BACKGROUND

Country profile

Located on a delta formed by the confluence of the Ganges, Jamuna (Brahmaputra) and Meghna rivers, Bangladesh is one of most densely populated countries in the world, bordering India to the west, north and east, and Myanmar to the southeast. There are around 700 rivers and tributaries across the country, making it a riverine country. Among this web of waterways some 162 million people dwell on 147,570 square km of land, with 580 km of coastline along the Bay of Bengal.1 Over 65 per cent of the population live in rural areas and depend mainly on agriculture.

The life-giving monsoons also mean that the country is extremely vulnerable to disasters: cyclones, floods, tornadoes, droughts, river-bank erosion and earthquakes are common. Climate change is expected to exacerbate these problems for Bangladesh.2
Despite significant socio-economic progress, around a quarter of the population still live below the national poverty line. The poverty rate in 2018 was 21.8 per cent, and extreme poverty was estimated at 11.3 per cent (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics); the country is currently ranked 135th out of 189 on the Human Development Index, and child mortality stands at around 30 per 1,000 live births. The World Bank calculated the gross domestic product (GDP) of Bangladesh at USD 274 billion in 2018 (USD 1,750 gross national income per capita).

The influx of more than 900,000 people fleeing from Rakhine State in Myanmar has prompted a significant humanitarian crisis. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has been working with the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS), and other partners, to assist these displaced people and their host communities in the city of Cox’s Bazar.

National Society profile

BDRCS is a leading humanitarian organization in Bangladesh. Established in 1973, the name and emblem were changed from Red Cross to Red Crescent on 4 April 1988. The nationwide organization is comprised of 68 units and a network of around 875,000 volunteers, with national headquarters in Dhaka.

Since its establishment, it has served vulnerable people during both times of normality and disaster through emergency rescue, disaster response and preparedness, disaster risk reduction (DRR), climate change adaptation, health, water and sanitation, capacity building, and the promotion of humanitarian values. Its contributions to the cyclone preparedness programme and assisting the displaced people from Rakhine have been highly praised and appreciated.

BDRCS works together with the Government as an auxiliary in the humanitarian field, and its role in disaster response is formally acknowledged and highlighted in the Government’s Standing Order on Disaster (SOD)—the main legal instrument regulating disaster management in Bangladesh.
Role of the IFRC country office

The role of the country office is to assist and advise the National Society with response operations, development, DRR programmes, and help facilitate the work of its membership and promote the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and humanitarian values in the country.

The office plays an important coordinating role in Bangladesh and abroad, particularly in times of major disasters, in order to mobilize required assistance and expertise to help vulnerable people. Its legal status is assured through an agreement with the Government of Bangladesh, which allows IFRC to operate and perform its mandated activities in the country. The same legal basis is also extended to some participating National Societies (PNSs) through an integration agreement, which enables them to operate in Bangladesh legally.

IFRC has been working in Bangladesh for more than 30 years and has supported several flagship projects and initiatives, including the cyclone preparedness programme (CPP), community development, National Society development (NSD), and many others.

Movement footprint

Along with the IFRC, several sister National Societies have supported BDRCS since its establishment. Some National Societies are physically present in the country, while others provide support through the IFRC. In 2020, 12 partner National Societies will pursue bilateral programmes:

- The American Red Cross is working in DRR (mainly in the coastal districts), cyclone preparedness in Cox’s Bazar, and supporting forecast-based action (FbA) and National Society capacity-building initiatives.

- The British Red Cross is working on building community-based resilience projects and expanding its urban resilience programme in the south of the country. It also supports some capacity-building initiatives in NSD, protection gender and inclusion (PGI), and response and disaster management. The British Red Cross will continue to support both host and migrant communities in the Cox’s Bazar settlements.

- The German Red Cross is supporting some important initiatives such as FbA, disaster management, urban DRR and some NSD initiatives. It also supports health and water sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services in Cox’s Bazar.
The Swedish Red Cross has introduced an integrated resilience project in the flood-prone district of Jamalpur, including initiatives on DRR, livelihoods, shelter, WASH and health. It will also support the NSD of the BDRCS. In addition, Swedish Red Cross is working in the WASH sector for displaced people in refugee camps, PGI, anti-trafficking and resilience-building for host communities.

