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## UN JOINT- PROJECT TO ADDRESS COOKING FUEL NEEDS, ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION AND FOOD SECURITY FOR POPULATIONS AFFECTED BY THE REFUGEE CRISIS

### MPTF OFFICE GENERIC FINAL PROGRAMME<sup>1</sup> NARRATIVE REPORT REPORTING PERIOD: 1 JANUARY 2019 – 30 JUNE 2022

Programme Title & Project Number	Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results <sup>2</sup>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programme Title: Joint Programme to Address Cooking Fuel Needs, Environmental Degradation and Food Security for Populations Affected by the Refugee Crisis in Bangladesh</li> <li>Programme Number: 00115175, 00118760, 00119520 and 00115158</li> <li>MPTF Office Project Reference Number:<sup>3</sup> 00115175, 00118760, 00119520 and 00115158</li> </ul>	<p>Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh</p> <p><i>Priority area/ strategic results</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alternative cooking fuel (LPG),</li> <li>Livelihoods,</li> <li>Self-reliance,</li> <li>Forestry and land stabilization</li> </ul>
Participating Organization(s)	Implementing Partners
<p>United Nations (UN) agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)</li> <li>International Organization for Migration (IOM)</li> <li>World Food Program (WFP)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>GoB:</b> Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR), the Economic Relations Division (ERD), the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock (MoFL), Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Climate Change, Forest Department (FD), Upazila Nirbahi Officers (UNO) and Union Chairpersons.</li> <li><b>INGOs:</b> United Purpose, Relief International, BRAC, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)</li> <li><b>LNGOs:</b> Society for Health Extension and Development (SHED), Prottiyashi, Shushilan, Centre for Natural Resource Studies (CNRS), Arannayk Foundation (AF)</li> </ul>
Programme/Project Cost (US\$)	Programme Duration
<p>Total approved budget as per project document:</p> <p>MPTF /JP Contribution<sup>4</sup>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Total:</b> 56,337,917</li> </ul>	<p>Overall Duration (<i>months</i>) 46 months</p> <p>Start Date<sup>5</sup> (<i>dd.mm.yyyy</i>) 01.09.2018</p>

<sup>1</sup> The term “programme” is used for programmes, joint programmes and projects.

<sup>2</sup> Strategic Results, as formulated in the Strategic UN Planning Framework (e.g. UNDAF) or project document;

<sup>3</sup> The MPTF Office Project Reference Number is the same number as the one on the Notification message. It is also referred to as “Project ID” on the project’s factsheet page on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#).

<sup>4</sup> The MPTF/JP Contribution is the amount transferred to the Participating UN Organizations – see [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

<sup>5</sup> The start date is the date of the first transfer of the funds from the MPTF Office as Administrative Agent. Transfer date is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

Government Contribution (if applicable)	Original End Date <sup>6</sup> (dd.mm.yyyy)	30 June 2022
Other Contributions (donors) (if applicable)	Actual End date <sup>7</sup> (dd.mm.yyyy)	30 June 2022
<b>TOTAL:</b>	Have agency(ies) operationally closed the Programme in its(their) system?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Programme Assessment/Review/End-Term Eval.</b>	Expected Financial Closure date <sup>8</sup> :	30 June 2022
Evaluation Completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date: 10.10.2022 Evaluation Report - Attached <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date: 15.10.2022	<b>Report Submitted By</b> <input type="radio"/> Name: KHAN Rigan Ali <input type="radio"/> Title: PSU Coordinator (a.i) <input type="radio"/> Participating Organization (Lead): IOM <input type="radio"/> Email address: <a href="mailto:rakhan@iom.int">rakhan@iom.int</a>	

<sup>6</sup> As per approval of the original project document by the relevant decision-making body/Steering Committee.

<sup>7</sup> If there has been an extension, then the revised, approved end date should be reflected here. If there has been no extension approved, then the current end date is the same as the original end date. The end date is the same as the operational closure date which is when all activities for which a Participating Organization is responsible under an approved MPTF / JP have been completed. As per the MOU, agencies are to notify the MPTF Office when a programme completes its operational activities. Please see [MPTF Office Closure Guidelines](#).

<sup>8</sup> Financial Closure requires the return of unspent balances and submission of the [Certified Final Financial Statement and Report](#).

### **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ACMC	Aggregation Center Management Committee
AF	Arannayk Foundation
BCC	Behavior Change Communication
BDT	Bangladesh Taka
CiC	Camp in Charge
CM	Community Mobilizer
CNRS	Centre for Natural Resource Studies
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease-19
DAE	Department of Agricultural Extension
DFID	Department for International Development
DLS	Department of Livestock Services
DoF	Department of Fisheries
EETWG	Energy and Environment Technical Working Group
EVI	Extremely Vulnerable Individual
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office
FD	Forestry Department
FFG	Fisheries Farmers Group
FFS	Farmer Field School
FNS	Food and Nutrition Services
FSCD	Fire Service and Civil Defense
FSS	Food Security Sector
HC	Host Community
HHs	Households
IGA	Income Generating Activities
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LPG	Liquefied Petroleum Gas
LSP	Livelihood Service Provider
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MPTF	Multi-Partner Trust Fund
NFI	Non-Food Item
BPRM	The Bureau of Population, Refugees & Migration
REVA	Refugee influx Emergency Vulnerability Assessment
RRRC	Refugee, Relief and Repatriation Commission
SAFE	Safe Access to Fuel and Energy
SMART	Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tools
SMSD	Site Management and Site Development
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WFP	World Food Program

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Safe Access to Fuel and Energy Plus (SAFEPlus) is a UN joint project to contribute to the overall food and nutrition security, skill development, and resilience of 125,000 Rohingya and host community households in Cox's Bazar. The programme aimed to contribute 100,000 Rohingya households and 25,000 host community (HC) households with cooking fuel (Liquefied Petroleum Gas- LPG), on and off-farm livelihoods support, reforestation of 2,000 hectares (Ha) of land in host communities, and stabilizing 500 Ha of vulnerable land terrains in the camps. With funding from Canada, Norway, Sweden, FCDO (former DFID), the SAFEPlus programme (1 January 2019 – 30 June 2022) successfully achieved its four objectives.

The first objective was aimed for targeted households (HH), especially women-headed and vulnerable households, which have monthly decreased expenditures related to firewood purchases and increased nutritional intake for HH members. To address cooking fuel needs, SAFEPlus consistently distributed LPG (Liquified Petroleum Gas) refills to 124,550 Rohingya and Host Community (Host community was unsupported in 2022) households where 67,175 Extremely Vulnerable Individual (EVI) households were supported with porter support. During the program period, a total of 2,762,883 LPG refills were distributed to the beneficiaries. The end evaluation of the program observed that expenditure linked to cooking fuel was decreased in all targeted Rohingya households (100%) and 80 per cent of the vulnerable host community households.<sup>9</sup>

The second objective was Local agriculturists are engaged in markets and benefit from income generation. A series of activities were performed by the SAFEPlus programme to achieve the second objective. 1,440 farmers (506 women) have received training on innovative climate-sensitive agriculture, high-value crop production, post-harvest processing, and value addition, among other topics and they received different input (seeds and micro-gardening kits, irrigation, and agro-mechanization support) support. 16,000 farmers comprised of 798 producer groups were capacitated through training on technology, financial literacy, market-linkage, and 40 local service providers were trained and equipped to extend their support to the farmers on improved farming practices. 6,352 vulnerable host community households were provided livelihood training (tailoring, vegetable production, dry fish production, fish farming, wall painting, mobile servicing, small business, poultry rearing, livestock rearing, handicraft) and given input to perform the income generation. The end evaluation identified around 72 per cent of the beneficiaries were found experiencing an increase in income than the baseline<sup>10</sup>.

Comparisons to findings in 2021 and 2022 (Refugee Influx Emergency Vulnerability Assessment (REVA-5), the overall proportion of household food consumption increased (78 percent).

**Mentoring and Training of Rohingyas** was another objective of this program. During the qualitative discussions for the end evaluation survey, the respondents indicated that the mentorship activities had significantly influence on their ability and livelihood. They mentioned that training on vegetable gardening helped them in growing fresh vegetables in their households, for which, they can now consume more vegetables. Around 90 per cent<sup>11</sup> of the Rohingya beneficiaries reported having gained knowledge from the mentoring initiatives.

Negative environmental impacts are mitigated through land/forest rehabilitation was one important objective of this program. Different initiatives were taken for environmental restoration through land stabilization,

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<sup>9</sup> SAFEPlus End Evaluation survey, October 2022

<sup>10</sup> Due to the lack of a formal baseline survey for these activities, the REVA 2019 was used as baseline for income of the host communities.

<sup>11</sup> SAFEPlus End Evaluation survey, October 2022

restoration and erosion control, slope stabilization, and reforestation of damaged areas. A total of 2,000 Ha of land have been planted in 1,016 sites and 313 Ha of land have been stabilized. Using the CO<sub>2</sub> emission factor for firewood in Bangladesh and LPG<sup>12</sup>, a reduction of 586 per cent of CO<sub>2</sub> emission<sup>13</sup> was visible among the Rohingya households.

## **I. Purpose**

Since August 2017 more than 900,000 Rohingya people have been forced to flee from Myanmar Rakhine state to the economically fragile district Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh within a few months. As a result, they became reliant on aid from the international community and the hospitality of the Government of Bangladesh. Rohingya refugees were almost completely reliant on the distribution of non-cooked food including rice and pulses to cover their meals with only a few organizations supplying fuel for cooking. It was regularly reported that refugees were unable to prepare their rations, skipped meals multiple times a month, or ate undercooked food in response to the increasing wood fuel shortage. Additionally, venturing out to nearby forests for firewood collection increased their vulnerability to unsafe lifesaving risks like Gender-Based Violence (GBV), elephant attacks, kidnapping, extortion, and trafficking risks. Apart from the shelter and nutrition concerns, the refugee settlement was observed to be a threat to the environment and its biodiversity, as more than 7,000 hectares of forest had been extremely damaged or permanently lost.

In view of this situation, the concept of Safe Access to Fuel and Energy Plus (SAFEPlus) program emerged to address the issues by introducing alternative clean cooking fuel, livelihood opportunities for host communities, increased knowledge on self-reliance for refugees, and environmental restoration.

SAFEPlus is a multi-agency (involving, Food and Agriculture Organization, International Organization for Migration and the World Food Programme), multi-donor, and Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) funded programme whose primary aim is to contribute to the overall food and nutrition security, empowerment and resilience of 125,000 (100,000 Rohingya refugees and 25,000 host community members) households in Cox's Bazar.

The three UN agencies had leveraged their technical expertise for implementing the SAFEPlus program, i.e. IOM utilized the existing WFP SCOPE e-voucher system to provide LPG to the Rohingya. WFP and IOM worked together on the implementation of empowerment and skills development activities for the Rohingya population, with a particular focus on young adults and women. During this period FAO successfully utilized its technical capacity in agriculture production, marketing, and reforestation/land stabilization. FAO has a strong relationship with the Ministries of Agriculture and Environment Forestry and Climate Change which was utilized to build the capacity of farmers thus the beginning of the multi-year process of rehabilitating damaged forest areas and agricultural land.

