3.7 Resilience Building in Protracted Crisis Contexts

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This chapter has been written as a specific technical addition to the existing ActionAid Resilience Handbook (2016). It important to note that this is not a standalone piece and should be used in conjunction with both ActionAid’s Resilience Framework and Resilience Handbook.

What is a protracted crisis?
ActionAid understands protracted crises to be ongoing, prolonged states of emergency. They can refer to either ongoing conflict contexts and/or recurrent natural hazard induced disasters. They are often driven by a combination of recurring causes. Factors determining protracted crises can vary from a variety of factors such as drought, conflict, poor governance and/or occupation. They are driven by a combination of recurring causes.

Eight key factors that often make up a protracted crises context have been identified:

1. Are long term in nature [5 years +]
2. In contexts of poor governance or a weak state
3. Often experience disrupted livelihoods and food insecurity
4. Experience high and often increasing levels of poverty
5. Experience volatility and uncertainty about the future
6. Face disrupted social norms
7. Rely largely on an informal economy²
8. Have a large presence of humanitarian and development actors³

Why is it important?
Protracted crises are one of the most challenging contexts to build resilience in. However, the sector is recognising that they are becoming the new norm, with almost half a billion people in over 20 countries and territories currently affected by protracted crises⁴. With 10% of the global population still living in extreme poverty, almost 50% are living in contexts of protracted, ongoing crisis.⁵

Combined with this overwhelming level of need, donor fatigue in areas of protracted, ongoing crisis, makes it harder to raise long term public funding to meaningfully address vulnerability.

In 2012 protracted crises absorbed 78% of all funds dedicated to humanitarian response by OECD member countries. Since then, it is clear that the world is becoming more violent with ever increasing conflict and risk drivers are being ever exacerbated by factors such as rapid population increase, urbanization, displacement and climate change.⁶

National and global policies undermined by spikes in protracted crises perpetuate human rights violations and lack of safety. 87% of people living in extreme poverty live in countries that are fragile states and/or environmentally vulnerable and facing prolonged crises. Further to this, 88% of

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² The informal economy is a System of trade or economic exchange used outside state controlled or money based transactions. It is often excluded from taxation or GDP calculations.
³ Insert reference to livelihoods in protracted crisis research
⁴ FAO (2018) http://www.fao.org/resilience/areas-of-work/protracted-crisis/en/?page=313&ipp=10&tx_dynalist_pi1%5Bpar%5D=YToxOntzOjE6IkwiO3M6MToiMCI7fQ%3D%3D
⁵ http://www.globalissues.org/article/26/poverty-facts-and-stats
humanitarian funding goes to medium, long term recipients facing crises for eight years or more (Development Initiative, 2017).

Protracted crises can often lead to increased and long-term food insecurity, depletion of assets, reduced livelihoods options, increased exposure to violence and exploitation and risk of displacement as well as lack of access to and control of resources and limited decision making. This, in turn can also reproduce and reinforce protracted crises, creating a negative cause-effect cycle that perpetuates the volatility of the context. In such contexts, we often see an increased propensity of negative coping strategies that further undermine the environment and efforts to build resilience. Often these negative coping mechanisms disproportionately impact women and young people (with negative coping strategies such as early marriage, school drops outs and child labour).

Protracted crises are an important, yet changing context, where we must align both our development and humanitarian efforts for ActionAid’s transformational resilience approach to be meaningfully achieved.

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What protracted crises contexts are we working in and learning from?

**Palestine:** Ongoing conflict & occupation in Gaza.

**Jordan:** Syrian Refugee Crisis.

**Kenya:** Ongoing drought & flood risk. Exacerbated by climate change.

**Lebanon:** Syrian Refugee Crisis.

**Nigeria:** Ongoing conflict and displacement in Northern Nigeria.

**DRC:** Ongoing conflict and displacement in the Kivu’s

**Bangladesh:** Ongoing drought and flood risk and displacement, exacerbated by climate change. The Rohingya refugee crisis.
Our approach
ActionAid's vision is to enable women and young people living in protracted crises to be resilient to current and future shocks and stresses through absorptive, adaptive and transformative actions and timely humanitarian interventions.