The Swiss Red Cross will continue to support BDRCS interventions on DRR and community empowerment in the north of the country, as well as some branch development initiatives in five districts. Additionally, Swiss Red Cross will continue its efforts for improving primary health care support for host communities in Cox’s Bazar.

The Danish Red Cross is working on BDRCS capacity building in psychosocial support (PSS) at its national headquarters and districts and is involved in providing WASH and PSS services in the camps in Cox’s Bazar.

The Italian Red Cross will support the BDRCS to enhance the capacity of youth and volunteers in the Chattogram division in the south-east of the country.

The Turkish Red Crescent will continue to work bilaterally with the BDRCS to respond to the needs of camp residents.

The Japanese Red Cross will support the health component through emergency healthcare, a health clinic and community-based health and first aid.

The Canadian Red Cross and Qatar Red Crescent are also supporting the BDRCS in providing some health services to the displaced Rakhine people in Cox’s Bazar.

The Qatar Red Crescent will continue to support BDRCS interventions on shelter, food and non-food items and health in Cox’s Bazar and other districts.
AREAS OF FOCUS

1,050,000
PEOPLE TO BE MADE RESILIENT AGAINST DISASTERS

105,000
PEOPLE TO BE SUPPORTED AND ENSURE THEIR SAFETY AND SECURITY THROUGH THE PROVISION OF SAFE SHELTERS IN CASE OF FLOODS AND CYCLONES.

13,901
PEOPLE TO RECEIVE CASH GRANTS AND SKILLS TRAINING.

51,100
PEOPLE TO BENEFIT FROM ACTIVITIES AROUND MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH, CLINICAL HEALTHCARE SERVICES IN EMERGENCIES, FIRST AID AND AWARENESS RAISING.

64,000
PEOPLE TO RECEIVE ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE.

15,600
PEOPLE TO BENEFIT FROM PGI TRAINING AND RELATED SERVICES.

2,000
INDIVIDUALS TO BE REACHED AND ENGAGED THROUGH MIGRATION AND DISPLACEMENT TRAINING, STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY DISCOURSE.
STRENGTHEN THE CAPACITY OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY
ENSURE EFFECTIVE INTERNATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT
INFLUENCE OTHERS AS LEADING STRATEGIC PARTNERS
ENSURE A STRONG IFRC
AREA OF FOCUS

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Because Bangladesh sits in the path of the cyclone alley of the Indian Ocean, it is highly vulnerable to cyclones and floods. On top of that, the country is also vulnerable to earthquakes, drought, cold waves, fire, and other extreme events. DRR is thus a core focus of the BDRCS, along with enhancing the capacity of communities to cope with disasters.

The approach includes establishing community-level contingency plans, a disaster-response fund, training and sensitization, a community-level early-warning system, school-based DRR and large-scale awareness raising on hazards and potential disasters.

BDRCS also places a high priority on saving lives by anticipating disasters and taking early action for which, a forecast-based action project has been started. The FbA is now linked to the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF), which automatically releases the required funds when an early action protocol (EAP) is activated. This initiative also responds to one of the five fatal flaws that were identified by the World Disaster Report 2018—Out of Money—by ensuring that required funds are available before a disaster actually hits the community.

Climate change has obviously increased certain disaster risks for the country’s low-lying coastal communities. Hence, communities are taught to manage stoves and fuel so that these are not made unusable in case of flooding. People are informed about climate change and its consequences through drama or folk song, and printed communications. Saplings are provided to vulnerable communities to help fight deforestation and erosion. Farmers are taught to use climate-resilient crop varieties, or techniques such as plinth cultivation. Seed banks and food banks have been established to further boost the community’s resilience to disasters. Furthermore, all activities planned in this area of focus contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically goals 1, 2, 11 and 13.
The work of the BDRCS also covers human-made disasters. For example, road traffic accidents kill more people each year than natural disasters in Bangladesh. Hence, a road safety project has been implemented through 500 schools, as children are considered an effective medium to spread knowledge and skills to their families. In addition, BDRCS risk analysis and response capacity will be strengthened by setting up a fully equipped emergency operation centre, which will be connected to national and international weather forecasting centres.

