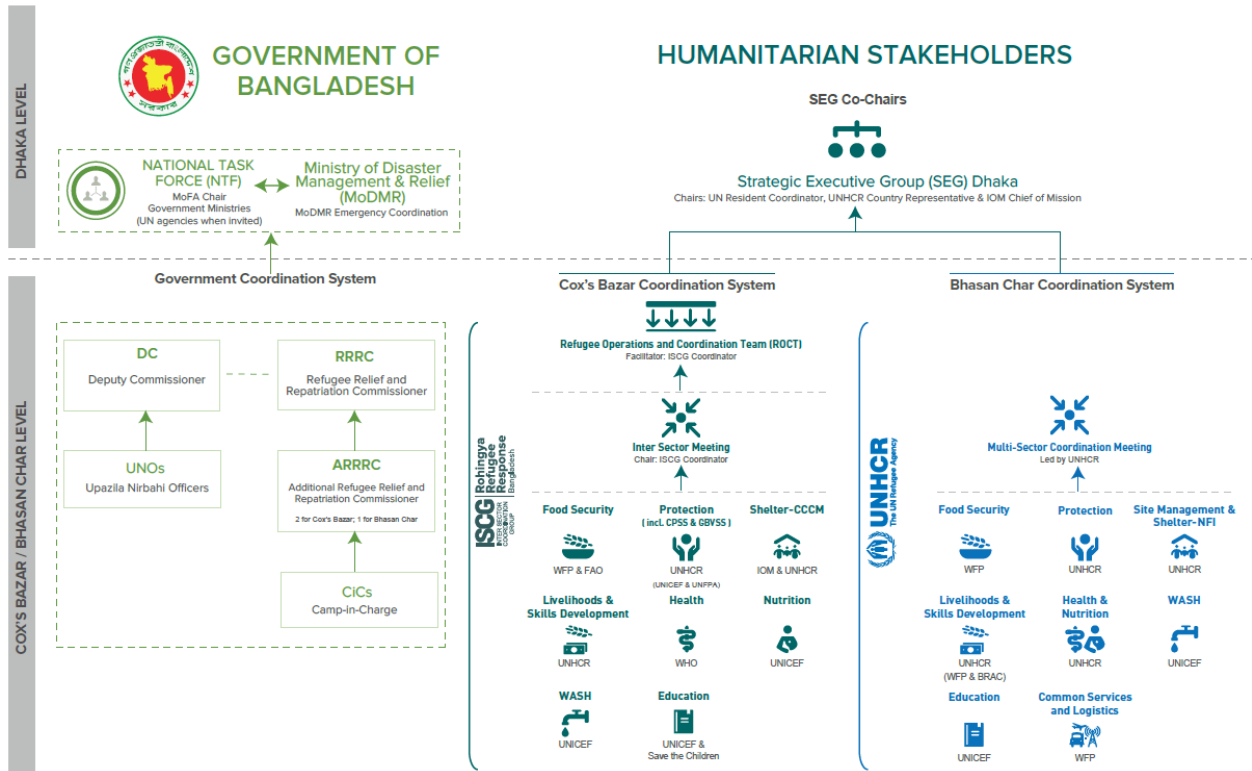
The ISCG convenes the Refugee Operations and Coordination Team (ROCT) Meeting, which is responsible for ensuring a timely, principled, and coordinated response and overseeing the refugee operation in Cox’s Bazar. It comprises the Heads of UN Agencies responsible for various sectors, members of international and Bangladeshi NGOs active in the response, and donor community representatives based in Cox’s Bazar.

The ISCG also coordinates inter-sectoral coordination and cross-cutting issues. The sectors involved in the Rohingya humanitarian response include Education, Emergency Telecommunications (ETS) (up until 2023), Food Security, Health, Livelihoods and Skills Development, Nutrition, Protection/Child Protection (CP)/Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Shelter-Camp Coordination and Camp Management (SCCCM), and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH). These sectors work together to ensure that all Rohingya refugees and the affected host communities have access to basic services in a predictable, efficient, and timely manner.

The coordination system ensures that cross-cutting issues such as the Centrality of Protection, Age,

Gender, and Diversity (AGD), AAP, and PSEA are mainstreamed across the work of all sectors and humanitarian partners. The ISCG convenes the Inter-Sector Meeting in Cox’s Bazar to ensure a coherent, efficient, and timely inter-sectoral response in support of operations in the camps and host communities. The collective needs of the Rohingya refugee response for the UN and I/NGOs is outlined in the Joint Response Plan (JRP), which is issued annually with the support of the Government.