ActionAid has identified women-led community-based protection interventions as a crucial entry point for resilience building in protracted crises contexts.

ActionAid puts women at the forefront of its resilience and humanitarian approach. It does this by taking a feminist lens to interrogate uneven and patriarchal power structures and root causes driving vulnerabilities, promoting leadership of those most affected but underrepresented and marginalized women, building on local insight, talent and capacity, and putting participation and accountability at the heart of transformational community resilience building. ActionAid recognises women and young people as powerful agents of change with a strong capacity to meaningfully address the root causes of vulnerability and drivers of risk.

The protection approach builds on local women’s strengths, knowledge and experience, recognising their capability to drive their protection. It is based on the understanding that the protection risks and threats confronting women and girls are caused by gender hierarchies and gender inequality. It is a crucial first step to building trust and social cohesion in complex and challenging environments.

In September 2017, ActionAid held its first meeting on working in protracted crises. This meeting brought together key actors from across the federation to share learnings from two pieces of research; one focusing on protection in protracted crises and another on resilience livelihoods in protracted crises. Leading on from this, ActionAid has started to implement a Danida funded four-year programme exploring how to adapt our resilience, protection and accountability work to protracted crises contexts in Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan.

Supporting this, a resilience in protracted crises learning community of practice was established including ActionAid International (IHART), ActionAid Lebanon, ActionAid Palestine, ActionAid Jordan, ActionAid Nigeria, ActionAid Bangladesh, ActionAid DRC and ActionAid Denmark. All of which have and will continue to provide understanding and learning to strengthen our resilience approach in protracted crises contexts. Through this programme and CoP, eight principles to guide resilience building in protracted crises have been identified.

Key programming principles for resilience building in protracted crises

1. Implement women-led community-based protection as an entry point for resilience building.
   Include psychosocial support activities. Protracted crises can increase the level of exposure to risk from violence, exploitation and abuse and exacerbate existing negative social norms. Protection is an effective entry point and accompaniment to resilience building in protracted crises and efforts should be aligned. Supporting and enabling women to regain voice and agency over threats and risks which they face in the immediate, medium and long-term is an essential component of psychosocial support and wellbeing. Access to services and support through safe spaces for example, enables trust and community togetherness and strengthens social cohesion which is crucial for resilience building at an individual and collective level. It provides the opportunity for initiatives such as risk mapping, livelihood diversification and preparedness plans and initiatives to be developed together in a safe space.

2. Be locally led by women leaders whilst harnessing the capacity of young people. Resilient interventions should ensure power is shifted to the community level, and specifically to women.

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9 Danida is the term used for Denmark’s development cooperation, which is an area of activity under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark
and young people to address existing power imbalances at all levels. The WLCBP approach emphasises the essential role of women leaders and young people to lead the response and influence community resilience activities; this includes contributing to and owning community risk and vulnerability assessments, resilience strategies and communication plans. It is widely acknowledged by ActionAid that putting women at the forefront of leadership significantly improves the level of inclusive targeting and quality of implementation of programmes. Working with women leaders increases the reach and capacity to understand the different vulnerabilities and needs across the whole community. Creating space to meet, build skills, form alliances and solidarity, is crucial to foster transformative change in gender and power relations in the community to achieve respect for women’s rights in safety and dignity. It strengthens hope, avoids aid dependency and ensures local capacity is strengthened and not undermined thereby mitigating and protecting against the adverse effects of future disasters.

3. **Strengthen social cohesion and community togetherness.** Strong social capital, cohesion and community togetherness strengthens resilience. Social fabric can break down in protected contexts, eroding feelings of togetherness, solidarity, belonging and support. Empower women leaders and young people to strengthen social fabric and community togetherness. This is particularly important in contexts of displacement. To do this, projects should work with both host communities and displaced populations to bring people together and encourage feelings of unity, togetherness, belonging and alliance. Again, our women’s’ safe spaces can be a powerful entry point for bringing women from host and displaced communities together to share their struggles and work together to overcome them. In particular, work with young people to encourage the whole community to come together and work together to support one another.

