



# HACK FOR HUMANITY

March 17-18, 2018 | Brown University

## Summary Report

**HI<sup>2</sup>**  
Humanitarian  
Innovation Initiative





## Hack for Humanity Lens

# The Rohingya Refugee Crisis

Hackathon participants were directed to view their challenges through the lens of the evolving Rohingya refugee crisis and to tailor their pitches in a relevant way. Resources on the crisis and the global humanitarian response were provided to all teams prior to the event to encourage teams to come prepared with a foundational understanding of the lens.

### Lens Description ~

Since August 25, 2017, over half a million ethnic Rohingya Muslims have fled Myanmar's Rakhine State into neighboring Bangladesh to escape appalling violence and violations of human rights. Others remain internally displaced within Myanmar without access to humanitarian aid. The speed and scale of the refugee influx to Bangladesh has made this the fastest growing refugee crisis in the world and the concentration of refugees in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh is now among the densest in the world. With the total Rohingya population in Bangladesh now close to 1 million, Bangladesh and the international community are struggling to meet the displaced populations' escalating needs. The displaced Rohingya population is highly vulnerable, having fled conflict and experienced severe trauma, and now living in extremely difficult conditions with limited access to food, water and sanitation, shelter, healthcare, and other basic services in the spontaneous sites where they have settled. In addition to the extreme vulnerability of the displaced, the sheer number of Rohingya refugees seeking shelter in Bangladesh has put a remarkable strain on the already limited resources of host communities.

The UN OCHA Interagency Standing Committee (IASC) Humanitarian Response Plan for 2017-2018 identified the areas of WASH, health, nutrition and food security and shelter for immediate scale-up to save lives in both settlements and host communities. Given the current population density and poor sanitation and hygiene conditions, any outbreak of cholera or acute watery diarrhea (AWD), which are endemic in Bangladesh, could kill thousands of people residing in temporary settlements. Urgent nutrition needs have been prioritized for children aged under five (including infants), pregnant and lactating women and adolescent girls. These include close to 17,000 children under five suffering from severe acute malnutrition (SAM) to be supported over the next six months. Moreover, children, adolescents and women in both the Rohingya and host communities are exposed to high levels of violence, abuse and exploitation including sexual harassment, child labor and child marriage and are at high risk of being trafficked. With roughly 60% of new arrivals being children, an estimated 453,000 Rohingya children aged 4-18 years old are in need of education services.



# Challenges

Five cross-cutting humanitarian challenges, applicable to the Rohingya crisis, were identified and published prior to the event. Challenges were left intentionally broad in hopes of cultivating a wide range of creative solutions. Participants registered to address one of the five following challenge areas:

## Increasing Access to Community-Based Management of **Acute Malnutrition**

Total Number of Teams: **2**



## Overcoming Deliberate **Obstruction of Humanitarian Access**

Total Number of Teams: **2**



## Enhancing Local Participation in **Disaster Risk Reduction** Efforts

Total Number of Teams: **5**



## Providing **Education** Opportunities for Displaced Children

Total Number of Teams: **10**



## Delivery of Adequate **WASH** Services in Situations of Severe Population Overcrowding

Total Number of Teams: **1**



# Mentors



**Maria Kasparian**  
Executive Director  
Edesia

**Rob Grace**  
Political Science  
Brown University



**Rabiul Islam**  
Professor of Social Work  
Rajshahi Univ., Bangladesh



**Zein Tayyeb**  
Humanitarian Affairs  
UN OCHA, Jordan



**Sangeetha Yogendran**  
Researcher  
KAS Rule of Law Programme Asia



To encourage teams to delve into the complexities and realities of humanitarian emergencies, humanitarian practitioners and academics were brought in to help guide each team, enabling thought processes to develop into relevant and grounded project pitches. Each challenge area had a designated mentor who teams interacted closely with over the two days. Another valuable resource available to teams was the opportunity to communicate with area specific advisors with specific professional, technical, and procedural expertise.

