



The Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population

NEWS LETTER

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“IPPF responds to the Rohingya crisis”

The International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), founded in 1952, is the world’s largest NGO in the field of sexual and reproductive health (SRH). For more than 60 years since, IPPF, with its member associations in more than 140 countries, has been implementing programmes in over 170 countries, and runs more than 45,245 service centers around the world. In 2017, IPPF delivered 208.6 million SRH services worldwide.

Japan has forged a close partnership with IPPF. Ms. Shidzue Kato, Japan’s first woman parliamentarian and a pioneer of the family planning movement, was one of the founding members of IPPF. For more than 40 years since its establishment in 1974, the Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JPFP) has been a partner of IPPF, which has also supported the activities of JPFP.

This issue of the newsletter features the report of IPPF and others on the support provided to Rohingya refugees, who are a Muslim minority in Myanmar.

(Source: <https://www.ippf.org/blogs/providing-sexual-and-reproductive-healthcare-rohingya>)

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One of the worst refugee crises in recent years has been that facing the Rohingya. Thousands have fled their homes in Myanmar following a horrific campaign of violence which started in August 2017.

Over 600,000 Rohingya sought refuge in Bangladesh, and the majority are still living in camps there until it is safe enough to return.

As with any crisis situation, the provision of sexual and reproductive healthcare is essential, and IPPF clinics and local organizations on the ground have helped ensure that these needs do not go unmet.

Rehana’s story

We spoke to 25-year-old Rehana Begum who is 8 months pregnant with three small children in tow. She was one of the hundreds of thousands forced to leave home amidst the crisis. Heavily pregnant and exhausted, her and her family walked for 15 days to reach safety in Bangladesh.

Rehana visited an IPPF health clinic for a check-up and was provided with antenatal care. This was the first time during any of her pregnancies that she has had any medical attention.



Before attending the clinic Rehana was unaware of family planning as a way to plan future pregnancies. “I was not aware of family planning methods earlier,” she told us. “I am happy to know that I have options in terms of controlling my family size. I would definitely want to adopt a family planning method after my delivery”.

Delivering essential healthcare

Working with local organizations, IPPF’s focus is on delivering sexual and reproductive healthcare to the camp.

Women and girls make up 94% of clinic visits, with 77% of total visitors who received sexual healthcare under 25-years-old.

Field teams have been mobilized to create awareness about sexually transmitted diseases and birth control methods. IPPF has partnered with various local agencies for provision of these services as well as distribution of the kits and medical supplies.

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Support of the Japanese government

(Source: <https://www.mm.emb-japan.go.jp/profile/english/press/20180223.html>)

1. The Project for Responding to the Humanitarian Situation in Rakhine State (total grant: 1.1 billion Yen)

Immediately after the incident that occurred at the end of August in 2017 in Myanmar’s Rakhine State, emergency assistance has been implemented by the International Red Cross Committee (ICRC) etc. However, Internally Displaced Persons (according to the United Nations Office for Humanitarian Affairs Adjustment (OCHA), estimated number of Internally Displaced Persons in Rakhine State was 128,420 as of December 2017) and local residents require further assistance because they have been living under a prolonged refuge with stagnated economic activities that have been negatively affecting their nutrition, health and sanitation and living environment.

It is also expected that once the repatriation of IDPs and those who have fled to Bangladesh (according to the Refugee Assistance Adjustment Group ISCG, about 688,000 people have fled to Bangladesh as of February 11, 2018) commence officially, it will aggravate the difficulties faced by the residents in the state, making it vital to provide humanitarian assistance for food, health and sanitation, living environment and promoting cohesion among communities.

Through World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), this project will provide humanitarian assistance to affected people and communities such as food distribution, child protection, protection of displaced persons, shelter maintenance, child education and health care. By doing so, the project aims to improve regional stability and the humanitarian situation, and contribute to better living conditions for people affected by the incident, school enrollment rate, child protection and psychological care for women and girls, etc.

**Interview with Dr. Natalia Kanem,
Executive Director of UNFPA**
(Mainichi Shimbun, July 23, 2018; Tokyo, morning edition)

“With the support of the Japanese government, UNFPA is strengthening aid to the Rohingya, the Muslim minority in Myanmar, who fled to Bangladesh... UNFPA is distributing Dignity Kits, which include personal hygiene items and underclothes. There are also special kits for pregnant women. These supplies are a symbol of solidarity of the international community... The Japanese government is also assisting Myanmar in conducting the census, which will provide the basic information needed when the Rohingya refugees return safely to Myanmar”.

<https://mainichi.jp/articles/20180723/ddm/004/070/005000c>
(in Japanese)

2. The Project for Inclusive Development and Empowerment of Women in Rakhine State (total grant: 1.1 billion Yen)

This project, to be implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) will support people who were affected by intercommunal clashes since 2012 and the situation after the 2017 attack on the security forces, provide capacity building for the relevant administrative officials, increase competence for human rights and women’s access to law by strengthening awareness and skills for local communities and legal stakeholders, provide vocational training to encourage economic independence, support development of community infrastructure and provide capacity building for women. Through these activities, the project aims to support the middle and long-term improvement of living conditions in the area, strengthen capacity of administrative officials and contribute to the middle to long-term reconstruction of the communities affected by the incident.



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