The inter-agency coordination structure in Bhasan Char is led by UNHCR. A lighter and more agile coordination system in Bhasan Char ensures greater efficiency. A sectoral system is also in place in Bhasan Char.



Discussion

- Mr. Saikat Biswas, the Humanitarian Access Coordinator for ISCG, highlighted that ISCG was established before the 2017 influx, providing a historical overview of the coordination structure and the evolution of the Rohingya crisis.
- In 2017, OCHA led the Rohingya response initially. An agreement was made with the GoB to follow this hybrid mode (ISCG). The coordination structure is endorsed annually.
- Since the government classifies the Rohingya as Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals (FDMNs) rather than refugees, the standard Refugee Coordination Model could not be applied.
- The coordination system should be a living organism or mechanism; it should continuously improve and evolve. This dialogue will also contribute to shaping humanitarian structures at both the national and Cox’s Bazar levels by learning from each other’s experiences.
- The Coordinator of the Needs Assessment Working Group shared insights from the HCTT’s experience with cyclone and monsoon preparedness and response in Cox’s Bazar. While Health Cluster Coordinator discussed the health-related response in Cox’s Bazar, emphasizing the importance of complimenting government efforts to improve capacity.
- Mr. Kalam Hossain from UNDP and the Shelter Cluster highlighted the impact of multiple cyclones and floods occurring in the same years, underscoring the need to enhance recovery efforts beyond immediate humanitarian action.

3.2. Session 02: Case study - Cyclone Mocha Emergency Preparedness and Response

3.2.1. Presentation on the Key Learning from Multi-Hazard Emergency Preparedness and Response Mechanisms in the Rohingya and host communities:

Ms. Marrie-Ann Merza, Emergency Preparedness and Response Officer at ISCG, presented the [key learning from multi-hazard emergency preparedness and response mechanisms](#) in the Rohingya and host communities. These lessons learned were identified during a recent workshop organized by ISCG. She presented the lessons learned regarding what worked well, and what are the gaps/areas for improvement following the six key components in emergency preparedness and response. These components included: (i) coordination mechanism, (ii) early warning system, (iii) simulation, drills, and pre-positioning, (iv) anticipatory actions, (v) evacuation, search and rescue, and (vi) joint assessment, information management, and SITREP.

