

Concept Note

International Women's Day (IWD) 2025 Campaign in Cox's Bazar

Campaign Overview

Global Theme	: For ALL Women and Girls: Rights. Equality. Empowerment.
National Slogan	: “অধিকার, সমতা, ক্ষমতায়ন — নারী ও কন্যার উন্নয়ন”
Organized by	: Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group (GiHA WG) IWD Task Force, in collaboration with the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC) and GBV Sub-Sector (GBVSS)
Launch Event	: 5 March 2025 (Wednesday) at RRRC Office, Cox’s Bazar
Dress Code	: Purple and pink attire, symbolizing justice, dignity, and solidarity with women’s rights, aligning with the campaign’s call for equality and empowerment

1. Background

International Women’s Day (IWD), observed globally on **8 March**, celebrates the achievements of women while highlighting persistent systemic barriers to gender equality. The 2025 commemoration holds historic significance as it marks **30 years since the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing+30)**—a landmark global pledge adopted by 189 governments in 1995 to advance women’s rights. With only **five years remaining** to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Beijing+30 offers a pivotal moment to assess progress, address gaps, and amplify the voices of women—particularly those in crisis-affected contexts—in shaping inclusive policies and solutions.¹

In Cox’s Bazar, humanitarian response partners observe IWD through a unified effort, including the Government of Bangladesh, UN agencies, international and local NGOs, and women’s organizations. The 2025 global theme, “**For ALL Women and Girls: Rights. Equality. Empowerment.**”, underscores the urgency of ensuring universal access to rights, opportunities, and agency for women and girls, regardless of their background or circumstance. This theme resonates deeply in Cox’s Bazar, where **Rohingya refugee women** and **host community women** navigate intersecting challenges such as limited access to education, healthcare, livelihoods, and protection risks exacerbated by displacement and social norms.

¹ United Nations official page for International Women’s Day 2025: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/womens-day>

The IWD 2025 campaign will also align with the **69th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69)** (10–21 March 2025), which will review global progress on Beijing+30. By linking local realities to this global agenda, the campaign aims to elevate the experiences of marginalized women in Cox's Bazar and advocate for targeted investments in gender-responsive initiatives.

Guided by an **intersectional approach**, the Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group (GiHA WG) under the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG), through its IWD Task Force, will lead the campaign in partnership with the RRRC and GBV Sub-Sector. The initiative prioritizes **inclusivity**, engaging diverse stakeholders—government bodies, humanitarian actors, grassroots organizations, and community representatives—to foster dialogue, solidarity, and actionable commitments toward gender equality.

2. Local Context

As the Rohingya response in Cox's Bazar enters its eighth year, the need for **gender-responsive, community-led solutions** remains central to fostering resilience and sustainability. The national slogan, “অধিকার, সমতা, ক্ষমতায়ন — নারী ও কন্যার উন্নয়ন”² (Rights, Equality, Empowerment — Advancing ALL Women and Girls), reflects a shared commitment to prioritizing women's empowerment as a cornerstone of community recovery and progress.

Women and girls in Cox's Bazar—including **Rohingya refugees** and **host community members**—continue to navigate intersecting challenges that hinder their full participation in social, economic, and community decision-making. Key barriers include:

- **Limited access** to education, livelihoods, and leadership opportunities.
- **Heightened protection risks**, including gender-based violence (GBV).
- **Structural inequities** in decision-making and justice systems.

Recent developments include:

- **Funding dynamics:** Recent shifts in international humanitarian funding have reduced resources for essential services, making it crucial to maximize the impact of gender-focused interventions.
- **Protection concerns:** Ongoing developments in Myanmar continue to shape security dynamics in the camps. It is important to maintain a strong protection framework for women and girls. Women and girls from both communities are facing amplified vulnerabilities, including increased gender-based violence, restricted access and mobility, and minimal representation in leadership roles and decision-making processes.

² “Department of Women Affairs, Government of Bangladesh. Instructions on IWD 2024 celebration: <https://mowca.gov.bd/>

- **Underreported GBV Cases:** While progress has been made in GBV prevention and response, cultural sensitivities and safety concerns persist, limiting women's ability to seek support. This underscores the need for strengthening community-based reporting mechanisms, fostering trust-building, and ensuring survivor-centered services.
- **Shifting social norms:** Displacement and prolonged crisis have altered gender roles in both refugee and host communities, presenting opportunities for strengthening women's leadership and women's role in community government structures.

Findings from the Q4 2024 Joint Protection Monitoring Report reveal increasing threats to women's safety, livelihood restrictions, and housing, land, and property (HLP) challenges in camps.³ The IWD 2025 campaign seeks to amplify the voices of refugee and host community women, ensuring their experiences and leadership are integral to shaping gender-responsive solutions.

