

**United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)  
Bangladesh**

**Terminal Evaluation of the  
Early Recovery Facility (ERF) Project**  
(Project Award ID: 00061275)

***Final Report***

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<b>Key Project Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR), Government of Bangladesh (GoB)</li> <li>• Ministry of Planning, Government of Bangladesh</li> <li>• Department of Disaster Management (DDM)</li> <li>• Bangladesh Scouts</li> <li>• Bangladesh Disaster Preparedness Centre (BDPC)</li> <li>• Pre-qualified NGOs (both national &amp; international)</li> </ul>
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Many changes and revisions were made to the original report based on the presentation of the findings of the terminal evaluation, which ultimately took place on October 21, 2018, several months after completion of the assignment. The consultant is especially grateful to the UNDP Bangladesh Country Director, who took the findings and challenges seriously enough to suggest a follow-up visit including the evaluator. This did take place in late December (20-22), 2018, where a field visit was undertaken to Gaibandha on December 21 to visit beneficiaries, while on December 22, a dissemination workshop was organized with involved NGOs in Rangpur. The evaluator was taken along as a guest, and also made a brief presentation of the findings, which were corroborated by the involved NGO officials present. This is the first and thus far only evaluation conducted by the consultant where there was a follow-up, which itself is a good practice.

Last but not least, the consultant is grateful to the UNDP Bangladesh Country Director Mr. Khurshid Alam and the Program Analyst Mr. Arif Abdullah Khan, the evaluation managers, for selecting the consultant to carry out this interesting yet challenging evaluation and allowing him to do so with full independence.

However, any errors and omissions are those of the consultant, and no one else.

## Table of Contents

<b>List of Abbreviations</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>i. Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b> .....	<b>9</b>
1.1 Background of the Bangladesh ERF Programme .....	9
1.2 Objectives of the ERF Terminal Evaluation.....	10
1.3 Key implementing partners and other Stakeholders .....	10
1.4 Previous Evaluation Exercises .....	11
1.5 Management set-up of the ERF .....	11
1.6 Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation .....	11
1.7 Suggested Aspects to Consider .....	11
1.8 Clients.....	12
1.9 Evaluation Criteria .....	12
1.10 Methodology .....	12
1.11 Management Arrangements .....	13
<b>2 The Findings of the Terminal Evaluation</b> .....	<b>14</b>
2.1 Evaluation Findings .....	14
2.2 Intended Outputs mentioned in the Project Document.....	15
2.3 Achievement of the Intended Outputs .....	15
2.4 Findings based on the ERF Activities.....	18
2.5 Findings based on the Field Visits.....	18
2.6 Finance, Human Resources and other Project-related Activities.....	26
2.7 Summary of the Evaluation and Lessons Learned.....	28
2.8 Follow-up Visit.....	29
<b>3 Conclusions and Recommendations</b> .....	<b>31</b>
<b>List of Annexes</b>	
Annex 1 .....	Terms of Reference (TOR) 33
Annex 2 .....	Timeline of the Evaluation 41
Annex 3 .....	Selection of Documents Consulted 42

# List of Abbreviations

AWP	Annual Work Plan
BCCSAP	Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan
BCPR	Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery
BDT	Bangladesh Taka
BUET	Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology
CDMP	Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme
CPP	Cyclone Preparedness Programme
DDM	Department for Disaster Management
DMB	Disaster Management Bureau
DMC	Disaster Management Committee
DNA	Disaster Needs Assessment
DRF	Disaster Response Facility
DRR	Directorate of Relief & Rehabilitation
DRRF	Disaster Relief and Response Facility
ERF	Early Recovery Facility
ERD	Economic Relations Division
FFWC	Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Society
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LCG-DER	Local Consultative Group – Disaster and Emergency Response
MoDMR	Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief
NDMAC	National Disaster Management Advisory Committee
NDMC	National Disaster Management Council
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NGOCC	NGO Coordination Committee on Disaster Management
OECD	Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development
PDNA	Post-Disaster Needs Assessment
PSC	Project Steering Committee
SOD	Standing Order on Disaster
RRAP	Risk Reduction Action Plan
TPR	Technical Progress Report
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDP CO	United Nations Development Programme Country Office
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

# Executive Summary

The Early Recovery Facility (ERF) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Bangladesh is a conglomeration of projects undertaken under the Facility since early 2011 to help initiate early recovery, as the very name suggests. It is much more dynamic and multi-faceted than a project, as it more like an agglomeration of 70+ projects related to post-disaster early recovery, bringing significant challenges in attempts to evaluate the performance of the ERF by a single consultant in barely one-person month.

The main findings of the evaluation are based on the five Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)/ Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. The methodology was a mix of desk review (analysis of relevant reports and data related to the programme) and field visits including interactions with stakeholders in Dhaka as well as in the field (series of meetings and interviews). A variety of methods, including quantitative and qualitative evidence involving multiple means of analyses were drawn upon.

Bangladesh is one of the country's most at risk from the impacts of climate change. According to a recent World Bank study<sup>1</sup>, approximately 134 million people in Bangladesh are at risk of being victims of climate change, which will result in declining living standards due to rising temperature and erratic rainfall, and cost the country an estimated accumulated loss of US\$ 171 billion in gross domestic product (GDP) by 2050. Therefore it is likely that both acute (such as flooding or cyclonic events) and chronic hazards (such as flooding, drought, sea-level rise and saline intrusion) will increase in frequency and severity in the coming decades. The nature and scope of the hazards are well-documented in a range of existing literature.

UNDP Bangladesh's Early Recovery Facility (ERF), February 2011 – June 2018 (originally planned for 2011-2015), has far outlived the initial coverage period, and is now in its fourth extension. The first two extensions were for one year each (for 2016 and 2017 respectively), the third for a half-year term (through June 2018) and the final one for three months, through September 30, 2018 (given the administrative delays facing the follow-up phase).

ERF followed a unique project approach that offered quick activation of flexible mechanisms and tools for fast operationalization of early recovery assistance in order to complement the national disaster risk reduction efforts. The overall objective of ERF was to assist the victims of natural disasters in Bangladesh by putting in place systems that allowed coordinated and effective early recovery under a collaborative framework involving the Government, development partners and humanitarian actors. The ERF aimed to support and empower the central coordinating role of the Government in coordination and supervision of disaster recovery activities under a flexible and rapid implementation arrangement, in conformity with the United Nation's Country Programme Action Plan framework. It also included an NGO roster for quick implementation from a pool of pre-authorized NGOs in case of emergencies to shorten the time needed to act quickly for early recovery in the case of emergencies.

Although a mid-term evaluation (MTE) was conducted in February 2014, there were numerous interventions undertaken by ERF in the four and a half year period since, and this terminal evaluation mainly focuses on the post-MTE period. Based on the information provided, there appears to be proper utilization of financial resources, though funding has

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<sup>1</sup> South Asia's Hotspots The Impact of Temperature and Precipitation Changes on Living Standards (2018)

been a major issue. Given the uncertainty of funding, human resources turnover has apparently been an issue for ERF, with the team that oversaw the first half of the project not being around for the majority of the extension phases.

Since the current ERF personnel who oversee implementation of ERF activities have only been with ERF since 2016, there appears to be some institutional gaps in documentation and it was not possible to contact all previous ERF personnel, given the time constraints and the difficulty in locating several of them as it has been several years since they left ERF in specific and UNDP in general. The lack of monitoring and evaluation materials and the lack of documentation available at the onset of the evaluation affected the progress of the terminal evaluation.

Discussions with current and former GoB officials as well as current and former UNDP officials indicated that relevant officials considered ERF had gone a considerable way in achieving its objectives, significantly enhancing the capacity for the Government of Bangladesh in disaster preparedness and providing relevant training to especially the officials of DDM, who mentioned prior to 2011, they had never received any training. The contributions to ERF have thus gone a long way in raising the capacity of the national government and the concerned Ministry and Department in disaster preparedness. The overall consensus was that a relatively effective and well-functioning Early Recovery Facility has been put in place thanks to ERF. By far and large, it appears that the objective of ERF was satisfactorily and substantially achieved and that the contributions to ERF have thus gone a long way in raising the capacity of the national government and the concerned Ministry and Department in disaster preparedness.

ERF also was innovative in creating the NGO roster to quickly deploy NGOs for early recovery efforts. This NGO roster, a system that was created under ERF in Bangladesh, is currently undergoing replication in other UNDP programs around the world, given its immense potential in tackling disasters with early recovery efforts on a very quick basis from among pre-screened NGOs. Thus, overall, the majority of Outputs under ERF were significantly and substantially achieved during the tenure of the ERF, which also goes to show the relevance and effectiveness in attaining the stated objectives of ERF in the context of early recovery efforts in Bangladesh.