The IFRC country office will assist BDRCS at every stage of the project cycle management, including supporting project design, management, technical guidance, monitoring, quality control, reporting, fund-raising for the planned activities and coordination with different stakeholders.

### Needs/challenges/vulnerability

According to the Natural Disasters Risk Index (NDRI), Bangladesh is ranked as the country most at risk in the world from extreme weather and geophysical events. In 2017 there were 335 natural disasters in the country, affecting more than 95.6 million people. In 2018 there were 5,514 road accidents, killing 7,221 people.

### Outcome

**Communities in high-risk areas are prepared for and able to respond to disasters**
Safe, disaster-resilient shelter is a key need for Bangladesh’s riverside and coastal communities, where thousands are displaced by floods, cyclones and erosion almost every year. The floods of 2017, 2018 and 2019 destroyed more than 120,000 houses and damaged several hundred thousand individual shelters. Floods and river erosion in 2018 permanently displaced more than 43,000 people. Recently, cyclones Bulbul and Fani damaged over 500,000 houses in coastal areas and people categorically requested safe shelters instead of any other relief package or food, etc.

When there is an imminent risk of flood or cyclone in Bangladesh, up to several million people may require evacuation to safe places. However, cyclone shelters built 30 to 40 years ago are in bad condition and are in dire need of repairs and upgrading, and there is lack of safe evacuation shelters in case of flooding. In particular, char communities are isolated and difficult to access and very little assistance can reach them in an emergency.
The BDRCS plans to address the critical needs of char communities by building multi-purpose flood shelters and repairing/upgrading 50 old and unsafe cyclone shelters in the coastal area. This initiative is in line with the spirit of the World Disaster Report 2018, which affirms our commitment to “leave no one behind”. This initiative will also contribute to SDGs 9 and 11, by providing safe and resilient infrastructure. Communities will be taught to identify solutions for safe shelter and settlements, and to develop action plans within their limits of local resources and capacities. This plan will help BDRCS maintain readiness to immediately distribute 10,000 shelter materials in times of major disaster. The IFRC country office will support the project design, construction of shelters, safe shelter training and technical supervision and monitoring of construction/repair projects and reporting.

Needs/challenges/vulnerability

- Over two-thirds of rural houses in Bangladesh are not permanent structures.
- Around 63 per cent of the population live in rural areas.
- Rural communities, particularly char areas, are vulnerable to floods but lack any flood evacuation shelters.
Livelihoods, particularly in rural areas, remain a concern in Bangladesh as about a quarter of the population live in poverty or extreme poverty. Furthermore, a large portion of the population depend on a single source of income, generally from agriculture, which makes them very vulnerable in times of disaster. According to the World Bank (2016), 87 per cent of rural households depend on farming for all or part of their income, which is susceptible to weather-related events. Very few people spread the risk through alternative livelihoods or crop insurance, leaving them dependent on external support to mitigate the impact of disasters.

In 2017, more than 100,000 people in char areas were flooded for five days, with thousands losing their assets and livelihoods. More recently, cyclones have caused enormous damage to agriculture, fruit and fish-farming areas.

The BDRC plans to help 13,901 people make their livelihoods more resilient by identifying the most vulnerable households and providing them with cash grants, accompanied by a skills-development programme. With the help of relevant government officials, these will be followed with awareness-raising activities on livestock, agriculture, fisheries and other rural livelihood themes. This year greater focus will be placed on empowering single women and women-headed households. Initiatives in 2020 will also contribute to SDGs 1, 2 and 10.

The IFRC country office will support project design, cash distribution, livelihoods training, as well as monitoring, supervision and reporting to ensure the highest level of accountability and integrity.

**Needs/challenges/vulnerability**

- 21.8 per cent of the population live below the poverty line.
- Families with low incomes and single livelihoods are the most vulnerable.
- Livelihoods of the char and river basin communities and those along coastal areas are highly vulnerable to floods and cyclones.
AREA OF FOCUS

HEALTH

Bangladesh has significant maternal and child health (MCH) issues. According to the Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (BDHS, 2014) 62.2 per cent of births occur at home, increasing maternal and neonatal mortality rates, especially in rural and remote communities. BDRCS currently runs 56 MCH centres across 29 districts, of which only 32 are financially sustainable. The other 24 centres need funding for infrastructure, medical instruments and medicines. Refresher training for midwives and assistants is a requirement for ensuring quality of service being provided. Therefore, BDRCS plans to renovate five existing MCH centres and provide equipment and medicines to 20 MCH centres in 2020.

