

## UNHCR and Japan sign USD 2.9 million agreement for lifesaving support to Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh

### PLACE

Dhaka

### DATE

15 June 2023



The Government of Japan and UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency signed an agreement to provide approximately \$2.9 million (JPY 391 million) to ensure that crucial lifesaving support in the form of humanitarian assistance and protection is continued for the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar and on Bhasan Char.

The exchange of notes was signed by UNHCR Bangladesh Representative Johannes van der Klaauw and the Ambassador of Japan to Bangladesh H.E. Mr. IWAMA Kiminori, at the UNHCR country office in Dhaka.

The contribution by Japan will ensure that UNHCR is able to continue delivering lifesaving assistance in Cox's Bazar in the form of shelter and non-food items such as sleeping mats, blankets and soap. The funds will allow UNHCR to repair shelters and infrastructure such as drains, bridges, pathways, stairs, retaining walls and stabilizing slopes.

"Support from Japan comes at a crucial time when Rohingya refugees are once again trying to rebuild their lives after Cyclone Mocha and recent fires that have ravaged various sections of the camps. This additional funding will help provide necessary shelter materials to allow us to build back better and protect refugees from further risks, notably the most vulnerable among the women and children," said Johannes van der Klaauw.

Meanwhile on Bhasan Char, Japan's contribution will support UNHCR's efforts to carry out community-led projects and improvements for refugee protection, for instance by increasing accessibility to services for persons with disabilities.

Ambassador IWAMA expressed his hope that the support from the Government of Japan would improve the living conditions of both Rohingya and host communities.

"We are pleased to provide USD 2.9 million to UNHCR. We hope that this assistance will strengthen refugee protection including fire prevention through shelter construction and rehabilitation, and site maintenance and development. Japan will continue to work towards sustainable solutions including the support of the repatriation of refugees to Myanmar, and will cooperate with international organizations such as UNHCR, to improve the living conditions of refugees and host communities." said Ambassador IWAMA Kiminori.

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Since the beginning of the emergency in August 2017, Japan has been a steady supporter of the Rohingya refugee response in Bangladesh, contributing over USD \$200 million to UNHCR and other UN agencies as well as NGOs in Bangladesh, including through this new funding.

The announcement of the agreement between UNHCR and Japan comes just after a visit to Bangladesh by UNHCR's Deputy High Commissioner Kelly T. Clements during which she drew attention to the ongoing critical humanitarian and livelihood needs of refugees as well as their host communities. A lack of funds has led to a reduction in lifesaving supplies for refugees, including food.

Humanitarian agencies have appealed for more than \$876 million this year to support almost 1.5 million people, including 930,000 Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar and 30,000 on Bhasan Char, and 495,000 Bangladeshis in neighboring communities. As of June 2023, the Joint Response Plan was approximately 28 per cent funded. Predictable and sustained funding is needed to avert a wider humanitarian disaster.

**ENDS****FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:****UNHCR:** Mostafa Mohammad Sazzad Hossain, [hossaimo@unhcr.org](mailto:hossaimo@unhcr.org); +880-1-313-046-459**Embassy of Japan in Bangladesh: Public Relations Section;** [publicrelations@dc.mofa.go.jp](mailto:publicrelations@dc.mofa.go.jp); +880-2-222-260-010