Key Components	What worked well?	What area needs improvement?
Coordination Mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RRRC played a vital role during the emergency response, primarily in the <u>swift mobilization of government resources</u> and supporting deployment in the camps. Camp in Charge (CICs) active coordination role as the head of the camp Disaster Management Committee (DMC) <u>led to the swift delivery of services</u> to affected refugees, including the timely activation of the camp DMC EOC control room and effective operations. The institutional presence and functionality of the Sectors enabled immediate life-saving responses and advocacy for <u>build-back-better</u> shelter reconstruction and rehabilitation. Institutional strengthening of local DMCs plays a significant role in <u>improving first responders' capacity to respond to emergencies</u> demonstrated through immediate activation of the DMCs after receiving the signal and enabling the <u>DC office to operate the control room and carry out 24-hour monitoring.</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delayed EPR planning resulted in an uncoordinated response. Humanitarian Coordination Cell (HCC) has not been organized and activated in all camps. Camp DMCs are new, some are not yet fully familiar with their roles and responsibilities and the <u>operationalization of the DMC guidelines</u>, before, during, and after a disaster (DRM cycle). Limited synergy between the Bangladesh communities' DRM coordination and the Rohingya response EPR coordination.
Early Warning System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness campaigns conducted before seasonal disasters with Disaster Management Units (DMUs) <u>improved community readiness.</u> Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BDM) provided regular weather forecasts, timely release of alerts and warnings, widely shared through their website and bilaterally with relevant government actors, including District Disaster Management Committees (DDMC). The presence of other weather monitoring portals (INSTANT) releasing 7-day weather forecasts <u>helped to analyze and validate alerts and warnings.</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early warning communication and dissemination are less inclusive – <u>Mainly CPP disseminates the messages</u> and wider support for transmission of message is needed. Limited sensitization of existing Early Warning System (EWS). Early warning messages are not in the local language. The EWS for the heat wave and flash flood was not as developed as Cyclone. Communities do not take disaster early warning messages seriously.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning from pilot landslide EWS in the host communities <u>advanced the adoption of the system in the camps.</u> 	
Simulation, Drills & Pre-positioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The immediate deployment of First On-Site Teams (FORT) and community responders (CPP, DMC, etc.) during Cyclone <u>helped improve community preparedness.</u> EPR orientation packages delivered before the seasonal onset of disasters (cyclone/monsoon/fire season), including simulation and drills increased the effectiveness of the first responders (DMU, DMCs, and other volunteers). Catchment prepositioning of emergency stocks is vital for the <u>efficient delivery of life-saving response.</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not harmonized and updated contingency plans and prepositioning of stocks at the Union and Upazila as per the Department of Disaster Management (DDM) plans. Only some Unions and Upazilas have contingency plans and prepositioned stocks. Timely implementation of simulations/ drills aligned with seasonal/ hazard calendar at all levels (Districts to Wards). Limited evaluations and documentation of learning.
Anticipatory Actions/ Forecast-based Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unconditional cash assistance under Forecast-based financing (Fbf) /AA piloted in Teknaf areas <u>safeguarded the livelihoods of the cyclone-affected communities.</u> Small-scale mitigation activities implemented jointly with the Government and humanitarian and development partners <u>improved collaboration and partnerships.</u> The established link with the National Anticipatory Action Technical Working Group (AATWG) is beneficial for sharing knowledge, learning, and guidance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity building for volunteers and partners on Age, Gender, and Disability (AGD) mainstreaming during emergencies. Triggers have to be contextualized for effective FbF/ AA implementation. Harmonization of AA concepts among agencies and communities. Less funding to implement AA.
Evacuation, Search and Rescue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The designated over 500 cyclone/multi-purpose shelters available in the host communities provided safe spaces for the timely evacuation of the affected population. 18 Evacuation and Temporary Shelters (<u>Multi-Purpose Service Centers</u>) are in progress of being built, which will <u>help to safeguard at least the most vulnerable.</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reluctance of families to relocate from highly vulnerable locations to safe locations. Communities have less trust in early warning and forecast. No evacuation plan and no established evacuation arrangement with the government for refugees considering limited safe shelters inside the camps.
Assessment, Information Management & SITREP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 4-hour and 72-hour Joint Needs Assessments (JNAs) during cyclone incidences were <u>vital for preparing SITREPs, press releases, and flash appeals.</u> Use of or reference from other tools, i.e., Volunteer Management Tool (VMT) and Centralized Automated Information Processing Platform (CAIPP) for individual case management at Complaints and Feedback Mechanism (CFM) desks to <u>support the reporting data needs.</u> The alignment of the district and camp JNA at the national level benefited the <u>harmonization of data reporting and analysis.</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners have a limited understanding of when, how, and who is responsible during the JNA activation. Improving the data analysis e.g., use of Kobo, including data disaggregation by age, gender, and disability. Consistency in statistical reporting between different levels and partners. Improving the socio-economic analysis of disaster impact. Standardized monitoring system on displacement tracking and monitoring during emergencies.



3.2.2. Presentation on the Lessons Learned from Cyclone Mocha Emergency Preparedness and Response:

Mr. Mohammad Mainul Hossain Rony, Food Security Cluster Coordinator from HCTT, and Md. Tanjumul Alam Arif, Disaster Response Management Officer from the Emergency Preparedness and Response Working Group (EPRWG)/ISCG, jointly presented the lessons learned from Cyclone Mocha emergency preparedness and response in Cox's Bazar. While Mr. Rony focused on lessons learned from local communities in Cox's Bazar from ICCG's point of view, Mr. Tanjumul focused on lessons learned from the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar from ISCG's point of view.

The presentation highlighted that Cyclone Mocha struck the coastal areas near the Bangladesh-Myanmar border on 14 May 2023, resulting in extensive damage to homes and facilities across all 33 Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar and nearby Bangladeshi communities. A [joint flash appeal](#) was developed with a requirement of USD 42.16 million to support affected communities, with USD 36.53 million allocated for the Rohingya Refugee Response and USD 5.63 million designated for the HCTT to assist Bangladeshi communities in Teknaf, including Saint Martin's Island, which was the hardest hit area.

