

Bangladesh

1 - 31 December 2019

The second phase of the Government of Bangladesh-UNHCR **Joint Registration process has been completed**. Some **819,787** persons received identity documents under the process. The third phase will commence in January 2020 with continuous registration.

UNHCR has completed the **winterization distributions for 88,000 refugee families**. Blankets and other core relief items have helped families to stay warm as temperatures dropped in December and January.

Bangladeshi authorities have started to place **fencing** around some refugee settlements in Cox's Bazar district, citing security concerns. UNHCR is concerned about the potential impact on freedom of movement and has advocated for a proportional response.

KEY INDICATORS

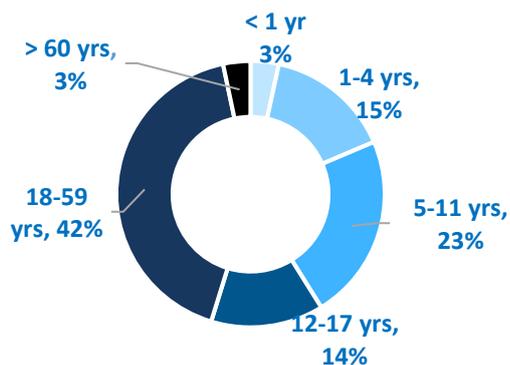
914,998* (as of 30 September 2019)

* The number of refugees from Myanmar estimated to be currently residing in Bangladesh in total, including those fled prior to 2017. Some 744,400 persons have fled Myanmar to Bangladesh since September 2017.

819,787

Registered and issued documents under the Government of Bangladesh-UNHCR process that started in June 2018.

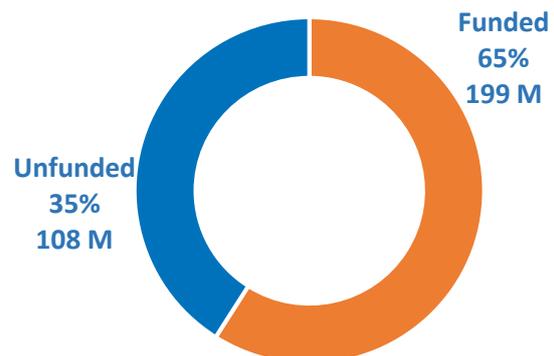
AGE BREAKDOWN OF REFUGEES IN COX'S BAZAR



2019 FUNDING (AS OF 7 JANUARY 2020)

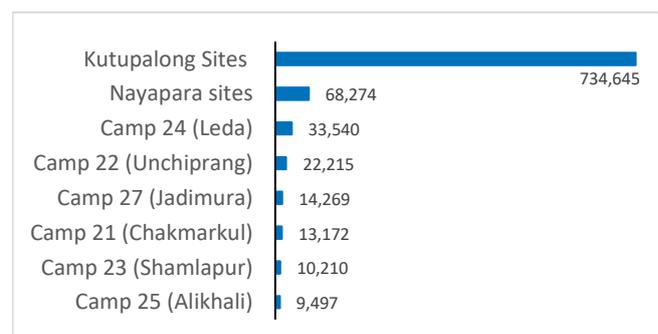
USD 307.6 M

requested for Bangladesh



POPULATION OF CONCERN

Key settlements



*Kutupalong Sites includes Camp 10, Camp 11, Camp 12, Camp 13, Camp 14, Camp 15, Camp 16, Camp 17, Camp 18, Camp 19, Camp 1E, Camp 1W, Camp 20, Camp 20 Extension, Camp 2E, Camp 2W, Camp 3, Camp 4, Camp 4 Extension, Camp 5, Camp 6, Camp 7, Camp 8E, Camp 8W, Camp 9 Kutupalong RC and Nayapara sites includes Camp 26 and Nayapara RC

Operational Context

- The overall situation of refugees in Cox's Bazar is stable. Restrictions on freedom of movement remain in place. The Government of Bangladesh has started to enforce this restriction through the fencing of some camps, with security concerns cited as one of the factors behind the decision. UNHCR's view is that the civilian and humanitarian character of the camps must be maintained, and any restrictions that may hamper freedom of movement and access to basic services should be clearly related and proportionate to identified security risks. The agency continues to maintain contact with the authorities on the issue of fencing to understand its plans and implications and encourages the authorities to undertake consultations with refugees and the host community on such measures. A ban on the use of SIM cards limiting refugees' access to information on the Internet has remained in place. This has also affected refugees' ability to contact the authorities, humanitarian agencies, service providers and family members living abroad in many cases.
- Planning for the humanitarian response in Cox's Bazar in 2020 took a step forward with consultations on 4 December between humanitarian actors and the Government of Bangladesh. Stakeholders included the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC), district and sub-district chairpersons, line ministries, military representatives, Camp-in-Charge (CIC) officials, the UN Resident Coordinator, UN agencies, NGOs (local, national, international), civil society, and donors. A Joint Response Plan was agreed which will be launched in 2020.
- UNHCR, among other humanitarian actors in Cox's Bazar, marked 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence in late November and early December. It is an annual event launched on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and ending on Human Rights Day (10 December). This year's campaign saw the participation of UNHCR, other UN and NGO agencies, Government partners and refugees. Each of the activities undertaken acknowledged the gravity of Gender-Based Violence globally and sought to increase awareness and renew commitments by all those with the ability to prevent and respond to abuses. Among the activities undertaken by UNHCR were discussion sessions with refugee women, sensitization activities for men and boys, art competitions and cultural programmes, theatrical performances and other events that are estimated to have reached over 10,000 people in refugee and host communities.
- A high-level delegation from the Government of Myanmar's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, together with ASEAN-ERAT visited Cox's Bazar and met with refugees on 18 and 19 December. In their meeting with Rohingya refugees, the Myanmar delegation presented the voluntary return process, outlining a stay at a reception centre upon return to Myanmar, plans for village reconstruction, restoration of property, and health and educational support. The Rohingya refugees reiterated the need for security and restoration of rights, including provision of citizenship. The delegation also met with a group of Hindu Rohingya refugees on the second day. UNHCR hopes that these discussions will continue to take place on a regular basis.