# Advisors

## Nour Audi

MPH, School of Public Health, Brown University

## David Barros

VP, Empowerment  
Dharma Platform

## Saadiyah Bilal

Fellow, Emergency  
Medicine Brown University

## Angela Blanchard

CEO of BakerRipley

## Juliana Carvalho

Consultant, MERCOSUR  
Human Rights Institute

## Benjamin Davies

Humanitarian Specialist  
U.S. Naval War College

## Elizabeth Hermann

Professor of Landscape  
Architecture, RISD

## Chris Kwaja

Conflict Management  
Jos Jos University, Nigeria

## Peter Lundgren

Humanitarian Coordinator  
MSF & UN

## Rashmi Sharma

Fellow, Emergency  
Medicine Brown University

## Julie Thompson

UN OCHA, Geneva



# Day 1



Hack for Humanity opened with welcoming remarks by **Dr. Adam Levine**, Director of the Humanitarian Innovation Initiative. Participants were then introduced to the **Dharma platform**, a newly developed software program that allows organizations to simplify data collection, management, analysis and visualization. An inspiring keynote address was then given by **Kirsten Gelsdorf**, Senior Lecturer and Director of Global Humanitarian Policy at the University of Virginia. Students then formed into their teams, ranging from 3-6 students, to begin “hacking” their identified challenge.

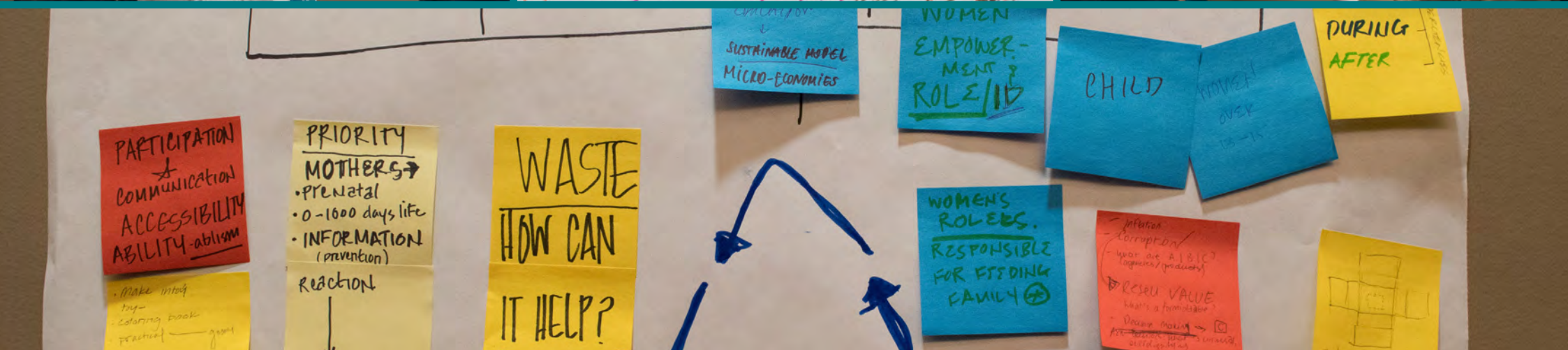
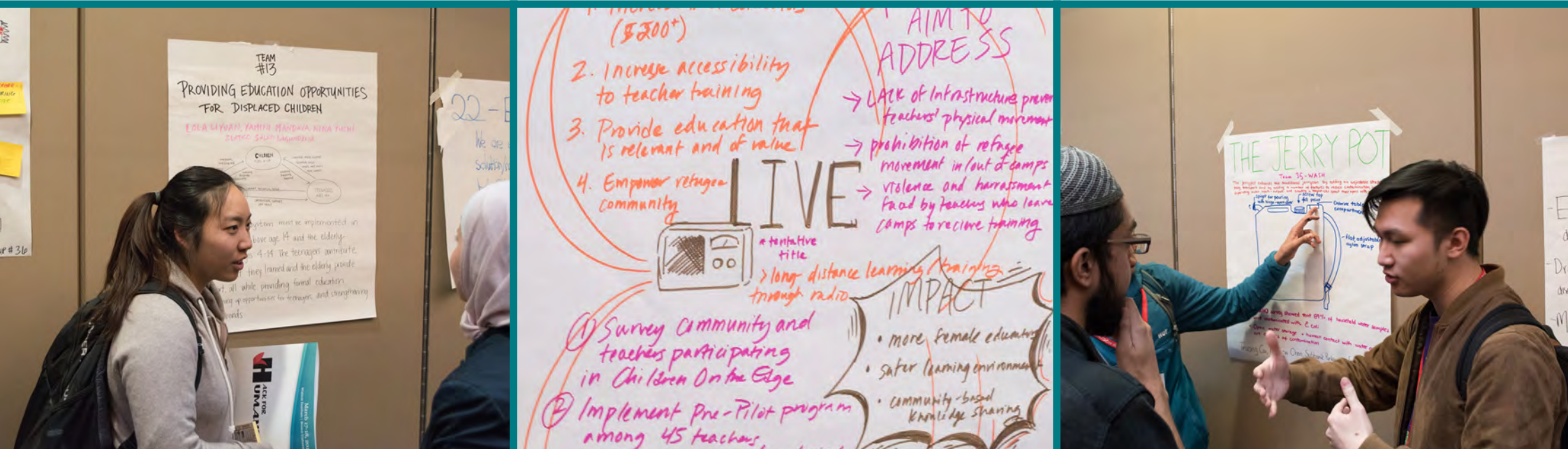
Kirsten Gelsdorf kicks off the hackathon with an inspiring keynote address ~