The Terminal Evaluation of the ERF involved reviewing a host of different activities across a very broad spectrum, all related to disasters and early recovery initiatives. However, given the limited time-frame for conducting the evaluation, and the fact that the evaluation fell not only during the onset of the monsoon, but also during much of the month of Ramadan, followed by Eid-ul-Fitr, conducting field visits during the brief evaluation period proved challenging. Despite this, three field visits were undertaken to provide insight into the strengths and challenges in ERF interventions undertaken in recent times. The brief field visits to the UNDP ERF project sites included:

- 1) Field visit to northern region (Rangpur division) to assess the impact of the 2017 ERF flood assistance, on June 13-15, 2018;
- 2) Field visit to on-going ERF activities for the host community in refugee influx areas (Cox's Bazar, Chattogram division) on June 20-22, 2018; and,
- 3) Field visit to Mymensingh (Mymensingh division) to assess the earthquake preparedness intervention, on June 23, 2018.

Given that the ERF has been involved in early recovery in the case of both natural and human-induced disasters, this makes the scope of the facility much more over-arching and multifaceted. ERF has been engaged in both in early recovery and in the prevention techniques for land-slides in the Chittagong Hill Tracts region. ERF has also been involved in earthquake preparedness in Mymensingh, the area which witnessed the most devastating earthquake in Bangladesh over a century ago, as the region falls between multiple tectonic plates that are earthquake-prone. Issues like water-logging have also been addressed under ERF in the south-western region of Bangladesh.

With the influx of almost one million Rohingya refugees since August 2017, ERF was active in ensuring communal harmony among the host community in Cox's Bazar district and even engaged in temporary rural employment for segments of the local population generation through enhancing rural infrastructure in remote regions, which took on added significance as the influx of refugees has resulted in a depression of wages for day labour in the region.

Field visits indicated that while by far and large, intended beneficiaries had received the benefits of the early recovery interventions, there was some scope for further improvement in carrying out the interventions. In the case of the flooding in the northern districts, while two bundles of tin (each bundle of tin consists of eight sheets of tin) were among relief items provided as UNDP flood assistance to beneficiaries, no money to help build the house was provided, which resulted in the majority of flood assistance beneficiaries being unable to rebuild their abodes despite receiving the necessary tin for this purpose.

Overall, ERF has made significant strides, both in terms of capacity building and in terms of direct interventions, and was found to be highly relevant, quite efficient and effective as well as apparently sustainable overall. However, in a disaster-prone country like Bangladesh, what ERF has done is a significant start; a lot more remains to be done. There is no room for complacency. It can be hoped that the insights and observations along with the recommendations of this ERF terminal evaluation will help in designing better and more efficient interventions in future early recovery efforts in Bangladesh, and other countries can also learn from the best practices that have come out of ERF.

Based on the Terminal Evaluation of the ERF, the following conclusions and recommendations can be reached:

- ERF is no less relevant now than it was at its inception and there is no scope for complacency;
- Although a lot of progress has been made with regards to early recovery initiatives, a lot more needs to be done;
- Ensure proper M&E & documentation for better institutional memory;
- Fine-tune field-level interventions to make them more productive and pro-active;
- Help in modifying the strategic approach of GoB from reactive to pro-active for better alignment with future ERF/DRRF interventions;
- Involve more actively the various other early recovery initiatives for better coordination and learn from best practices, both locally & globally [including GoB ones (*e.g. providing money with tin for building the accommodation*)];
- Try to ensure longer-term contracts for effective & efficient project personnel for employee retention/curtail and avoid high employee turnover;
- Significant scope for improving interventions at the micro-level;;
- Essential to have full-time M&E personnel; and,
- Try to avoid repeated extensions of facility.



# 1 Introduction

This Early Recovery Facility (ERF) Terminal Evaluation Report is based on the specifications laid down in the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the terminal evaluation of the ERF in Bangladesh. The ToR has been provided in Annex 1. The report begins in this section with an overview of the ERF, including the background, objectives, main stakeholders, and previous evaluation exercises. Section 2 delves into the issues of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the facility, the main issues of the terminal evaluation. Section 3 provides suggestions for future interventions, including the proposed follow-up project, including possible measures to enhance management efficiency.

## 1.1 Background of the ERF

Bangladesh is commonly cited as a country that is extremely vulnerable to natural disasters. Given the combination of its geographic location, topography, dense population and levels of poverty, natural hazard events unfortunately often result in disasters with high loss of life and economic damage. Trends in the data indicate that the situation in terms of preparing for and responding to disasters is improving over time, with massive improvements in the reduction of lives lost. One important element of this has been improvements in early warning systems (EWS) and cyclone shelters in particular. The Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters estimates that close to 229 million people have been directly affected by natural disasters during last few decades, with over 7,700 killed and economic damage in the order of US\$5.6 billion.

At the same time, Bangladesh is one of the country's most at risk from the impacts of climate change. According to a recent World Bank study<sup>2</sup>, approximately 134 million people in Bangladesh are at risk of being victims of climate change, which will result in declining living standards due to rising temperature and erratic rainfall, and cost the country an estimated accumulated loss of US\$ 171 billion in gross domestic product (GDP) by 2050. Therefore it is likely that both acute (such as flooding or cyclonic events) and chronic hazards (such as flooding, drought, sea level rise and saline intrusion) will increase in frequency and severity in the coming decades. The nature and scope of the hazards are well-documented in a range of existing literature.

UNDP Bangladesh's Early Recovery Facility (ERF), February 2011 – June 2018 (originally planned for 2011-2015), has far outlived the initial coverage period, and is now in its fourth extension. The first two extensions were for one year each (for 2016 and 2017 respectively), the third for a half year term (through June 2018) and the final one for three months, through September 30, 2018 (given the administrative delays facing the follow-up project).

ERF followed a unique project approach that offers a quick activation of flexible mechanisms and tools for fast operationalization of early recovery assistance in order to complement the national disaster risk reduction efforts. The overall objective of ERF was to assist the victims of natural disasters in Bangladesh by putting in place systems that allowed coordinated and effective early recovery under a collaborative framework involving Government, development partners and humanitarian actors. The ERF aimed to support and empower the Government's central coordinating role in coordination/supervision of disaster recovery activities under a flexible and rapid implementation arrangement, in conformity with the UN's Country Programme Action Plan framework.

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<sup>2</sup> South Asia's Hotspots The Impact of Temperature and Precipitation Changes on Living Standards (2018)

With the closure of the Project, UNDP has undertaken a terminal evaluation. The Expert (National Consultant) will be guided by the Assistant Country Director (R & IG) and will work in close coordination with the UNDP Country Office.

## 1.2 Objectives of the ERF Terminal Evaluation

The terminal evaluation of ERF has the following objectives, based on the terms of reference:

-perform holistic outcome and output analysis

-assess the achievement of the project objectives taking into consideration:

- implementation approach
- stakeholder participation
- relevance and effectiveness
- sustainability
- financial planning
- cost-effectiveness
- monitoring & evaluation

-review a broad range of strategies such as ERF's contribution to the national early recovery efforts, following disasters, analyze the main findings and indicate the key lessons to be learnt with examples of best practices.

## 1.3 Key implementing partners and other Stakeholders

Key implementing partners of the ERF are as follows:

- Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR), Government of Bangladesh (GoB)
- Ministry of Planning, Government of Bangladesh (GoB)
- Department of Disaster Management (DDM)
- Local Consultative Group – Disaster and Emergency Response (LCG-DER)
- International Federation of Red Cross
- Bangladesh Scouts
- Mymensingh City Corporation
- Narayanganj City Corporation
- Bangladesh Disaster Preparedness Centre (BDPC)
- Pre-qualified NGOs
- Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET)

## 1.4 Previous Evaluation Exercise

There was a Mid-term Evaluation (MTE) of the ERF in 2014. The MTE exercise was carried out in February 2014, analysing the programme against the project design. A number of recommendations were made, including in the categories of policy and programmatic support, capacity development and emergency response and early recovery. The independent Mid-term Evaluation (MTE) served several purposes – first, to look at the programme design and implementation and assesses the programme's continued relevance of support based on achievement to date in achieving planned objectives. Based on past

lessons, the MTE highlighted corrective areas that would require project's focus over the second half of the project. The MTE examined all five stated outcome areas of the project and assessed progress towards expected outcomes and objectives.

## 1.5 Management set-up of the ERF

The ERF is led by a National Programme Analyst who is assisted by a Shelter Specialist and a Capacity Development Specialist and several administrative and finance officials, with further recruitment going on in anticipation of the new follow-up facility that is awaiting approval from the government. The ERF is currently based on the 18<sup>th</sup> floor of the IDB building, but at one stage occupied half a floor on the 14<sup>th</sup> floor of the same building with many full-time employees. The unique structure of ERF allows for the rapid deployment of a large number of experts, both international and national, on very short notice to tackle emergency situations, both natural and those caused by humans.

## 1.6 Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

The evaluation will assess the **achievement** of the project as a whole as well as for the five components and their linked or joined activities. Strategic **lessons learned** will be identified and **recommendations** put forward to be considered in further programming by stakeholders and UNDP for the next phase of the project. Achievement of higher level results and internalization of these results and related processes by the stakeholders will be a key issue to examine. The evaluation will also recommend measures for promoting long-term sustainability of the ERF results and impact.