4. **Build flexibility into the programme and activities**
   The dynamic nature of protracted crises means that the situation, risks and needs can often fluctuate and change. Needs can quickly change, and opportunities can suddenly occur, and these should be seized. Therefore, flexibility and diversification should be built into both resilient activities and programming approaches. This includes flexible funding and the capacity to continuously work with community leaders to monitor, predict and prepare for future spikes or changes in the crises and needs. Here, regular reflection points need to be built into programmes for community leaders to reflect on the changing context and activities being implemented.

5. **Build on existing local capacity (strengthen and do not undermine)**
   It is important to ensure interventions strengthen and do not undermine local capacity, particularly the capacity of women and young people. Whilst additional information, skills and training can strengthen capacity, we should always work to understand and build on existing local capacity. Here it is important to include existing capacity as a key aspect of initial and ongoing context, risk and vulnerability analysis. Existing capacity must be understood through a lens of gender and power so that we are not unintentionally reinforcing patriarchal systems. This existing local capacity should be identified, acknowledged, shared and strengthened. In particular, it is important to create the space to build a transferrable nature to existing skills and capacity so women and young leaders know how to apply their skills and capacities to new contexts, if displaced in the future.

6. **Strengthen access to and understanding of information**
   Lack of reliable information not only significantly limits the ability to prepare and mitigate shocks and stresses, false information and rumours can also perpetuate feelings of mistrust and anxiety. Key external information providers should be identified and linked to local community networks (especially of women and young people). Then, programmes should provide specific opportunities, platforms and systems for groups to regularly share information, update risk mapping and adapt mitigation strategies accordingly. One of the biggest challenges in these contexts, particularly for women, is gaining access to useful and reliable information. Going
beyond this, it is equally important to have the capacity and knowledge to know how to use this information to guide decision making and reduce risk.

Different groups may share information in different ways so this area of work must be based on a clear analysis of how different people communicate in different structures (e.g. in the household, in the community, with informal and formal structures etc.) This is particularly important for Early Warning Systems and ongoing preparedness planning for spikes and changes in the ongoing crisis context while also recognising community based early warning mechanisms and how they function. It is also crucial to be able to provide legal support and access to basic services particularly in contexts of displacement where situations change quickly. It is also important to understand that in contexts of protracted crises caused by ongoing conflict or state fragility; information can often be very sensitive. Therefore, this must be connected to a wider protection strategy and be able to ensure it adheres to the do no harm standards.

7. **Be guided by the do no harm principles and through this ensure there are strong communication and accountability mechanisms in place.** The do no harm principles\(^{10}\) have been developed to guide programmes in conflict affected states in order to understand micro level conflict, promote peace and social cohesion and avoid exacerbating tension and violence. This requires a careful gendered analysis of the context of conflict and the programme, examining how interventions interact with the conflict, and a willingness and flexibility to redesign programmes to improve its quality. This needs to be done at all levels of programming; from micro analysis led by women and young leaders, to national and international macro analysis. Guidance on how to do this can be found in the tools linked to this chapter. In addition to this, there is a need for comprehensive communication strategies between all stakeholders and strong accountability mechanisms such as complaints procedures. Again, starting with a women led community-based protection approach can provide the entry point and foundation required to reflect on these principles together with local community leaders.

8. **Address the root causes of vulnerability through taking a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA).** Transformational resilience involves radically challenging institutions, culture and behaviour to tackle unequal power dynamics in society that (re)produce and (re)enforce vulnerability. Therefore, it is important to support the affected community identify and tackle the root causes. This should take a multi-level human rights-based approach, with a specific focus on women’s rights, protection and inclusion. Women should be empowered to advocate for rights at the national and international level, whilst having programming driven at the local level. This should take a focus on women’s rights intervention and include inclusive, protection programming, so that women are empowered to have the space, and agency, to lead long term, sustainable change to effectively challenge existing power inequalities and vulnerability caused by patriarchal system.