Achievements



PROTECTION

- **Second Phase of the Government of Bangladesh-UNHCR Joint Registration Process is completed**
On 31 December, the second phase of the joint Government of Bangladesh-UNHCR registration process wound down. Some 819,787 refugees from Myanmar have been registered in a Joint Registration exercise run by the Bangladesh authorities and UNHCR by the end of December. The process aimed at obtaining accurate biometric data of refugees, using UNHCR's Biometric Identity Management System (BIMS), to provide each individual who arrived since 2016 with a unique identity document, including family attestation. Some 880,133 individuals were counted as part of a UNHCR/Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC) family counting exercise in 2018. Over 93 per cent of those initially counted were newly verified and registered through the joint registration process.
- While registration will be continued for updating and amending data in the system, the number of sites and staff involved will be reduced significantly in line with the needs of continuous registration. Any household

with changes in status of existing family members will be able to approach registration sites in the third phase of the process to update their information.

- The registration data collected to date will be instrumental in ensuring more accurate lists which will form the basis for planning and delivery of assistance offered by UNHCR and others. The registration database and smart card offered to refugees will make distributions quicker, resulting in lower waiting times for refugees.

Protection dialogue with Camp-in-Charge (CIC) staff

- An annual protection workshop and dialogue was organised in Cox's Bazar in December between UNHCR protection staff and the Bangladesh government appointed Camp-in-Charge officials (CICs) from the Office of the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC), who oversee 34 refugee settlements in the district. The event provided time for an orientation on protection principles, which was useful for many newly appointed staff to discharge their functions in the settlements, as well as to offer a platform to engage in a two-way sharing of information on best practices, gaps and challenges, and brainstorming on how UNHCR and Government officers can address protection issues affecting refugees, particularly in view of the ongoing transition from an emergency response to a more stable operational environment. Discussions centered on a number of key themes, including safety and security, legal assistance, access to justice and mediation mechanisms, civil documentation, SGBV, child protection, and code of conduct.

Joint Capacity Sharing Initiative

- UNHCR continued to contribute to the capacitation of Camp-in-Charge support staff under a Joint Capacity Sharing Initiative (JCSI). In December, 73 CIC support staff received training on camp management and coordination, protection work, gender in humanitarian action, and disaster risk reduction. JCSI will continue in 2020 as a multidisciplinary multisector training and skills transfer platform that helps prepare and reinforce national capacities for refugee site management.



UNHCR site management staff have been working closely with Government appointed Camp-in-Charge (CIC) officials and their support staff to share knowledge on camp management tools, practices and experiences from around the world. Photo: UNHCR

Community representation and participation

- UNHCR has supported the formation of a camp committee in the Kutupalong Registered Camp following the selection of community representatives in November. The new committee has a good gender balance, with approximately 50 per cent female, and 50 per cent male representation. The 49 new committee members were trained on the code of conduct and their accountability to communities they represent.
- UNHCR continued in December to facilitate participatory programming with refugee communities. On 4 December, UNHCR, partners and the CIC office jointly with refugee representatives inaugurated 71 community-led projects in Camp 7. Projects were selected after a series of consultations in which community representatives took the lead in the identification of communal needs, project design and prioritization. Most projects were selected to strengthen communal infrastructure.



SHELTER AND NFIS

Winterization distributions target refugee families in Cox's Bazar

- As temperatures dropped in December, UNHCR started to deliver winterization assistance to refugee families to keep warm. Some 86,239 families were provided with blankets, sleeping mats and other non-food items during the winterization support campaign.


