

Terms of Reference

Situation Analysis of Joint Emergency Operations Centres in Cox's Bazar District, Bangladesh

Project Background

The District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC), under the Chairmanship Deputy Commissioner, has the authority to establish an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) consisting of an Information Centre and Control Room, according to the Standing Order on Disasters 3.2.5.3.1 (District) and 3.3.5.3.1 (Upazila).

Cox's Bazar district has a high base level of vulnerability to natural hazards such as cyclones and flooding. Since August 2017, this has been compounded by the establishment of camps for large numbers of Rohingya refugees on precarious sites highly susceptible to flooding and landslides. In the event of a natural disaster in Cox's Bazar, it will therefore be necessary to ensure effective coordination between the DDMC, the Refugee Relief and Repatriation (RRRC) office, the Armed Forces Division, and the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG), which coordinates the international humanitarian support to the Rohingya population in the District. An adapted model for a disaster response EOC – with representation from the RRRC, AFD and the ISCG alongside the district administration – has therefore been agreed upon for the district. The objectives of the Joint EOC would be to support effective operational coordination and situational awareness, and to ensure a rapid response to emerging operational issues in the case of a severe event in which the Deputy Commissioner activates the EOC. In addition to a Joint EOC in Cox's Bazar, Upazila-level Joint EOCs in Teknaf and Ukhia have also been proposed in order to support coordination on the ground, in line with the established Upazila Disaster Management Committees.

The membership of the joint EOC includes government representatives (civil surgeon, DPHC, DPHE, AFD (military), police, CPP, etc.) as outlined in the Standing Order on Disasters. To support the mandated decision-makers to respond to the now-increased population in Cox's Bazar in the case of a severe weather event, it has also been suggested to include a Support Team consisting of staff seconded by ISCG partners, with the goal of providing technical support in information management, emergency telecommunications and other areas as required. In the case of a severe event, the Support Team would ideally also ensure a single point of contact for humanitarian actors and coordination mechanisms to engage with the Government-led response.

Since mid-2018, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) has been providing resources to support the establishing and maintenance of Joint EOC through its partners ACTED/REACH, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). These resources include equipment and physical infrastructure, as well as staffing capacity for information management and liaison functions.

The operational model for the adapted, joint EOC was piloted throughout the 2018 monsoon season. This piloting period showed that certain key planning assumptions underpinning the planning for the EOC had been incorrect, most notably assumptions about the likelihood of disasters and need for EOC activation during the monsoon. In addition, due to lack of buy-in from key actors and confusion around leadership models, it has not yet been possible to expand the original EOC model—which is only activated in the event of a disaster—to the extended version proposed by ECHO partners—which envisioned a standing body with an expanded membership, fulfilling continuous information management, preparedness and early warning functions. To ensure that the resources provided by ECHO to support the EOC are being used effectively, efficiently, and meeting Government of Bangladesh and humanitarian needs, a consultant is being recruited to conduct a situation analysis and propose adjustments to the adapted EOC model and support, also taking into account the wider day-to-day capacity and functioning of the relevant Government entities and how resources would and

could be re-oriented in the case of immediate response to a severe weather event. In particular, the wider day to day coordination requirements of the Government entities should be taken into account: capacity support needs have also been offered for Coordination Cells, and for support to development agendas, in the DC and UNO Offices.

Consultancy Objectives

Against this background, ACTED/REACH will contract an individual or firm to conduct a situation analysis of the current status of the Joint EOCs. The overall objective of the consultancy is to **identify entry points for more effective ECHO support to the functions of the adapted Joint EOC for emergency preparedness and response.**

To achieve this objective, the consultancy will be expected to answer the following research questions:

Structure and modality of an adapted joint EOC

- Who are the key stakeholders in the process of establishing, utilizing and sustaining a Joint EOC model?
- What are key stakeholders' perceptions and expectations regarding the adapted Joint EOC's objectives and implementation modality.
- What are key stakeholders' perceptions and expectations regarding the roles and responsibilities of different actors in the adapted Joint EOC model?
- Based on these perceptions, what is the most appropriate adaptations and modality for a Joint EOC, and how should supporting ECHO partners work to achieve this?

Gaps and weak points hindering the effective function of a joint EOC

- What are the key gaps and weak points that would hinder the effective set-up and functioning of the EOC in the event of an emergency, within the ECHO support period and beyond? Specific focus should be on:
 - Overall, what would be the ideal structure of a joint EOC to strengthen emergency response, for both refugees and affected host communities, in a timely and effective manner (bearing in mind the well-established mechanisms under the Standing Order on Disasters)?
 - What is the most appropriate staffing structure of EOCs, including chains of command and points of accountability for key EOC functions?
 - What are the key capacity requirements for EOC members?
 - What is the capacity and limitations of mandated government bodies to fulfil key EOC functions, especially around information management and early warning?
 - What sets of standard operating procedures for key EOC functions need to be established (bearing in mind the well-established mechanisms under the Standing Order on Disasters)?
 - How should the flow of information into, within, and out of the EOC be managed?
 - How should linkages between District, Upazila and camp-level EOCs be developed and strengthened?
 - How should linkages between government and non-government actors within the EOCs be developed and strengthened?
 - What baseline information is required to allow for effective EOC functioning in the event of an emergency (e.g. maps/lists of populations and key infrastructure, contact lists, etc.)?
 - Of the key baseline information, what is currently available and what are priorities for further data gathering/consolidation?
- How should these gaps and weak points be addressed by ECHO partners supporting the EOCs?