Beyond MCH, specialist doctors will provide advice through health camps, and community members will receive training on hygiene practices, basic health care, safe water and vector-borne diseases.
Together, these interventions are expected to increase the number of safe deliveries, improve the quality of MCH services, increase communities’ access to basic mother and child healthcare services, immunization activities, and reduce relevant risk factors. Additionally, this plan includes epidemic and pandemic preparedness of BDRCS, and support for an improved first aid service through first aid harmonization.

This area of focus directly contributes towards SDG 3. The implementation of all proposed activities will be actively supported by the IFRC country office in terms of project design, management, monitoring and reporting of field activities.

**Needs/challenges/vulnerability:**

- The maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 livebirths) currently stands at 172.
- 62.2 per cent of babies are delivered at home.8

### Outcomes

**Vulnerable people’s health and dignity are improved through increased access to appropriate health services**

- **40,000** people provided with mother and child basic healthcare support, immunization and preventive health services through MCH centres
- **10,000** people provided with emergency clinical health care
- **1,000** people trained in first aid
- **5** renovation of MCH centres
- **20** MCH centres receiving equipment support
AREA OF FOCUS

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

Bangladesh faces a range of challenges in the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) area. Only 61 per cent of the population has access to improved sanitation facilities. Those without access face a greater risk of diarrhoea, dysentery and typhoid. Diarrheal diseases are some of the leading causes of child death (along with acute respiratory infections), and almost 90 per cent of those cases are directly linked to contaminated water, lack of sanitation, or inadequate hygiene.

The groundwater in 61 districts out of 64 is contaminated with arsenic, and thousands of people have been affected with arsenicosis (a chronic illness resulting from drinking water with high levels of arsenic), cancer and other complications. Menstruating girls are kept away from school for days every month because of social taboos and lack of sanitation facilities. Hygiene practices are generally poor, but especially so in rural areas.

BDRCS plans to provide safe water in emergencies, install additional water points and improved latrines, as well as provide water purification kits and desalination plants. Hygiene will be promoted through participatory hygiene and sanitation transformation (PHAST) training, while materials will be developed for information, education and communication on WASH activities, and distributed among communities. Awareness raising will be implemented at schools and among vulnerable communities, starting in areas with high rates of water-borne diseases.
Collectively, these interventions are expected to increase the availability of safe water, improve hygiene and sanitation conditions, and reduce the number of cases of arsenic-induced illness. BDRCS response readiness will be increased and the overall capacity to cope with water- and hygiene-related disasters will be strengthened. These activities will directly contribute towards SDGs 3 and 6.

**Needs/challenges/vulnerability:**

- Around 90 per cent of child deaths from diarrhoeal diseases are due to sanitation problems.
- Around 97 per cent of people in rural area rely on groundwater, but 95 per cent is contaminated with arsenic.
- Only 23 per cent households in the poorest quintile have improved sanitation facilities.

**Outcome**

- Vulnerable people have increased access to appropriate and sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene services.
AREA OF FOCUS
PROTECTION, GENDER AND INCLUSION

IFRC, as always, emphasizes the dignity, access, participation and safety of all individuals across its activities and programming. It is concerned for how people’s gender, disability, age and other diversity factors affect their vulnerability to harm before, during and after disasters. The 2020 plan is particularly focused on engaging with people who face risks of marginalization, inequality and violence by addressing issues of exclusion, discrimination and inequity through the following:

Greater emphasis on stand-alone protection areas including anti-trafficking assessments, piloting projects to protect adolescent girls on the move from sexual violence and upholding their sexual and reproductive health rights and access to services during emergencies. In complex humanitarian settings, IFRC aims to increase local capacities to implement community-based protection assessments to identify context-specific protection concerns.