3. Campaign Objectives

These objectives, designed for a short, impactful campaign informed by pre-campaign consultations with Rohingya and host community women, prioritize their voices and needs, aligning with the global theme and national slogan:

Protect women's rights & ensure access to justice. Prioritize women's safety and access to justice by addressing critical protection needs identified through participatory consultations. Advocate for survivor-centered GBV services, safe and accessible reporting mechanisms, and readily available legal aid. Address systemic barriers to justice to ensure all women in Cox's Bazar receive the protection and remedy they deserve.

Advance gender equality & amplify women's leadership. Ensure women's voices shape humanitarian action. Facilitate participatory forums with Rohingya and host community women to identify their priorities for equitable access to rights and resources. Champion their meaningful participation in decision-making processes so their perspectives directly inform and influence humanitarian interventions.

Empower women's economic resilience & drive social cohesion. Strengthen women's leadership in resilience and community. Partner with women to co-design and implement tailored economic empowerment programs, including skills training, entrepreneurship opportunities, and financial inclusion. Advocate for sustainable funding and partnerships to scale gender-transformative initiatives. Simultaneously, promote social cohesion and challenge harmful gender norms through community-led

³ Protection Sector's Joint Protection Monitoring Report Q4 2024: https://rohingyaresponse.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/PS-Joint-Protection-Monitoring-Report-Quarter-4_2024.pdf

dialogues and awareness campaigns that celebrate women's leadership and foster solidarity between refugee and host communities.

4. Campaign Activities

- **Participatory consultation Sessions:** Gender focal points will conduct participatory assessments across camps and host communities, documenting challenges, successes, and priorities in advancing women's rights. These assessments will involve consultations with the Camp-in-Charge (CiCs), relevant stakeholders, and community members. The consolidated findings from across all locations will be presented at the Launch Event- Open Dialogue at the RRRC Office on **March 5, 2025**. The event's Discussion and actionable solutions will be shared with the respective communities through dedicated feedback sessions, ensuring community validation and ownership. These sessions will inform a shared action plan, establishing a common understanding of priorities and defining a way forward for advancing gender equality and strengthening the role of women in the humanitarian response in Cox's Bazar.
- **Launch Event- Open Dialogue on “For ALL Women and Girls: Rights. Equality. Empowerment” (RRRC office, March 5, 2025):** This session will bring together keynote speakers, policymakers, and women leaders to explore gender equity issues in the context of the Rohingya crisis, reflecting on Beijing+30 and its relevance. Stakeholders will collaborate to identify key priorities and strategies for promoting gender equality and enhancing women's roles in the humanitarian response from the findings of the participatory Consultation sessions.
- **Community Engagement & Grassroots Campaigns:** Mobilize local initiatives to support women's empowerment in both the Rohingya refugee camps and host communities.
- **Media Campaigns & Storytelling Initiatives:** Amplify women's voices through documentaries, interviews, and social media campaigns to showcase their lived experiences, challenges, achievements, and opportunities to the wider audience and get back to the community with a targeted approach for transformational changes in the gendered roles and relations.

5. Communication Strategy

Campaign Slogan and Hashtag: The campaign's main slogan will be

English : For ALL Women and Girls: Rights. Equality. Empowerment.

Bangla : “অধিকার, সমতা, ক্ষমতায়ন — নারী ও কন্যার উন্নয়ন”

Target Audience: Government officials (RRRC, CiCs, APBn, MoWCA), representatives of relevant UN and (I)NGO heads of offices, ISCG and SWG coordinators, WLO/WRO, and gender focal points who represent different multi-sectoral humanitarian actions and are working towards achieving gender equality and gender-responsive programming.

Multi-channel Approach: The campaign will use a variety of communication channels to reach different audiences effectively. This includes social media platforms, email newsletters, website/blog posts, and local media. The campaign will be promoted under the hashtag [#ForAllWomenAndGirls](#).

Support and Advocacy: The GiHA WG IWD Task Force, with the support of the ISCG Communications and External Relations Working Group, will support communications and advocacy to promote IWD campaign activities, including the main event and community-level events in the Rohingya and host communities.

Reporting and Documentation: A consolidated report will be produced based on the main event and community event reports from GiHA WG members and will be circulated through ISCG.

Ethical Considerations: All activities and events will be documented with informed consent at both the community and Cox's Bazar levels. Partners are required to strictly adhere to PSEA (Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse) guidelines.

6. Conclusion

As we commemorate IWD 2025, let us commit to breaking barriers, championing inclusivity, and creating opportunities for women and girls everywhere. This year's campaign in Cox's Bazar reaffirms our collective responsibilities to champion gender justice, women's leadership, and decision-making power. Together, we can foster a future rooted in dignity and empowerment for all women and girls.

7. Contacts

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