ICCG and ISCG presented the lessons learned regarding what worked well, what did not work as well and identified gaps following the six key components in Cyclone Mocha preparedness and response. These components included: (i) coordination, (ii) preparedness measures, (iii) early warning communication/dissemination, (iv) needs assessment and reporting, (v) life-saving response and early recovery, and (vi) resource mobilization.

For instance, lessons learned from ICCG regarding what worked well, what did not work as well, and identified gaps in terms of coordination include the following:

Various coordination aspects **worked very well** during Cyclone Mocha from ICCG

- In pre-landfall context (one week before), the national-level DMC was activated, clusters held emergency meetings, shared early alert messages, communicated with relevant government ministries/departments, coordinated with IFRC/BDRCS/PPP, and supported the DMCs. Regular updates by cluster lead agencies, DMC meetings at the District and Upazila levels, timely activation of emergency control rooms, and communication with relevant control rooms, as well as implementation of cyclone anticipatory actions in local communities, all worked well in terms of coordination.

- During landfall, support for evacuation via CPP and cluster partners, prepositioning of contingency stock, and monitoring the situation and information sharing, etc., worked well in terms of coordination.
- After landfall, rapid needs assessment by the Needs Assessment Working Group (NAWG), publication of Cluster SitReps incorporating government department data, distribution of contingency stock, allocation of resources by government departments, and development of a Joint Appeal and joint resource mobilization, etc., worked well in terms of coordination.

What could be improved: the active coordination of HAG and SEG, ICCG and ISCG, and the clarity of response scope among ICCG and ISCG.

While gaps were identified, such as: the capacity of common resource mobilization, clarification of scope of work, and SOP for ISCG and ICCG coordination and information sharing during emergencies.

On the other hand, lessons learned from ISCG regarding what worked well, what did not work as well, and identified gaps in terms of coordination include the following:

Various coordination aspects **worked very well** during Cyclone Mocha from ISCG.

- In the pre-landfall context (one week before), coordination with the authorities occurred, an EPR contact details list was shared, and communities were informed whom to contact for emergency support. Regular updates with the SEG supported effective preparedness, and close coordination with local BMD for regular weather updates was maintained. DMCs, including camps through CiCs, and Emergency Control Rooms were activated quickly. Two humanitarian staff were positioned in the military Joint Coordination Cell to ensure a rapid response from clearing roads to saving lives, etc., and all worked well in terms of coordination.
- During landfall, ISCG assigned/positioned people in Ukhiya and Teknaf for a possible response. CiCs coordinated camp first responders, and ISCG positioned people coordinated with the Bangladesh Army and Fire Service and Civil Defence (FSCD) for standby for debris management, etc., all worked well in terms of coordination.
- After landfall, Government-led efforts to provide immediate assistance in the aftermath of the storm, with the support of emergency humanitarian teams and volunteers, and humanitarian teams were dispatched the morning after the cyclone passed on 15 May to address the most urgent needs and extremely vulnerable communities, all worked well in terms of coordination.

What could be improved: the coordination during response implementation at the camp level needs strengthening, activation of different coordination cells from the district to camps was not always clear to agencies, and the proposed HCC mechanism was not activated.

Gaps were identified, such as: absence of a robust Multi-Hazard Response Plan (MHRP) and SOPs, lack of simulation of the MHRP and SOPs, and ad hoc representation of humanitarian agencies and ISCG in government DRM coordination.

The detailed presentation on key lessons learned from Cyclone Mocha's preparedness and response, covering what worked well, what did not work as well, and identified gaps across all six key components, is [attached here](#).

3.2.3. Plenary Sessions on what worked well, what did not work as well, and gaps identified:

Ms. Maria Ena Mayen Olmedo, Humanitarian Affairs Officer at OCHA, facilitated the plenary session on what worked well, what did not work as well, and the gaps identified in the Cyclone Mocha preparedness and response, in addition to the above presentation on a similar subject by ICCG and ISCG. Initially, participants were given the opportunity to share their honest reflections on lessons learned via open discussion. Then, they were asked to share their reflections on what worked well, what did not as work well, and the gaps identified using sticky notes.

What worked well?