A specific focus will be on reviewing lessons learnt and sustainability aspects developed by the ERF so that complete and externally reviewed documentation of the project is available as a basis for further action and scaling up. This is particularly important in view of the consideration for further technical support to this scaling up.

## 1.7 Suggested aspects to consider

The specific issues and aspects to be addressed in the final evaluation will be identified through the consultative process with stakeholders in the initial stages of the evaluation and based on review of the project documentation and other relevant documentation.

**Some broad areas** in which specific aspects to be addressed can be identified are:

- Validation of the strategic approach, including any changes in the strategies used;
- Achievement of project objectives;
- Key concerns, lessons learned and emerging good practices;
- Institutional strengthening, capacity building and creation of enabling political environment that stimulates ownership of reforms and measures;
- Ascertain the sustainability mechanisms that are in place. In addition, gauge the possible replication and up-scaling of these mechanisms and interventions; and,
- Follow-up to the mid-term evaluation (MTE).

## 1.8 Clients

The constituents are the primary stakeholders of the project who will use this evaluation report as well as UNDP, GoB and the donors of ERF and the follow-up project, the Disaster Relief and Response Facility (DRRF), which was scheduled to start in July 2018, but is now undergoing Government of Bangladesh (GoB) approval. This evaluation exercise will hopefully allow for learning from the ERF and help the DRRF avoid the same pitfalls at the micro-level implementation of projects for a more robust performance, while enhancing delivery overall and achieving even greater performance at the macro-level.

## 1.9 Evaluation Criteria

In principle, the evaluation will be conducted following UN evaluation standards and norms, and will specifically address the overall Evaluation Criteria as defined in the UNDP Policy Guidelines for results-based evaluation, as follows:

- A. Relevance
- B. Effectiveness
- C. Efficiency
- D. Impact
- E. Sustainability

However, because of the MTE, one or more of these criteria may have been sufficiently addressed and may not need to be included in the terminal evaluation.

As detailed in the Early Recovery Facility project document, the ERF had the seven outputs mention under the Results and Resources Framework. Each of the seven outputs has multiple proposed activities and indicators, though only the seven major outputs are mentioned for developing a better understanding of what ERF has achieved:

- Output 1: A functional Early Recovery Facility;
- Output 2: Well-functioning, coordinated and equipped district and upazila-level disaster management officials;
- Output 3: Integrated and coordinated volunteer network ready to respond to local and national level disaster events;
- Output 4: Contribution to the development of innovative community-based solutions to disasters and climate change induced events;
- Output 5: Support to national-level disasters in response to GoB appeal/request to extend complementary support;
- Output 6: Support to emergency response coordination, through the Local Consultative Group—Disaster and Emergency Response (LCG-DER) and national cluster system; and,
- Output 7: Support to Bangladesh to participate in regional and global DRM and CCA initiatives.

## 1.10 Methodology

Although initially the Final Evaluation was to be conducted by a two person team of independent consultants – one international consultant and one national consultant, due to a combination of factors, the terminal evaluation of ERF was conducted by a single national

consultant, who will work according to the principles of independent evaluations and be free of any link to or control of the specific programme or organisation being evaluated.

The Terminal Evaluation methodology covers three areas:

1. Review of key documents;
2. Interactions/ interviews with key stakeholders including DDM, MoDMR, implementing partners, beneficiaries and other relevant informants; and,
3. Field-based observations, including visits to implementing Ministries, Departments, and beneficiary communities.

The methodology was a mix of desk review (analysis of relevant reports and data related to the programme) and interactions with stakeholders in the field (series of meetings and interviews). A variety of methods will be applied that draw on both quantitative and qualitative evidence and involve multiple means of analysis.

The stakeholders interviewed included the key implementing partners (MoDMR and the DDM) and other stakeholders as well as the clients. It also includes other actors such as implementing partners (NGOs) and field visits to the UNDP ERF project sites as follows:

- 4) Field visit to northern region (Rangpur division) on June 13-15, 2018;
- 5) Field visit to on-going ERF activities for the host community in refugee influx areas (Cox's Bazar, Chattogram division) on June 20-22, 2018; and,
- 6) Field visit to Mymensingh (Mymensingh division) on June 23, 2018.

After completion of the field mission a Stakeholder Workshop was supposed to be held in Dhaka in order to share the preliminary findings and recommendations of the evaluation mission team by means of a PowerPoint, to elicit comments by invited key stakeholders, and a general discussion. However, perhaps due to scheduling conflicts, a suitable date and time for both an initial internal UNDP dissemination workshop and a larger Stakeholder Workshop have yet to be held, even though a scheduled internal workshop due to be held on August 14, 2018, was cancelled at the very last minute.

## 1.11 Management Arrangements

The evaluator will report to the Evaluation Managers. The UNDP County Office for Bangladesh and the ERF project will provide administrative and logistical support during the evaluation mission. Project management will also assist in organizing a detailed evaluation mission agenda, and to ensure that all relevant documentations are up to date and easily accessible by the evaluator. All stakeholders, particularly the relevant UNDP staff, relevant government ministries and agencies, NGOs and other key partners will be consulted throughout the process and will be engaged at different stages during the process. They will have the opportunities to provide inputs to the TOR and to the draft final evaluation report.

## 2 Findings of ERF Terminal Evaluation

The Terminal Evaluation covers three areas, as mentioned previously in the methodology section. The terminal evaluation of the Early Recovery Facility (ERF) consisted of initially reviewing the relevant documentation, including the ERF project document, the annual project reviews, the mid-term evaluation (MTE), the various publications prepared under the ERF. Based on the understanding of the relevant documentation, interviews were conducted with the relevant stakeholders within UNDP and the UN system as well as relevant Government of Bangladesh (GoB) officials, especially from the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR) and the Directorate of Relief & Rehabilitation (DRR). Field visits were also undertaken to validate the achievements of the ERF.

In this section, the findings of the evaluation are presented. The success of the facility is assessed against the standard UN evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, even though ERF is much more than a single project, and rather a combination of multiple projects, making the task of evaluation much more challenging than it would be for the common project.

### 2.1 Evaluation findings

The main findings of the draft report are based on the following evaluation criteria

- *Relevance*
- *Effectiveness*
- *Efficiency*
- *Impact*
- *Sustainability*

Bangladesh is one of the country's most at risk from the impacts of climate change. According to a recent World Bank study<sup>3</sup>, approximately 134 million people in Bangladesh are at risk of being victims of climate change, which will result in declining living standards due to rising temperature and erratic rainfall, and cost the country an estimated accumulated loss of US\$ 171 billion in gross domestic product (GDP) by 2050. Therefore it is likely that both acute (such as flooding or cyclonic events) and chronic hazards (such as flooding, drought, sea level rise and saline intrusion) will increase in frequency and severity in the coming decades. The nature and scope of the hazards are well-documented in a range of existing literature.

The ERF aimed to support and empower the Government's central coordinating role in coordination/supervision of disaster recovery activities under a flexible and rapid implementation arrangement, in conformity with the UN's Country Programme Action Plan framework. Thus, ERF appears to be as highly relevant at its onset as it is at the time of the terminal evaluation of ERF. For a more thorough understanding of its relevance, it is necessary to have a better understanding of the targets of the ERF based on the project document. The Intended Outputs of ERF are detailed to provide a better understanding on which basis the evaluation was carried out.

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<sup>3</sup> South Asia's Hotspots The Impact of Temperature and Precipitation Changes on Living Standards (2018)

## 2.2 Intended Outputs mentioned in the Project Document

As detailed in the Early Recovery Facility project document, the ERF had the seven following outputs mentioned under the Results and Resources Framework. Each of the seven outputs have multiple proposed activities and indicators:

Output 1: A functional Early Recovery Facility;

Output 2: Well-functioning, coordinated and equipped district and upazila-level disaster management officials;

Output 3: Integrated and coordinated volunteer network ready to respond to local and national level disaster events;

Output 4: Contribution to the development of innovative community-based solutions to disasters and climate change induced events;

Output 5: Support to national-level disasters in response to GoB appeal/request to extend complementary support;

Output 6: Support to emergency response coordination, through the Local Consultative Group—Disaster and Emergency Response (LCG-DER) and national cluster system; and,

Output 7: Support to Bangladesh to participate in regional and global DRM and CCA initiatives.

## 2.3 Achievement of the Intended Outputs

Based on the discussions with relevant stakeholders (GoB) and UNDP Country Office and both current and former ERF Project Officials and other relevant UN officials, it appears evident that in terms of achieving the intended outcomes as mentioned in the ERF Project Document, the overall consensus was that a relatively effective and well-functioning Early Recovery Facility has been put in place thanks to ERF. How well ERF will continue to operate beyond the lifetime of the project remains to be seen and can only be measured with the passing of time; however, by far and large, it appears that Output 1 was satisfactorily and substantially achieved.

