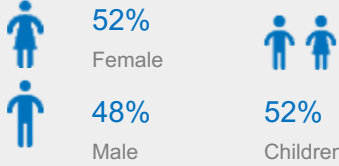




## POPULATION

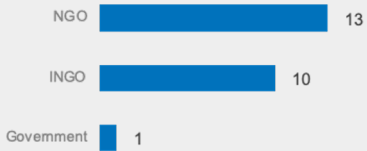
**967,842** # of registered refugees



as of 31 October 2023

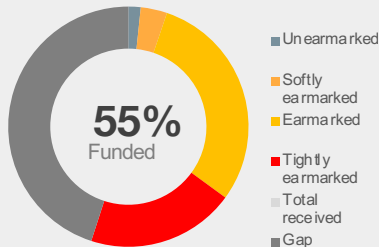
## PARTNERS

**24** # of partners implementing key UNHCR activities in 2023



## FUNDING

**275 M** Funding for 2023 operations



as of 31 October 2023

## HISTORY

UNHCR has been a friend of Bangladesh since 1971, providing life-saving aid to some 10 million refugees forced to flee during the Liberation War.

Today, UNHCR and partners manage 16 camps in Cox's Bazar, including Nayapara and Kutupalong Registered Camps, plus the island of Bhasan Char, supporting the Government of Bangladesh to provide essential services and meet the protection needs of one million Rohingya refugees, including special services for women, children and persons with disabilities. Most arrived in 2017, fleeing persecution, large-scale violence and human rights violations.

Support is additionally extended to host communities while continuously working towards solutions to ensure that refugees can return in a safe, dignified, voluntary and sustainable way once conditions in Myanmar allow.

## OPERATIONAL UPDATE

October 2023



Sumbul Rizvi, the newly appointed UNHCR Representative in Bangladesh, presented her credentials to Foreign Minister A.K. Bin Momen.

## KEY UPDATES

- 2023 JOINT RESPONSE PLAN:** As of [31 October](#), the 2023 Joint Response Plan (JRP) is 43% funded with USD 373 million received against the overall appeal of USD 876 million, including USD 67 million for Bhasan Char. The 2023 Plan provides protection services and essential assistance to nearly one million vulnerable Rohingya refugees and a half million Bangladeshis in host communities. [Read more.](#)
- WELCOMING UNHCR'S NEW REPRESENTATIVE:** On 10 October, Ms. Sumbul Rizvi took office as UNHCR's new Representative in Bangladesh. She brings more than 35 years of experience in human rights and humanitarian work, including critical experience in Cox's Bazar, having played a key role as the UN Coordinator in establishing an inter-agency response to the Rohingya refugee crisis in 2018. [Read more.](#)
- 'THE ROAD TO THE GLOBAL REFUGEE FORUM':** On 17 October, key stakeholders including governmental counterparts, humanitarian and development partners, refugee-led organizations, academia and civil society members convened in Bangkok for a high-level meeting on creating solutions and advancing support for Rohingya refugees. [Read more.](#)
- REPATRIATION PILOT INITIATIVE:** On 31 October, a 36-member government delegation from Myanmar arrived on a two-day 'come and tell' visit and screening exercise of refugees verified for repatriation by Myanmar. While UNHCR was not involved in the visit, it is committed to ensure that Rohingya refugees can realize their right to return when they choose, based on a fully informed and voluntary decision. [Read UNHCR's statement.](#)
- CYCLONE HAMOON:** On 24 October, Cox's Bazar district was struck by Cyclone Hamoon. Bringing winds of 120-155 km/h and 60 mm of rainfall, the storm caused heavy damage across the district, including in Cox's Bazar town. Electricity and telecommunications were affected for several days, hampering some office functions. In the Rohingya camps, 1,009 shelters were damaged or destroyed, including 391 shelters in UNHCR-managed camps. 148 families who were displaced the night of the storm were able to return to their shelters the next day. This is the second cyclone to strike Cox's Bazar this year, making the need for improved shelter solutions even more urgent. [Read more.](#)
- REGISTRATION EXERCISE:** The exercise to verify and update the registration data of refugees in Nayapara Registered Camp continued. By month end, 21% of 23,282 targeted households had been verified.
- CAMP COMMITTEES AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE:** A training on core concepts on gender-based violence (GBV) and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) was organized for 20 camp and block committee members in Nayapara Registered Camp, including nine women. Committee members learned about GBV guiding principles, safe referral practices, PSEA fundamentals, child marriage, gender equality, and ways to effectively empower women in the community.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

### 1. BASIC RIGHTS, PROTECTION & EDUCATION

Refugee rights are respected, and they have access to education and protection, including protection against gender-based violence.

### 2. ADEQUATE LIVING CONDITIONS IN A GREEN ENVIRONMENT

Essential and sustainable services (including safe shelters, health, nutrition, WASH, energy) are ensured, and the environment is protected.

### 3. SKILLS & CAPACITY BUILDING TO SUPPORT DURABLE SOLUTIONS

Work toward sustainable solutions, with voluntary repatriation at the centre, supported by skills development, livelihoods and capacity building for refugees.

### 4. DIVERSIFIED FUNDING & PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships with development and private sector actors to innovate, support and localize operations.