## **II. Assessment of Programme Results**

### **i) Narrative reporting on results:**

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<sup>12</sup> Bhattacharya, S.C., Abdul Salam, P., Sharma, M., 2000. Emissions from biomass energy use in some selected Asian countries. *Energy* 25, 169–188. doi:10.1016/S0360-5442(99)00065-1

<sup>13</sup> For calculation of CO<sub>2</sub> emission, the average use of cooking fuel in terms of Kg per household per month was calculated. From the Bhattacharya et al, 2000 study, the CO<sub>2</sub> emission factor of that fuel was identified. These factors illustrate the CO<sub>2</sub> emission in terms of burning a particular type of fuel. The formula is CO<sub>2</sub> emission from Fuel<sub>n</sub> (Kg/Month/HH) = Amount of Fuel<sub>n</sub> used (Kg/Month/HH) X CO<sub>2</sub> emission factor of Fuel<sub>n</sub>. In case of multiple types of fuel used, the resulted CO<sub>2</sub> emissions were added to get the total household CO<sub>2</sub> emission per month in terms of Kg.

**Outcomes:** SAFEPlus program is successfully achieved its objectives in the given implementation period. Expenditure linked to cooking fuel was decreased for all of the Rohingya households and 80 per cent for the vulnerable host community households. Around 72 per cent of the host community beneficiaries were found experiencing increased their income. Women and girl beneficiaries from the host community reported that access to LPG canisters reduced their cooking time, pollution from smoke, and accumulation of dirt in the kitchen, thus leading to an overall reduction in the time spent in the kitchen which was spent for income generation activities. Around 90 per cent of the Rohingya beneficiaries reported having gained knowledge from the mentoring initiatives. Around 313 Ha out of the target 500 Ha lands inside the camp was covered under the slop stabilisation and reforestation activity. SAFEPlus was successful in reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emission, primarily from reducing the firewood use as cooking fuel. This reduction was significant among the Rohingya households (around 586%). In case of host communities, the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emission was found to be around 111 per cent.

**Objective 1: Targeted households, especially women-headed and vulnerable households, have monthly decreased expenditures related to firewood purchase and increased nutritional intake for HH members.**

The objective is to address the cooking fuel needs of Rohingya and initially the host communities by introducing alternative clean cooking fuels and technology. The program was initiated to address the urgent need of a lack of cooking fuel among Rohingya residing in the camps. The shortage was compounded by the devastation, in the early response, of forests surrounding the camps which were consumed as cooking fuel. This situation became a source of tension for the host communities in the local unions surrounding the camps.

Distribution activities have been implemented directly by IOM, while the Liquidified Petroleum Gas (LPG) supply chain is contracted and managed by the private sector vendor NF Enterprises. The program uses the WFP SCOPE e-voucher system to redeem refills using an entitlement card and electronic voucher system. The SCOPE system allows beneficiaries to access vouchers for entitlements on the SCOPE assistance card. Using the cards, beneficiaries can collect their gas cylinders refills at their designated LPG depots. The system provides a complete beneficiary receipt record which prevents duplication of entitlement distributions and allows for tracking household distributions to support the programmes help desk issues. The use of WFP's SCOPE e-voucher system allows connection with households' registration information from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). This access worked to assure household eligibility and avoid duplications of assistance.

Throughout the project consistently distributed LPG refills to all Rohingya households. In host communities, only the most vulnerable households, such as disabled and female headed households, were selected to receive LPG. In May 2021 support to the host communities was discontinued based on the community's adoption of LPG technology as a fuel source, host community access to livelihoods, and a decrease in donor program support. Compared to the 80 per cent target, 100 per cent of targeted households' expenditures linked to firewood decreased in Rohingya camps during the project period. The main reason for the overall cost decrease of cooking fuel is use of LPG. Though the percentage of decreased costs in host communities was lower than Rohingya camps. 80% of host community households experienced at least a 15% decrease in household fuel expenditures.

The LPG program continues to be an essential service in camps, meeting the energy requirements for cooking by households. Provision of LPG remains critical due to ongoing limitations on livelihoods and the receipt of non-cooked food such as rice, pulses, meat, and fresh vegetables which are distributed to the Rohingya beneficiaries in camp.

**Output 1.1: Households, especially female-headed and vulnerable, have improved access to alternative cooking fuel and facilities (IOM).**

In 2022, the IOM SAFEPlus programme provided refills and LPG cooking services exclusively in camps. A summary is as follows:

- **2022 highlighted activities from 1 January 2022 to 30 June 2022**

- 95,175 Households supported in the Rohingya camps (Host community was unsupported in 2022).
  - Breakdown of households supported
    - 69% Male
    - 31% Female
- 501,502 LPG refills were distributed.
- 15,502 EVI households were supported with porter support
  - Household breakdown of EVI supported
    - 37% Male
    - 63% Female
- 1,638 households received new LPG packages

From 1 January 2019 through 30 June 2022, the IOM SAFEPlus programme provided refills and LPG cooking services in both camps and host communities.

- **Program Total highlighted activities 1 January 2019 – 30 June 2022**

- 124,550 Households supported in the Rohingya camps and host communities.
  - Breakdown of head households supported by gender
    - 74% Male
    - 26% Female
- 2,762,883 LPG refills were distributed.
- 67,175 EVI households were supported with porter support
  - Household breakdown of EVI supported
    - 42% Male
    - 58% Female
- 131,146 new LPG packages (stove sets) were distributed which reflects stoves replaced in camp due to fires, natural disaster, theft, and general wear and tear.

With the funds received from The Bureau of Population, Refugees & Migration (PRM) USA, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), and Global Affairs Canada from January through June 2022, IOM provided refills to a total of 97,175 households in the 16 camps of IOM's area of responsibility through eleven LPG depots. IOM's Area of Responsibility (AoR) encompasses camps 8E, 8W, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 20 Extension, 22, and 24.

Not all households received refills each month and some households received two refills in a month. This distribution was based on cycles designed to meet the household's energy needs. The refill frequency was designed following post distribution monitoring completed in 2019 which revealed LPG cylinders were being returned with fuel remaining. IOM's distribution cycle is developed quarterly so LPG depot managers can inform beneficiaries of their next refill date each time they receive their refill. To increase

Household Size	Refill Frequency (duration of days)
2+	47
4+	38
6+	32
8+	29
10+	24
12+	21

beneficiary awareness mobilization teams, go to the camp sub-blocks to inform beneficiaries of ongoing distributions per household size.

Throughout the complete program cycle of SAFEPlus IOM's LPG distribution program was funded by the United States of America (USA), Australia, Japan, Netherlands, Korea/JTS, European Union (EU), Global Affairs Canada (GAC), Norway, Sweden and The United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) and Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO). While other donors have provided bilateral support; Canada, Norway, Sweden and DFID supported the programme through the Multi-Partners Trust Fund (MPTF). Korea/JTS provided in-kind donations of 170,000 LPG cooking stoves.

The LPG distribution programme maintained multiple channels for feedback and complaints from households through help desks located at each LPG distribution point, referrals from site management, Communication with Communities referrals, and direct referrals from Protection sector focal. Based on the feedback and complaints the team works to directly resolve issues and take actions to address them as required. If the complaints and feedback received are related to information sharing (i.e. queries related to the LPG distribution cycle and location), the responses were given immediately. In cases of damage and/or loss of the LPG cylinder, joint assessments were conducted with Shelter/NFI, Site Management, and Protection teams to verify the cases, and follow up assistance is based on assessment findings. In cases related to the SCOPE card, the concerns were referred to WFP, while matters related to UNHCR attestation cards were referred to UNHCR. In 2022 IOM received a higher level of access to the SCOPE system which led to decreased time lapses between complaint and feedback. On average, at the 11 distribution points that IOM operates, 545 cases are received related to SCOPE card issues and all cases were resolved within two weeks since the receipt of the cases in close coordination with WFP's SCOPE team. At the distribution points some queries are received at the general feedback and complaints desk, majority are related to next distribution dates and cycles which is responded immediately by the dedicated staff.

The programme continually worked to strengthen community mobilization for information sharing in camp with increased outreach on multiple levels, including CiC, stakeholders (such as Site Management and Protection), Majlis (main block and sub-block), Imams, female community representatives in sub-block levels and household visit. The community mobilization was implemented through the meetings and door-to-door visits and the focus was mainly on informing the distribution cycle, fire safety measures in the kitchen spaces and maintenance of the cooking stoves and LPG related accessories.

In order to ensure efficient usage and to reduce vulnerability to fire, all beneficiaries were trained on efficient cooking methods, health and nutrition practices, fire safety and environmental conservation. After the large multi camp fire in 2021, a pilot initiative was incorporated into the program to provide steel fire shields to provide a fireproof barrier between stove and flammable shelter materials.

In a continuation of safety for the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, distributions at each depot continues to maintain evenly spaced distributions, based on increased mobilization efforts, to avoid overcrowding and allow for social distancing. All depots maintain a mask policy for distributions and hand washing or hand sanitizing and temperature taking for depot entry remains in effect.

Moving forward under Phase II of this project (01 January 2022 – 31 December 2024), IOM continues to plan to increase the number of depots to improve services in camp by reducing travel time for beneficiaries in camp. Camps with shared depots tend to trend toward large distributions and can suffer from variation in refill frequency. As funding allows and pressure cooker piloting data becomes available IOM looks to the possibility of incorporating pressure cookers into the program to improve overall sustainability and environmental protection.



## **Objective 2: Local Agriculturists are engaged in markets and benefit from income generation.**

Vulnerable households from the host communities were capacitated in a number of on-farm and off-farm activities under the SAFEPlus project. At the same time, appropriate market linkages were also established for them with a view to increase income for these households. The end evaluation identified the average income of the host community households participating in the project activities increased to BDT 16,320 per month. This was found 23 per cent more than the baseline figure (no formal baseline survey was done so REVA 2019 was used as baseline figure for income of the host communities). Around 72 per cent of the beneficiaries were found to be experiencing an increase in income than the baseline figure. During the beginning of the influx, whereas the suppliers used to bring the food commodities from outside the district. Once the host community beneficiaries started producing additional food commodities due to the skills training, provision of inputs and other supports, linkages were facilitated of these beneficiaries with the suppliers of WFP food shops, who started procuring commodities from host communities.