Given how disaster-prone Bangladesh is, and the fact that Bangladesh is one of the country's most at risk from the impacts of climate change, the objective of early recovery is in no way any less relevant now than it was at the time of the inception of the ERF. According to a recent World Bank study<sup>4</sup>, approximately 134 million people in Bangladesh are at risk of being victims of climate change, which will result in declining living standards due to rising temperature and erratic rainfall, and cost the country an estimated accumulated loss of US\$ 171 billion in gross domestic product (GDP) by 2050. Therefore it is likely that both acute (such as flooding or cyclonic events) and chronic hazards (such as flooding,

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<sup>4</sup> South Asia's Hotspots The Impact of Temperature and Precipitation Changes on Living Standards (2018)

drought, sea-level rise and saline intrusion) will increase in frequency and severity in the coming decades. The nature and scope of the hazards are well-documented in a range of existing literature. Thus, there is no doubt of the relevance of ERF in the context of Bangladesh.

In regard to Output 2, ERF has significantly helped build GoB capacity for the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR) and especially of the Directorate of Relief & Rehabilitation (DRR). This has helped in significantly establishing a well-functioning, coordinated and equipped district and upazila-level disaster management set-up. As there was no scope for training of DRR officials prior to 2012, ERF helped DRR capacity building through providing trainings to officials. Discussions with two current Director-level officials at DRR provided insights into how valuable the ERF-sponsored trainings were for DRR officials, and how it made DRR officials be much more enthusiastic and inspired in carrying out their responsibilities due to the capacity building initiated under ERF. Based on the interviews, Output 2 was also substantially achieved under ERF.

Discussions with current and former officials of both the Department for Disaster Management (DDM) and the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief as well as current and former UNDP officials associate with ERF indicated that relevant officials considered ERF had gone a considerable way in achieving its objectives, significantly enhancing the capacity for the Government of Bangladesh in disaster preparedness and providing relevant training to especially the officials of DDM. DDM officials mentioned that prior to 2011, they had never received training even when they had been in the Bureau of Disaster Management, which along with another entity, the Directorate of Relief & Rehabilitation, were merged to form DDM in 2012, following the enactment of the Disaster Management Act, 2012<sup>5</sup>.

The contributions to ERF have thus gone a long way in raising the capacity of the national government and the concerned Ministry and Department in disaster preparedness. This includes, but is not limited to helping the concerned Ministry develop a Draft Disaster Management Policy, Operationalizing the Standing Orders on Disaster and preparing the Handbook for Disaster Management Committees, updating the Flood and Cyclone Response Preparedness Plans and helping the Ministry and DDM host their websites, along with the publication of a wide range of other materials related to disasters.

Given the creation of an integrated and coordinated volunteer network ready to respond to local and national level disaster events was done under ERF, especially for projects like the Cyclone Preparedness Program in the coastal districts, it appears that Output 3 has also been significantly and substantially achieved. The Earthquake Preparedness Program conducted in Ward #14 of Mymensingh City Corporation and the training of Bangladesh Scouts under ERF are some of the examples of how integrated and coordinated volunteer networks were created, courtesy of ERF.

While ERF has definitely made contributions to the development of innovative community-based solutions to disasters and climate change induced events, given the susceptibility of Bangladesh to climate-change induced events, such as the interventions for averting landslides in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and also for water-logging affected areas in the

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.ddm.gov.bd/site/page/48e43e67-78e6-428f-9be1-584e9f93446d/Creation-of-DDM>



south-western parts of Bangladesh. Output 4 has been somewhat achieved, given the scale of the potential damage to Bangladesh that is likely to occur unless there is a reversal in global warming, there is significant scope to conduct further interventions in regard to this output, which is a never-ending process.

With flood victims being provided relief in the form of a package consisting of two bundles of tin, a trunk, cooking apparatus, bed sheets, blankets and pillow covers, mosquito nets, school bag for children among the materials given in the north-western flood affected regions in late 2017 and early 2018, support to national-level disasters in response to GoB appeal/request to extend complementary support is evident under ERF, as was also the case when cyclone-proof housing was constructed in Banshkhali of Chattogram division in the aftermath of cyclone under another project. These are some examples of ERF fulfilling Output 5. While larger funding would allow ERF to carry out greater relief efforts in the backdrop of natural disasters, given the funding received for such projects under ERF, the outcome is quite considerable and satisfactory.

Output 6, which consists of support to emergency response coordination, through DER LCG and national cluster system, was also evident from ERF activities. ERF was active in ensuring communal harmony among the host community in the district of Cox's Bazar and even engaged in temporary rural employment for segments of the local population generation through enhancing rural infrastructure in remote regions, which took on added significance as the influx of refugees has resulted in a depression of wages for day labour in the region.

Flood assistance in the north-western flood affected regions in 2016 and 2017 to support national-level disasters in response to extend complementary support is evident under ERF, as was also the case when cyclone-proof housing was constructed in Bashkhali of Chattogram division in the aftermath of cyclone under another project. ERF was active in ensuring communal harmony among the host community in the district of Cox's Bazar and even engaged in temporary rural employment for segments of the local population generation through enhancing rural infrastructure in remote regions, which took on added significance as the influx of refugees has resulted in a depression of wages for day labour in the region.

Even during the evaluation period, there was evidence of support to Bangladesh under ERF to participate in regional and global DRM and CCA initiatives when the ERF program manager took a team of GoB officials headed by the Honorable Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR) to an international climate change conference in Mongolia. There were also numerous instances of international and national-level trainings attended by relevant Ministry officials as well as officials of the Directorate of Relief & Rehabilitation (DRR). Thus, Output 7 was also significantly achieved.

Thus, overall, the majority of Outputs under ERF were significantly and substantially achieved during the tenure of the ERF, which also goes to show the relevance and effectiveness in attaining the stated objectives of ERF in the context of early recovery efforts in Bangladesh. These achievements relate to the effectiveness and efficiency of ERF pertaining to its stated objectives, as well as to the impact of ERF in achieving early recovery in post-disaster situations.

## 2.4 Findings based on the ERF Activities

Given the extent of activities undertaken under ERF, not all projects under the facility could be visited or reviewed. However, some notable projects are mentioned based on the review of ERF activities that are worthy of mentioning, given their potential important and the need to continue the efforts.

In 2017 and 2018, ERF implemented projects to save the lives of school children that aim to reduce the loss of lives of school children from earthquake and tsunamis. Under the Community Based Disaster Management (CBDM) Asia II and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)-funded *School Preparedness Programme Against Tsunami* aims to strengthen awareness and preparedness by collecting risk data, producing education materials, reviewing and developing school disaster preparedness plans, designing drill scenarios and conducting safe evacuation drills.

The projects contributes to the achievement of the Sendai Framework's seven targets to reduce lives lost, reduce the number of people affected by disasters, and economic damage from natural and human-induced hazards. It also contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals Target 11 to significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations.

The four major project outputs include:

- Output 1: School preparedness and awareness programmes institutionalised.
- Output 2: School preparedness and awareness programmes replicated and adapted in more schools.
- Output 3: System for risk assessment data for vulnerable schools established.
- Output 4: New ideas to strengthen preparedness in innovative ways through partnerships with multiple partners and agencies

Several studies were also carried out under ERF. Some studies are more relevant than others, with several worthy of being mentioned. Innovative studies include a highly technical study on areas prone to river erosion. Based on the findings of the study on the *Hydrological and Modeling Study for Side Slope Stabilization Work in Selected River Erosion-prone Villages* and the experience gained during the process, the following endorsements can be made:

- The shelter height, particularly in an island char environment, should be based on frequency analysis of available secondary water level data and it is important that a 20-year return period can be chosen as the design level.
- A topographic survey with reference to Survey of Bangladesh data should be carried out to fix the design level and level of raising.
- In selecting shelter locations, the macro-stability of the sites should be studied with the help of satellite images and image processing tools.
- Many of the existing shelters in the study area are found prone to river erosion and thus redesigning the shelter height have been recommended.

## 2.5 Findings based on the Field Visits

Some major findings of the draft report are based on the following field visits:

- 1) Field visit to northern region (Rangpur division) on June 13-15, 2018;

- 2) Field visit to on-going ERF activities for the host community in refugee influx areas (Cox's Bazar, Chattogram division) on June 20-22, 2018; and,
- 3) Field visit to Mymensingh (Mymensingh division) on June 23, 2018.

**Field visit to northern region (Rangpur division):**

The first round of field visits concerned the UNDP-China Flood Assistance Program in three north-western districts, namely Nilphamari, Kurigram and Lalmonirhat during June 13-15, 2018. On June 13, extensive field visits were conducted based on the list of beneficiaries provided for Saidpur upazila of Nilphamari district. A total of 26 beneficiaries out of a total of 120 recipients were interviewed at their residences in Saidpur. Flood-affected victims were provided relief in the form of a package consisting of two bundles of tin (each bundle of tin contains 8 sheets of tin; thus a total of 16 sheets of tin, enough to build a tin-shed residence was provided), a trunk, cooking apparatus, bed sheets, blankets and pillow covers, mosquito nets, a saw/apparatus and a school bag for children were among the materials given in the north-western flood affected regions in late 2017 and early 2018.

