



### Project Proposal Summary

<b>Rotarian Peace Projects Incubator's Thematic Area</b>	Cultural Resources for Peace
<b>Rotary Focus Area</b>	Peace and conflict prevention Basic education and literacy Community economic development Maternal and child health
<b>Contact:</b> Contact person within your group (Name and email)	Professor Dr. Mamun Al Mahtab <a href="mailto:shwapnil@agni.com">shwapnil@agni.com</a>  Natalia Sineaeva, nsineaeva@gmail.com (for RPPI group coordination)
<b>Project Title:</b> Provide a full title (and acronym if any)	<i>Let There be Light:</i> Establishing a training center to empower Rohingya women and children living in Bangladesh
<b>Project Partners and Participating Organisations:</b>	Forum for the Study of the Liver Bangladesh in cooperation with Forum for Secular Bangladesh, LEPS - Learning through Pictures & Sound, Rotary Club of Dhaka Generation Next, RID 3281 Bangladesh and Rotary Peace Fellows: Dr Matthew Johnsen and Dr Dean Ravizza
<b>Geographical Scope</b>	Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh and beyond
<b>Summary:</b> Please provide a concise summary with a maximum of 500 words outlining the project and explaining the community needs your project will address and how these needs were identified.  Ensure that you include what your project aims to achieve (objective) and how (method/procedure). What will be the main outcomes?  Explain in a few sentences how you will incorporate the objective of sustainability into your project.	<b><i>What are the challenges?</i></b>  A crisis with Myanmar nationals from Rakhine state who are referred to as <i>Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals</i> (FDMNs) began in late 2017 when these individuals fled Myanmar to the safety of Bangladesh in large numbers in the face of unprecedented atrocities and crimes against humanity committed against them. Bangladesh was faced with the challenge of accommodating over a million Myanmar nationals. Many had lost loved ones and had first-hand experience of savage brutality, leaving them scarred with deep psychological trauma.  While living in Myanmar under control of a military junta, many Rohingyans had systemically been deprived of modern secular education. Now residing in temporary shelters in Cox's Bazar, secular education is still wanting, and these camps are becoming

fertile grounds for radicalization and growing fundamentalism. More than 250 Islamic schools have been established in and around these camps over the last three years. These schools focus on Islamic education, but do not find the wider exposure to a variety of cultural activities and opportunities for intellectual development one finds in secular approaches to education.

***Let There Be Light***

Within this background, we argue that there is an urgent necessity to adopt deradicalization measures including secular education. Without these, the futures of Myanmar youth may fall prey to radicalization, leading to unfortunate consequences in Bangladesh and Myanmar, and beyond. It is within this framework, the concept of setting up a *multipurpose training center for these displaced Myanmar citizens (youth and women) has been proposed.*

The project aims to create an atmosphere of secularism and progressive thinking and learning among these young people preventing radicalization, ensuring deradicalization and helping develop their skills and assets. We believe this project to be first of its kind in Cox's Bazaar.

For students, it would provide:

- ***Informal education:*** The centre will offer non-formal education to 70 Rakhine students. A special curriculum will be developed to include: Rakhine, English, mathematics, science and history. We will strive to provide this within a supportive learning environment.
- ***Development of inter-cultural awareness and competence:*** Additional focus will be to accustom the students to Rakhine culture. This will include learning of languages/their own culture/language and other cultures. For this purpose, teachers will preferably be recruited from educated Rakhines.
- ***Sport for inclusion:*** There will be special emphasis on physical training and sports to enhance factors of social inclusion, social cohesion, and psychosocial wellbeing for children and youth including girls and individuals with disabilities among others.
- ***Music and arts*** will be used to develop creativity and other skills.
- ***Computer skills, e-learning process:*** A hybrid educational model will be followed to provide education at the centre. Faculty members from across Bangladesh will provide non-formal education to the children and women attending the centre using online platform.

For women, it would provide:

- ***Training in entrepreneurship, skills, training to use these skills on the labour market.*** The centre will also have a

	<p>vocational training unit for Rakhine women. There will be emphasis on handicrafts and computer literacy among others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Informal education;</b> There will be provision for non-formal adult education with emphasis on Rakhine women. The aim will be to provide non-formal education to 30 Rakhine women (mothers of children attending the centre).</li> <li>• <b>Commercialisation of products</b> produced by Rohingya women, help with finding markets and occupations, and healthcare training.</li> </ul> <p>For both target groups, to keep the program participants attracted to the centre, a mid-day meal will be provided each day of operation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Health Center:</b> The centre will have a primary healthcare facility to provide basic healthcare as well as create health awareness among the attendees and their family members. Given the scars born of traumatic experience, the center will also provide services to help participants cope with the effects of trauma and post-traumatic stress.</li> </ul> <p>Where possible, in both the health care and the vocational services elements, a hybrid model will be employed and specialized resource persons will render their services using online platform.</p> <p>Audio-visual contents will be developed in Rakhine and English for providing non-formal education, healthcare, vocational training as well as cultural and sports activities at the centre using online platform.</p> <p>Initially the center will be established in a rented property in Balukhali or Kutupalong with good access to the camps. Over time, the aim will be to construct a multi-storied, multi-purpose building in the future as alternate sources of funding become available. If the centre can be relocated to its own building, the building will be constructed so that it can also act as a cyclone shelter.</p> <p>One strength of this proposal is that it draws on existing resources including very strong team (Rotarians) with experience of working with refugees and many connections.</p> <p>For <b>sustainability</b> of the project following measures will be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercialization of the products produced by the Rohingya women receiving vocational training.</li> <li>• Faculty members providing online non-formal education and training will mostly render their services complimentary.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To reduce the operational cost of the centre, a hybrid model will be adopted and emphasis will be given on the best utilization of the online platform.</li> <li>• Alternative sources of funding, including from the government of Bangladesh, will be sought.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Beneficiaries:</b> Who are the beneficiaries? Please include the estimated number of direct beneficiaries</p>	<p>Direct beneficiaries include 70 Rakhine children and 30 Rakhine women forcefully displaced from Myanmar and now residing in the camps Cox’s Bazar. They will be the focus of the informal educational and vocational training. They and their families, as well as others in the community will benefit from the primary health center formed on the premises.</p> <p>If this secular education approach is successful in reducing the level of radicalization in the camps, and scaled to a sufficient degree, the potential impact on the community and the larger society, within Bangladesh and Myanmar could be substantial in building the structure for a more peaceful society over time.</p>