### **Output 2.1: Vulnerable households in host communities are provided with training and means for livelihood activities (IOM, WFP)**

IOM reached 6,352 (5,173 women, 1,179 men) beneficiaries from the host community in 2020 through livelihood assistance to improve their economic conditions and earn sustainable livelihoods. The program supported the beneficiaries through productive asset support, soft skills, technical skills, and vocational skills to achieve the desired objectives. In the reporting year 2021, IOM and partners provided follow-up support (additional training, inputs, grants) and monitoring of the activities to ensure sustainable graduation from the program. The following forms of training were provided:

**Technical and Vocational Training:** This included computer skills, plumbing, repair of machineries. These trainings have demand in the local community enabling them to apply their skills as soon as the training is completed. After receiving the training, the beneficiaries started their income utilizing the inputs support they received. The endline evaluation suggests that, around 72 per cent of the host community beneficiaries were found experiencing the income increase due to technical and vocational training.

**Transferable Soft Skills:** A wide range of transferrable soft skills were provided to the beneficiaries based on their needs and opportunities in the market. Beneficiaries had the opportunity to gather the knowledge and become skilled for sustainable livelihoods in the long run. Some of the notable trainings are various crafting, sewing, tailoring, food processing, vegetable cultivation, poultry, livestock, fisheries.

**Productive asset support:** Realizing the need for productive asset support (equipment/ cash grants) to utilize the new skills and knowledges of beneficiaries, IOM provided various equipment (tools, raw materials, livestock, seeds) to jump start the business of beneficiaries. Additional cash grants support was provided to beneficiaries ranging from 9,000 BDT to 35,000 BDT based on their business plan and needs.

IOM, in coordination with implementing partners, undertook the following activities for 6,352 beneficiaries in 2021:

- A total of 650 beneficiaries were provided different training on handicraft, Nakshi (design work on cloth using thread and needle), Making Fishing Nets, Small business (fruit, honey, jhal muri, ready food, fish, grocery, laundry), tailoring, and vegetable growing to 2,000 beneficiaries in Ukhiya Upazila by IOM partner SHED in Teknaf Upazila.

- United Purpose provided training to 2,959 beneficiaries on autorickshaw repairing, carpentry, CNG autorickshaw repairing, computer servicing, electrical mechanical, food processing, livestock rearing, mobile servicing, poultry & livestock rearing and marketing, vegetable cultivation, and vermicomposting in Ukhiya and Teknaf Upazilas.
- PROTTYASHI provided training to 705 beneficiaries on sewing, screen and block printing, dyeing, hand stitching and wall-mat making, hand embroidery/karchupi, machine embroidery, wooden craft, jute craft, bamboo craft, catering services for youth groups, food processing, natural craft making, electric wiring and electronics for youths, and plumbing in Ukhiya Upazila.
- Few beneficiaries received unconditional cash grants from SAFEPlus during COVID-19 but no training were provided to them.

A follow-up assessment found that the average income per beneficiary/household was BDT 5,051 in early 2021, which increased to BDT 6,896 - BDT 13,860 in the targeted community during the mid of 2021, showing a positive impact of the project. However, a devastating flood in June 2021 caused havoc to the livelihoods of the targeted communities, destroying crop fields, and fisheries, death to the poultry/ livestock, and damages to the business centers. The project did not foresee such risks and could not deliver proper support to sustain the shocks as this was in the last month of the intervention.

WFP reached 15,902 vulnerable host community households to ensure they have received vocational and life-skills and monthly subsistence allowances of BDT 1,050 (per month). Participants also received a cash grant/business capital of BDT 15,000 to start their own businesses. Under the Enhancing Food Security and Nutrition (EFSN) model, women have access to entrepreneurial skill development and life skills training. They are supported with a monthly subsistence allowance of BDT 1,050 (US\$ 12) and are organized into Self-Help Groups which help enhance financial accountability through monthly savings and as a social safety net. Following training and the submission of a business plan, each member receives a substantive cash grant of 18,000 (US\$ 212) to start income generating activities. Each woman also receives a group grant of BDT 5,000 (US\$ 58) to invest in collective group businesses.

WFP supported the formation of 382 Self-Help Groups through which 9,917 women collectively saved USD 173,253. WFP has transitioned from cash-in-hand to mobile money payment systems to improve control and assurance mechanisms for cash transfer and mainstream financial and digital inclusion for the local population.

87 men and 413 women farmers reached under the climate adaptive agriculture project. In June 2021, WFP launched a climate adaptive agriculture project which aims to enhance the food security of farmers through innovative agricultural techniques for the production of saline-resistant crops. WFP reached 413 women and 83 men farmers through this project in 2021.

## **Output 2.2: Local agriculturalists, especially women, have access to innovative climate-sensitive agricultural practices and high-demand and nutrient crops (FAO).**

To improve the livelihoods of 1,440 farmers (of whom 506 women) in Ukhiya and Teknaf sub-districts of Cox's Bazar, the project focused on improving their access to technical assistance, production inputs and agricultural extension services. Furthermore, the project focused on connecting the beneficiaries with both the public and the private sectors. The beneficiary households were organized into farmers' groups (20 households per group) to enable agricultural extension agents to facilitate their access to relevant services. In total, 72 farmers' groups were formed, including all 1,440 farming households (representing 7,200 people). The

1,440 households were direct project beneficiaries and all of them were smallholder farmers (owning 0.5–1 Ha or less).

The targeted farming households received training on climate-sensitive agriculture, high-value crop production, post-harvest management for value addition, integrated farming practices, business planning, and the use of information and communication technologies platforms and applications (focusing on agriculture). Moreover, a total of 50 demonstrations were facilitated by the project, focusing on high-value and nutrient-dense crops. The project also trained the beneficiaries on improved farm production, collective action and market linkages, among other topics. The beneficiaries were also trained on conducting cost-benefit analysis to enable them to gain deeper understanding of business scenarios for particular farming practices and their environmental and geographical contexts.

**Output 2.3: Local agriculturalists have access to inputs (seeds, irrigation, and production technology) to develop high demand crops (FAO).**

During the project implementation period, FAO distributed a total of 1.02 tonnes of hybrid winter and summer vegetable seeds (i.e. bitter melon, cauliflower, eggplant, okra, radish, sweet melon and tomato) to the 1,440 beneficiary households to support vegetable production at the household level. To contribute to reducing production costs and increasing efficiency in agricultural activities, the project in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture (DAE), distributed a total of 110 units of farm machinery (48 units of power tillers, 46 units of water pumps and 16 units of power rice threshers) to 48 farmers' groups. A total of 960 farming households directly benefited by receiving services from the distributed productive assets.

**Output 2.4: Host community groups are provided with material and training on sustainable fishing technologies (FAO).**

The project provided improved pond aquaculture training to 280 pond fish farmers. Additionally, the provided capacity-building training to 234 small-scale dry fish producers and their workers on hygienic dry fish production. Both the skills development training activities were conducted together with the respective Upazila Fisheries Officer of the Department of Fisheries. After completion of the training sessions, the fish farmers were provided with production inputs, including 63 tonnes of fish feed and fishnets for sampling purposes, pH meter for testing water quality and water pumps for maintaining water level on the ponds. The project impact study observed that the farmers are producing on average 10.4 kg per decimal, which is higher than the figures reported in the Department of Fisheries' statistical yearbook for Cox's Bazar 2018 (8.2 kg/decimal). The farmers also grew vegetables on ponds' dyke for household consumption and income from the surplus sale. For dry fish groups, the project provided small mesh nets and frames for drying fish. Additionally, the project provided 17 dry fish producers with 17 sets of bamboo fish drying racks. The project monitoring report observed that dry fish producers were able to produce hygienic and toxin-free dry fish products. In addition, the project has provided life jackets, torches and technical training on safety at sea to 988 individual fisherfolk.

**Output 2.5: Strengthening the collective capacity of agricultural producer groups and enhance income generation through improved market linkages and food security of marginal farmers' households (FAO).**

In 2019, the project organized stakeholders' consultation workshops and identified the potential areas for engagement of the private sector entities with the project beneficiaries. The project reached 1,440 smallholder farmers through group activation, on-farm training, improved learning and good practices, awareness of climate resilience, high-yield vegetable production, agro-mechanization support, distribution of behavioral change communication materials, establishing aggregation centers, and connecting with local markets.

Moreover, FAO focused on building the collective capacity of the farmer groups to enable them to increase production and income by adopting integrated approaches. The project facilitated the establishment of ten aggregation centers in the project areas (i.e. Ukhiya and Teknaf sub-districts). The Aggregation Center Management Committee established linkages with 63 farmer groups, comprising of 1,260 farmers and connected them with markets through these aggregation centers, which helped farmers obtain better prices for their products, connect with buyers, output markets, local buyers and wholesalers. A total of 63 farmers' groups established access to WFP-led retailers' outlets in Rohingya camps and local markets through the ten established aggregation centers. From January 2021 to June 2022, a total of 7,000 tonnes of vegetables were sold, including 30 tonnes in Rohingya camps and the remaining 6,970 tonnes were sold in the local markets and the distance markets through buyers.

**Output 2.6: Market actors are motivated to invest in the supply chain benefiting the production and market access for 5 key supply chains (FAO)**

FAO supported the producer groups in establishing direct linkages between growers and buyers, helping farmers to produce demand-oriented products. Direct connection with the market actors contributed to improving pricing and securing long-term supply chain agreements between various market actors. Moreover, FAO conducted ten market linkage meetings between and within local traders, aggregation centers and farmers, engaging a total of 205 participants (of whom 40 women). As a result, the market actors provided high-quality inputs (e.g. vegetable seeds and livestock feed), and outputs (high-quality products with better prices), which have contributed to strengthening the performance of value chains. Four private companies supplied high-quality seeds, organic fertilizers, pesticides, fish and poultry feed, as well as post-harvest processing materials/equipment, among other products. In addition, three contractual agreements were signed between retailers and farmers' groups and five contractual agreements were signed between private sector companies and farmers' groups. Moreover, with the support of four private entities, the project provided ten vaccination kits to local service providers providing vaccination services. In turn, the local service providers supported the farmers through the vaccination of their poultry flocks. Additionally, ten market aggregators started supporting farmers in accessing high-quality inputs and selling farmers' products in the local markets and within Rohingya camps through aggregation centres. A total of 20 farm mechanics supported the farmers in repairing and maintaining farm machinery.

**Output 2.7: Government local service provision capacity for technical support to farmer groups is expanded in 4 sub-districts (FAO)**

During the project period, the DAE organized agro-technology fairs at district and sub-district levels each year except in 2020 (due to the COVID-19 pandemic). The farmers identified potential private sector partners and learned about agro-technologies through their participation in agro-technology fairs. Furthermore, the project organized two village-level inputs and technology promotion fairs with the participation of farmers' groups, retailers, dealers, and representatives from agro-based companies to showcase their products and relevant technologies. Moreover, the project organized learning visits for the DAE staff, inputs retailers, farmers' leaders and local service providers to learn about improved farming technologies in different geographical contexts. Additionally, the project organized two local learning visits focusing on high-value crops and commercial farm production in hilly areas. A total of 20 farmers' leaders and six participants from DAE, DoF and partner NGOs observed vegetable cultivation in hill tracts area and practices of advanced agricultural technology.