All the beneficiaries interviewed mentioned they had received all the goods mentioned in the relief package, and were appreciative of the package. Almost all the recipients mentioned they had also received Bangladesh Taka (BDT) 200 for carrying the relief materials by rickshaw van to their residences. However, in all unions except Nur Nagar, which was an Urdu speaking neighbourhood, no more than one of the beneficiaries in each of the unions mentioned that they had been able to utilize the tin for the purpose for which it was provided due to lack of funds to finance the building of the house with the new tin, which they estimated to cost at least BDT 10,000, which they could not afford.

Only in Nur Nagar was it evident that all the beneficiaries who had received the relief materials had utilized the tin. This is perhaps indicative of the fact that in most residences of Nur Nagar, both the husband and the wife were working (men worked as carpenters or rickshaw-pullers or in similar types of jobs, while women worked in the town often as servants or cleaners), and where apparently the majority of dwellers had received the assistance. According to one resident, 22 out of 23 households in Nur Nagar had received the assistance from UNDP, and all who had received it had utilized the tin soon after receiving it.



Nur Nagar Village

This was, as mentioned previously, not the case in the other unions of Saidpur, where the majority of recipients had unutilized tin in their residences. While they all said they intended to utilize the tin, they said they were unable to due to fund constraints. According to officials of both MoDMR and DDM, under government approved schemes, at least BDT 3,000 is provided per bundle of tin to help subsidize the cost of building a tin-shed house from the tin provided as flood relief assistance to avoid such pitfalls. Thus, it is advisable to take on board the lessons learnt from other such flood relief programs and there is no need to reinvent the wheel.

Only one questionable case of relief distribution to a beneficiary who didn't seem eligible was found in Saidpur Sadar. A lady who had lost her husband (and thus qualified as a widow) but lived in a cemented house had received the relief goods, which seemed a little surprising. Being a widow often entails a lady to receive assistance in the case of floods; however, there should be criterion (such as having a cemented house) that should disqualify her from receiving any assistance.

There was also a person who was apparently autistic who had received relief materials, which goes to show that people with disabilities were also considered when relief materials were distributed.

Thus, by far and large, recipients were found to be needy and deserving of receiving the relief materials, and the ERF was successful overall in choosing beneficiaries for receiving flood assistance. During the internal dissemination, the evaluator was informed that despite requests from UNDP Bangladesh, the donors turned down the request to provide money along with the tin for the flood-affected to rebuild their houses.



Visits to Kurigram and Lalmonirhat were conducted on June 14. In Kurigram, the condition of the roads did not permit travel beyond Kurigram Sadar or to the residences of people who lived on the chars (shoals). As food assistance was being distributed on June 14 prior to Eid, many poor people had thronged the Jatrapur Union at Kurigram Sadar, an area where there were 500 beneficiaries of the UNDP intervention. Here also only one of the seven UNDP intervention beneficiaries who were met mentioned they had utilized the tin for building their residences; others mentioned lack of financing as the main obstacle to their rebuilding their residences with the tin provided under the UNDP intervention.



Jatrapur Union under Kurigram Sadar

In Lalmonirhat Sadar, food assistance was also being distributed on June 14, as it was prior to Eid, many poor people had thronged the Kulaghat Union #2, an area where there were 9

beneficiaries of the UNDP intervention, according to a local member of the Union Parishad. Here also only one of the nine UNDP intervention beneficiaries mentioned they had utilized the tin for building their residences; others mentioned lack of financing as the main obstacle to their rebuilding their residences with the tin provided under the UNDP intervention. This is in line with the findings of the scenario found in Saidpur and in Kurigram Sadar. This leaves scope for better planned interventions to assist the flood-affected victims of the area.



Kulaghat Union #2 under Lalmonirhat Sadar

On the way to Lalmonirhat, while dropping by another union of Kurigram Sadar, discussions with officials at their office revealed that 10 kg of free rice was being provided to the poor people. The officials suggested that the government could get the beneficiaries to work for the 10 kg of rice, which could be done in exchange for the rice. This would help improve the quality of the roads and other infrastructure in the area. They also opined that unless river dredging takes place, floods will be a recurring event in the area and no permanent solution will be possible, with acute flooding likely to occur every year.

### **Field visit to on-going ERF activities for the host community in refugee influx areas (Cox's Bazar, Chattogram division)**

The field visit to Cox's Bazar were undertaken on June 20-22 to visit the Cyclone Preparedness Project office in the district town, and to visit the programs undertaken under ERF for the host community in areas which had seen an influx of Rohingya refugees.

The Cyclone Preparedness Project had received capacity building support from the ERF, and the visit to the Project office in Cox's Bazar included a video presentation on how the Project has made major strides in preparing people in coastal regions aware and prepare for such emergencies, from hoisting cautionary flags, provision of equipment including microphones to announce the potential onset of dangerous weather, to a demonstration of how the radio room of the Storm Warning Center operates in the case of such emergencies.

For the visit to witness programs undertaken under ERF for the host community in areas which had seen an influx of Rohingya refugees, a total of 1920 men and women from Teknaf and Ukhiya upazila were provided cash employment for 28 days; one-third of the workers were women. The purpose of this intervention under ERF was to help build small and medium infrastructure, including better earthen roads connecting remote villages to the main highway. The purpose of this project was to make infrastructure in those areas more resilient, while also helping people of the area in income-generation, more so since their wages had been depressed due to the influx of the Rohingya refugees, which had more than tripled the population of the remote areas and resulted in significant depression of daily wages for day-labor in those areas. Interventions also included trying to look into how to improve social cohesion, and ERF had helped conduct several community risk assessments as part of the intervention.



A Chakma house in Ukhiya (Photo Credit: Kelly Rogers of DevEx)

What appeared obvious from a visit to the area was that while the road network was still in decent condition, given there were earthen roads, local inhabitants mentioned that if a deep tube-well had been provided in their locality, that would have saved them the burden of having to access safe drinking water by having to walk more than half an hour to secure such safe water, and another half an hour to walk it back to their residences. The local inhabitants requested for another round of employment generation schemes from UNDP to help them economically and further improve the infrastructure and possibly also establishing a source for safe water closer to their abodes.

Another interesting observation was that while the Bengali settlers who had been living in that area for years next to the Chakma inhabitants and neighbors, the Bengali settlers apparently had not taken up indigenous house-building skills from the Chakma. While the Chakma houses were elevated, which allowed for very good air circulation in an area which had no electricity, the Bengali houses were almost at ground level and were very hot to sit and stand in. There remains significant scope for integrating indigenous house-building technology among the Bengali population in those areas for a better quality of life.

## Field visit to Mymensingh

A field visit to Ward #14 of Mymensingh City Corporation was undertaken on June 23, 2018 to meet with the Ward Commissioner and also visit at least one of the school sites where teachers for the earthquake preparedness training were employed. Under this project, an earthquake preparedness initiative was taken involving several (five) local schools of the ward and a core team of volunteers was trained, relevant equipment provided, and the structural integrity of a number of buildings in the area (including the Government Primary School visited) were tested and necessary remedial measures were taken to enhance the integrity so that they could withstand even a moderate to powerful earthquake.



#126 Char Para Government Primary School, Mymensingh

As part of the field trip, a visit was made to #126 Char Para Government Primary School, which was one of the five schools that were under the purview of the training. Two of the three teachers who had undergone training were still with the school, while the third teacher had been transferred to a Government Primary School outside of Mymensingh town. Although initially it was thought that this was the first such training imparted to the teachers of the school, it was found out through personal interviews that the NGO Forum for Bangladesh had conducted an earthquake preparedness training a year before a similar training was provided under ERF. However, the ERF training was found to be more in-depth and for a longer duration than the training provided by the NGO Forum for Bangladesh.

The ERF had taken initiatives to strengthen the structural integrity of #126 Char Para Government Primary School, which was one of the five schools covered under Mymensingh Ward #14. It may be mentioned that a visit to the school revealed that although many important measures were taken, the area suffers from severe water-logging during the monsoon, and that even half an hour of rain results in the over-flowing of the drain water into the streets and even into the school. The picture of the Principal's room shows a desk that is elevated by four chairs to avoid damage to the desk.





Room of the Principal at #126 Char Para Government Primary School

A visit to the other rooms on the ground floor revealed a similar picture. Although not relevant to the project, given the water-logging problem that persists at #126 Char Para Government Primary School, it was notable that the NGO Forum for Bangladesh had also helped the school by building several bathrooms/toilets for the school; previously, there was apparently no dedicated bathroom/toilet for the school. The newly constructed bathrooms/toilets were built at an elevated level so that they would not face the problem of water-logging.

Discussions with the Ward Commissioner revealed that ERF had provided significant training to a large number of volunteers; a recent fire in Mymensingh town had the volunteers arriving at the scene of the fire before the fire service. Equipment provided by ERF under the initiative was used to alert volunteers. Given that an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure, such interventions can go a long way in containing damage from a potential earthquake.