- Early warning/messaging and evacuation to shelters.
- The WASH team provided an impressive and swift response.
- For the first time, a Joint Flash Appeal was issued, covering both JRP areas and beyond.
- A joint situation report was produced.
- Effective coordination structures were in place.

What did not work as well?

- Social media amplified attention to Cyclone Mocha, causing panic and uncontrollable messaging.
- BMD forecasting was not always accurate.
- Local community's lack of trust in early warning messages.
- Unclear who was supposed to assist/respond where (St. Martin?)
- Ambiguities in the classification of work scope.
- Centralized decisions by the GoB.
- Issues with evacuating patients.
- For the Health Sector, there was a late approach to WHO.
- Inadequate coordination between ICCG and ISCG, highlighting the need for a coordination mechanism.
- Difficulty in evacuating refugees due to the lack of safe shelters within the camps.
- Absence of joint meetings and response monitoring for Cyclone Mocha.
- Fragile communications system.
- Initial notification to Clusters came from a Sector colleague on 1 May, with BMD notification arriving later.
- Challenges in data validation.

What are the areas for improvement or gaps identified?

- Ensure preparatory coordination between ISCG and ICCG at the onset of a cyclone.
- Conduct quarterly meetings between Sectors and Clusters well in advance.
- Establish modalities for joint response monitoring.
- Enhance sharing of plans, reports, and resources, including assessing impact versus flash appeal requirements.
- Foster multi-departmental involvement across structures.
- Strengthen information sharing, particularly in relation to evacuation plans aligned with the GoB strategy, and address capacity constraints.
- Ensure provision of safe shelters post-evacuation.
- Develop and utilize shared assessment tools collaboratively between ISCG and ICTT (both for host communities and camps).
- Promote synergies across various coordination mechanisms and adopt a common approach.
- Increase stock prepositioning, currently at 30 per cent, particularly in camps and humanitarian coordination centers.
- Establish a clear protocol for JNA activation and collaboration.
- Address issues of inadequate local integration.
- Develop scenario-based plans to enhance preparedness.
- Clarify the definition of host community/local community, including geographic allocation and delineation of responsibilities.
- Acknowledge the need for further readiness in the event of a major cyclone impacting the camps.

Discussion

- How can we ensure equitable access to GoB services for both host communities and refugees while meeting their respective needs?
- It is important to recognize that host communities and refugees have distinct needs that must be addressed separately.
- Regarding Multi-Purpose Service Centres, how can we optimize their use and make the most of available resources?
- Currently, there are an insufficient number of Multi-Purpose Service Centres available for 1 million

- Rohingya refugees.
- While Cyclone Mocha did not directly impact the area, it is still valuable to learn from the preparedness efforts undertaken.
- Instead of referring to "common tools," let us emphasize the importance of collective tools that are interoperable.
- At the national level, ICCG has a 5Ws tool for who is doing what, where, whom, and when. If this tool is also shared with ISCG it may be useful in Cox's Bazar.
- Evacuation poses a significant challenge for this operation and needs to be addressed effectively.



3.3. Session 03: Roles and responsibilities during emergency preparedness & response

Mr. Daniel Gilman, Head of the Humanitarian Financing and Strategy Unit at OCHA, facilitated the scenario-based session. Following the [hypothetical cyclone scenario](#), participants were asked to unpack and agree on roles and responsibilities for preparedness and response to future disasters and events.

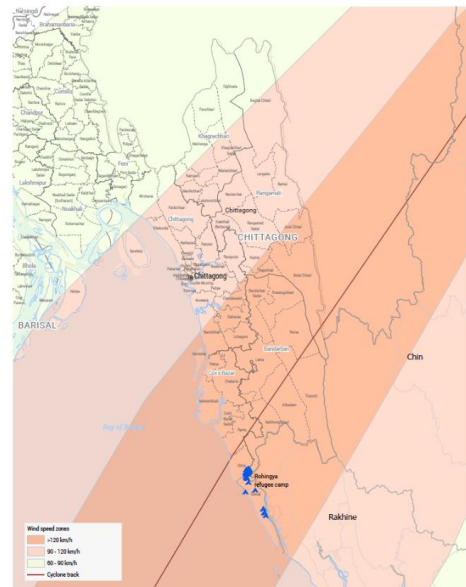
Scenario: A cyclone of comparable or greater intensity than Mocha hits the Cox's Bazar region.