180,000 SWISS FRANCS FUNDING REQUIREMENT
Inclusive and protective disaster response operations based on a gender and diversity analysis. IFRC’s revised Minimum Standards for Protection, Gender and Inclusion in Emergency Programming, which includes establishing and strengthening referral pathways and ensuring access to multi-sector response services, will be disseminated and integrated into training for surge capacity, as well as PGI integration in emergencies.

Encouraging local, evidence-based solutions, using research and best practices to advance gender equality and inclusion within a protection framework.

Improvements in disaggregated data collection and analysis through data collection mechanisms, enabling research and new learning content and tools for staff and volunteers in order to include people with disabilities and gender and sexual minorities in the various settings where we operate.

The BDRCS is highly committed to improving the conditions of women, children and vulnerable people, and aims to increase gender and diversity knowledge and skills within BDRCS at all levels, ensuring that gender and diversity are mainstreamed into all projects and services. Collectively, these activities will contribute to SDGs 3, 5, 8, 10 and 16.

Needs/challenges/vulnerability

- Bangladesh is ranked 136th among 189 nations on the Gender Inequality Index (2018).9
- More than 4 million children are out of school.
- Less than 20 per cent of children with disabilities have access to education.

**Outcome**

Communities become more peaceful, safe and inclusive through meeting the needs and rights of the most vulnerable.
AREA OF FOCUS
MIGRATION

Bangladesh currently faces a variety of migration-related challenges as both a country of origin and destination. On the one hand, around 500,000 Bangladeshis leave the country every year to seek work abroad and, on the other, the country hosts more than 900,000 refugees from Myanmar, most of whom have arrived since the violence worsened in August 2017. This has created one of the most challenging displacement crises in the region for decades, and a significant priority area for the BDRCS. The National Society plays a key role in providing services to the people displaced from Rakhine under its population movement operation. Regarding migration out of Bangladesh, the BDRCS conducts awareness raising on the risks and vulnerabilities of migration, as well as engaging in dialogue and coordination with other National Societies at destination countries to improve the conditions of Bangladeshi migrant labourers.

However, in 2020 BDRCS is looking for a clearer direction and position on migration and displacement-related issues by developing a national strategy on migration and displacement and clarifying its role vis-à-vis migration and displacement in the future. Furthermore, BDRCS also plans to organize a discussion with officials and stakeholders on contemporary humanitarian challenges and the ways to address migration and displacement issues. These activities will increase awareness and acceptance of migrants and help build a common approach and understanding in dealing with transnational migration.

Through these activities, around 2,000 people will benefit directly, but they will also contribute to the larger cause of migration and displacement and support those displaced Rakhine people currently living in Bangladesh.

Needs/challenges/vulnerability

- More than 900,000 displaced people from Rakhine State are living in Bangladesh.
- Economic migration contributes to human trafficking and violence against women.

OUTCOME

People trained on migration policy and guidelines: 200
People reached with migration-related support and services: 2,000
Communities support the needs of migrants and their families and those assisting migrants at all stages of migration.
STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

STRENGTHEN NATIONAL SOCIETY CAPACITIES

IFRC seeks to strengthen the capacity of National Societies to deliver their mandated services. This year the plan includes a reform of human resources, upgrading of the financial management system, enhancement of transparency, and an improved resource-mobilization strategy. Furthermore, the NSD programme intends to enhance coordination with Red Cross Red Crescent partners and other stakeholders, adopt fraud and corruption prevention policies, mainstream child protection, gender and diversity, and strengthen planning, monitoring, evaluating and reporting (PMER). The plan is to implement these improvements at the level of national headquarters, as well as at the local branch level, thereby facilitating bottom-up planning and budgeting processes.

As a new governing board will be elected in the new year, this plan also supports new leadership orientation and training. Likewise, as the time has come to draft a new strategic plan for 2021–24, this plan will try to facilitate the drafting process. Another aim is to support and encourage BDRCS to secure the enactment of the Red Crescent law, which has been pending with the Government for 15 years. Unless there is a critical force and effort to push this issue ahead, it may never be achieved. Hence, we consider this issue as a matter of the highest priority. The time is ripe and conducive now to push this issue vigorously.