This initiative included some volunteers (including the Ward Commissioner) receiving training in Nepal and in China, and the valuable life-saving skills and the equipment provided under ERF will help tackle any emergency that is not on a regional and national scale. Upscaling such initiatives could help contain the fallout from serious catastrophes, as earthquake preparedness is lacking in general in the country, even though newspaper articles from time to time have warned of the serious consequences that would befall the aftermath of an earthquake in the capital city of Dhaka or any region of Bangladesh. This is all the more relevant given that a recent geological evaluation concluded that Bangladesh is significantly exposed to earthquake hazards with its vulnerability most likely exacerbated by socio-economic factors. Although Bangladesh has not experienced any damaging large earthquakes in the past century, the need for having better community preparedness with both non-structural and non-structural measures is therefore considered critical to reduce severity of casualty.

Overall, it was found that the ERF projects had been managed well and leakage, one of the major concerns in many projects that were implemented in Bangladesh in the past, did not appear to be a concern. However, there is scope to try and make certain interventions more effective. The low rate of utilization of tin provided as relief assistance is such an example. While there is no need to reinvent the wheel, in certain cases, it may be prudent to take advantage of lessons learnt by other agencies, including the Government, to have a more efficient outcome.

In the case of the flood relief, since both Ministry and DDM officials mentioned that the norm in relief tin distribution includes providing BDT 3,000 with each bundle of tin to help beneficiaries utilize the tin for re-building their accommodation, inclusion of such, subject to funding, would seem a more ideal proposition. There is no need to reinvent the wheel; government interventions allocate Bangladesh Taka (BDT) 3,000 per bundle of tin provided for flood-affected families. When asked, the beneficiaries mentioned lack of funds for their inability to build new houses with the tin received in approximately three-fourths of the cases in Saidpur of Nilphamari district, while the regions of Lalmonirhat district and Kurigram district exhibited even lower percentages of people being able to utilize the tin, even more than six months after having received the tin under the UNDP ERF. This is indicative that on a micro level, there is some scope for improving the design of the interventions to further cater to the needs of the affected.

In the case of assisting the host community in Cox's Bazar, the inclusion of having several deep tube-wells built alongside the road construction would also have significantly helped the host community be preventing them from having to spend so much time and energy in collecting safe drinking water.

Thus, it appears that there is scope for better micro-management and planning for potential future interventions related to early recovery projects, in order to avoid potential pitfalls and lack of fully attaining the desired objectives under the ERF for future programs, facilities and interventions.

## 2.6 Finance, Human Resources and Project-related Issues

Based on the information provided by UNDP Bangladesh Finance, there appears to be proper utilization of financial resources, though funding has been a major issue. Given the uncertainty of funding, human resources turnover has apparently been an issue for ERF, with the team that oversaw the first half of the project in general not being around for the extension phases.

While there was only one fixed-term position under the project, that of the international project manager (who held a P4 Fixed Term Appointment position), aside from that one position, apparently all ERF personnel are on Service Contracts of various durations. However, given the figures provided regarding the human resources, there appears to be no major shift in the number of project personnel on service contracts (not short-term consultancies) in the ERF over the duration of the project. As apparently mentioned by a former ERF team member, after the departure of the international project manager, the team was not the same. It is also necessary to ensure that longer-term contracts for ERF and follow up phase Disaster Relief and Response Facility (DRRF) officials can be ensured to

retain experienced project personnel throughout the duration of the project, especially to ensure there is no break in institutional memory.

The year-wise annual expenditure under ERF is provided in the following table:

Year-wise annual ERF expenditure	
Year	Expenses in USD
2011	1,400,295.37
2012	818,942.65
2013	3,949,164.05
2014	2,303,665.43
2015	1,573,743.28
2016	3,220,509.00
2017	5,058,062.64
2018	2,014,073.58
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>20,338,456.00</b>

The annual ERF expenditure scenario from 2011 to 2018 indicates significant fluctuations in annual expenditure under ERF throughout the years, with the highest amount of slightly over US\$5 million spent in 2017, while the lowest amount of slightly under US\$819,000 was the spent in 2012, with the following year, 2013, witnessing the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest annual expenditure at slightly under US\$4 million spent for ERF during the 8-year period, with the total expenditure just over US\$20 million total over the full time-period.

Several Government officials (both Ministry and DDM), both current and former, as well as several ERF staff mentioned the dynamism and extensive experience of the international project manager in making things happen. There also appears to be lack of several key personnel, including that of a monitoring and evaluation officer as well as a documentation officer. Even though the monitoring and evaluation task is a full time one, it is now being carried out as an additional responsibility by a current project official. Documentation has also suffered as a result of not having a documentation officer to keep detailed documentation of the 70+ projects undertaken under ERF.

Given the specialization needed for carrying out the responsibility of monitoring and evaluation, a dedicated officer was required to cover the project activities. Due to the diversity and dynamism of the activities under ERF, there should have been a full-time monitoring and evaluation officer throughout the full term of the ERF, including all extension phases. The lack of monitoring and evaluation materials and the lack of documentation available at the onset of the evaluation affected the progress of the terminal evaluation.

Having the terminal evaluation conducted during Ramadan also affects the evaluation in a country like Bangladesh; with the Eid holidays falling within the evaluation period also affected the evaluation to some extent. However, due to an extension (both in terms of time and the number of person days, since this evaluation was supposed to be conducted by a two-person team led by an international consultant but was ultimately conducted by a single national consultant), and the project-ending as well as the preoccupation of ERF officials with trying to finalize the next phase of the project, the timing was not optimal for carrying out the evaluation and the field visits. As regards the timing of the project terminal evaluation, although it is common to have the evaluation near the completion of the project, for future

evaluations, it is strongly advisable to have a well chalked out schedule, especially for the interviews with the government officials.

## 2.7 Summary of the Evaluation and Lessons Learned

Overall, the relevance of the ERF has been very high from the beginning and continues unabated, and perhaps has increased since the onset of the ERF. It was and continues to be closely aligned to national needs of Bangladesh through the Department for Disaster Management (DDM) and the line ministry, the Ministry of Disaster Management & Relief (MODMR). All key stakeholders interviewed have indicated explicitly that the focus on ERF is very relevant. Relevant stakeholders have also stressed that the relevance is still as valid as before and much more needs to be done. As a result of the above, ERF ownership has been high from the beginning at DDM & MODMR.

ERF has contributed to significantly achieving its stated intentions and aims as specified in the Project Document. ERF has indeed supported relevant interventions. It has undertaken short-/medium-term actions to help increase the effectiveness of DDM and MODMR through relevant training in early recovery. It has contributed to early recovery efforts in various disasters. ERF has made initial steps in achieving these quite broad objectives, and it may well have contributed to laying a foundation to be able to achieve these objectives more comprehensively in the future.

The ERF initiatives generally appear to have been cost effective; however, more in-depth analysis is required. There was a high level of turnover; none of the original ERF staff is currently with ERF. The number of international staff is currently zero; the project initially had an international staff (P4) as the Project Manager, but now all the ERF staff are on Service Contracts. While the project was due to end initially in December 2015, there have been four time extensions of ERF, and overall ERF spending is slightly over US\$20 million on 70+ projects. However, it should be noted that the quality of reporting for ERF needed to be significantly improved.

Overall ownership of ERF at the government =level has been very high from the beginning in MODMR and especially at DDM. DDM officials (including Bureau of Disaster Management, one of two entities merged into DDM) mention they had received no training on early recovery prior to ERF interventions to train them accordingly. ERF also helped DDM in preparing relevant and necessary training manuals and updating the Statement on Disasters. However, it should be noted that there was no planned exit strategy for ERF. Based on the interviews conducted, it appears that the method by which the Joint Needs Assessment (JNA) was conducted caused a host of unpleasant questions, and that the ERF faced significant transformation after this JNA which apparently has affected ERF in terms of potential impact.

During the evaluation, ERF was in its fourth and final extension. Prior extensions include two year-long extensions for 2016 and 2017, an initial six-month extension through June 30, 2018 and finally a three-month extension through September 30, 2018. While ERF has imparted significant training and know-how to DDM and MODMR, time will tell how sustainable the initiative ultimately is. DRRF, the follow-up initiative, is expected to realistically explain how the next phase will be carried forward once ERF concludes

Major achievements under ERF have been mentioned. Some of these achievements include:

- Conducting wide-ranging capacity building initiatives for various stakeholders, which has helped mainstream disaster risk reduction (DRR);
- Facilitating systematic changes for GoB in effective disaster response by providing necessary support;
- Initiating the NGO roster, which is now being replicated across UNDP offices world-wide to involve NGOs in early recovery efforts on very short notice;
- Conducting several research studies;
- Piloting of several technical innovations for DRR;
- For dealing with potential disasters like earthquakes, ERF has supported GoB in many ways [e.g. through national campaigns, developing communication materials & websites, introducing model wards, etc.]
- Working as a DRR knowledge hub and supporting GoB in resource mobilization for recovery.