**Putting the Resilience Framework into Practice**

Each protracted crisis requires in-depth understanding of the context at all levels. Therefore, our recommendations can never be prescriptive in nature. However, reflecting on our existing work in protracted crises contexts across the federation, some examples and guidance have been captured. As with all resilience programming it is always important to start with a holistic multi-hazard and vulnerability analysis at the local level to understand the context, root causes and power dynamics that exist.

Good practice examples: Protection as an entry point for resilience

- **Case study 1: Displacement & Conflict: Humanitarian & Resilience Programme in Palestine, Lebanon & Jordan**

Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan are implementing a four year, Danida funded humanitarian programme. The overall aim is to build community resilience to ongoing crises. Here, protection is being used as an entry point for resilience building at the community level. This is combined with accountability and social and economic resilience activities. The teams in each country have worked to apply and adapt each aspect of the resilience flower to fit to their protracted crises context.

**Holistic Multi Hazard Vulnerability Analysis**
The teams have planned to conduct regular analysis throughout the programme, led by women and youth leaders to understand the context, capacities and tensions. Here, women and young leaders will map the risks, capacities and vulnerabilities in the communities. This will enable the programme to continuously reflect on women and young people’s needs and the impact of the activities in place.

**Realising Rights & Access to Basic Services**

In Jordan and Lebanon women’s rights have been combined with refugee rights and the services available for displaced people as well as host communities is being focused on. Awareness raising on
women’s rights is transforming negative social norms and reducing negative coping mechanisms such as early marriage and child labour. Additional focus is being put on advocating for the right to work. The right to a secure income can reduce social tensions and decrease the risk of aid dependency. This advocacy on refugees’ rights to work is combined with an economic empowerment aspect of the programme outlined below.

**Gaining Awareness, Knowledge and Skills**

Including social and economic resilience and empowerment activities to the programme has been identified by women leaders as a much-needed focus in strengthening women’s resilience, confidence and independence. This involves building on existing capacities through ‘swap a skill’ initiatives and small grants to support women-led small business enterprises. In Lebanon and Jordan, a focus will be on making sure skills and businesses can be transferrable, so that women can take their skills and income generating activities with them if displaced again. Here, local analysis of the economy will be conducted as part of the context analysis. Furthermore, ‘swap a skill’ initiatives will be run in women safe spaces to build capacity and strengthen community cohesion and encourage this level of economic empowerment.

**Collective Action & Partnership**

In Jordan and Lebanon both host and refugee women and young people are coming together to share their stories, overcome their challenges and learn new skills together. This is aimed at increasing collective action, social cohesion and community togetherness.

In Gaza, partners are working together, under the umbrella of a network organisation to advocate for change. Creating alliances, joint efforts and protection for speaking out about sensitive issues. In Jordan and Lebanon, the teams are implementing activities to bring both host and refugee community members together through women’s safe spaces and psychosocial activities. Here, women and young people come together to share their issues and concerns and work together to overcome them.

**Strengthening Institutions and Policy**

Advocating for meaningful change in policy and strengthened institutions has been identified as a challenge in conflict affected, fragile states. Here, the teams in Palestine, Jordan and Lebanon are working with a global team to identify advocacy needs to raise awareness and advocate for change at the global level. One way of doing this includes increasing the number of local partner organisations and community leaders who attend and meaningfully engage in global platforms; such as the UNISDR Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. Here, local women will speak out about their context and interventions at panel events and activities. Here, global advocacy messages will be rooted in lived experience and practice in the communities we are working with.

**Case Study 2: Protracted Natural Hazard: Kenya, Marafa**

Marafa is a community located in Kilithi County in the coastal area of Eastern Kenya. Marafa faces ongoing, severe climate induced shocks and stresses from prolonged, yearly periods of drought and recurrent flash floods. In March 2018, Marafa faced the worst flash flood that communities can remember. Community leaders described this as a once in a lifetime event, however, with a changing climate, there is concern that the severity of this flooding will become a more regular risk.