Population Exposed:

- 120 km/h wind speed zone: 4 Districts and 24 Upazila exposed, with 5 million Bangladeshi population and 1 million Rohingya refugees.
- 90 - 120 km/h wind speed zone: Five Districts and 45 Upazila exposed, with 8.2 million Bangladeshi population.

Storm Surge:

- Affecting settlements along the coast.
- 2.4 – 3.6M storm surge during the cyclone.
- 1.5 million people in Cox's Bazar, Kutubdia, Maheshkhali, Teknaf and Ukhiya Upazilas were affected.
- Airport, ports and other critical infrastructure impacted (including the ISCG office).



Based on the above hypothetical cyclone scenario, participants were tasked through group work to identify ideas around any operational challenges and to determine how best the ISCG and ICCG could work together to maintain a high level of readiness. Additionally, they were asked how to improve the process of collaboration in the following five groups/areas:

1. Building synergies for coordination between ICCG and ISCG.
2. Government engagement: coordination and collaboration with Government counterparts at different levels, including DRM structures.
3. Information Management including joint needs assessments, analysis and reporting.
4. Accountability during emergencies in host communities and refugee camps
5. Anticipatory Action, preparedness work and early warning.

Group 1 (Ideas) – Building synergies for coordination between ICCG and ISCG.

- Develop SOPs with clear guidance from Co-Chairs (ICCG and ISCG).
- Harmonize the Joint Multi Sector Needs Assessment (J-MSNA) (ISCG and ICCG) for joint response planning and monitoring.
- Establish a communication channel.
- Hold bilateral sector and cluster meetings to share information and delegate authority.
- Develop a contingency plan and joint sitreps.
- Conduct Simulation Exercise (SIMEX) with ICCG and ISCG.
- Create common 5Ws for ICCG and ISCG.
- Jointly participate in the NGO coordination meeting hosted by the district management committee.
- Ensure commitment of cluster lead agencies for sector/cluster navigation.
- Promote learning and sharing between ICCG and ISCG.

Group 2 (Ideas) – Government engagement: coordination and collaboration with Government counterparts at different levels, including DRM structures.

- Conduct orientation on the ISCG – ICCG at the field level.
- Develop a clear SOP for ISCG – ICCG
- Create a resource mapping and contingency plan aligned with government plans.
- Build capacity on EPR for relevant government stakeholders.
- Strengthen communication with the government, including participation in various fora.
- Continuously advocate for a human lifesaving-centered approach.
- Strengthen civil-military coordination.
- Build capacity for camp-level government stakeholders (CIC, APBn, Bangladesh Ansar, etc.). Provide orientation to local administration by ISCG and at the national level by ICCG.
- Recognize the reality of staff turnover and the limited shelf life of institutional memory.

Group 3 (Ideas) - Information Management including joint needs assessments, analysis & reporting.

- Revisit and review tools (JNA and others) to identify and address gaps.
- Clarify areas of coverage for assessments, including JRP and non-JRP areas, and ensure compliance with GoB regulations on data collection in host communities.
- Agree on the timeline and period for assessments, analysis, and reports, including continuous monitoring.
- Ensure pre-disaster data is prepared, available, and accessible.
- Agree on 5W reporting processes.

Group 4 (Ideas) - Accountability during emergencies in host communities and refugees.

- Conduct needs assessment and stocktaking for camps and host communities.
- Coordinate with all actors to harmonize messaging.
- Translate key messages into Rohingya and Bangla.
- Develop Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials with an AGD lens, PSEA training, GBV referral maps, and train CiCs, majhis, and APBn on confidentiality.
- Develop a communications strategy using mics, megaphones, radio, and TV. Activate feedback mechanisms and communicate evacuation points and service facilities for emergency communications.

- Coordinate communication across sectors: Education (for learning centers), Child Protection (for multi-purpose centers), and the SCCCM sector, including visibility warnings (flags).
- Activate specialized teams (Protection, Emergency Response Unit [PERU], CPP, DMU, and Safety Unit Volunteers [SUV]).
- Stockpile and distribute hygiene kits and essential supplies based on needs.
- Provide information on available services (PSEA, GBV, and Child Protection).
- Establish Child Protection, GBV, Health, and Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support (MHPSS) services.
- Implement the "Look, Listen, and Link" approach for affected people.
- Build the capacity of GoB actors (APBn) and responders. Collaborate with APBn and CiC officials to refer cases (GBV, PSEA) and ensure female engagement across teams.

