

## Livelihoods and Skills Development Sector (LSDS) engagements with the Private Sector :

The Livelihoods and Skills Development Sector (LSDS) has actively engaged with the private sector since 2023 to create sustainable income-generating opportunities for both Rohingya refugees and host communities within the Humanitarian – Development nexus. By fostering these partnerships with national and local enterprises, industry associations, and chambers of commerce, LSDS is aspiring to facilitate skills training, market linkages, and enterprise development. These collaborations will not only enhance economic inclusion but will also promote self-reliance by aligning humanitarian efforts with market-driven approaches.

Sectors Engaged with
<b>RMG</b>
<b>Leather goods</b>
<b>Soap making</b>
<b>ICT</b>
<b>Plastic Waste Recycling</b>
<b>Handmade Toys &amp; Souvenirs</b>
<b>Solar Energy</b>
<b>Handicrafts</b>

### Progress till May 2025:



### Chittagong-based Private Sector visiting camps

### Private Sector Brainstorming with LSDS SAG

- UNHCR has actively engaged with Chittagong-based private sector actors, including those from the Ready-Made Garments (RMG), leather, food processing, and SME sectors, to explore inclusive economic opportunities for refugees. In early 2025, several of these private sector representatives visited the ongoing skills development initiatives in the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar, followed by a visit to Bhasan Char in May to further assess potential areas for collaboration.
- Notably, the local footwear manufacturing association in Chittagong, in collaboration with UNHCR, conducted a comprehensive survey in March 2025 to assess the supply and demand for handmade leather shoes within the camps. Based on the findings, a joint pilot initiative is underway to provide specialized training to at least 200 refugee beneficiaries in leather shoe production. Upon completion of the training, the initiative aims to empower refugee entrepreneurs to establish and operate their own small-scale leather footwear businesses, contributing to both skills enhancement and sustainable livelihoods.
- The owner of the Salt and Sugar restaurant chain has expressed strong interest in supporting capacity-building initiatives for refugee beneficiaries currently engaged in vocational training as bakery and pastry staff. In alignment with UNHCR's efforts to promote sustainable livelihoods, discussions are underway to establish a partnership aimed at replicating a functional bakery model in an adjacent host and camp area. This collaboration seeks to enhance practical skills,

provide hands-on experience, and create meaningful income-generating opportunities for trained individuals, while also contributing to local food supply and fostering social cohesion between refugee and host communities. Initially for the first phase of a café in Teknaf, the discussion on employing 25 Refugees and 10 Host Community beneficiaries were discussed. A survey will be conducted with various agencies to determine what the café should provide with support from ISCG.

- In January 2025, the ILO, in collaboration with ISCG, organized an engagement with select National private sector companies to assess potential economic opportunities for engaging both Rohingya refugees and host communities. A visit to the camps, followed by an intense workshop, resulted in interesting business ideas and proposals which were then shared in Dhaka together with other UN agencies. The findings and recommendations from this initiative were also presented to the RRRC. . As a result, the ILO proposed five innovative business models aimed at fostering inclusive and sustainable economic exchanges between the Refugees and Host communities. These include plastic waste recycling for commercial use, eco-friendly handmade toys and souvenirs produced by Rohingya women, digital literacy and ICT skills development through an IT innovation hub, decentralized neighborhood off-grid solar energy solutions which creates income, and the production of handicrafts and home décor items for export. These models are designed to encourage private sector participation, promote green livelihoods, and support long-term resilience and self-reliance for both refugee and host populations. Necessary approvals from the RRRC office and quick mobilizing of small seed funds can roll out these business pilots immediately.
- The WASH Sector requires 2.2 million soap units monthly, with nearly USD 7 million spent annually. Prottiyashi's pilot production center near Camp 1W has shown strong results. Building on this, five more centers are planned, creating income opportunities for at least 250 refugee and Host Community women. The private sector has committed to invest, and UN Women will collaborate. LSDS is facilitating the partnership with the Chamber of Commerce to scale this sustainable, livelihood-focused initiative. Initially the discussion is to establish soap production center in Camp 4ext and Camp 25.



**Five Dhaka-based private sectors visiting the camps**



**Dialogue with the Private Sector at ILO Dhaka**



**Visit to Soap Production Center near Camp 1W**