

PRESS RELEASE

HBKU Students Embark on a Mission to Aid Rohingya Refugees

Doha, January 17, 2018 – In an education service trip, 16 graduate students at Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), a member of Qatar Foundation, embarked on a mission to Bangladesh where they expanded on their knowledge of the crisis engulfing Myanmar and Rohingya refugees. Held in collaboration with Qatar Charity, the trip was preceded by a series of educational workshops on disaster management, allowing participants to develop an in-depth understanding of the ongoing international conflict prior to engaging in humanitarian efforts on-ground.

Led by HBKU Student Affairs, the expedition began in the city of Dhaka with a group briefing, after which the team of graduate students and accompanying staff proceeded to their relief station in Cox's Bazar, a port city host to significant numbers of Rohingya refugee camps. The relief tour concluded with a reception held at the Embassy of the State of Qatar to Bangladesh, where visiting team members called upon His Excellency the Ambassador Ahmed Mohammed Nasser Al-Dehaimi and apprised him of their humanitarian mandate.

Executive director of media and communication at Qatar Charity, Ali Ateeq Al-Abdullah, said, "Qatar Charity is pleased to jointly cooperate with HBKU in the field of humanitarian response and international relief work, furthering its graduates' abilities to play pioneering roles in economic and social development at home and abroad.

"Through their service learning trip to the refugee settlements in Cox's Bazar, the graduate students were able to closely observe the plight of the Rohingya community in Bangladesh. Interacting with the refugees deepened their understanding of the many lives that have been gravely affected during this ongoing humanitarian crisis. Furthermore, as a result of the relief work that the HBKU expedition team conducted to alleviate suffering amongst the refugees, participating students were able to gain a new appreciation for the common human values they share with those living in crisis. Through our joint work with the students, we are happy that we were able to underscore the importance of volunteering as an important aspect of learning."

An objective of the trip was to expose and educate HBKU students on conditions that may result from conflict-ridden areas. Faisal Ahmed Al-Mohannadi, senior student engagement supervisor at HBKU who was on the trip, said, "Our service learning expeditions serve to help HBKU graduate students gain an understanding of complex global challenges – be they developmental, socio-economic or humanitarian in nature. This trip to Bangladesh provided students with an opportunity to learn more about the

current Rohingya refugee crisis. With the support of Qatar Charity, we succeeded in delivering a number of services to this distressed community.

“In addition, our time in Bangladesh gave us the rare opportunity to directly engage with the refugees and hear about their moving experiences. This gave us a unique perspective we would have only been able achieve by venturing outside of our comfort zone.”

In Bangladesh, the HBKU team visited Rohingya camps and donated ready-to-eat meals, food products, clothes, tents, and hygiene kits. Additionally, the participants visited hospitals to gain a deeper insight into the unique medical concerns being faced by the displaced Rohingya community.

Commenting on his experience with the Rohingya community living in refugee camps, Rashid Al-Marri, a Juris Doctor student at HBKU and expedition member, said, “My trip to the Rohingya camps is of special educational significance for me. This is because I personally observed the extent to which displaced refugees are in need of life essentials such as food, clothing, shelter, sanitation, and healthcare. Even more importantly, I learnt that it is essential that these asylum seekers not be made to feel alone in their time of existential crisis. We must all strive to let them know that we are with them and are willing to contribute to make their situation better – no matter how small our efforts are in the larger scheme of things.”

Notably, the humanitarian assistance team from HBKU also organized a series of recreational activities to engage Rohingya children inhabiting refugee settlements and orphanages in Bangladesh. These efforts were designed to help the youth develop their communication skills and maintain their cognitive, emotional, social and physical abilities.

Every year, graduate students from HBKU volunteer to assist underprivileged communities around the world. Through personal engagement, teams acquire a first-hand understanding of the multi-faceted challenges faced by people who are living in critical need of basic shelter, healthcare, nutrition, sanitation, education, and economic development.

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About Hamad Bin Khalifa University
Innovating Today, Shaping Tomorrow

Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development (QF), was founded in 2010 as a research-intensive university that acts as a catalyst for transformative change in Qatar and the region while having global impact. Located in Education City, HBKU is committed to building and cultivating human capacity through an enriching academic experience, innovative ecosystem, and unique partnerships. HBKU delivers multidisciplinary



undergraduate and graduate programs through its colleges, and provides opportunities for research and scholarship through its institutes and centers. For more information about HBKU, visit www.hbku.edu.qa.

About Qatar Charity

Supervised by an elected committee, Qatar Charity is a non-governmental organization established 10/11/1992. In order to assist vulnerable communities across the world through humanitarian relief work, Qatar Charity focuses on sustainable development, combating poverty and emergency relief. The Charity has operated in more than 70 countries and maintains 27 international field offices.