FAO organized a two-day technical training for government officials from DAE on information communication technology in the agriculture sector. As a result, the technical capacities of DAE officials were strengthened to provide capacity-building and innovative extension services to their local communities. A total

of 76 staff from DAE, Department of Livestock Services (DLS) and DoF, including 50 sub-assistant agriculture officers participated in the training.

### **Objective 3: Mentoring and Training of Rohingyas**

IOM and WFP provided mentoring on basic skills to 7,042 Rohingya women. IOM provided mentoring and self-reliance support for the Rohingya refugee households on a number of skills, including soft skills and income generating skills. Around 90 per cent of the Rohingya beneficiaries reported having gained knowledge from the mentoring initiatives. Around 92 per cent of male beneficiaries and 87 per cent of female beneficiaries could recall the mentoring and self-resilience activities that were carried out with them from SAFEPlus project. During the qualitative discussions, the respondents indicated that the mentorship activities had a significant influence on their ability and livelihood. Training on vegetable gardening helped them in growing fresh vegetables at their households, for which, they can now consume more vegetables. They mentioned that the activities enhanced their confidence and income generating skills for which they would be able to be engaged in income earning activities like sewing, and handicraft.

#### **Output 3.1: Rohingyas are mentored in Basic skills (IOM, WFP)**

IOM and its partners supported to 5,000 Rohingya women beneficiaries through the provision of sustainable self-reliance options in 2020-2021. During the project period, micro-gardening initiatives were established and the beneficiaries received training and agricultural inputs along with technical support and supervision. The project provided 1 bucket, 1 watering can, 8 different types of seeds, bamboo for fencing and food during the training sessions for Kharif-1 in 2020. Beneficiaries started their preparatory work, such as land preparation, mixing of fertilizers fencing, and seed sowing under the supervision of technical assistant and the team. The project also established 15 community gardens in 5 camps where suitable land was available. In every group, there were 3-6 members. After receiving training in different camps, seed producer beneficiaries planted vegetable seeds for seed production. Seed producers were selected from the participants who were proactive during the training. Seed preserving pots were distributed to the beneficiaries for properly storing vegetable seeds for the next season for them and for their neighbors for future use. It helped the beneficiaries to ensure the sustainability of future use of seeds.

The project selected 50 male beneficiaries who were interested, and business minded as vegetable traders to receive short entrepreneurship training on trading. After receiving training, vegetables traders started trading fresh leafy and fruit vegetables at different collection points in camps with support from the project.

2,042 refugees were supported by WFP through Recycling, Centre Based Training and Disability and Age Inclusion projects with 80 per cent women engagement. Under the self-reliance programme, WFP supports refugees to enhance their resilience through skills development activities such as homestead vegetable gardening, aquaculture and tailoring. The self-reliance activities faced a long-term delay in the implementation due to the government restrictions on such activities in the camps at the beginning of the project phase. Activities were also suspended in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions and WFP reprogrammed part of its self-reliance activities to engage beneficiaries in mask-making. 700,000 masks were produced for which raw material was provided from the SafePlus grant involving 84 Rohingya beneficiaries. The masks were distributed to the community members. In 2021 WFP scaled-up self-reliance activities targeting at-risk youth (both women and men), and extremely vulnerable individuals, such as older people, persons with disabilities and women-headed households.

### **Objective 4: Negative environmental impacts are mitigated through land/forest rehabilitation. (FAO)**

The impacts of environmental degradation have been mitigated through successful plantation programmes, providing ecosystem services as well as livelihoods opportunities to the local communities. With the support of WFP and IOM's cash-for-work activities, and technical guidance from FAO, 2,313 Ha of damaged forest lands have been rehabilitated (both inside and outside the camps) using approximately 2.9 million seedlings. The average survival percentage of the seedlings for these rehabilitation works was 81 percent based on an annual assessment that was conducted during 2019–2022. Technical guidelines based on site-specific assessments were published to ensure the sustainability of the achieved results. The Government nurseries (20) and private nurseries (64) were supported by providing establishment and technical inputs, enabling them to produce approximately three million high-quality indigenous seedlings. The initiative has contributed to the ecosystem restoration efforts of FAO and protected the livelihoods of forest-dependent host communities. Moreover, with the support of the Forest Department and the International Union for Conservation of Nature, the project developed guidelines for spatial monitoring and reporting tools for hill and plain land forest areas.

#### **Output 4.1: Land stabilization, restoration, and erosion control measures conducted (FAO, IOM, WFP)**

In 2018, FAO conducted satellite imagery analysis to categorize the areas inside the camps according to the level of degradation. In 2019, technical specifications for land stabilization and greening the camps in Cox's Bazar were developed. This allowed SAFE Plus partners to restore 2,313 Ha of degraded forest land, which accounted for 100 percent of the target outside of the camps and 63 percent of the target inside the camps. An innovative Dry Season Planting Framework was developed and successfully piloted, expanding the plantation window from only the monsoon season to covering the full year. Challenges to achieving the target inside the camps were mainly due to COVID-19 restrictions and a decrease in the available areas for plantation due to the closure of the two camps. Despite these challenges, the activities under Output 4.1 contributed to increasing the vegetative coverage and reduced landslide vulnerability.

#### **Output 4.2: Cash for Work programme support land/forest rehabilitation activities/tree nurseries (FAO, IOM, WFP)**

IOM and its partners involved the local vulnerable communities through the cash for work to enable them earn income and continue their livelihoods. Throughout the project period, IOM utilized 68,608 (58,167 man-days and 10,441 woman-days) cash for work person days to support land/forest rehabilitation and stabilization, tree nurseries.

FAO: During the project period (2019–2021), 178 322 cash-for-work days were achieved, exceeding the target of 150 400. The work focused on reforestation, maintenance activities, and the establishment of nurseries. Consequently, Output 4.2 has positively contributed to improving environmental-friendly livelihoods opportunities.

WFP utilized 178,822 person days engaged in Cash-for-Work to implement the program. Under the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) programme, WFP provided care and maintenance support in the camps, including dry season plantation.

In the host community, WFP provided: plantation watchers to look after new plantation sites; weeding; plantation and maintenance support in ranges managed and owned by the Bangladesh Forest Department

including some 2,000 ha areas of forest; earth filling in Garjan tree forests; fire line cutting; and waste collection from Medakaccapia National Park and Fashiya Khali Wildlife Sanctuary in coordination with Bangladesh Forest Department.

In coordination with the Bangladesh Forest Department (BFD) and under the technical leadership of FAO, WFP contributed to the greening of the camps through plantation initiatives. Inside the camps, in collaboration with all actors, WFP completed around 300 ha plantation (planting more than 800,000 seedlings) and continues the care and maintenance of around 90 ha of plantation. WFP ensured plantation sites were maintained year-round through its cash-for-work programme.

#### **Output 4.3: Nurseries are producing planting materials (FAO)**

The target of supporting 20 nurseries was achieved by engaging 440 workers (of whom more than 45 percent women), including 283 seasonal workers and 157 permanent workers. For sustainability of the results, 22 Nursery Management Teams (NMT) were organized under four Nursery Associations, and a total of 64 host community nursery owners were trained on nursery management skills. A recent impact study conducted by FAO indicated that 93 percent of nursery workers benefited economically from job opportunities created in the nurseries and 79 percent of trained people in the NMT have improved their knowledge related to the financial, organizational, and operational management of nurseries. As a result, the nurseries currently produce approximately 3 million seedlings per year, increasing profits, contributing to ecosystem restoration and mitigating the impacts of climate change. Moreover, for the first time in Cox's Bazar, FAO has conducted a floral biodiversity assessment in Cox's Bazar South Forest Division. This has supported the Forest Department in determining the list of species for the rehabilitation of degraded forest land, inside and outside the camps, and the established nurseries are now producing the selected seedlings.

#### **Output 4.4: Slope stabilization and reforestation of damaged areas (FAO)**

SAFE Plus programme reached its target of restoring 2 000 Ha of degraded forest land and the plants had a 67 percent survival rate (outside the camp). In response to relatively low survival rates, FAO and WFP conducted gap-filling support and increased maintenance of the sites. An assessment revealed that 50 percent of forest-dependent communities around the planted areas are relying on fuelwood, indicating that fuelwood collection is a source of deforestation. For the sustainability of the plantations, a total of 80 community co-management groups were formed, engaging a total of 4 100 people, who are involved as a workforce of the Cox's Bazar Forest Department to protect the social forestry programme of the Government of Bangladesh. A total of 116 participants from these groups received hands-on training on sustainable forest management.

#### **Output 4.5: Soil conservation and land stabilization (FAO)**

FAO provided technical support and planting materials to stabilize a total of 313 Ha of land inside the camps, which is below the target of 500 ha. Both biological and biomechanical land stabilization methods were used to stabilize gentle and steep slopes. Information related to the appropriate methods and relevant guidance were shared with all relevant partners through the Energy and Environment Technical Working Group since 2018. The target for households benefitting from the soil conservation and land stabilization activities was reached with 100 community co-management groups formed (87 groups by WFP partners and 13 groups by IOM

partners) who have been working on maintenance activities since 2018. An assessment was conducted to evaluate the performance of the different approaches to land stabilization inside the camps, and a nature-based mixed plantation approaches using site-specific native species was documented as the best option.

### **Qualitative assessment:**

SAFEPlus was implemented in a partnership approach and from different contexts, during the implementation period numerous positive changes have been recorded, and this program is a successful one program. WFP's SCOPE e-voucher system allows connection with households' registration information of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). This access worked to assure household eligibility and avoid duplications of assistance. The design of SAFEPlus was responsive to the identified needs of the target population – both immediate and longer-term needs. SAFEPlus partners closely worked with Forest Department (FD) to address the environmental degradation and deforestation caused from the influx. With the support of WFP and IOM's cash-for-work activities, and technical guidance from FAO damaged forest lands have been rehabilitated inside and outside the camps. IOM and WFP provided mentoring on basic skills to Rohingya women. IOM provided mentoring and self-reliance support for the Rohingya refugee households on a number of skills, including soft skills and income generating skills. Around 90 per cent of the Rohingya beneficiaries reported having gained knowledge from the mentoring initiatives. Women and girl beneficiaries from host community reported that access to LPG canisters reduced their cooking time, pollution from smoke, and accumulation of dirt in the kitchen, thus leading to overall reduction in the time spent in kitchen. This also helped women in engaging with skill development and income generation. The introduction of LPG to Rohingya households reduced the firewood collection from forests, and, thereby, reduced the risks for women and children quite significantly for being victims of violence. Host community beneficiaries engaged in vegetable, fish and livestock production and have been selling the commodities to the vendors, who later sell those the suppliers of WFP e-voucher shops for Rohingya camps. Some of the vendors were found selling directly to the Rohingya households in the camps.

The programme closely worked with different key Ministries like, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR), the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock (MoFL), the Department of Forest (DoF), Upazila Nirbahi Officers (UNO), and Union Parishad Chairpersons'. At Cox's Bazar coordination level, the programme worked with the Food Security, Shelter and Non-Food Item (NFI) sectors and the Energy and Environment and Livelihoods Technical Working Groups through the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG). The programme also closely worked with the private sector such as contracting LPG companies to manage the supply chain.