HEALTH & NUTRITION
Acute watery diarrhoea response and vaccinations

- Acute watery diarrhoea was successfully reduced in the camps in recent weeks following concerted efforts to provide hygiene and sanitation items to refugees in Ukhiya and Teknaf. Patients were also routinely tested. Four cholera vaccination campaigns were conducted over the course of 2017-2018 which helped provide basic protection and limit transmission. UNHCR and partners, in close cooperation with WHO, increased distributions of soap and water purification tablets, and strengthened the focus on delivering messages on the causes of acute watery diarrhoea and ways to prevent and avoid it at the household level.
- A further oral cholera vaccination (OCV) campaign started on 8 December. The campaign mobilized a network of 1,440 volunteers to support humanitarian agency health teams to go door-to-door.
- As the lead of the Community Health Working Group, UNHCR supported the planning and training of volunteers for the OCV campaign and mobilized volunteers for door-to-door visits and information dissemination. It is the first door-to-door campaign of its kind in the Cox's Bazar settlements. Bringing the vaccination services to refugee homes was expected to increase participation. Over 162,000 children between the age of 1 and 4 years old were successfully vaccinated.



Photo: Humanitarian partners and volunteers undertaking an oral cholera vaccination campaign in Rohingya refugee settlements. Photo: UNHCR

Nutrition causal analysis

- In collaboration with the Nutrition sector, UNHCR and other partners supported the implementation of a Link Nutrition Causal Analysis (LNCA) - an exercise to identify causes of malnutrition in refugee communities. The analysis indicated that malnutrition rates are not lowering beyond a certain plateau despite interventions due to several structural causes that include vulnerability to infectious diseases and poor hygiene practices, low food diversity at household level, sub-standard childcare and sub-optimal breastfeeding practices. LNCA findings will inform programmatic recommendations for partners' nutritional support activities going forward.

Working in partnership

UNHCR co-chairs a Strategic Executive Group (SEG) in Bangladesh with the UN Resident Coordinator and IOM. The UN Refugee Agency leads on the protection response for all refugees, and heads a Protection Working Group in Cox's Bazar. UNHCR welcomes its valuable partnership with a number of UN agencies and coordinates the delivery of its assistance with humanitarian partners through a number of working groups under the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG). UNHCR's main government counterpart is the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief and its Cox's Bazar-based Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC). UNHCR staff work closely with the Camp-in-Charge officials in different refugee settlements, as well as a range of international and national actors. It has a strong network of 33 partners:

MDMR (Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief) | Action Aid Bangladesh | ACF (Action Contre la Faim) | BNWLA (Bangladesh National Woman Lawyer's Association) | Bangladesh Red Crescent Society | BRAC (Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee) | Caritas Bangladesh | Center for Natural Resource Studies | CODEC (Community Development Centre) | COAST (Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust) | Danish Refugee Council | FH Association (Food for the Hungry) | GK (Gonoshasthaya Kendra) | IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources) | Handicap International | Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation | Light House | Oxfam GB | Relief International | Mukti Cox's Bazar | NGO Forum for Public Health | RTMI (Research, Training and Management International) | Save the Children International | World Vision | Solidarites International | Terre des Hommes | TAI (Technical Assistance Incorporated) | NRC (Norwegian Refugee Council) | WFP (World Food Programme) | UNDP (United Nations Development

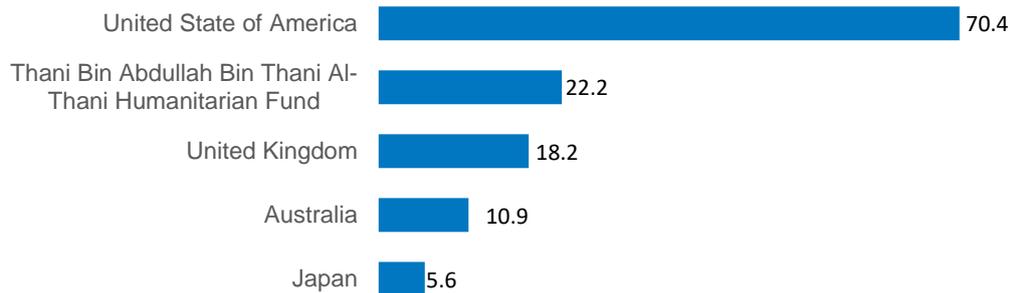
Programme) | IOM (International Organization for Migration) | BLAST (Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust) | Rights Jessore

UNHCR would also like to acknowledge the crucial role played by the refugees in the response; with over 3,000 volunteers from the refugee community who are often the first responders on the ground.

Financial Information

Total recorded contributions for the operation amount to some **USD 199 million**. UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked and broadly earmarked funds.

Top 5 funding sources (2019)



UNHCR's humanitarian response in Bangladesh is made possible thanks to the generous support of major donors who have contributed unrestricted funding to UNHCR's global operations, and to donors who have generously contributed directly to UNHCR Bangladesh operations.

In 2018 and 2019, support has been received from the people and governments of:

Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, the European Union, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Qatar, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

UNHCR is sincerely grateful for the additional support received from many individuals, foundations, and companies worldwide including Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Education Cannot Wait, Kuwait Finance House, Qatar Charity, and Thani Bin Abdullah Bin Thani Al Thani Humanitarian Fund.

CONTACTS

Mai Hosoi, External Relations Officer, Dhaka (Bangladesh), hosoi@unhcr.org

Steven O'Brien, External Relations Officer, Cox's Bazar (Bangladesh), obrien@unhcr.org

LINKS

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