Tasks/Work assignment:



Under the direct supervision of Helvetas/ACTED/REACH and in consultation with ISCG, IOM, UNDP and ECHO, the consultant will be required to synthesise a review of key literature and documentation, together with key informant interviews with stakeholders:

Literature review:

- Compile and review background documentation regarding current government and ISCG emergency preparedness and response frameworks, plans etc. for Cox's Bazar district.
- Compile and review all documentation related to current status, strategies, workplans etc. of both the current EOC set-up, and the proposed adapted Joint EOC.
- Review the availability and coherence of available baseline data relevant to disaster response (e.g. population data, natural hazard risk, key infrastructure)
- Review assessments and lessons learned documents relating to previous disaster responses in Cox's Bazar

Key informant interviews:

- Conduct an initial mapping of key stakeholders with an interest or role in the EOC at both District and Upazila level (Ukhia and Teknaf only). These should include but not be limited to: District Commissioner's Office staff, District and Upazila Disaster Management Committees, UNOs and Union Parishads, PIOs, RRRC, emergency services, BDRCS, ISCG secretariat and emergency cell staff, ISCG humanitarian affairs/liaison officers, REACH, IOM, UNDP and ECHO staff.
- Identify most relevant stakeholders for interview within the timeframe of the assessment and conduct interviews focused on answering the research questions laid out above.

Deliverables

1. A detailed Terms of Reference for the assessment outlining detailed objectives, research approach, workplan, etc.; to be developed in coordination with ACTED/REACH, IOM, UNDP and ECHO.
2. Key informant interview questionnaires, to be developed in coordination with ACTED/REACH, IOM, UNDP and ECHO.
3. Inception report outlining lists of documentation to review and preliminary list of key stakeholders for interview
4. Workshop with relevant key stakeholders and ECHO EOC partners outlining preliminary findings and facilitating joint discussion and analysis
5. Final report synthesising findings from literature review, interviews and workshop, as relate to the objectives and research questions of the consultancy, and including recommendations for ways forward tailored to relevant stakeholders.

Responsibilities of ACTED/REACH:

- Provide accommodation, transport, and any required equipment in Cox's Bazar
- Provide logistical support to the assessment process, including securing relevant government permissions

Responsibilities of ECHO partners (ACTED/REACH, IOM, UNDP, ECHO)

- Review all proposed outputs (ToRs, tools, reports etc.)
- Suggest, and facilitate introductions and liaison to, key stakeholders
- Facilitate access to relevant documentation as required by literature review.

Duration

The consultancy is expected to last for 6 weeks, broken down as follows:



- Inception work (identification of key informants and literature to review, set-up of interviews, etc.) – 1 week
- Literature review and key informant interviews – 2 weeks
- Preparation of preliminary findings presentation and implementation of review workshop – 1 week
- Preparation of draft report – 1 week
- Review and edits for final report – 1 week

General Expectations

1. All work must be conducted within the framework of ACTED's global code of conduct and the laws of the government of Bangladesh
2. ACTED security guidelines must be strictly followed throughout the consultancy period
3. Informed consent must be sought and received from all study participants
4. All deliverables will remain the property of ECHO and cannot be shared publicly without the common consent of ECHO, ACTED/REACH, IOM and UNDP.

Qualifications

The consultancy is open to applications from individuals, teams, or firms, with the following qualifications:

- Experience of working on issues related to disaster risk reduction and/or disaster management in Bangladesh.
- Experience of working closely with Government of Bangladesh disaster management stakeholders and institutions.
- Experience working in humanitarian emergencies involving both national and international stakeholders.
- Knowledge and experience of the context in Cox's Bazar is a plus
- Masters' degree in disaster risk reduction, social science or other relevant field.
- Fluency in English (written and spoken) and Bangla
- Excellent communication skills
- A proven track record of delivering high quality consultancy work in related areas

Background on the contracting agencies

The proposed consultancy will be overseen by the consortium Helvetas-ACTED-REACH, and funded by ECHO. ACTED is a French NGO with expertise in emergency response across multiple countries, including Bangladesh. Helvetas is a Swiss NGO, registered in Bangladesh, with livelihood, WASH, governance and emergency projects in the country. IMPACT/REACH and ACTED are currently hosted by Helvetas in Bangladesh.

REACH is a joint initiative of two NGOs (IMPACT Initiatives and ACTED) and a UN program (UNOSAT). Its purpose is to promote and facilitate the development of information products that enhance the humanitarian community's decision making and planning capacity for emergency response (see: www.reach-initiative.org and www.reachresourcecentre.info). REACH's global team is hosted in Geneva by IMPACT Initiatives, a Swiss-based association. Within the REACH partnership, IMPACT supervises all REACH country level activities, providing backstopping to field teams, defining the framework of country interventions, and validating all REACH products. At global level, IMPACT engages with REACH's global partners and oversees rapid deployments.