## ii) Indicator Based Performance Assessment:

Using the **Programme Results Framework from the Project Document / AWP**s - provide details of the achievement of indicators at both the output and outcome level in the table below. Where it has not been possible to collect data on indicators, clear explanation should be given explaining why.

	<b><u>Achieved</u> Indicator Targets</b>	<b>Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)</b>	<b>Source of Verification</b>
<p><b>Goal:</b> Contribute to the overall food and nutrition security, skill development, and resilience of 125,000 Rohingya and host community households in Cox's Bazar.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> % of targeted households who adopt one or more negative food-related coping strategies</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> 70% (WFP Refugee Influx Vulnerability Assessment, REVA study, Dec 2017)</p> <p><b>Target:</b> 50%</p>	64%	<p>While Mid Term Reviews shows negative food-related coping, mechanisms had improved to 48%. the percentage had increased to 64% by the end period evaluation.</p> <p>Beneficiaries attributed this to the price increases of food. Market data indicates a 21% inflationary cost of to the average food basket between the period of July 2021 – July 2022.</p>	SAFEPlus end line evaluation
<p><b>Objective 1:</b> Targeted households, especially women-headed and vulnerable households, have monthly decreased expenditures related to firewood purchase and increased nutritional intake for HH members.</p> <p><b>Indicator :</b> % of targeted households who report decreased monthly expenditures linked to firewood purchase</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> 0</p> <p><b>Target:</b> 80%</p>	<p>A 100 % decrease in fuel expenditures by households in the Rohingya camps was achieved as the total population in camp was eligible to receive LPG cooking sets and regular scheduled refills.</p> <p>Though the percentage of decreased costs in host communities was lower than in Rohingya camps. 80% of host community households experienced at least a 15% decrease in household fuel expenditures.</p>	No variance	SAFEPlus end line evaluation

	<b><u>Achieved</u> Indicator Targets</b>	<b>Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)</b>	<b>Source of Verification</b>
<p><b>Output 1.1:</b> Households, especially female headed and vulnerable, have improved access to alternative cooking fuel and facilities</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> # of targeted households (disaggregated by sex) with cooking set and LPG provision for 6 months</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> 0</p> <p><b>Target:</b> 125,000 households (40% female)</p>	<p><b>Indicator 1.1.1</b> 124,550 (95,175 Rohingya and 29,735 host community) households were supported where 92,167 (74% were male headed households, and 32,383 (26%) were female headed households.</p> <p>In the Rohingya community 31% of the head of households are female and 69% are male.</p> <p>In the host community 20% of the heads of household were female and 80 % were male.</p>	<p>Total households target and percentages were unmet due to actual populations included distribution.</p> <p>In the Rohingya community this basis directly reflects household statistics for the camps.</p> <p>In the host community head of households was unmet as most vulnerable households were included as beneficiaries in the program.</p>	LPG distribution records
<p><b>Objective 2:</b> Local agriculturists are engaged in markets and benefiting from income generation</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> % of targeted household from host community who report increase in income after participation in the project.</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> 0</p> <p><b>Target:</b> 60%</p>	<p>72%</p> <p>The end evaluation identified around 72% of the beneficiaries were found experiencing an increase in income than the baseline.</p>	No variance	SAFEPlus end line evaluation
<p><b>Output 2.1:</b> Vulnerable households in host communities are provided with training and means for livelihood activities</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> # of targeted individuals, (disaggregated by sex) trained in livelihood activities and receiving start-up support</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> 0</p>	<p>IOM: 6,352 (5,173 women, 1,179 men)</p> <p>WFP: 15,902 vulnerable host community households have received vocational and life-skills and monthly subsistence allowances of BDT 1,050 (per month). Participants also received a</p>	During the reporting period, different challenges had to face to implement the program. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, some of the targets could not be achieved. FAO had to suspend livelihood activities.	Beneficiaries list, progress report

	<b><u>Achieved</u> Indicator Targets</b>	<b>Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)</b>	<b>Source of Verification</b>
<b>Target:</b> 25,000 households	<p>cash grant/business capital of BDT 15,000 to start their own business.</p> <p>WFP supported the formation of 382 SHGs through which 9,917 women collectively saved USD 173,253.</p> <p>87 men and 413 women farmers reached under the climate adaptive agriculture project</p>		
<p><b>Output 2.2:</b> Local agriculturalists, especially women, have access to innovative climate-sensitive agricultural practices and high-demand and nutrient crops (FFS)</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> # of agriculturalists supported in climate-sensitive agricultural practices and high-demand and nutrient crops production, marketing, and management</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> 0</p> <p><b>Target:</b> 1,440 agriculturalists (72 groups of 20 members)</p>	<p>FAO: 1 440 farmers (of whom 506 women) from 72 farmers' groups of farmers field schools are supported. The farmers have received training on innovative climate-sensitive agriculture, high-value crop production, post-harvest processing and value addition, among other topics.</p>	No variance	Event reports, activity reports, and monitoring report
<p><b>Output 2.3:</b> Local agriculturalists, especially women, have access to innovative climate-sensitive agricultural practices and high-demand and nutrient crops</p>	<p>FAO: 1 440 farmers were supported through the distribution of inputs throughout the project period. In the first year, the beneficiaries received seeds and micro-gardening kits. In 2020, the 1 440 farmers received vegetable seeds, irrigation, and agro-</p>	No variance	Distribution muster roll and distribution event report.

	<b><u>Achieved</u> Indicator Targets</b>	<b>Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)</b>	<b>Source of Verification</b>
<p><b>Indicator:</b> # of agriculturalists supported with inputs (seeds, plantings, irrigation and production technology)</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> 0</p> <p><b>Target:</b> 1,440 agriculturalists (72 groups of 20 members)</p>	<p>mechanization support service from the project. In 2021, they received hybrid vegetable seeds. Among the 1 440 farmers, 720 farmers received agro-mechanization support services from the project.</p> <p>Under the project 36 farmer groups have received farm machinery. Within this 36 groups total number of the individual farmer is 720. Therefore, 720 farmers got direct support through project provided farm machinery. Also, 12 neighbouring farmer groups comprised of 240 farmers within the close proximity of these 720 farmers have access to the project provided farm machinery with the rental provision. Thus in total of 960 households benefited from the distribution of farm machinery.</p>		
<p><b>Output 2.4:</b> Host community groups are provided with material and training on sustainable fishing technologies</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> # of individuals provided with fishing material and training;</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> 0,</p> <p><b>Target:</b> 200</p>	<p>FAO: 988 individuals received life jackets, torches and training throughout the project period. The project also provided capacity building training on safety at sea to the individual fishers.</p>	No variance	Program progress report
<p><b>Output 2.5:</b> Strengthening the collective capacity of agricultural producer groups and enhance income generation through</p>	<p>FAO: 16,000 farmers comprised of 798 producer groups were capacitated through training on improved production technology,</p>	<p>According to FAO's Farmer field school guideline ideally each farmer group should comprised of 20 members. According to that 800</p>	Beneficiary database and training participants' list

	<b><u>Achieved</u> Indicator Targets</b>	<b>Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)</b>	<b>Source of Verification</b>
<p>improved market linkages and food security of marginal farmers households</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> # of agricultural producer groups have strengthened capacity and enhanced income generation</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> 0</p> <p>Target: 800</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> # of marginalized farmers</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Target: 25,000</p>	<p>financial literacy, quality inputs, and market linkage.</p> <p>749 farmer groups have increased their income out of 798 groups.</p> <p>24,988 marginalized farmers in four sub-districts of Cox's Bazar (Ukhiya, Teknaf, Ramu and Cox's Bazar Sadar) were provided with training, input support and follow-up activities.</p>	<p>farmer group should have 16,000 individual farmers. However, 8 farmer groups comprised of 25 farmers in each group those who were previously working with Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) and continued to support by the project intervention. Therefore, the total number of group supported is 798 instead of 800 to keep the total number of individual farmer 16,000. Remaining 790 farmer groups comprised 20 members each group.</p> <p>12 individuals (fishers) were not available during the input distribution and training period. The individuals relocated from the project implementation area.</p>	<p>Beneficiary database, training participants' list</p>
<p><b>Output 2.6:</b> Market actors are motivated to invest in the supply chain benefiting the production and market access for 5 key supply chains</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> # of supply chains supported by the market actor's investment</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> 0</p> <p><b>Target:</b> 5</p>	<p>FAO: Three supply chains of livestock, fish and vegetable crops were supported by the farmers' group with the investment of local traders.</p>	<p>Two supply chain on fruits and cereal crop was dropped at the initial stage of the project through the recommendation of a stakeholder consultation workshop</p>	<p>Aggregation center sales report, monitoring report</p>
<p><b>Output 2.7:</b> Government local service provision capacity for technical support to farmer groups is expanded in 4 sub-districts</p>	<p>FAO: 40 local service providers were trained and equipped to extend their support to the farmers on improved farming practices</p>	<p>An additional number of local service providers was targeted to ensure that the project is able to meet the target in the event of some participants dropping out.</p>	<p>Training report</p>

	<b><u>Achieved</u> Indicator Targets</b>	<b>Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)</b>	<b>Source of Verification</b>
<b>Indicator:</b> # of farmer trainers employed in FNS <b>Baseline:</b> 0 <b>Target:</b> 30 <b>Indicator:</b> # of FNS relevant knowledge institutions supported directly activities <b>Baseline:</b> 0 <b>Target:</b> 50	<p>76 government staff from three departments (DAE, DOF, DLS) working at the field level as the extension agents were trained to support the local community.</p> <p>In both cases, the services provided by the extension workers and LSPs contributed to the food and nutrition security of the farmers in the project area.</p>	Government extension staff are sometimes transferred and sometimes positions remain vacant therefore an additional number of staff has been trained.	
<b>Objective 3:</b> Mentoring and Training of Rohingyas <b>Indicator:</b> % of targeted Rohingya households who report having gained knowledge Baseline: 0 Target: 60%	<p>90%</p> <p>Considering the overall Rohingya refugee beneficiaries, 90% beneficiaries could recall the training and thought those were effective in increasing their basic knowledge in different income generating activities.</p>	No variance	SAFEPlus end line evaluation
<b>Output 3.1:</b> Rohingyas are mentored in basics <b>Indicator:</b> # of Rohingyas who received mentoring Baseline: 0 Target: 30,000	IOM: 5,000 Rohingyas women WFP: 2,042 Total: 7,042	Due to COVID-19 restrictions, some of the activities were suspended in 2020 and 2021 so the target could not achieve.	Program progress report
<b>Objective 4:</b> Negative environmental impacts are mitigated through land/forest rehabilitation <b>Indicator:</b> # of hectares of agricultural land protected or rehabilitated Baseline: 0	FAO: 2,313 Ha rehabilitated. (2,000 Ha outside of the camp area and 313 Ha inside the camp area).	No variance	Program progress report