**Step 1: Providing the foundation: Holistic Multi Hazard Vulnerability Analysis**

The ActionAid Kenya team, local partners and community leaders explained how each project starts with a community-based risk analysis. Here, communities map the context, the different types of risks, vulnerabilities and capacities that exist in the community. This enables the community to
reflect on the risk environment they are living in, map out the areas of high risk, identify their capacity and start planning together, how to overcome, prepare and strengthen community resilience. This should always be the first step of a resilience programme as it enables local actors to come together, share knowledge and build collective action, community togetherness and empower action planning.

Step 2: The different aspects of resilience:

1. Realising Human Rights and Access to Basic Rights

In Marafa, all ongoing programmes have a strong focus on realising rights. The whole Local Rights Programme (LRP) area have explored and worked towards strengthening their awareness and realisation of their basic human rights. Community leaders feel that there are three priority areas for Marafa’s human rights work: (1) access to land rights (2) access to legal support and the judicial system and (3) access to effective disaster risk governance.

Here, ActionAid and partners have worked with women to advocate for and successfully achieve land rights and access to justice. ActionAid has supported women to increase livelihood income, save and buy deeds to land. Women leaders explain that they feel that the combination of reliable and diversified livelihoods (different crops, livestock, farming techniques and food production) and land ownership has significantly increased their resilience and ability to cope, adapt and transform with the ongoing level of risk. Image 3 (below) illustrates one of the women ActionAid has supported with livelihood diversification and successful land ownership.

Secondly, ActionAid and partners have supported community members to demand access to the legal system. This has resulted in the creation of a mobile court system that visits the community regularly to process abuse and violation cases. Furthermore, as part of the recent humanitarian response to the flash floods in Marafa, ActionAid and partners have supported community leaders to advocate for strengthened risk governance in alignment with the National Adaptation Plans of Action.

2. Gaining awareness, knowledge and skills

ActionAid and partners used the participatory HVA as a foundation for sharing local knowledge and increasing access to information. Leading on from this, the communities in Marafa have set up local Early Warning Systems (EWS) for flash floods; connecting to communities living upstream who are able to monitor river levels and warn those living downstream if floods are likely.

In addition to this, ActionAid works with communities to build skills and capacity for diversified livelihoods. This includes sustainable drought and flood resistant agriculture methods as well as providing livelihood and skills training to women such as hairdressing, food production and small business development. This aims to diversify income and provide households with multiple incomes to fall back on if one is negatively impacted.

3. Collective Action and Partnership

“Work together, you are stronger when you speak out together” (Community Leader)

The community in Marafa come together in groups to farm, prepare and to advocate to the local government for access to basic services. Here, resilience is strengthened when communities and groups come together to support one another in income generation, advocacy, preparedness and disaster response. Community leaders shared that if they were to give one piece of advice to other
communities facing the same challenges, it would be to come together, work together and support one another.

4. Strengthening institutions and influencing policy

Lastly and tying into all other areas of the resilience framework flower, the ActionAid team, partners and community members work together to advocate for the rights and needs to those living at risk. Here, ActionAid and partners are working with women led community groups to strengthen their relationship with the local government and build confidence to advocate for key issues and have a voice in the decision-making processes.

One key example is the ongoing negotiations that the community and local government are having around relocating those living in high flood risk zones. Community members are open to this, due to the level on ongoing risk, disruption and loss caused by increasingly regular periods of floods and drought, however, are advocating that relocation zones have proper access to basic services and livelihood opportunities before agreeing to move.

Local actors also work to influence and implement the local development plans and local level NAPA commitments (National Adaptation Plan of Action) through the devolved governance system. Here, local actors and community leaders use these policy commitments to hold government to account and advocate for action.

**Step 3: ensuring strengthening principles:**

1. **Interlinked systems and integrated programmes**

It is clear that, ActionAid’s integrated approach to empowering women leaders to link the Humanitarian Response, Child Sponsorship and Sustainable Agriculture programmes, through the same women leaders enables a full package of resilience building and connects multiple community needs and capacities.

2. **Work across different levels**

This can be seen in the advocacy work being carried out. Linking local rights advocacy to national adaptation plans, it is clear that being aware of the policies, commitments and obligations of the government at all levels significantly helps build resilience.

