

DM2009 Project Summary

Project Number: 3635 Booth Number: 77

Emergency Shelter and Income Opportunity for Tidal Refugees

COUNTRY: Bangladesh

ORGANIZATION: SEBA

FUNDING REQUEST: \$198,600

OBJECTIVE: To resettle 2,000 climate refugee families in Khulna City or in adjacent areas through safety-net service delivery in the form of emergency shelter with income opportunity in an urban setting, and to institutionalize a safety-net and micro-insurance program to be independently managed by a climate refugee organization, with the potential of scaling up to all coastal areas.

RATIONALE: Sea-level rise is causing tidal floods twice a day, damaging houses, crops, and properties, and eroding land, while tidal water is limited during low tide. Twelve island unions (lowest local government units) have been lost to tidal waters. Half of the 350,000 people have fled the area. Our observations in Khulna City alone suggest that approximately 50,000 people have fled the worst-hit areas. These climate refugees undergo enormous suffering while transporting their household effects, finding shelter, acquiring urban livelihood skills, and finding access to funds for generating productive assets. Necessary safety-net support and the establishment of an organization by and for refugees would pave the way for refugee resettlement.

INNOVATION: Use of existing 1,000 climate refugee families as hosts for another 1,000 newly arrived families reduces the per-family cost of resettlement service delivery. The proposed safety nets would free refugees from the mental anxiety and financial hardship associated with working the longer hours needed to develop their own financial support system. An organization for and by refugees, and the refugees' contribution toward the micro-insurance program, would translate into a quicker sense of organizational and financial sustainability.

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