	<b><u>Achieved</u> Indicator Targets</b>	<b>Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)</b>	<b>Source of Verification</b>
Target: 2,000			
<b>Output 4.1</b> Land stabilization, restoration and erosion control measures conducted  Indicator: # of sites replanted  Baseline: 0  Target: 100	FAO: 1,016 sites (190 sites covered in 2019, 50 sites covered in 2020, 53 sites in 2021, and 723 sites in 2022)  IOM planted 363 sites.  WFP completed around 300 ha of plantation (planting more than 800,000 seedlings) and continues the care and maintenance of around 90 ha of plantation.	No variance	Completion report
<b>Output 4.2</b> Cash for Work programme support land/forest rehabilitation activities/tree nurseries  <b>Indicator:</b> # of Cash for Work days supporting land/forest rehabilitation activities/tree nurseries  Baseline: 0  Target: 158,400 cash-for-work days	IOM: 68,608 CFW person days (58,167 man-days and 10,441 woman-days)  WFP: 178,822 person days engaged in Cash-for-Work  FAO:	No variance	Cash for wor report
<b>Output 4.2</b> Nurseries are producing planting materials  <b>Indicator:</b> # of women reached by intervention  Baseline: TBD  Target: 20 nurseries established (200 individual workers employed, 40% women)	FAO: 440 workers (of whom 201 women) have been employed in the 20 FAO-supported nurseries.	No variance	Activities completion report

	<b><u>Achieved</u> Indicator Targets</b>	<b>Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)</b>	<b>Source of Verification</b>
<b>Output 4.3</b> Slope stabilization and reforestation of damaged areas (Community-wise targeting)  # of hectares planted # of planting materials produced Baseline: TBD Target: 2,000 Ha planted; 1,500,000 pieces of planting materials (pieces) delivered to local nurseries for year 1 and 2	FAO: 2,000 Ha (471 Ha in 2019 and 1 529 Ha in 2020) have been planted  2,847,743 planting materials were procured throughout the project period. (858,725 in 2019, 1,490,000 in 2020, 375,000 in 2021, and 124,018 in 2022).	The target has been overachieved. The number of seedlings planned for procurement could not meet the requirement to cover the target of 2,500 Ha (2,000 Ha outside camps, 500 Ha inside the camps). Hence, the procured seedlings number exceeded the target.	Activities completion report
<b>Output 4.4</b> Soil conservation and land stabilization (2,500 hectares)  <b>Indicator:</b> # of hectares of land stabilized  <b>Indicator:</b> # of communities and households benefiting from the actions Baseline: TBD Target: 500 Ha land stabilized, 100 community groups established	FAO: 313 Ha of land have been stabilized  100 community groups	Due to the establishment of infrastructure and development programmes, land available for planting inside the camps has become scarce. This has affected the progress under this activity. The project accelerated efforts to identify more land to be planted with support from Energy and Environment Technical Working Group , site management and site development team and others working inside the camps during the planting season.	Activity completion report
Refugee households feel more resilient after participating in the skills development training  <b>Indicator:</b> % of targeted refugee households who report feeling more resilient  <b>Baseline:</b> 0 <b>Target:</b> 60%	(Please see Objective 3)		



	<b><u>Achieved</u> Indicator Targets</b>	<b>Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)</b>	<b>Source of Verification</b>
<p><b>Output:</b> Refugee are provided with capacity building skills development training</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> # of Rohingya refugees who received skills development training</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> 0</p> <p><b>Target:</b> 1380</p>	(Please see Output 3.1)		

### iii) Evaluation, Best Practices and Lessons Learned

Through a third party, SAFEPlus 1 end-line evaluation was carried out in October 2022. The main findings of the evaluation were the expenditures linked to cooking fuel were found to decrease for 80% of the vulnerable host community households and all of the Rohingya households. Rohingya households were found using LPG as cooking fuel, while around 75% of the host community households were found using this. Around 72% of the host community beneficiaries were found experiencing the income increase. Around 90% of the Rohingya beneficiaries reported having gained knowledge from the mentoring initiatives under pillar 3 of the project. Around 313 Ha out of the target 500 Ha of lands inside the camp was covered under the slope stabilisation and reforestation activity. SAFEPlus was successful in reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, primarily by reducing firewood use as cooking fuel. This reduction was significant among the Rohingya households (around 586%). In the case of host communities, the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emission was found to be around 111%.

For the end-line evaluation report please see Annex 4 and for the presentation of key findings of the evaluation, please see Annex 5.

#### FAO:

An impact evaluation study was conducted to measure the impact and progress of the project at the community level. The key findings of the study are mentioned below:

- Eighty-six percent of farmers have increased their incomes by adopting improved farming practices.
- Ninety-four percent of farmers reported that they have used at least one type of technology/improved production system such as power tiller, water pump, power thresher, reaper, pheromone trap, and perching in the last 12 months. Around 118 Ha of land has been covered by an improved production system in the last 12 months.
- Ninety-six percent of farmers stated that the government extension staff have increased their number of the visits (three–four per year) compared to the beginning of the project (only once in a year) in 2019.
- Fifty-three percent of farmers have savings in the group-based bank account with average savings per member estimated at BDT 2,018.
- Sixty-eight percent of households reported that in their families women are involved in agricultural production providing activities. In particular in activities such as applying fertilizer, irrigating the crop, preparation of organic fertilizer (i.e. vermicompost), seed sowing, and weeding.
- Sixty-six percent of households are in acceptable food consumption status.
- Seventy-nine percent of nursery management team members stated that they have improved their knowledge on financial, organizational, and operational management of nursery after receiving the training.
- Ninety-three percent of nursery workers reported that they have benefitted in terms of stable and secured income after receiving the training.

#### IOM:

A major challenge for the LPG distribution program was the number of distribution depots the program was able to establish in the Rohingya camps. The program had eleven depots to cover sixteen camps. Two of these depots were communal depots shared with other organizations operating in camps. Initially this led to severe congestion and long wait times for beneficiaries. It was recognized that the distribution schedules which were created by field staff on a monthly basis were a large part of the failure in the mobilization process. The practice led to a lack of transparency for beneficiaries and contributed to total dependence on messaging from ground mobilization facilitators for information about distribution dates and times. Based on this many households followed word of mouth messaging leading to arrival on unscheduled days and times.

In the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2021, the scheduling was switched to an administrative level task. This allowed for a quarterly schedule to be created which adhered to sector LPG distribution guidelines. In creating successive on-going distribution cycles communication with beneficiaries was increased at the depot level. This systematic improvement combined with an updated beneficiary receipt token led to households leaving distributions with full knowledge of their next distribution date. This has allowed ground facilitators to focus on distribution times for sub-blocks households leading to less congested distributions and decreased waiting periods for beneficiaries.

Market-based “transactional” relationships of supplying commodities by one community that was demanded by the other is an effective approach to reduce communal conflict and improve social cohesion, as a system of “inter-dependency” is created through such relationships.

A combined package of capacity development, input distribution, technology transfer, and market linkage are an effective mechanisms for income increase for community people rather than doing livelihood interventions with standalone components. Such combined package, even with a limited outreach, can ensure sustainable access for poor and vulnerable population, particularly women, into formal value chains as a value chain actors.

Using a common and streamlined supply chain by all the UN agencies for sourcing and distributing LPG, and working directly with LPG manufacturers rather than their vendors may result in reduced cost.

Ease of access to updated data on implementation aspects of a project can be convincing for the donors, and supportive for flexibility and quick decision making for the implementors.

#### WFP:

WFP conducted an outcome monitoring assessment in April 2022 to monitor the food security and nutrition status of its Enhancing Food Security and Nutrition Programme beneficiaries in Ukhiya and Teknaf. Overall, the proportion of households with acceptable food consumption is high (78 percent). Comparisons with findings from the 2021 Refugee Influx Emergency Vulnerability Assessment (REVA-5) indicate that EFSN beneficiaries have better food consumption scores than the general population, pointing to the potential positive influence of WFP assistance in improving beneficiary households’ food access.

In addition, REVA-5 indicated that, in the general population, women-headed households reported inadequate consumption compared to male-headed households (48 versus 36 percent, respectively). This outcome monitoring assessment found no differences in adequate consumption between male- and female-headed households. As EFSN only targets women, this potentially indicates the programme’s strength in empowering women-headed households to attain food security status comparable to other segments of the population. In addition, beneficiaries reported that increased income and the skills developed from the programme have empowered them, and improved how their families and communities perceive them.

#### Recommendations moving forward:

- Strengthen the implementation of nutrition-sensitive approaches within the programme:  
While acceptable food consumption is high and suggests better food access for EFSN participants than non-participants, the consumption of protein and iron-rich foods is low among beneficiaries. Further, less than half of female beneficiaries attained minimum dietary diversity for women (MDD-W). Increased nutrition messaging and strengthening of nutrition-sensitive approaches are essential to further improving dietary diversity.
- Most beneficiaries do not hold a bank account or have linkages to financial institutions. Programme strategies aimed at the financial inclusion of female beneficiaries should increase financial literacy and identify impediments to women’s inclusion in the formal and informal financial sectors.

- More than half of households use coping strategies to meet their food needs due to drops in seasonal income and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The programme will continue to strengthen beneficiaries' capacities to cope with seasonal economic shocks, focusing on building sustainable livelihoods.
- Programme implementation approaches should consider geographical variabilities, which influence beneficiaries' food security indicators.
- Although EFSN beneficiaries scored highly on the women's autonomy index, the majority still face restrictions in moving outside the home, potentially limiting their ability to fully engage in livelihoods and income-generating activities. Keeping in mind local sensitivities, the programme shall explore culturally-and socially-sensitive ways to increase women's participation.

Further information on the [Enhancing Food Security and Nutrition \(EFSN\) Programme Outcome Assessment Report](#)

#### **iv) A Specific Story (Optional)**

FAO:

In 2018, in response to massive deforestation, and subsequent land and ecosystem degradation, FAO conducted satellite imagery analysis to classify the level of degradation, and to develop technical specifications for site-specific restoration. One major challenge to respond to the urgent need for restoration, was the fact that the plantation window in this part of Bangladesh, just covered 4 months during the monsoon, a season which also implies a huge risk of landslide. In response, FAO has developed a dry season planting mechanism that aims to extend the period. The dry season plantation pilot included two different scenarios – outside the camps (Shilkhali) and inside the refugee camp (camp-19). The activities included plantation and management, and in collaboration with the Bangladesh Forest Department (FD) and Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC) Office. The pilot also included conducting a performance evaluation of plantations for the different sites, using various species, and conducting an analysis of cost-benefit over three months between December and March 2020.

The dry season plantation mechanism included incorporating moisture retention materials and methods, for example, water hyacinth compost which is considered an invasive species, and cocoon plantation. A total of 2903 seedlings of six indigenous species were planted outside the camps, and 200 cocoons, and 17 indigenous plant species inside the camp, where the dry season plantation mechanism also was combined with a modified Miyawaki plantation method. Irrigation was continued at varying frequencies for both trials.

