

21st October 2020, Dhaka

Subject: CCNF position paper / statement on the eve of a donor conference on sustainable support to Rohingya response on 22nd Oct, organized by UK, USA, EU, and United Nations.

- 1. We appreciate donor initiative but we urge them to REDOUBLE the EFFORT for ROHINGYA REPATRIATION as it is the only SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION.** We the CCNF (Coxs bazar CSO NGO Forum, www.cxb-cso-ngo.org) appreciate the commitment of donor / rich/developed countries for organizing this conference, thinking for sustainable support for Rohingya response as these become a protracted crisis. But it has to be noted that Bangladesh is a country, suffering climate and other problems, for which like Rohingya response Bangladesh at all not responsible. e.g., Bangladesh even in this year 2020 has a displacement of 2.5 million people due to climate impacts, by the year 2050 the displacement will be 1/3 of the population as forecasted by IPCC (International Panel for Climate Change). Especially in Coxs bazar Bangladesh has the world's largest shelters of climate displaced constructed by our own government money, most of the displaced are from the disappearing island Kutubdia of Coxs bazar district. COVID 19 pandemic has pushed the poverty rate up to 30 % and in general 20 % reduction of general public income. Due to incessant flood which has damaged crops and others in 2/3 of the country, leading some other crisis including food shortage. UN and INGOs hardly proved that they are giving a proportionate approach to all these humanitarian problems of Bangladesh other than Rohingya's response.
- 2. POSITIVELY ENGAGE with OUR GOVERNMENT, AID for EMPOWERMENT.** Donors, UN, and INGOs must review how much of aid money has come in Bangladesh, how much technology and know-how have been transferred to locals, how much space has been given to locals in refugee management, even although UN, INGOs, and donors have committed development effectiveness and Grand Bargain agreement. For hosting more than 1 million Rohingya refugees we have got a lot of thank you leaf service, but there is very little solidarity effort to assist Bangladesh especially the district of Coxs bazar. If the world, UN, and INGO leaders are committed to Bangladesh, they must show sincerest approach to Bangladesh, UN and develop countries, INGOs in their home of origin, must redouble their effort to keep the pressure on Myanmar to take their citizen as early possible, repatriation is the only sustainable solution. Aid should be used for empowerment to the locals, not to create some fund eater NGOs, it should be to promote locally origin CSOs (Civil Society Organization) who are the first responders and in hitherto history too, even in recent pandemic they have come out with their own resources. But we observed there are systematic drive out on them and orchestrated propaganda against them on the so-called colonial notion of "capacity development" and "they do not know anything". They are being considered as Guest in the sector meetings and no access to ISCG (Inter Sectoral Coordination Group). Due to the surge of the humanitarian operation, the biggest damage has been done to local CSOs, in respect of staff poaching by UN and INGOs, staff salary has gone up to 236 % which is not at all favorable to promote sustainable local CSOs. In several ways, we tried to draw attention to all these, but no response, it seems that everything has tailored for aid business. We are demoralized by the fact that amid this crisis some of the developed countries have doubled their business relation with Myanmar in the last few years, continuing arm business with the Myanmar government, they must show their sincerity in this regard, and do all possible ways to compel Myanmar to take back Rohingya refugees or they must consider to third country repatriation of these refugees. We request all to positively engage with our government.
- 3. The situation tells us to TAKE a BOTTOM-UP APPROACH, ensure participation of LOCAL ACTORS including REFUGEE REPRESENTATIVE in response management.** Along with dwindling situation of aid, managing the response management with reducing the level of aid, which need localization approach, it took around 2 years to finalize a localization road map by UN leadership, one can imagine in this situation how we can keep trust upon UN, in fact by de-facto who are leading the response and managing the fund. Recent violence in the camps tells us too that, all the plans have to be integrated with peacebuilding and social cohesion, which

have to be bottom-up. Local actors like local NGO/CSOs, local government along Refugee representatives can manage the response in a low-cost manner and as locals know best the language and culture, they can act better for joint initiative for social cohesion and peacebuilding too. It should be noted that there was very little participation of local NGO/CSOs, local governments, and Rohingya representative in the past and all JRP (Joint Response Plan) preparation. We tried but we have faced strong resistance at all levels. In the beginning, we have had the opportunities to meet top policymakers, Ambassadors, and donor's representatives, even ISCG leaders have had meeting host community / local government leaders with our invitation, but present ISCG leaders have stopped everything.

4. **Joint led but SINGLE LINE AND SINGLE POT MANAGEMENT is necessary for optimal use of resources.** We believe that along with the government the response management has to be jointly led with UN agencies especially by UNHCR, as they are the only mandated organization for taking care of refugees. So, there should be a single line and especially single pot fund management, so that available resources will be used judiciously and without any duplications. E.g., ISCG has the coordination on most of UN agency resources with some INGO resources too, but most of the INGO resource who channel through NGOAB (NGO Affairs Bureau) of Government of Bangladesh hardly counted in the ISCG system. Since the beginning CCNF is urging for this, in absence of this we believe that there are some duplications and mismanagement. We appreciate the initiatives of UN agencies, especially of UNHCR and IoM during COVID 19 pandemic, due to their effort, the rate of infection especially in camps was low, and the host community has also been benefited in this regard.
5. **Create POOLED FUND and DIRECT FUNDING to promote local NGO/CSOs for SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT.** Localization Task Force (LTF) as created by SEG (Strategic Executive Group, formed by UN, co-chaired by UNRC, UNHCR, and IoM) has already proposed a pooled fund and a localization driver to promote local NGO/CSOs for sustainable response management. We are talking about the NGOs who are also committed to human rights/refugee rights along with other activities. In long run, such a local civil society is needed not only for response-related service delivery but also for raising the voice and engaging with government and social actors for the protection based on human rights. As we have pleaded earlier that, the UN and INGOs should be limited their role in monitoring and technical assistance in this regard, they must take time-bound plan for each and every expatriate on technology and know-how transfer, all expatriate employment must be demand-driven, must not be supply-driven.
6. **AID TRANSPARENCY is needed to DIMINISH PUBLIC CONFUSION and constantly to try for reducing management cost, there is scope TO REDUCE COSTS.** There is huge public confusion on how much money has come and in fact how much money has gone for the direct benefit of the Rohingya refugees and host communities. We acknowledge there is good work has done. But there are concerns and confusion on the huge management cost of international agencies. CCNF has done a study based on UNOCHA FTS figures so far (since JRP 2017) and till 15 October 2020 around \$ 2. 6 bln has received, which is around \$ 423 per Rohingya family per month. We have used the UNHCR standard of per Rohingya family size i.e., 4.59. We assumed that money coming through the NGO channel might not include in this UNOCHA FTS. It is the reason we are pleading that there should be a single line and single pot fund management, for the best use of the aid money. We have a rapid study that, in practical level in per Rohingya family they have the service of around \$ 130, rest of the money has been utilized for common services and management cost including education, child protection, gender protection, and health services. We have not been able to ascertain the contribution from the World Bank and ADB (Asian Development Bank) too. CCNF have had already given a lot of proposals in respect of reducing cost.

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