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It is time to think future _ JRP 2021 & Rohingya response should be open to democratic ownership

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Wed, Apr 21, 2021 at 11:07 AM

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Dear Mia, George & Johannes

(i) Thank you for your response on the 18th April meeting to my three queries (attached herewith) that I have raised on behalf of local and national NGOs working in Rohingya response. Please note that me and Abu Morshed Chowdhury were selected as local and national NGO representatives in an open and participatory process conducted by ISCG. As you have stated that the LTF (Localization Task Force) report is still the issue in the table then I will urge it should be mentioned as one cross cutting strategic objectives in the JRP 2021.

We feel that the LTF report it is futuristic, i.e, not only (a) to cope with reduced levels of aid, (b) also to ensure technology and know-how transfer to local CSOs and also to (c) manage the response with the whole of society approach (WoSA) with the leadership of local actors, while UN and INGOs will play the role in monitoring and technical assistance.

(ii) We have submitted our formal response on draft JRP 2021 on 1st February, anyone can download the 2 page document from here. In view of our impression we have given the title of our comment, "JRP 2021 : Is it Going Beyond or Business As Usual". But, we feel demoralized that, in the recently circulated draft light version of JRP 2021, there are hardly any reflections, ISCG and all others must consider to give real sense of participation to all stakeholders.

(iii) We have had the same request in our letter dated 15th April. The Localization Task Force (LTF) and its report on the localization road map of the Rohingya response, was a hard work of almost 30 months. It is not only we, in LTF (Localization Task Force) led by UNDP and IFRC with participation of UNHCR, UNRCO, Oxfam, Save the Children, UKAID/FCDO, EU, several prominent independent consultant (e.g., Shireen Huq and Abdul Latif Khan), finally huge field work done by with the leadership of Barrister Manjoor Hasan and his team from CPJ of BRAC University. We request you

to publish the report, a huge amount of \$ has spent on the work. Publication of the report was due much earlier, you should understand that any further delay in this regard, will jeopardize our relation of trust.

(iv) May I like to draw attention on the second para of page 8 of the latest draft JRP 2021, "*Additionally, the Bangladesh Rohingya Response NGO Platform is an independent body which brings together more than one hundred Bangladeshi and International NGOs. The NGO Platform Coordinator is fully engaged in decision-making and agenda setting within coordination bodies guiding the Rohingya humanitarian response at all levels*". This sort of statement is top down and again a repetition of ISCG and response management attitude to undermine local homegrown institutions like CCNF (www.cxb-cso-ngo.org), who work not only in rohingya response but also on the whole Coxsbazar issue.

Moreover we have repeatedly reported our concern on democratic deficit of NGO Platform, (a) It is running hardly with democratic due diligence (e.g., there are hardly any NGOP committee meetings in the last 6 months), and (b) the NGOP hardly has been able to develop any relation with local administration. In the last 4 years we have experienced that HoSoG and ISCG use the expatriate led NGOP as a block to deter the direct participation of NGOs especially the participation of Local NGOs. Again we do like to repeat our appeal that all NGOs including local NGOs has the enough capacity to represent HoSoG and ISCG in Coxsbazar level, directly without any via media. Participation in the sector and the need to keep safe discussion space should not be an excuse in this regard, ISCG and HoSoG expatriates must accept the notion of tolerance and critical engagement.

It is time for building a single silos in Rohingya response, which is only possible with the practice of democratic ownership.

Sincerely

Reza

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Input in SEG 18th April.docx

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