Overall, 100 per cent survival of seedlings was recorded in the first three months for all trials, including the control. Earthen cocoon plantations performed the best considering less irrigation was needed due to minimizing evaporation loss, which significantly reduced maintenance costs. In addition to moisture retention, the use of cocopeat and compost from water hyacinth added value as nutrients were cycled back to forest soils. In summary, dry-season planting mechanisms are more cost-efficient and less laborious when compared to using only irrigation to plant in the dry season. Furthermore, the pilot showed that the Miyawaki method combined with dry-season plantation can be used to restore the degraded hills of refugee camps throughout the dry season. This is the first Miyawaki plantation in the country with a dry season implementation. Based on the trial results, FAO prepared a training manual that can be used to spread and scale-up dry season plantations with the Bangladesh Forest Department, and other relevant stakeholders/individuals in other parts of the world.

IOM:

### **Monowara's dream of opening her own garments center**

IOM livelihoods development initiatives have contributed to empower and transform a rural housewife into a successful entrepreneur. Ms Monowara was a poor woman who has a family with six members. Her husband is a boat mechanic and the money he earned is not enough to meet the needs of a six members large family.

Eventually Monowara become associated with a livelihood program offered by IOM to improve the capacity of rural women and allow them to start their income generating activities. The program formed a ten members group and Monowara was elected as the group leader of the self-help group. Based on the interest of the group members, the program offered them Income Generating Activities (IGA) trainings on poultry, tailoring, cow rearing and other common IGA schemes. Monowara received training on cow rearing and tailoring. While the skill development is not enough to start business for poor women, the program also offered 30,000 Tk as seed grants to the



Monowara with her group members in her tailoring center



The calf has almost turned to adult

beneficiaries. Monowara bought a cow from the grants which gave birth a calf. She sold the cow at a higher price and bought three sewing machines. She always had a dream of becoming an entrepreneur and the sewing machines took her to another step toward her goal. She opened a tailoring school at her home and started to train other women. She has trained twelve women which also contributed on her income. In addition to the tailoring school, she has tailoring business. Soon she becomes a skilled tailor and the women in the community started taking her services. Now she earns nearly 15,000 Tk per month from her tailoring business.

The business not only contributed on her economic status but made her empowered too. She has a strong voice and can take decision in the family. Now her group dreams bigger to open a small garment in the locality. Monowara is a textbook example of how a proper livelihood opportunities and skills could turn a rural woman into a true entrepreneur.

WFP:

### Self-Reliance/Inclusion: Mujibur's story

**Mujibur Rahman, aged 33**, came from Myanmar at the outset of the crisis in 2017. Below he shares his story in his own words, including how the WFP disability and age inclusion initiative is transforming his life for the better:

“My hometown is Maungdaw, where I used to live with my family. I was living a decent life there with nothing to complain about. As I am deaf and also have not spoken since birth, my family uses two to three words which we use to communicate with each other.

As I grew up, I started to feel anxiety about not being able to communicate with my family and express my feelings. When the crisis in Myanmar started, we decided to come to Bangladesh.

On our way, my father became sick and subsequently died after reaching Bangladesh; my mother also died a few days later. The anxiety and depression inside me were unbearable. I couldn't share the pain and sorrow I was having with anyone, even if I tried, no one understood me. I will never forget those days.



Today, I am getting sign language training with 1,500 other refugees, and can communicate with 1,500 people which feels amazing. In the camp where I live, I have 150 other people with whom I can now share and express my feelings.

*Mujibur has his portrait taken in the WFP assistance site where he receives training (Photo credit: HelpAge/Md. Ahsan Habib).*

We also have opportunities to participate in other trainings, such as life skills and handicrafts production, which can enable me to develop my skills and earn an income as well.

No one can imagine the happiness I am experiencing right now. I wish I would have had this type of training 4-5 years ago, which I would have communicated with my friends and family. But it's never too late. I am very thankful to WFP for thinking about us, giving us hope and saving us from misery.”

For more on WFP's Disability Inclusion initiatives, see this [video](#)



## Self-Reliance/Upcycling: Setara's story

**Setara Begum (35 years old)** lives with her daughter and mother in Camp 15. She is a participant of WFP's Circular Food Assistance project in the camps, whereby refugees collect and upcycle WFP food packets (Super Cereal, fortified biscuits and RUSF) into tote bags, wallets and other innovative products for a cleaner camp environment.

Setara is one of 44 women engaged in the Camp 15 upcycling center who has seen first-hand how waste can be transformed into something useful. She is engaged in the 'sewing' section, which is the last part of the production process. It is therefore up to her to decide how the final product is going to look, and she is able to create each product with creativity and freedom.

**"I have been sewing for 25 years but I have never seen something like this [production of upcycled goods]," Setara said. "It's interesting how you can turn waste into different products. We share our own ideas [for designing] and try to create something unique every time."**

As a result of the upcycling project, Setara noticed that her neighbors now perceive aluminum wrappers differently and are reluctant to throw them away. This change in behaviour has also reduced drainage blockade problems around her home.

Setara is using the stipend she earns from her participation in the project to pay for her mother's medical treatment and other family expenses.

*For more on WFP's upcycling initiative, read this [article](#)*



*Setara shows off one of the tote bags she created using upcycled aluminium packaging from specialized WFP foods used to prevent and treat malnutrition (Photo credit: Cordaid/Riad Arif).*

## Self-Reliance in the camps: Ajida's story

**Ajida Begum, age 23**, is a refugee residing in camp 15, block H-12. Her household is headed by a woman, and consists of three individuals, including herself and her child.

Ajida's spouse abandoned her while they were in Myanmar. In 2017, it took her family three days to flee from Myanmar to Bangladesh. Later, she heard that her husband had been killed by the Myanmar army, shattering her prospects of reuniting with her husband. At that point, Ajida realized that she would be the only caregiver for her son and needed to provide financially as no other family members had a source of income.

One day, Ajida and other women received information on vocational and life skills training from one of WFP's partners, which piqued her interest. Today she is a participant of WFP's Self-Reliance programme in the camps and is currently attending training in handicrafts production. She hopes to acquire new knowledge and skills in the course, which she can use to support herself and her family members.

**"I am excited to participate in this training,"** she explained. **"My instructor trained us well. All my depression has vanished, and I now hope to become financially independent and support my family."**

Ajida is already using her newfound talent to bring some cheer to herself and those who have the chance to enjoy the fruits of her production.

**"If I consistently exercise this skill, the items will be of high quality, and I will maintain a healthy mind and body,"** she shared. **"I can also decorate my house however I like."**

While Ajida has no previous handicrafts experience, she has now learned to make macramé plant hangers, bags and decorative keyrings among other items. She now intends to launch her own business once her family is able to return to Myanmar.



Ajida practicing her newfound macramé skills to make a wall hanging (Photo credit: Action Aid Bangladesh/Bappy Hakim).

*Other WFP's self-reliance activities include [homestead gardening and aquaculture](#)*



## Livelihoods in the local Cox's Bazar community: Monowara's story

**Monowara Begum**, a participant of WFP's livelihood programme, lives in Hnila, Teknaf with her husband and three children. Monowara Begum remembers her life before joining as harsh, where it was difficult for her and her husband to make it to the end of the month. Being a day labourer, Monowara's husband wasn't making enough money to meet their family's needs. Being a mother, it was heartbreaking for Monowara to see her children struggling and she wanted to change her life for them.

The change started when Monowara was selected as a participant in the 'Enhancing Food Security and Nutrition' (EFSN) livelihoods programme. EFSN is a multiyear project that aims to empower the most vulnerable women in the local communities of Cox's Bazar with entrepreneurial skills to help them establish their own businesses and earn a stable income.

After being selected as an EFSN participant, Monowara started to participate in group meetings and other project activities, and receive a monthly subsistence allowance of BDT 1050 to buy nutritious food for her and her family. She also received a three-day entrepreneurship development training (EDT) where she learned business basics in detail. Upon completion of this training, Monowara received BDT 15,000 to establish her own businesses: vegetable cultivation as her main business and chicken rearing as a secondary endeavour.



Monowara works in the vegetable garden she cultivated with training and support from WFP (Photo credit: Shushilan/Dolon Sarkar).

With the support of her husband and family members, Monowara started cultivating vegetables in 7 decimals of land and bought ten chickens. Within a short time, she started to profit from cultivating that small piece of land, earning BDT 70,180 in total of which she reinvested BDT 26,670 back into her business. Her chicken also began to produce eggs which she and her family eat to fulfil their daily nutrition needs.

With the income she reinvested, Monowara is now cultivating vegetables on a broader scale, producing bottle gourd, pumpkin, ridge gourd and other seasonal vegetables; and bought a cow and a calf with BDT 40,000 of her profit. Now she has several businesses and earns a good income which she uses to support her children and her family. Monowara takes great pride in this achievement and wants to expand her business endeavours even more.

Monowara and the members of her EFSN women self-help group, 'School Para Fingey,' also received BDT 150,000 from WFP as a group business grant which they used to establish a joint poultry farm.

Many EFSN participants are now [selling their produce](#) to Fresh Food Corners in the refugee camps. Other WFP livelihoods participants are engaged in [sheep-farming](#) and [handicrafts production](#). Watch the videos to see the programmes in action!

## **Problem / Challenge faced:**

By 2019, Cox's Bazar had lost 6,164 Hectares of forest lands to refugee settlements, and 1,837 acres to firewood collection.<sup>14</sup> The result was not only the intense competition between refugees and local populations over dwindling sources of energy but also high expectations for the Government to mitigate tensions through rapid shock responses to local communities. Short to medium term solutions to meet the energy demands and measures towards restoration of the environment.

Planned field activities implementation faced challenges due to the COVID-19 outbreak and changing context. The changes resulted in delays in implementation and the need for reprogramming of activities. Monsoon driven plantations created challenges to meet the targets.

Securing adequate land inside the camps for plantation was not available to achieve the programme goal.

### **FAO:**

The project has faced contextual and implementation challenges. The management applied effective risk management and challenges reduction strategies which enabled smart risk-taking and adaptive management by reducing risks and challenges. After completion of Year 1 implementation, the project faced major challenges, which was the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. In response to the Government Order, FAO had to suspend livelihood activities (Objective-2), especially the training programme for the host community beneficiaries, Farmer Field School (FFS) market linkage activities, and capacity building of Local Service Providers (LSPs). On the other hand, under the forestry component (Objective-4), FAO faced several unforeseen challenges and delays in nursery construction and technical support. Moreover, it also created an impediment in achieving the rehabilitation target sets inside the camps alongside the challenges of getting space due to camp dynamics. The collective accomplishment of activities has contributed to attaining programme results in alignment with the result framework. The following are the major challenges faced during the reporting period:

- Price fluctuation of agricultural inputs due to inefficient market systems, COVID-19 pandemic and flash floods due to monsoon rainfall.
- Inadequate public and private extension services to the marginal farmers, especially for the women.
- Farmers' limited access to the agricultural credit and ICT-based improved extension services.
- Lack of availability of quality seeds, quality fingerlings; and adulteration of agricultural inputs such as fertilizers and chemicals.
- Lack of ground/surface water management system.
- Land tenure issues impact agricultural productivity (i.e. govt. owned forestry land, legal/illegal tenure system in practice and placed).
- Lack of coordination of many new projects and programmes entering the agricultural sector.
- Inadequacy of available forestland inside the Rohingya camps for implementation of the project activities.
- The mechanism for disbursing cash for the forest day labourers.
- Frequent changes in land used plan by the relevant government departments.
- Losses of seedlings during transportation.
- The main challenge faced by the Forest Department and other stakeholders was the inadequate capacity to produce high-quality seedlings, to meet the increased demand due to massive deforestation caused by the influx.