Group 5 (Ideas) - Anticipatory Action, preparedness work and early warning.

- Orient CPP, camp volunteers, and others on protection and AAP through a coordinated mechanism.
- Establish a Memorandum of Understanding for moving Rohingya refugees to safe locations. Develop a simplified, contextualized and unified evacuation mechanism, and early warning messages.
- Distribute shelters according to the geographic locations of refugees.
- Review forecasting and early warning dissemination to ensure inclusiveness of all vulnerable groups.
- Provide information on shelter availability and preparedness, including evacuation routes.
- Coordinate civil-military efforts on early warning for response (ICCG - ISCG).
- Clearly distinguish between preparedness actors and AAs.
- Harmonize trigger models and awareness.
- Apply AA, including the Early Action Protocol (EAP), for communities and Bangladeshis.
- Develop an inclusive evacuation plan based on early warning/scenarios for refugees and host communities.
- Hold coordination meetings with authorities and ICCG/ISCG.
- Mobilize resources and personnel.
- Operational challenges:
 - Integration of resources and capacity among (Govt, ICCG/ISCG).
 - Inclusiveness of early warning message dissemination.



3.4. Session 04: Collaboration in the future

Ms. Maria Ena Mayen Olmedo and Mr. Daniel Gilman from OCHA jointly facilitated the session. Participants were asked to identify strategies to keep channels open, collaborate more effectively, determine the frequency and modality of meetings, key areas of action and processes, using sticky notes.

HCTT and ISCG participants collectively identified several action points or areas for seamless collaboration between ISCG and ICCG, as follows.

Coordination, Collaboration and Meetings:

- Establish communication channels.
- Conduct bilateral meetings and regular learning/sharing between ISCG and ICCG aiming at increasing response efficiency.
- Include standing agenda points for updates from Sectors and Clusters in both ICCG and ISCG meetings, as required.
- Schedule a coordination meeting between government counterparts and ISCG/ICCG.
- Strengthen communication/advocacy with Government, including joint participation in forums at both national and sub-national level.
- Joint participation in disaster management/EPR coordination meetings hosted by the district administration, as required.

Joint Planning & Standard Operating Procedures:

- Develop joint SOPs aligned with government plans to provide clear guidance on coordination and reporting during emergencies.
- Conduct joint planning based on the SOP developed.

Harmonized Tools and Guidelines:

- Jointly review existing assessment, reporting, and monitoring tools for harmonization, enabling them to be used both inside the camps and the host community.
- Agree on the 5Ws/3W reporting template and process, particularly for the host communities. This aligns with the ISCG-ICCG commitment to establish joint milestones in their respective work plans, the Joint Response Plan and the Humanitarian Response Plan.

Joint Assessments and Information Sharing:

- Clarify areas of coverage for assessment (JRP and non-JRP areas).
- Periodically review and update coordination bodies' roles based on areas of responsibility HCTT (NAWG, Information Management Working Group) and ISCG (Needs and Population Monitoring, Information Management Analysis Working Group)
- Agree on a specific timeline/period of assessments, analysis, and reporting, including ongoing monitoring.
- Collect pre-disaster assessment and data analysis and ensure that they are available and accessible for planning.
- Conduct needs assessments using the harmonized tools and methodologies in coordination and with the participation of Sectors, Clusters, and government technical agencies. Develop joint sitreps and reports pre- and post- disaster.

Contingency Planning and Preparedness:

- Develop harmonized contingency plans aligned with government plans.
- Conduct scenario SiMEX for ICCG and ISCG.
- Establish evacuation plans and shelter management for Rohingya refugees and local/host communities.

Early Warning Systems:

- Harmonize trigger models and awareness messages for anticipatory action/early warning in conjunction with government systems.
- Support the development and implementation of end-to-end early warning system tailored to specific contexts (messages, alerts dissemination methodology, chain of command).

Capacity Building and Advocacy:

- Collaborate on institutional capacity strengthening at District and Cox's Bazar levels and harmonize capacity building initiatives in line with Standing Orders on Disaster and humanitarian standards, both at national and Cox's Bazar levels.
- Continue to advocate with Government and related stakeholders for an approach focused on savings lives, including safe evacuation of refugees during cyclones.



