

OVERVIEW

In September 2017, when an average of 16,000 refugees were fleeing into Bangladesh every day, UNHCR urgently began airlifts to deliver much needed aid. In less than three months, as many as 17 airlifts carried 1,671 tents, 2,405 tarpaulins, 55,511 kitchen sets, 142,938 blankets, 57,300 jerry cans, 62,100 mosquito nets, 177,675 sleeping mats, 28,760 buckets, 11 prefabricated warehouses and 58,120 solar lamps to Bangladesh. The storage capacity of UNHCR’s warehouse in Cox’s Bazar is 6,000 cubic meters (2,480 square meters), which is enough to assist up to 165,000 individuals at a time. So far in 2018, UNHCR had four airlifts which carried over 4,320 of tents, in addition to core relief items (CRIs).



Kitchen sets being unloaded into the new UNHCR warehouse in Cox’s Bazar. ©UNHCR / Caroline Gluck

Upon their arrival, refugee families were provided with basic relief items and a shelter kit to help them build their houses. The standard UNHCR CRI kit contains five blankets, five sleeping mats, two mosquito nets, two tarpaulins, one solar lamp, jerry can and a bucket.

In order to minimize the impact of the emergency response on host communities and reduce the risk faced by children and women while collecting firewood, UNHCR distributes compressed rice husks (CRHs) to refugee families. UNHCR is in the process of establishing solar street lights in the settlements and highways to also benefit the communities generously hosting refugees. So far, **232** out of **270** solar street lights have been installed, while 38 are in stock.

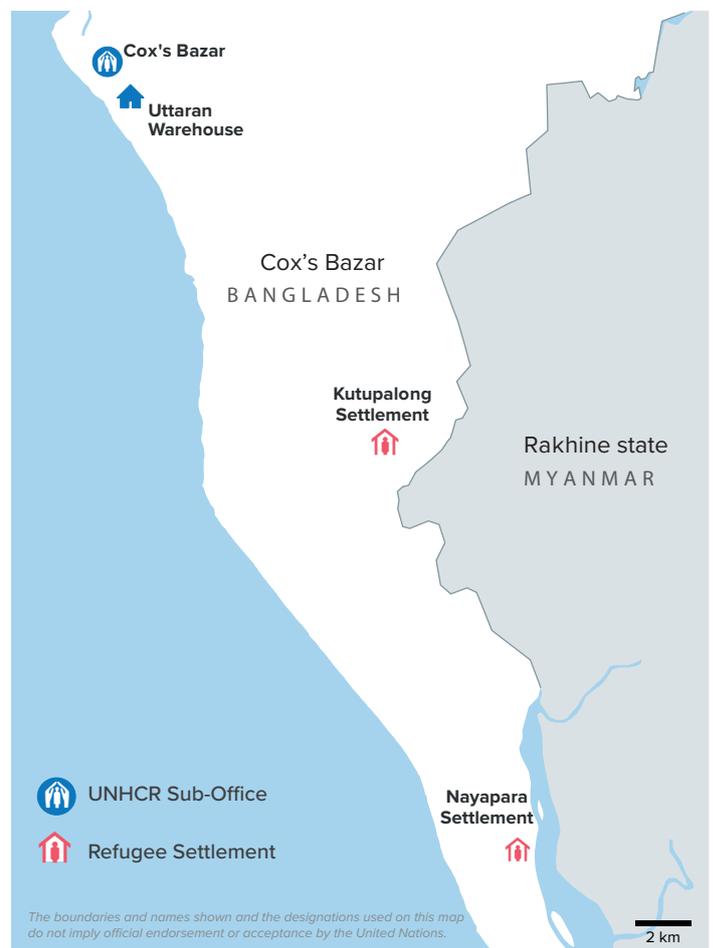
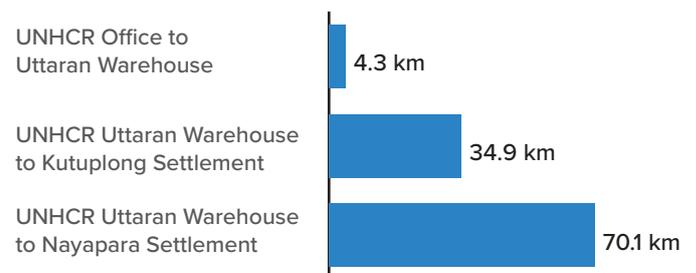
In December 2017 and January 2018, temperatures in the settlements dropped under 15 degrees Celsius at night. As part of the efforts to help refugees stay warm, UNHCR and partners distributed some 185,000 winter shawls for men and women and sweaters for children.

In preparation for the monsoon season, refugees were also provided with some upgraded shelter kits to help them build sturdier homes. These include some tarpaulins, rope, bamboo, and some 20 sandbags. UNHCR also started distributing pre-monsoon kits; 25% of which have already been distributed out of a target 80,000 kits. The pre-positioning of repair kits is also underway in case refugees’ homes are affected by floods and landslides. Containers stocked with post-monsoon materials, such as sleeping mats, plastic sheeting, buckets, rope, and water purification tablets (aqua-tabs), are being pre-positioned across the settlements, with 39 out 132 already in place, as of 13 May 2018.

Key figures



Distance between UNHCR office, Warehouse and the Refugee Settlement



Working in partnership

In Bangladesh, UNHCR works in close collaboration with the government and humanitarian actors to coordinate the response. The Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR) and the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC) are UNHCR's main government counterparts, in addition to Camp-in-Charge officials (CiCs) overseeing refugee settlements in the Cox's Bazar District.

UNHCR coordinates its interventions with humanitarian actors under the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG), of which UNHCR co-chairs the Strategic Executive Group (SEG) with the UN Resident Coordinator and IOM. UNHCR leads on the protection response for all refugees, and heads the Protection Working Group of the ISCG, together with the RRRRC.

To implement its response, UNHCR works closely with a 26 partners, both international and national actors:

ACF (Action Contre la Faim) | **ACTED** (Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development) | **ADRA** (Adventist Development and Relief Agency) | **BDRCS** (Bangladesh Red Crescent Society) | **BNWLA** (Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association) | **BRAC** (Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee) | **CARITAS BANGLADESH** | **CODEC** (Community Development Centre) | **DRC** (Danish Refugee Council) | **FH** (Food For the Hungry) | **GK** (Gonoshasthaya Kendra) | **HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation** | **HI** (Handicap International) | **IUCN** (International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources) | **MDMR** (Ministry of Disaster Management) | **NGOF** (Ngo Forum) | **OXFAM** | **PUI** (Première Urgence Internationale) | **REACH** | **RI** (Relief International) | **RTMI** (Research Training and Management International) | **SCI** (Save the Children) | **SI** (Solidarités International) | **TAI** (Technical Assistance Incorporated) | **TDH** (Terre Des Hommes Foundation) | **WFP** (World Food Programme)

Local sourcing of goods and services is a priority for UNHCR.

Supporting the response

The response of the Government and people of Bangladesh is extraordinarily generous, and continuous support from the international community is critical to assist Bangladesh in the humanitarian response to the refugee situation. UNHCR has called for support for refugees and host communities, as well as sustained political efforts to work towards a solution for the situation. A Joint Response Plan (JRP) for the Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis was launched in March 2018 calling for USD 951 million for humanitarian actors to continue delivering lifesaving assistance until the end of the year. UNHCR is appealing for USD 238.8 million as part of its Supplementary Appeal for 2018 to enable the organization to respond to the needs of hundreds of thousands of refugees as they prepare to face a harsh monsoon and cyclone season.

Acknowledgement

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