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<sup>14</sup> National Parliamentary Committee Report on the environmental crisis due to the refugee influx in Cox's Bazar; 2019)

#### **IOM:**

The COVID-19 pandemic hit the world as soon as the livelihoods and self-reliance activities of the program were initiated. IOM with other development and humanitarian organizations had to respond to the immediate needs of the vulnerable affected beneficiaries to sustain them from the COVID-19 lockdown. IOM had to utilize additional resources from the donor to meet the program objectives in this regard.

#### **WFP:**

Due to COVID-19 restrictions some activities were suspended and WFP reprogrammed part of its self-reliance activities to engage beneficiaries in mask-making. The self-reliance activities faced a long-term delay in implementation due to the government restrictions on such activities in the camps at the beginning of the project phase.

#### **Programme Interventions:**

Cash assistance as an immediate shock response (with accompaniment to diversify livelihoods outside of the traditional forest environments) enabled host communities to adopt new skills and livelihood options. FAO, IOM, and WFP in collaboration with the District authorities supported the improvement of agricultural assets, facilitated land on lease to native tribes for food production, and complementary assets transfer in the form of animal rearing to boost HH capital base. The programme also enhanced the traditional skills in loom and craft products for elderly men and women.

#### **FAO:**

In addressing the challenges the project has shifted the inputs distribution plan and distributed the inputs at door to door. Also, circulated the awareness material along with the inputs distribution package. The MEAL team collected data using an online platform and disseminated an electronic version of the awareness and training material. The project also introduced a solar-powered buried piped system and mobile water pumps for irrigating the winter crops using the sweet water from the adjacent canals and streams.

The challenge also was addressed by engaging community members, using cash-for-work modalities and providing training for the operation of the nurseries, and establishing new and upgrading existing nurseries. The Forest department and other stakeholders, now have a better capacity, both in terms of actual structures but also in terms of increased management capacity, to meet the needs of seedlings for restoration activities.

#### **IOM:**

When the COVID-19 pandemic caused lockdowns and shut much camp programming down the provision of LPG was declared an ongoing essential service by the Refugee, Relief and Repatriation Commission (RRRC) and continued distributions during the pandemic.

Based on the necessity of complete crowd prevention and COVID-19 messaging the LPG program adjusted in multiple ways.

- The first was to incorporate the mobilization team of the IOM shelter program in camps to both message on the pandemic and create a broad mobilization network to facilitate smaller and more evenly spaced distributions. This messaging led to increased communication with the camp community facilitating informed beneficiaries which helped to create social distancing in the depots.
- The IOM shelter construction team mobilized to redesign the depots to facilitate social distancing within the depots. Working to create hand washing stations, temperature taking areas, and spaced lines for social distancing.

- The facilities were used as distribution points for masks and community COVID-19 information sharing and facilitated the distribution of shelter tie down kits in monsoon season.

#### WFP:

In 2021 WFP scaled-up self-reliance activities targeting at-risk youth (both women and men), and extremely vulnerable individuals, such as older people, persons with disabilities, and women-headed households.

#### **Result (if applicable):**

#### FAO:

The significant result achieved was strengthening food security for the beneficiaries through food production and market access creation. As a result, diversity in vegetable consumption and households' nutrition status improved for half of the beneficiaries.

Key agricultural beneficiaries are 1,440 households who are under the wider focus of the project. The project worked broadly on agricultural sub-sectors (agriculture, fisheries, and market development) with these groups. The key achievements included training of these farmers' groups on best practices for improving the production of high-value vegetables and commercial production of vegetables and cultured fish. The collective capacity of farmers' groups strengthened and contributed to increasing farm productivity by 15 per cent and household income by 10 per cent for 81 per cent of farmers' income more than pre-intervention.

The project achieved results in connecting the commercial farmers' groups with the aggregation Centres for marketing their farm products. The project provided tremendous support to improve the relationship with potential private sectors/market actors and created mutual motivations between them and the farmer groups to ensure the sustainability of the project impacts. Government partners were engaged to provide support to both beneficiary groups.

The project achieved results in the capacity building for partners as well as public extension service providers; building knowledge and awareness of new technologies and best practices for cultivation and resource management.

The environmental impacts have been mitigated through successful plantation programmes involving communities and providing ecosystem services as well as livelihood opportunities for forest-dependent communities. With the support of WFP and IOM's cash for work, and technical guidance from FAO, 2,313 Ha of damaged forestlands have been rehabilitated in and around the camps using about 2.9 million seedlings. The average survival percentage of the seedlings for these rehabilitation works is more than 81 per cent as of the assessment done every year from 2019 to 2022.

In addition, an innovative dry season planting framework and training manual have been developed with successful piloting that enables extending the plantation period beyond the monsoon. Under the cash-for-work programme activity to support land/forest rehabilitation activities/tree nurseries (supported by IOM and WFP) the project achieved 178,322 cash-for-work days, the work focused on reforestation, maintenance activities, and nursery establishment. A recent impact study conducted by FAO showed that 93 per cent of nursery workers benefited economically from job opportunities created in the nursery and 79 per cent of trained people in the NMT have improved knowledge in financial, organizational, and operational management of nurseries.

The project restored 2,000 Ha of degraded forestland outside the camp, according to an assessment report these plantations had a 67 per cent survival rate. To improve this, FAO and WFP have conducted gap-filling support and increased maintenance of the sites. Another assessment indicated that 50 per cent of forest-dependent

communities around planted areas are relying on fuelwood, indicating fuelwood collection as a source of deforestation. For the sustainability of the plantations, a total of 80 community co-management groups were formed that consisted of 4,100 individuals who are involved as a workforce of the Cox's Bazar Forest Department to protect the social forestry programme of the Government of Bangladesh.

#### **IOM:**

The LPG program has provided a sustainable cooking fuel for both the Rohingya households in camp and the host community households surrounding the camps. This has greatly reduced the need for foraging for firewood by the Rohingya and the host community.

While data shows 75 per cent of the host community has adopted and uses LPG for cooking fuel the use of firewood has not been eliminated as 96 per cent (68% purchase/ 28% collection) of households in the host community continue to use firewood which directly reflects on the discontinuation of host community LPG distributions. On average host community households use seventy-one kilograms of firewood per month. A significant factor to be noted for the host community possible improved use of LPG is that firewood can be purchased in smaller quantities at lower costs. If the local market were to sell LPG in smaller quantities for smaller amounts, it would improve household LPG use and further reduce use of firewood.

In camp where LPG distributions continue for all households 100 per cent of Rohingya households continue to cook with LPG. 66 per cent (54% purchase/12% collection) of households continue to cook with firewood. The substantial significant difference is in the amount of firewood used with an average of sixteen kilograms of firewood being used by the families which still use firewood.

Before 2017 LPG was not a common cooking fuel in the Cox's Bazar district. The blanket distributions in camps have led vendors to expand their distribution networks as community adoption has expanded. The overall reduction of firewood use has allowed for plantation repair in both the host communities and within the camp setting<sup>15</sup>.

#### **WFP:**

Comparisons to findings in 2021 and 2022 (Refugee Influx Emergency Vulnerability Assessment (REVA-5), the overall proportion of household food consumption increased (78 percent). In addition, REVA-5 indicated that, in the general population, women-headed households reported inadequate consumption compared to male-headed households (48 versus 36 percent, respectively).

#### **Lessons Learned:**

Consortium projects are supportive in bringing synergy among the partner organizations working in the same geographic location.

Market-based "transactional" relationships of supplying commodities by one community that was demanded by the other is an effective approach to reduce communal conflict and improve social cohesion.

Combined package of capacity development, input distribution, technology transfer and market linkage are an effective mechanism for income increase for community people

Gender-targeted (men, women, boys, and girls) approach to ensure equal representation in most of the interventions.

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<sup>15</sup> Data based on SAFEPlus End Line Evaluation (30 September 2022) Thinkthrough Consulting

Any interruption in regular supply of LPG to the Rohingya community may create a drastic impact on the environment (e.g. deforestation), social cohesion, GBV, and communal tensions.

#### FAO:

Areas	Learning from programme implementation
Farmers Group Modalities	Working through a group approach is one of the best ways for proper resource utilization, management, production, and income generation as well as generating funds through savings practice at the community level. Around, 40 percent of farmers reported that they have taken business planning initiatives in a group approach and 53 percent of farmer groups reported that they have savings in a group-based bank account.
Agro-mechanization	Agriculture mechanization reduces dependency and production costs. 98 percent of farmers said that agro machines have contributed to reducing their cost of production.
Technology adoption	Technology adoption contributes to enhancing productivity and income. 94 percent of the responded farmers stated that they used at least one improved technology/production system like power tiller, thresher, water pump, reaper, vermicompost, pheromone trap, perching. in the last 12 months. Around, 86 percent of farmers increased their agricultural income compared to the agricultural income before the project intervention.
Synergic relations strengthened program implementation to sustain results	The synergic relation with the government institutions (i.e. DAE, DLS, DoF), community, and private sector has strengthened the implementation and helped to sustain the program results. The project involved the government extension staff and local service providers with the farmers. 96 percent of farmers reported that the government extension personnel have increased their visits for providing service compared to the time before the project intervention.
Alternative plantation strategies	FAO has piloted and found good results in dry season plantations. It reduces dependency only on monsoon and fosters consistency.
Formation of the Nursery management team	The formation of the nursery management team under the nursery association and capacity building of nursery management team members will ensure the sustainability of the project. Around 79 per cent of nursery management team members found improved knowledge levels regarding financial, organizational, and operational management of the nurseries.

#### IOM:

In creating successive on-going LPG distribution cycles communication with beneficiaries was increased at the depot level. This systematic improvement combined with an updated beneficiary receipt token led to households leaving distributions with full knowledge of their next distribution date.

#### Relevant communication materials:

**Annex 1:** FAO Visibility stuff

**Annex 2:** IOM Visibility stuff

**Annex 3:** WFP Visibility stuff

#### SAFEPlus Endline Evaluation:

**Annex 4:** SAFEPlus 1 Final evaluation report

**Annex 5:** SAFEPlus 1 Endline Evaluation Key Findings Presentation