

COVID-19 Situation Report-2

Humanitarian Crisis Management Programme (HCMP)

18 March 2020

Background

On 11 March, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic. The organisation reported more than 168,000 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 6,610 deaths in the affected countries as of 17 March. The number of cases in Bangladesh is also rising.

Cox's Bazar, in southeastern Bangladesh, hosts one of the world's biggest refugee camps, and faces the potential risk of a COVID-19 outbreak. There is a need for immediate targeted actions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the Rohingya camps, and its surrounding areas where hundreds of humanitarian workers are involved in the response and management of the Rohingya crisis.

The crisis is a multidimensional humanitarian problem. The spread of COVID-19 in the camps may create unforeseeable consequences, and without proper precautionary measures, the situation may quickly go out of control.

Daily Update

Cox's Bazar: According to the office of the Civil Surgeon of Cox's Bazar, three individuals are now in-home quarantine. The District Commissioner of Cox's Bazar has banned tourists' entrance and mass gathering in the beach area. Hotels and motels are asked to be vacated by 20 March.

Host community and camps: Following the guidance from the RRRC office and Child Protection sub-sector, HCMP has suspended service deliveries from all the CP facilities till 31 March. Similarly, BRAC has suspended all the activities that involve mass gatherings.

HCMP: The HCMP COVID 19 Task Force sat together for an emergency meeting to discuss the updates on COVID-19, progress on action plan, and future plan for protecting the staff, volunteers and projects participants of HCMP. The task force is following BRAC's emergency procurement policy to ensure supplies such as sanitisers, disinfectants, masks and gloves. The task force has also decided to meet twice (morning and evening) to review the situation updates and action plans. Members of the task force have also joined the meeting of BRAC's disaster management steering committee to update the situation and preparedness in Cox's Bazar and to receive guidance from BRAC's head office. In the afternoon, the task force held a meeting with all the sectors and unit leads of HCMP to review the needs and gaps to ensure safety and security of project staff and participants. All non-essential visits to camps have been restricted.

Overall Summary

On 15 March, a cleaning campaign took place on 16 March in HCMP offices of Cox's Bazar to raise awareness among staff about Covid-19, its symptoms and how to protect against the virus. All staff carefully carried out a cleaning session with necessary materials (duster cloths, disinfectants, etc), with demonstrations of proper personal hygiene practices. Hand wash and sanitisation stations have been installed in front of all HCMP offices in Cox's Bazar. A training session was conducted for BRAC's support staff to create awareness on protection against and prevention of Covid-19 and hygiene measures.