4. FIELD VISIT DEBRIEFING: 30 April 2024

National Cluster members found the visit with ISCG members invaluable for gaining a holistic understanding of their disaster management structures (e.g. cyclone preparedness programme, disaster management committees) and communication.

During the field visit, participants from ICCG and ISCG visited eight projects in the Rohingya camps and host communities in Ukhiya to observe best practices and opportunities for cross-learning:

- Emergency Hot Meal Preparation Kitchen by WFP-WVI
- Cyclone Preparedness Drill and Discussion with Camp DMC Members by UNHCR, IFRC, and ACTED
- Multi-Purpose Service Center/Cyclone Shelter by ISCG
- Mobile Fire-Fighting Unit Services by UNCHR-ACTED
- Green Hub Focusing on Slope Stabilization and Environmental Rehabilitation by WFP-ACTED
- Contingency Stock Prepositioning Site by IOM
- Small-Scale Mitigation Efforts in Government Shelter Projects for Landless People by BDRCS-IFRC
- Meeting With Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) and CPP Volunteers with BDRCS-IFRC.

Post field visit briefing and feedback.

1. Observations from the field visit

- Camp preparedness is robust, but there is a need for clearer understanding of Sector and Cluster roles in disaster preparedness and response within the Bangladeshi communities.
- Further sector-cluster collaboration (e.g. presentation of best practices) would be useful, especially considering resource constraints.
- EPR structures in the camps provide a point of reference for further strengthening EPR within the Bangladeshi communities, which will be a key focus for joint ISCG-ICCG efforts moving forward.
- Effective collaboration already exists between the Government and UN/NGOs working in the camps and local communities.

2. Suggestions from workshop discussion and field observations

- ICCG may engage national line ministries to bolster support and coordination for emergency response and sustainable development interventions in the camps and host communities.
- Maintaining open communication channels between Sectors, Clusters, and working groups can help effectively support refugees and local communities pre- and post-disaster.
- Preparedness and response activities across different levels (Dhaka, Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char) can be harmonized with a focus on sharing information and insights. Leveraging ISCG strengths in the Rohingya Refugee Response and existing national disaster management mechanisms for Bangladeshi communities is seen as beneficial.
- Capacity building at the institutional level can be beneficial for Bangladeshi communities, while harmonized and contextualized multi-hazard early warning systems should be strengthened in the refugee camps.
- Jointly conducting a comprehensive assessment of EPR measures can help address gaps and replicate good practices in the camps and local communities in Cox's Bazar.
- The importance of creating synergies in programmatic approaches was stressed, along with alignment with government guidelines and plans. ICCG strengths in advocacy with national-level ministries may be leveraged to address Sector challenges in Cox's Bazar.



5. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the ICCG-ISCG Dialogue stands as a testament to the power of collaboration in humanitarian endeavors. Through a combination of a workshop and a field visit, the dialogue facilitated invaluable exchanges, fostering mutual understanding of humanitarian coordination architectures, and improving coordination across various levels of humanitarian efforts. The dialogue served as a platform to identify numerous strategic action points and areas for collective enhancement of emergency preparedness and response in Cox's Bazar.

Looking ahead, the agreed priority actions between the ICCG and ISCG signify a strategic roadmap for enhancing humanitarian coordination over the next six months and beyond. By presenting dialogue outcomes to key stakeholders, developing harmonized tools, and establishing SOPs, the aim is to strengthen seamless coordination and ensure a more effective response to natural hazards. Continuous engagement through regular meetings and communications further reinforces this commitment to joint efforts.

Ultimately, by focusing on these priorities, the ICCG and ISCG are poised to strengthen preparedness and response mechanisms, benefiting both Rohingya refugees and Bangladeshi communities in Cox's Bazar. This collaborative approach not only enhances the effectiveness of humanitarian interventions but also exemplifies the spirit of solidarity and shared responsibility in addressing complex humanitarian challenges. The dialogue concluded with optimism and a pledge to enhance collaboration between the HCTT and ISCG, focusing on jointly implementing priority actions for effective preparedness and response in Cox's Bazar.



6. Annexes

[Annex 1: Participant list](#)

[Annex 2: Summary note with action points](#)

[Annex 3: Program/session plan](#)

[Annex 4: Field visit plan](#)