930,000 SWISS FRANCS FUNDING REQUIREMENT
The BDRCS current leadership and its contribution to humanitarian causes are acknowledged and highly appreciated by the State and the general public. In addition to NSD activities, the BDRCS is also improving its capacity to respond to natural disasters and human crises. It will work on updating contingency plans, response manuals and standard operating procedures, training national disaster-response teams, providing training on cash-based interventions, establishing forecast-based financing systems, developing a central database, and procuring drones for assessing disaster-affected areas.

**UNITS/BRANCHES WITH COMPLETED BRANCH ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENTS**

**68**

**BDRCS VOLUNTEERS INSURED**

**6,000**

**SENIOR LEADERSHIP OF BDRCS TRAINED ON GOVERNANCE AND PLANNING**

**15**

**BDRCS’S 2021–24 STRATEGIC PLAN DRAFTED**

**CENTRALIZED INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN PLACE AND OPERATIONAL**

**CURRENT FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM UPGRADED**

**THE BDRCS HAS THE NECESSARY LEGAL, ETHICAL AND FINANCIAL FOUNDATIONS, SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES, COMPETENCIES AND CAPACITIES TO PLAN AND PERFORM**
The 2020 operational plan aims to ensure timely and effective international disaster management and coordination. The IFRC supports and coordinates all disaster responses in the country, whether small or large. Currently, there are three ongoing emergency operations in Bangladesh that, for obvious reasons, demand very effective coordination and technical support to BDRCS. To achieve this objective, IFRC will actively engage the humanitarian coordination task team, clusters/sectoral working groups and other government-led meetings and workshops. IFRC will continue to support BDRCS in resource mobilization for urgent humanitarian actions, and also assist in overall disaster management through sharing learning experiences, technical inputs and advocacy. The DREF will be released based on the need to address any small emergencies. Also, IFRC will activate its convener role for shelter clusters and mobilize surge capacity from its global shelter cluster in times of emergency. In normal times IFRC will remain active in a number of cluster coordination mechanisms and continue to play an active role in advocating for the interests of disaster victims and vulnerable people.

The IFRC country office will strengthen its coordination and support for disaster responses and management of ongoing operations. The shared leadership and one window approaches will be continued, and IFRC will maintain its lead and influence in the country shelter cluster coordination, and actively participate in the Strategic Executive Group (SEG) and other national-level policy-making bodies. It will ensure that the Red Cross Red Crescent voice is always heard, and the rights and dignity of vulnerable people are widely advocated.

IFRC country office is actively engaged in localization dialogue and is the co-chair of the national localization task force. Our engagement in localization issues will continue in 2020.

While humanitarian diplomacy will be made more vigorous and effective, fund-raising activities will be actively pursued and new (large) donors will be approached, particularly to raise funds for the population movement operation.
(PMO) and other emergency operations in 2020. As large operations like PMO cannot run on low levels of funding, a major resource development drive is a must. We envisage an aggressive fund-raising drive for both regular programmes and emergency operations. Additionally, research will be conducted with the support of PMER to understand the efficiency of BDRCS distribution processes. Other research will be conducted to understand how disaster-affected families not receiving humanitarian assistance are recovering. Apart from these investigations, a final evaluation and post-distribution monitoring will be conducted for all emergency operations, which will then be used in future programming and interventions.

It is expected that with increased effort and initiatives in research, evaluation, coordination, fund-raising, shared leadership, humanitarian diplomacy and advocacy in 2020, the IFRC will continue to be a leading partner in the humanitarian community.

THE IFRC SECRETARIAT USES THEIR UNIQUE POSITION, TOGETHER WITH THE NATIONAL SOCIETIES, TO INFLUENCE THE DECISIONS THAT AFFECT THE MOST VULNERABLE AT LOCAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS

OUTCOME

ENSURE A STRONG IFRC

IFRC will reinforce its institutional commitment to:

- Compliance with the highest accountability standards to all relevant stakeholders through a broad framework that includes a code of conduct, principles and rules for humanitarian assistance, audited reports of expenditures, and a wide-ranging monitoring and evaluation methodology.

- Amenability to key management performance indicators, and a results-based approach for all work outlined in long-term plans and emergency operations. All activities via IFRC are monitored through a detailed measurement system with indicators at different levels to track performance.