Major challenges for ERF and the ensuing follow-up project, the DRRF, include:

- Facilitate modifying the strategic approach of GoB from reactive to pro-active for better alignment with future ERF/DRRF interventions and especially as Bangladesh graduates from least developed country status and foreign aid decreased;
- Involve more actively the various other early recovery initiatives for better coordination and learn from other initiatives [including GoB ones] as there is no need to reinvent the wheel;
- Provide money with tin to ensure better utilization of the resources in the case of the flood relief assistance, so more beneficiaries are able to utilize the relief materials.
- Ensure institutional memory is not lost as GoB jobs are transferable and also as there was relatively high turnover around the time the ERF was scheduled to end;
- Ensure having a full-time monitoring and evaluation professional for DRRF;
- Ensure having a full-time documentation professional for DRRF;
- Ensure more effective measures to reduce staff turnover, etc.

## 2.8 Follow-up Visit

Based on suggestions of the UNDP Bangladesh Country Director, who took the findings and challenges seriously enough to suggest a follow-up visit to the north-western region of Bangladesh to follow-up on the progress of the ERF intervention and based on the findings of the evaluator's presentation to the UNDP Country Team, a field visit north-west Bangladesh was undertaken by the ERF/DRRF team, including the evaluator, who was taken along as a guest. This visit took place on 20-22 December, 2018.

A field visit was undertaken to Gaibandha on December 21, 2018, to interview the beneficiaries. A focus group discussion (FGD) was held with 31 beneficiaries of the flood relief project. Of the 31 beneficiaries who answered, only 1 had built her house from the provided tin prior to September, 2018; another 12 had built houses in the past 3 months, while 6 more had partially used the tin. It is important to note that 12 had not yet utilized the tin they had received as beneficiaries, almost one year after all beneficiaries had received the flood relief package which included two bundles of tin (with each bundle containing eight tin sheets) for building a new house.

On December 22, a dissemination workshop was organized with involved NGOs in Rangpur. The evaluator was taken along as a guest, and also made a brief presentation of the findings, which were corroborated by the involved NGO officials present. This is the first and thus far only evaluation conducted by the consultant where there was a follow-up, which itself is a good practice. However, based on the discussions with the NGO officials present at Rangpur for the discussions, there was room for improvement in the ERF post-flood early recovery efforts, including a major recommendation of including some cash money along with tin for helping the flood-affected beneficiaries build their houses soon after the floods; based on the Gaibandha field visit on December 21, 2018, while there were still a considerable number of beneficiaries who were yet to build their houses with the tin they had received, about half of the beneficiaries who had built their houses with the tin provided had done so within the past three months prior to the visit, i.e., almost a year after being affected by the floods.

### 3 Conclusion and Recommendations

Bangladesh, where recovery interventions are normally undertaken sector-wise by the respective ministries and these recovery interventions are hardly conducted in a coordinated manner, is experiencing recovery gaps in knowledge, practice, and resource. There is no relevant legislation that exclusively contains specific provisions for recovery and specific mandates and/or roles and responsibilities on recovery issues are also not in place for the institutions that are engaged in disaster management. Though the issues related to recovery and action plans in this regard have been discussed to some extent in the National Plan for Disaster Management (2016-2020), the internal monitoring and accountability mechanism of the Government for post-disaster recovery requires streamlining under a single recovery framework as it receives the notion of “Build Back Better” through recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction as one of the implementing priorities of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR). The SFDRR is an international accord on disaster risk reduction which was adopted at the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in March 2015 in Sendai, Japan.

Mainstreaming disaster recovery practices in a coordinated manner calls for reviewing the global disaster recovery practices and way forward in Bangladesh context through identification of the gaps and challenges from the available knowledge base and experience of government officials, development partners and DRR practitioners. Moreover, formulation of post disaster recovery framework for Bangladesh considering the development pursuit of the country, goals and targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) - 2030 and priorities of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) is highly required.

Based on the Terminal Evaluation of the ERF, the following conclusions and recommendations can be reached for better post-disaster and early recovery:

- ERF is no less relevant now than it was at its inception
- Ensure proper M&E & documentation for ERF/ Disaster Relief and Response Facility (DRRF);
- Help in modifying the strategic approach of GoB from reactive to pro-active for better alignment with future ERF/DRRF interventions;
- Involve more actively the various other early recovery initiatives for better coordination and learn from other initiatives [including GoB ones (*e.g. providing money with tin for building the accommodation*)];
- Improve the management structure of ERF or in this case, the follow up phase, the DRRF;
- Try to ensure longer-term contracts for effective & efficient project personnel for retaining employees to curtail high employee turnover;
- Even though a lot of progress has been made with regards to early recovery initiatives, a lot more needs to be done;
- Significant scope for improving interventions at the micro-levels;
- Learning from best practices, both locally & globally
- Essential to have full-time M&E personnel;
- Necessary to have better documentation
- Take steps to store and improve institutional memory;
- Ensure policies to have long-term employees; and
- Try to avoid repeated extensions of facility.

It is expected that the draft report will be circulated to key stakeholders and partners and UNDP staff i.e. project management officials, UNDP Country Office Bangladesh, and if necessary/applicable, UNDP Regional offices and UNDP HQ) for their review. Comments from stakeholders will be consolidated by the evaluation manager and will be sent to the evaluation consultant to incorporate them into the revised evaluation report. The evaluation report will then be considered final.



# Annex 1 Terms of Reference (TOR)

## National Consultant - Early Recovery Facility (ERF) Terminal Evaluation

<b>Location :</b>	Dhaka, Bangladesh (Including Project Field Visits), BANGLADESH
<b>Application Deadline :</b>	03-May-18 ( <b>Midnight New York, USA</b> )
<b>Additional Category :</b>	Climate & Disaster Resilience
<b>Type of Contract :</b>	Individual Contract
<b>Post Level :</b>	National Consultant
<b>Languages Required :</b>	English
<b>Starting Date :</b>	(date when the selected candidate is expected to start) 05-May-2018
<b>Duration of Initial Contract :</b>	22 days over a period of 02 month

### Background

Bangladesh is commonly cited as a country that is extremely vulnerable to natural disasters. Given the combination of its geographic location, topography, dense population and levels of poverty, natural hazard events unfortunately often result in disasters with high loss of life and economic damage. Trends in the data indicate that the situation in terms of preparing for and responding to disasters is improving over time, with massive improvements in the reduction of lives lost. One important element of this has been improvements in early warning systems (EWS) and cyclone shelters in particular. The Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters estimates that close to 229 million people have been directly affected by natural disasters during last few decades, with over 7,700 killed and economic damage in the order of US\$5.6 billion.

At the same time, Bangladesh is one of the country's most at risk from the impacts of climate change, therefore it is likely that both acute (such as flooding or cyclonic events) and chronic hazards (such as drought, sea level rise and saline intrusion) will increase in frequency and severity in the coming decades. The nature and scope of the hazards are well-documented in a range of existing literature.

UNDP Bangladesh's Early Recovery Facility (ERF), 2011 – 2015 followed a unique project approach that offered, quick activation of a flexible mechanisms and tools for fast operationalization of early recovery assistance in order to complement the national disaster risk reduction efforts.

The overall objective of ERF was to assist the victims of natural disasters in Bangladesh by putting in place systems that allowed coordinated and effective early

recovery under a collaborative framework involving Government, development partners and humanitarian actors. The ERF aimed to support and empower the Government's central coordinating role in coordination/supervision of disaster recovery activities under a flexible and rapid implementation arrangement, in conformity with the UN's Country Programme Action Plan framework.

With the closure of the Project, UNDP Bangladesh seeks an International Expert to, with the support of a Project Analyst (R & IG) under a terminal evaluation.

The Expert will be guided by the Assistant Country Director (R & IG) and will work in close coordination with the UNDP Country Office.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

The terminal evaluation of ERF has the following objectives:

-perform holistic outcome and output analysis

-assess the achievement of the project objectives taking into consideration:

- implementation approach
- stakeholder participation
- relevance and effectiveness
- sustainability
- financial planning
- cost-effectiveness
- monitoring & evaluation

review a broad range of strategies such as ERF's contribution to the national early recovery efforts, following disasters, analyze the main findings and indicate the key lessons to be learnt with examples of best practices.

### **SCOPE OF WORK**

The International Expert is expected to lead the evaluation. The proposed evaluation seeks to assess the impact of the project over a broad range of strategies mentioned above and would specifically address the following:

#### **Strategic orientation:**

- Assessment of the appropriateness and effectiveness of the project strategy in contributing to the project outcomes
- Evaluating the relevance of ERF in the context of current national priorities in the DM sector

#### **Programme performance:**

- Assessment of the progress in planned outputs;
- Assessment of the perception of the communities and key stakeholders on the direct and indirect benefits derived from the programme;
- Analysis of important factors that influenced the programme performance;
- Assessment of the impact of ERF interventions during recent disasters;
- Assessment of the monitoring strategy;
- Assessment of key project activities with a focus on qualitative and quantitative factors and indicators of performance/achievements.

### **Lessons learned:**

- Identification of innovative approaches/methodologies;
- Identification of approaches/methodologies that failed in achieving the desired results and documentation of the reasons for failure for corrective actions;
- Identification and documentation of the best practices including risk, challenges and partnership building of the programme for replications and wider dissemination;

### **Sustainability:**

- Assessment of the sustainability of the project results in the light of the current policy and programmatic thrust of the Government of Bangladesh;
- Review the ongoing activities and their adequacy to sustain the project outcomes.