3. **Ecological sustainability**

Ecological sustainability has been recognised by the ActionAid Kenya team, partners and community leaders as essential in this climate risk, protracted crises context. Sustainable agriculture methods, water management and irrigation projects have formed a solid foundation of the resilience building work here.

4. **Long term and future oriented**

Community leaders are thinking long term but are frustrated with the IDP camp situation after the recent flash floods. They are planning, preparing and working with the government to rebuild, bounce back and relocate to higher, safer land. For those already living on higher ground, land ownership and land rights play a large part of the long-term planning. With land rights, community leaders explained that long term plans can be implemented with confidence that they won’t be evicted or relocated.

5. **Diversity and flexibility**
The various types of programming being supported by ActionAid shows the diversity of the resilience strengthening work going on in Marafa. Furthermore, the flexibility of being able to move from sustainable agriculture, livelihoods and rights to a rapid humanitarian response demonstrates flexibility. This has proven to be imperative to ensuring that all community needs are being addressed and supported.

Case Study 3: Protracted crisis: displacement caused by violent conflict: Rohingya refugee crisis

In August 2017, violence in the Rakhine state of Myanmar displaced hundreds of thousands of Rohingya people across the border into Bangladesh. Over 900,000 Rohingya people now live in refugee camps in Cox’s Bazar. ActionAid Bangladesh was one of the first organisations to respond to the crises and is responsible for managing two camps and nine women’s safe spaces across the wider Kutupalong mega camp. These women safe spaces are referred to as Shanti Khana’s (peace houses) by the Rohingya women. Through this, ActionAid reaches 13,617 households and 58,553 people in the two camps and 4,445 women through the women safe spaces. In addition to this, ActionAid runs activities on; GBV, protection, women leadership, livelihoods training, DRR and preparedness, psycho-social support and basic need support including NFI’s, food, dignity kits and solar lights.

The ongoing level of violence and displacement the Rohingya people have experienced, the fact that they are currently categorized as stateless and that their future is highly uncertain, means that the Rohingya community are one of the most vulnerable and marginalised groups of people in the world.

ActionAid recognises the Rohingya response as a protracted crisis and one of the most challenging emergency response interventions it has ever been involved in. Therefore, ActionAid has been quickly learning how to apply both its humanitarian signature and resilience approach to this ongoing, protracted context. This case study maps out how the Rohingya emergency response intervention has started to build the resilience of the most vulnerable women and young people.

Step 1: Providing the foundation: Holistic Multi Hazard Vulnerability Analysis

ActionAid has established DRR committees made up 50% of men and 50% of women to lead activities on risk awareness and disaster preparedness. Here, ActionAid Bangladesh staff, partner staff and Rohingya community members have come together to map out the risk, hazards and vulnerabilities across the camps. The major risks identified were; fires, landslides, flash floods and child trafficking. The DRR committee raise awareness about these risks, initiates preparedness activities such as developing fire stations, having trainings on first aid, firefighting, search and
rescue, developing early warning systems and supporting households to know how to effectively prepare for heavy rain and flash floods, such as securing houses and know how to get to the designated safe haven areas. In addition to this, the committee have identified the most vulnerable households in the camps to support in the preparedness and emergency response.

**Step 2: The different aspects of resilience:**

5. **Realising Human Rights and Access to Basic Rights**

ActionAid Bangladesh run women safe spaces and women’s groups. Here, awareness raising sessions are conducted on women’s rights, GBV and early marriage. There is a strong emphasis on increasing awareness and access to the services and basic rights being provided across the camps. Part of this initiative includes providing the space for women’s groups and adolescent girl groups to map out their challenges, gaps in basic rights and services and a list of demands that they want met. This is shared with the UN coordinating organisations, ActionAid and local government office running the camps to increase access to basic services and human rights.