# Pitch Sharing Poster Session

At the end of day one, teams shared their progress in a pitch sharing poster session. This provided each team with a valuable opportunity to bounce their ideas off one another and gain helpful insight moving forward into the next day.





# Day 2



After spending the morning finalizing their pitches, day two of Hack for Humanity featured an engaging panel discussion with the invited mentors and the final pitch presentations. Each team presented their pitch to a panel of five judges, who evaluated each pitch on the basis of originality, respect to individuals and communities, context, feasibility, impact, sustainability, and partnerships. Following the presentations, the judging panel convened to award the top 3 project ideas with seed funding to further develop their pitches.

## Judges

Angela Blanchard  
CEO of BakerRipley

Christopher Bull  
Senior Lecturer in Engineering

Elizabeth Dean Hermann  
Professor of Landscape Architecture, RISD

Adam Levine  
Director, Humanitarian Innovation Initiative

Jennifer Nazareno  
Presidential Diversity Post Doctoral Fellow at  
the Nelson Center for Entrepreneurship





# Final Pitch Presentations

Below are the ideas that were generated by the participating teams and presented to the judges.

[View the Pitch Presentations of Each Team >](#)

JerryPot - Re-Designing the Jerry Can

Increasing Access to CMAM Programing - Identify, Inform, and Incentivize

Reducing Risks for Pregnant Women in Refugee Camps: Prevention, Preparedness, Response, Recovery

Fortification and Stabilization: Vetiver Grass

Buddy Bags: Building Resilience and Empowering Rohingya Youth

Utilizing Bangladeshi Schools for Effective Education Aid

Implementing a Health-based Curriculum for Rohingya Refugee Children

P.E.E.R: Program for Education and Engagement of Refugees

InScribe: A Digitized Database of Shared Experiences in the Rohingya Language

Live: A Remote Teacher Training System Through Community Radio

The Humanitarian Codex: A One Stop Source for Negotiating Humanitarian Access

DirectMe: A Crowdsourcing App that Enhances Local Participation in DRR Efforts

Re-designing RUTF Packaging and Reuse: Values, Community, and Therapy

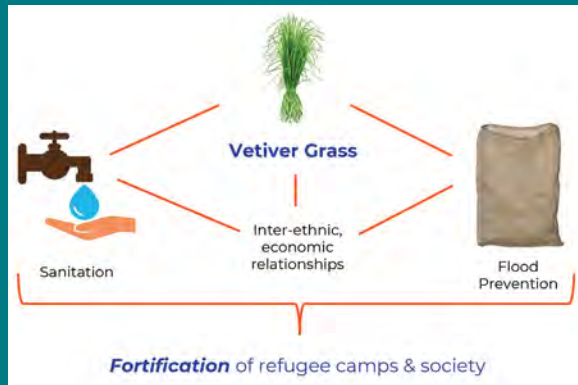
Developing Drainage Systems Through Local Participation

Clustr: A Coordination Tool for Access Mapping and Data Sharing

Youth Speaks: Giving Refugee Youth a Voice

# Awarded Prizes

The prizes for this year's Hack for Humanity were awarded to the three following teams, encouraging them to continue working on the development of their ideas.



Fortification & Stabilization: Vetiver Grass  
Humanitarian Innovation Initiative  
Seed Grant (\$500)

Live: Community Radio Teacher Training System

Nelson Center for Entrepreneurship  
Explore Grant (\$500)



JerryPot: Re-Designing the Jerry Can  
Brown Design Workshop  
Maker Grant (\$500)



# Thank You!

This event would not have been made possible without the generous support from the Nelson Center for Entrepreneurship, Brown Design Workshop, AP&S, Edesia, Swearer Center, Alpert Medical School, Wyze, and the Brown Global Health Initiative. We also want to thank Kirsten Gelsdorf for her inspiring keynote address, all of our wonderful mentors, advisors, and judges for sharing their wealth of knowledge and experience, and the Student E-Board for their amazing organizing efforts. Finally, kudos to all the participants who put in a remarkable amount of energy and dedication to develop their project pitches. See you next year!

