

## Terms of Reference

### LSDS Host Community Technical Working Group

#### 1. Introduction

Cox's Bazar District is home to a total Bangladeshi population of over 2.6 million.<sup>1</sup> The situation has been compounded by the significant population increase following the Rohingya Refugee influx, which has remarkably existing impacted infrastructure, resources, and the local economy.

In the district of Cox's Bazar, in response to the increase in the demand for products and services, and driven by the growing tourism industry, additional investments have been made in infrastructure and expansion of local markets, which had resulted in increased job opportunities. However, the high unemployment rate among the workforce in the host community, particularly the youth and women, remains a serious concern. Investment in skills development, entrepreneurship promotion and linking businesses for the host community are critical in addressing poverty in the district.

The Livelihoods and Skills Development Sector recognizes the urgent need for focused intervention to foster sustainable employment and entrepreneurship-oriented skills. As the poverty rate in Cox's Bazar is as high as 33%<sup>2</sup> with the host community in Cox's Bazar continuing to wrestle with significant economic challenges. Despite ongoing efforts, unemployment remained a pressing issue, underscoring the imperative for targeted initiatives aimed at enhancing livelihood opportunities.

Considering these challenges, the Livelihoods and Skills Development Sector is proposing the establishment of a Host Community Technical Working Group to address the multifaceted needs of the communities. This Technical Working Group will serve as a collaborative platform, bringing together key stakeholders involved in implementing projects within the host communities. It will operate with the overarching goal of providing technical guidance, standardizing approaches, and fostering collaboration to ensure a more effective and sustainable response to the prevailing economic challenges.

Through coordinated efforts and collective action, the Technical Working Group endeavors to bring about positive change by strengthening vocational skills training, promoting entrepreneurship, and enhancing market linkages. It is focused on strengthening the connection between skills development and the economy in terms of generating income and/or meeting the market needs and creating the space for sustainable and diversified livelihoods. By working closely with government agencies, implementing partners, and community representatives, the Technical Working Group aims to chart a course towards greater economic resilience and prosperity for all members of the host community.

#### 2. Objectives

The primary objectives of the Host Community Technical Working Group (HCTWG) are:

**Objective 1:** Support Livelihoods and Skills Development Sector (LSDS) in cooperating with the relevant partners, agencies to collect, review information regularly and ensure the quality and reliability of data.

LSDS is already collecting information on activities implemented by Sector's JRP and non-JRP partners through its monthly 5W tracker and the data is published in an interactive dashboard at <https://rohingyaresponse.org/sectors/coxs-bazar/livelihoods-and-skills-development/> to avoid duplication and ensure a harmonized approach. The Sector is also encouraging partners to share any studies/assessments/reports

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<sup>1</sup> Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics Population Census 2011

<sup>2</sup> BBS 2017

conducted by their respective agencies so they can be published on the website as well and serve as a repository of relevant documents and training modules.

The HCTWG would support LSDS in reviewing partners'/third party studies, evaluations and innovations and conducting a secondary data review in support of evidence-based programming, fundraising and advocacy.

**Objective 2:** Host community households have access to quality skills development and supportive services for apprenticeship, mentorship, business and enterprise development, and job matching services in Cox's Bazar District.

This objective will be supported by the following activities: mapping, harmonizing and matching services.

- Map existing work and resources across stakeholders in the area of livelihoods and skills development. Mapping will include:
  - Activities, implementers (UN, INGO, NGO, GoB) programmes delivered, certificates if any, experts delivering trainings and capacity development, timeframes of programmes;
  - Assessments of the minimum quality assurance standards required;
  - Assessment of technical expertise and capacity gaps of implementing partners, by using sector identified minimum standards through this HCTWG;
  - Developing a plan of actions based on the findings mapping exercise
- Support cooperation among agencies to develop jointly or try to harmonize skills training curriculums with the national training standards in Bangladesh so that all relevant agencies and partners can deliver unique and standardized skills training programs, including assessment and certification, which are demand-driven by the current market and employers;
- Promote skills in the livelihood and enterprise development sector with harmonization/standardization – to ensure minimum quality across all actors, such as:
  - GBV risk mitigation and gender equality in skills development programming and the workplace
  - Ensure gender inclusivity and persons with disability are targeted
  - Basic transferable or life skills, financial and functional literacy, foundational numeracy and literacy, occupational hazard and safety
  - Training on market linkages – baseline and endline surveys for IPs
  - Apprenticeship & certification
  - Entrepreneurship Training; inclusive of business and enterprise development skills
  - Develop online trainee management information platform for host community.

**Objective 3:** Utilize innovative approaches for host community skills development, livelihoods and market driven jobs. This includes:

- Review existing labour market studies and prepare labour market information about the priority sectors and occupations in in Cox's Bazar district. The latter should be reviewed as per the demand of the employers in Cox's Bazar;

The HCTWG will act as an action-oriented, consultative forum and 'think tank' to generate innovative solutions in terms of skills development, will provide technical advice, documentation and recommendations to the Sector and concerned partners and will ensure linkages with a cross-cutting thematic areas, other relevant Sectors and thematic Working Groups (i.e. Youth Working Group). The HCTWG will be meeting on monthly basis for discussion on ongoing any technical issues that need to be resolved.

The Livelihoods and Skills Development Sector will take the lead in establishing and coordinating the Host Community Technical Working Group, in close collaboration with government agencies, programme partners,

implementing partners, and other relevant stakeholders. The Task Force will operate under a participatory and inclusive approach, ensuring representation from all key stakeholders and fostering ownership and buy-in.

### **3. Conclusion**

The establishment of the Host Community Working Group presents a strategic opportunity to enhance livelihood opportunities and economic resilience in Ukhiya and Teknaf, Bangladesh. By providing technical guidance, standardizing approaches, sharing best practices, and fostering collaboration, the Technical Working Group will contribute to more effective and sustainable support for the host communities, particularly vulnerable groups such as youth and women.