- Full adherence to IFRC’s Fraud and Corruption Prevention and Control policy and facilitate effective risk management and the development of a culture of transparency as part of a robust framework that contributes to sound management practices.
Strict adherence to IFRC’s *Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse* policy that ensures every necessary step is taken to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse by IFRC personnel and to respond adequately to those incidents it cannot prevent. The policy prioritizes the well-being of the survivor and the accountability and integrity of IFRC’s engagement with local communities.

Ensuring a safe working environment and effective human resource management towards greater diversity and gender equality.

Apart from the above, the IFRC country office will maintain adequate human resources and systems to support and facilitate ongoing emergency operations and regular programmes. Currently, the IFRC country office directly supports three major emergency operations and over 50 development and coordination activities. While continuing its mandated activities, the country office liaises with the national government, diplomatic agencies and other international agencies, and at the same time extends its legal identity and legal base to other National Societies that are operating in the country through the IFRC’s legal status agreement. Hence, strong and effective coordination of the IFRC within the country is essential for enabling humanitarian action in Bangladesh.

**THE IFRC ENHANCES ITS EFFECTIVENESS, CREDIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

**ONGOING EMERGENCY OPERATIONS DIRECTLY SUPPORTED BY THIS OPERATIONS PLAN 2020**

**POPULATION MOVEMENT**

There are currently more than 900,000 displaced people from Rakhine State, Myanmar, including more than 700,000 who fled since a surge in violence erupted in August 2017, living in Bangladesh. The people and Government of Bangladesh have welcomed the displaced people with generosity and open borders. Nonetheless, the speed and scale of the influx has generated a major humanitarian challenge. The BDRCS has responded to the crisis through its PMO, with the support of IFRC and other partners. The PMO targets assistance for 200,000 people currently living in camps and extends support to 60,000 vulnerable Bangladeshi people who live in nearby host communities. However, due to conditions in the camp settlements, the contribution of the PMO cannot be measured by simply meeting one-off targets, but rather by its capacity to reach those in need with ongoing services, month after month. To date, the operation has provided 260,000 people with shelter, health, WASH, cash, PSS and PGI services. In October 2019, the IFRC appeal was revised to a budget of 82 million Swiss francs—the funding gap currently stands at 45 million Swiss francs.
MONSOON FLOODS 2019

Heavy monsoon rains across Bangladesh, India and Nepal have battered significant parts of these countries and caused disastrous floods, affecting millions of lives. In Bangladesh, despite a delayed monsoon onset, heavy rainfall occurred during the first half of July, especially during the second week, causing landslides and extreme flooding, resulting in massive damage across 28 districts. According to the National Needs Assessment Working Group (NAWG, 28 July 2019), more than 7.6 million people have been affected in 28 districts, over 300,000 people displaced, approximately 600,000 houses damaged, and 114 people have died. On top of that, about 532,000 hectares of crops have been destroyed. The IFRC response, at the request of BDRCS, was to launch an international appeal seeking 7 million Swiss francs to assist 150,000 people with emergency shelter, water, livelihoods and basic health supports. The operation commenced in July 2019 and will run until January 2021. As of November 2019, the appeal is only partially funded to a level of 35 per cent.

CYCLONE BULBUL

A strong cyclone formed on the Bay of Bengal, then travelled via Calcutta (India), making landfall on the coast of Bangladesh on 10 November 2019. When cyclone Bulbul reached Bangladesh, its power had reduced, yet it still managed to cause huge damage across 7 districts. Based on information available to date, over 722,000 people were affected, and more than 108,000 houses and 117,000 hectares of crop land were damaged.

IFRC, at the request of BDRCS, released 386,000 Swiss francs from its DREF to assist 17,500 of the most vulnerable people affected by the cyclone. This operation will continue until February 2020.
ENDNOTES

6. Char is a Bengali term for the riverine islands. These islands are present in both the Brahmaputra and Teesta rivers, many of which have semi-permanent settlements, all of which require boat transport.
Contact information of the IFRC Country office, for partners who wish to find out more:

Head of IFRC Country Office, Bangladesh
Azmat Ulla
azmat.ulla@ifrc.org

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Bangladesh
684–686 Red Crescent Sarak
Bara Moghbazar, Dhaka-1217
GPO Box 579, Dhaka-1000
Tel. +88 02 8315401–2