### **Partnership strategy:**

- Assessment of the effectiveness of ERF's partnership strategy (with GoB, NGOs and civil society) over the project in achieving the results and sustaining the gains;
- Assessment of relevance of partnership ERF has established over the project with various NGOs, institutions and agencies.

### **Future Opportunities vis-à-vis UNDP's support to GoB in disaster response and early recovery:**

- Identify specific recommendations on corrections and actions required to address the gaps in achieving the outcomes, including future partnerships, which can be incorporated into future support to GoB;

### **The assignment will focus on the following areas and activities:**

- Preliminary meetings with UNDP, GoB, development partners, implementing (contracting) partners;
- Submission of inception report (outline, proposed methodology, evaluation tools)
- Implementation of evaluation [including field visits], analysis of the data, preparation of reports etc
- Submission of draft final reports
- Presentation of findings

Submission of final reports

## Methodology

The FE methodology will cover three areas:

4. Review of key documents;
5. Interactions/ interviews with key stakeholders including DDM, MoDMR, donors, implementing partners, beneficiaries and other relevant informants;
6. Field based observations, including visits to implementing Ministries, Departments, Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) and beneficiary communities.

## Expected Outcomes: or deliverables:

The FE team will be accountable for producing:

- **Inception report**— the inception report will detail the reviewers’ understanding of what is being reviewed and why, showing how the review objectives will be met by way of: appraisal methods and techniques; sources of data (and an assessment their quality); and data collection procedures. The inception report will include a proposed schedule of tasks, activities and deliverables, designating a team member with the lead responsibility for each task or product.
- **Draft report**—the draft Terminal Evaluation report will submit to ERF UNDP programme management team for comment and to ensure that the evaluation meets the required quality
- **Final report** - a comprehensive analytical report in English. The length of the report shall not exceed 40 pages in total (not including annexes).
- **Presentation of initial findings and de-brief** – the consultant will present initial findings at a debriefing at the conclusion of the mission to relevant officials, project management team and relevant

## Evaluation ethics

UNDP ‘Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation can be consulted as reference document in drafting review principles.

## TIMEFRAME AND DEADLINE:

The assignment is for **22 working days** over a period from 25 April to 10 June 2018.

- UNDP Dhaka Office and Project Field Visit: **14 days**
- Home based: **08 days**

<b><i>Task/ Deliverables</i></b>	<b><i>Timeframe/ Required Days</i></b>
<b>Desk review-</b> finalizing review design and methods, prepare detailed inception report	4 days

<b>Review mission in project</b> – interviews, field visits, prepare draft report	10 days
<b>Presentation of initial findings and debrief</b> – presentation of initial findings to UNDP, government partners, donors and project staff	2 days
<b>Review of draft report</b> (for quality assurance) – incorporating comments and finalizing review report after the end of assignment.	6 days

Phase	Responsible Person	Tasks	Proposed timeline	Number of days (National consultant)
I	Evaluator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Desk Review of project related documents</li> <li>Briefing with the evaluation manager(s)</li> <li>Preparation of the inception report</li> </ul>		4 (although a higher number of total days may be required as it is being done by a single consultant instead of two consultants)
II	Evaluator (logistical support by the project)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Field visit</li> <li>Interviews with project staff and other key stakeholders and partners</li> </ul>		10
III	Evaluator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preparation for the Stakeholder Workshop</li> <li>Workshop with the project management and relevant UN offices for sharing of preliminary findings, if necessary through video conference</li> <li>Draft report based on desk review, field visit, interviews/questionnaires with stakeholders in Bangladesh and the stakeholder workshop</li> <li>Debriefing</li> </ul>		2
VI	Evaluation manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Circulate draft report to key stakeholders</li> <li>Stakeholders provide comments</li> <li>Consolidate comments of stakeholders and send to team leader</li> </ul>	3-4 days	
VII	Evaluator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalize the report based on feedback and comments received</li> </ul>		6
VIII	Evaluation Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the revised report and submit for final approval</li> </ul>	By July 1, 2018	
		Total no. of working days for Evaluator		22

## SUPERVISION AND PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Under the overall guidance from Assistant Country Director (khurshid.alam@undp.org), UNDP Bangladesh, the consultant will directly report to and Program Analyst (arif.abdullah@undp.org), UNDP. The Consultant will work with the Early Recovery Facility team.

### DOCUMENTS:

The Consultant will prepare and submit the documents mentioned above at the end of the assignment. Further work, or revision of the documents, may be required if it is considered that the report does not meet the UNDP and the government's standards, TOR, there are errors of fact or the document is incomplete or not of an acceptable standard.

### INPUTS:

UNDP will provide office space for the consultant as required and arrange meetings, consultations, and interviews and ensure access to key officials as mentioned in proposed methodology. Field visit in the project area of Bangladesh, only transportation will be arranged from UNDP.

### Travel:

All envisaged travel costs must be included in the financial proposal. This includes all travel to join duty station/repatriation travel. In general, UNDP should not accept travel costs exceeding those of an economy class ticket. Should the IC wish to travel on a higher class he/she should do so using their own resources. In the case of unforeseeable travel, payment of travel costs including tickets, lodging and terminal expenses should be agreed upon, between the respective business unit and Individual Consultant, prior to travel and will be reimbursed.

### Travel and DSA:

No DSA will be paid at the duty station. If unforeseen travel outside the duty station not required by the Terms of Reference is requested by UNDP, and upon prior agreement/approval, such travel shall be UNDP's expenses and the individual contractor shall receive a per-diem not to exceed United Nations daily subsistence allowance rate in such other location(s).

### Deliverables Linked with Payment Milestone:

Deliverables	Days required	Payment Schedule
Desk review- finalizing review design and methods, prepare detailed inception	04 days	15% of the contracted amount

report		
Project review mission – interviews, field visits, prepare draft report and Presentation of initial findings and debrief – presentation of initial findings to UNDP, government partners, donors and project staff	12 days	50 % of the contracted amount
<b>Review of draft report</b> (for quality assurance) – incorporating comments and finalizing review report	06 days	35% of the contracted amount

### Competencies

- Good communication and interpersonal skills and experience in working effectively in a multicultural environment;
- Professionalism: flexibility to make ad-hoc changes as and when the need arises;
- ability to perform under stress; willingness to keep flexible working hours;
- Teamwork: ability to establish and maintain effective working relations as a team member, in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic environment with sensitivity and respect;
- Communications: excellent interpersonal and communication skills;
- A team-player and self-starter, able to work with minimum supervision, with sound judgment; and
- Need creativity for graphics design and writing skills.

### Required Skills and Experience

#### ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS:

- Relevant post-graduate degree in development-related disciplines, with emphasis on disaster risk reduction, disaster management or associated field
- At least 5 years' hands-on experience in the evaluation and/or management of disaster management / climate change programmes in relevant field, including at the international level

#### Additional Required Skills and Experience

- Knowledge of current issues and trends in DRR, including the international

- architecture and financing mechanisms
- Knowledge of current issues and trends in climate change
  - Knowledge of results-oriented evaluation principles and methodology.
  - Familiarity with UNDP operations and knowledge of relevant UNDP' policies are an asset
  - Strong analytical skills
  - Organizational, administrative and planning skills
  - Good interpersonal skills and ability for team work

### **Language requirements**

Fluency of English and Bangla language is required;

### **Price Proposal and Schedule of Payments**

Consultant must send a financial proposal based on **Lump Sum Amount**. The total amount quoted shall be all-inclusive and include all costs components required to perform the deliverables identified in the TOR, including professional fee, travel costs, living allowance (if any work is to be done outside the IC's duty station) and any other applicable cost to be incurred by the IC in completing the assignment. The contract price will be fixed output-based price regardless of extension of the herein specified duration. Payments will be done upon completion of the deliverables/outputs and as per below percentages-

In general, UNDP shall not accept travel costs exceeding those of an economy class ticket. Should the IC wish to travel on a higher class he/she should do so using their own resources. Lodging, meals and transport cost for field visit related to this assignment will be paid by the project as per UN standard.

In the event of unforeseeable travel not anticipated in this TOR, payment of travel costs including tickets, lodging and terminal expenses should be agreed upon, between the respective business unit and the Individual Consultant, prior to travel and will be reimbursed.

### **Travel and DSA:**

No DSA will be paid at the duty station. If unforeseen travel outside the duty station not required by the Terms of Reference is requested by UNDP, and upon prior agreement/approval, such travel shall be UNDP's expenses and the individual contractor shall receive a per-diem not to exceed United Nations daily subsistence allowance rate in such other location(s).



## Annex 2 Timeline of the Evaluation



# Annex 3 Selection of Documents Consulted

*ERF Project Documents provided for review:*

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- 1) Project Document (ProDoc); 2011
- 2) MTE 2014
- 3) Annual Progress Reports (2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 & 2017)
- 4) Documents produced by the ERF
- 5) Project documents and relevant documents of linked Projects and initiatives; and
- 6) Other documents that were relevant for the evaluation.