6. **Gaining awareness, knowledge and skills**

Inside the women safe spaces and throughout the women’s groups, ActionAid is running awareness raising sessions on a number of topics from hygiene to protection. ActionAid is also supporting women to learn to read and write and providing livelihoods training including initiatives such as mobile phone fixing and sewing for the production of clothing, blankets and reusable sanitary napkins. This livelihoods programme aims to harness existing skills and capacity and empower women to earn an income. ActionAid has also set up a display centre in the market to showcase and sell products. ActionAid has also partnered with BBC media action to run information sharing sessions through radio programmes which cover a number of topics from increasing knowledge around disaster risk such as landslides to nutrition and wellbeing. ActionAid also runs two information centres in the camps, where community members can visit to access information about anything the need. Here, the ActionAid team support community members with increased access to information and sign posting to other services and organisations who can support them.

7. **Collective Action and Partnership**

Solidarity is a strong focus of the activities and initiatives run by ActionAid here. Community members explained that there is a strong sense of solidarity throughout the camps. Women’s groups, safe spaces and DRR committees bring people together to share challenges and experiences and to work together to improve the quality of life and level of disaster preparedness in the camps. However, one area that the community were concerned about was the increasingly negative relationship between the refugees and host community. More needs to be done here to align to the do no harm principles and strengthen social cohesion between host and refugee community members.

8. **Strengthening institutions and influencing policy**

The ActionAid Bangladesh team are working very closely with the local government office in charge of the camp. The team have built a strong relationship and level of respect with the government in order to ensure access to basic services and the opportunity for the women’s list of demands to be
shared with the local government office so the challenges and needs can be understood and addressed.

However, due to the political sensitivity of the underlying root causes of the violence and displacement the Rohingya community have experienced and the uncertain future of the Rohingya population in Bangladesh, advocacy and influencing on the root causes and human rights of the Rohingya community is very limited at the local level. The team have recognised the need to link this to ActionAid international’s advocacy efforts and also understand the need to work with the ActionAid Myanmar team too.

**Strengths:** The team have identified the following strengths of the Rohingya response programme:

1. The level of increased access to information through awareness sessions, training programmes, listening groups, information centres and DRR committee activities
2. Women leadership in community safe spaces and livelihood programmes
3. Collective action and solidarity throughout the Rohingya community through women’s groups, adolescent groups and DRR committees.
4. The psycho-social support and women safe spaces and the environment this enables for women to feel safe and focus on their wellbeing
5. The close working relationship with the local Bangladesh government and camp in charge office and the opportunity this provides for women’s needs and rights to be met.

**Gaps:** However, the team also identified a number of gaps that need to be addressed to effectively build resilience. This includes:

1. The need to strengthen social cohesion between the host and refugee communities
2. The need to link the local lived experience to global advocacy to tackle to root causes
3. The need to think about the environmental sustainability, tree planting, slope stabilisation and long-term impact on the wider environment
4. Increasing the reach of the livelihoods training to increase women’s economic empowerment
5. Basic needs are still being advocated for by the Rohingya women, such as easier access to drinking water, resilient shelters and access to electricity

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11 Image 1: Rohingya women paid volunteers, working in women safe space
11 Image 2: ActionAid Bangladesh staff stands outside women safe space below ‘no men’ sign
11 Image 3: Livelihoods skills training
11 Image 4: Adolescent girls group
Conclusion

It is important to reiterate that this guidance chapter does not aim to be prescriptive in nature. Each protracted crisis context is different and requires local level perspective and knowledge which can be provided by empowering local women and young leaders to lead resilience interventions and activities. The guiding principle here has been developed through capturing the lesson learning, good practice and challenges being faced across the countries in our Resilience in Protracted Crises working group (Bangladesh, DRC, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Nigeria and Palestine).

Additionally, with a gap in wider sector understanding on how to build resilience in protracted crises, this chapter will be kept as a live document which will be regularly reviewed, edited and updated as we learn and develop our approach.

Tools:
Integrated conflict prevention and resilience handbook:
Integrated conflict prevention and resilience field guide:
ActionAid Resilience in Protracted Crisis Position Paper: [need to create a platform online for learning]
ActionAid Resilience in Protracted Crises Case Studies: [as above]