

Management Response to the Mid-Term Evaluation of Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC) and Age International funded: Response to the Needs of Older People amongst the Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals (FDMN) and Host Community in Ukhiya, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

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Overall comments:

Age International welcomes the evaluation and its recommendations. The Rohingya crisis response was started by Age International with HelpAge International and two implementing partners YPSA and RIC, in October 2017. Since the start of its response, the focus has been on four outcomes, 1) Reduce morbidity and mortality rate amongst older men and women, 2) Reduce exposure of older people to communicable diseases, 3) Provision of safe and dignified spaces, and 4) Making humanitarian services more inclusive of older people. The project was implemented with a unique approach, piloted in this response, which was the establishment of Age Friendly Spaces (AFS), where older people were able to access age-friendly WASH facilities, gender-sensitive protection services and health services, assisted accompaniment support for mobility, individual case management mechanisms, and recreational facilities.

The evaluation provides important evidence of the impact of the AFS model, supplementing the quantitative and qualitative evidence gathered. The interviews and meetings during the evaluation provide evidence of community engagement in decision making processes, project implementation and the helping of other older people in accessing services through linking with service providers and understanding their rights. The evaluation states that, 'The AFS has built the foundation or strengthened the grounds for a community-managed service delivery – through this innovative facility, the older people as volunteers, were responsible for some of the crucial services in the AFS, like mapping of the service providers, assessing and referring cases, following-up cases and assisting in service delivery.' With this capacity, there is potential to expand AFS to other sites, while the current AFS can be managed by trained staff and volunteers with oversight management support from the project team. One FGD participant said, "Every month, we have two WASH Committee meetings. Now we can conduct [these meetings] on our own." Page#10

The evaluation suggests that the CHS commitments are mostly evident. Considering the local context and resource availability, management has already taken some initiatives to do better on our CHS commitments. This next stage of the programme are informed by the insights and recommendations of this evaluation.

Recommendation	Management Response and Actions
<p>R2. Modification and replication of AFS model</p>	<p>Modified and low-cost AFS in other camps, some strategic local and shared space with other service providers are in consideration of the management. Designing and preparation of modified design will be proposed in the next phase of the programme to other donor agencies.</p>
<p>R3. Need more analysis on how age cohorts significantly affects the demand for services as much as physical ability (to access AFS, for example).</p>	<p>Service provided and needs were analysed by age cohorts during planning the next phase of the response. The next phase of the projects are being designed based on the age specific needs.</p>
<p>R4. Quality time to staff for life work balance and for maintaining their high quality of service as well as provide them space to think, reflect, and utilise</p>	<p>Management is aware of the pressures and is taking steps to ensure staff wellbeing. For example, it has initiated group insurance, revised security guidelines, has taken some safety measures including vaccination for staff for protection from communicable disease and ensuring that staff and volunteers do not visit the camp alone and also undertaking sensitization of local community leaders for safety of female staff. We will periodically review the situation and continue to undertake proper steps. For work-life balance some actions have been taken including lesser working hours, flexible lunch time, providing laptop and tablets to ease working from anywhere including working from home and creating a favourable office set-up as close as possible to work place.</p>
<p>R5. Programmatically, there is a need to think about livelihood of the forced Rohingya migrants</p>	<p>This is an acute need for both Rohingya and Host Community. Management are exploring every option including short-term and long-term strategy to address this issue. Also strengthening</p>

	<p>joint advocacy with others to change the Govt. position on livelihoods.</p>
<p>R6. A significant gap is how older people’s concerns are being addressed by the entire humanitarian community.</p>	<p>We have imparted trainings for other humanitarian organisations on the Humanitarian Inclusion Standards for Older People and People with Disabilities (PwD). We also support through joint programming. For example, recently an advocacy initiative with the major WASH actors resulted in many of these actors including age friendly WASH facilities in their design. The HelpAge International Bangladesh Office has also developed a communication strategy with clear sector-wise messages on inclusion of older people in humanitarian responses by other actors.</p>
<p>R7. The response will need to be adaptive and agile to respond to changing conditions, requiring staff to be continually flexible and creative, with the ability to collect, process, analyse and act upon</p>	<p>Management has undertaken capacity building trainings for the staff including on restructuring. Lesson learning workshop and staff training needs were also conducted to involve staff in the process of change.</p>