### 5. CREATING A POSITIVE NARRATIVE

Lead the narrative on the Rohingya refugee response and improve public attitudes toward the Rohingya.

## DONORS

UNHCR in Bangladesh is grateful for the support of Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, Denmark, France, European Union, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jersey, the Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States of America.

With additional support received from UN funds including Education Cannot Wait (ECW) and the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and private donors, foundations, corporates, and companies worldwide including Fast Retailing Co. Ltd., Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Qatar Charity, and the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives.

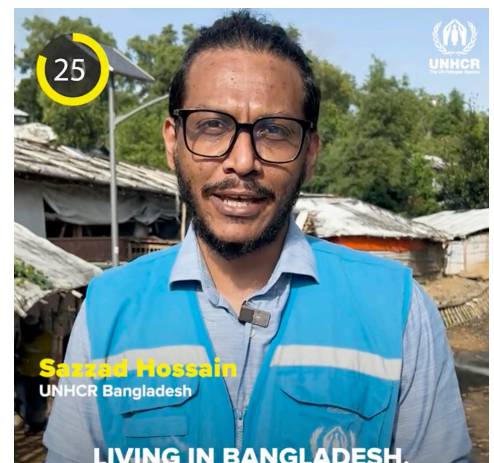
Contacts:

**Amy Jo Davies**, [daviesa@unhcr.org](mailto:daviesa@unhcr.org),  
 External Relations Officer, Cox's Bazar;  
**Romain Desclous**, [desclous@unhcr.org](mailto:desclous@unhcr.org),  
 Senior External Relations Officer, Dhaka.

- **VOCATIONAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT & PRODUCTION:** Workshops continued with 1,772 refugees (964 women) receiving curriculum-based vocational training in seven trades. A second round of assessment was conducted, with 71% of the test takers receiving a passing grade. Meanwhile, 390 refugee women were engaged in sanitary napkin and underwear production. To date, they have produced 95% of the 1.3 million sanitary napkins and 73% of the 400,000 female underwear needed for the December round of distribution.
- **BHASAN CHAR LIVELIHOOD PRODUCTS:** The RRRRC approved the export of goods made through livelihood projects on Bhasan Char, and asked interested NGOs to submit a list of products and quantities. The approval runs through 31st December 2023, after which the approval process will be repeated. Meanwhile, UNHCR partner, NGO Forum completed sewing and tailoring training of 200 women in October and has engaged all trainees in production of handicrafts targeted for marketing.
- **SHELTER REPAIRS:** Scale-up by suppliers of bamboo deliveries allowed UNHCR's shelter partners to clear a backlog of 5,848 shelters still needing repair and maintenance. Over 10 months of 2023, 40% of the 93,500 shelters in UNHCR-managed camps were verified for and received repairs – a significant increase compared to 2022, when only 30% were repaired. Reinforcement of vulnerable shelters with treated bamboo and metal footing will continue for the rest of the year as more shelters reach the end of their lifespans.
- **NEW FAECAL SLUDGE TREATMENT PLANT (FSM):** Teknaf's own FSM treatment plant began operations in October, joining two previously established plants in Ukhiya. The new plant can currently treat 50 cubic metres of faecal sludge daily and will process up to 120 cubic metres of sludge daily when all components are in place, serving five camps.
- **TELE-MEDICINE FOR MENTAL HEALTH:** Tele-psychiatry services were launched from Nayapara Registered Camp's Mental Health Inpatient Department, connecting refugees with severe mental illnesses to specialized psychiatric support. Post-discharge care will be ensured through a team of social workers, psychologists, and psychiatrists.
- **CELEBRATING DURGA PUJA:** The minority Rohingya Hindu community at Hindupara camp (around 140 families) celebrated Durga Puja on 24 October. Communal harmony during the festivities was ensured through close coordination with the camp-in-charge.
- **INTERNATIONAL DISASTER RISK REDUCTION DAY:** UNHCR marked the occasion (13 Oct) with [events](#) celebrating preparedness in Cox's Bazar and a session with the secretary of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief in Dhaka, attended by UNHCR's Bangladesh Country Representative Sumbul Rizvi and Deputy Representative Soo Jin Rhee.
- **MISSION REPORT:** In October, UNHCR hosted or assisted 10 visits from donors and partners to Cox's Bazar camps and Bhasan Char, including Australian footballer and refugee advocate Craig Foster, UNHCR-content gathering teams from Sweden and HQ, UNHCR's board of auditors, and the Ambassador of Japan who inaugurated the improved shelter project in Nayapara on 23 October in the presence of the RRRRC.
- **NEW FUNDING:** In October, a [new funding contribution](#) for UNHCR Bangladesh was received from Germany. As of 31 October, the operation is 55% funded.

## IN CASE YOU MISSED IT...

- **"We have overcome so many traumatic incidents... We are afraid that we will never go back to our homeland. We worry about our children's futures."** In this story for World Mental Health Day (10 Oct), Rohingya refugee counselor Nur Kalam explains the mental health toll of life in the camps, and how he uses his skills to support his community. [Read more.](#)
- In October, UNHCR Bangladesh accounts published 35 [Facebook](#) posts, 38 [tweets](#) and 28 [Instagram](#) posts, marking occasions such as [World Mental Health Day](#) (10 Oct), [International Disaster Risk Reduction Day](#) (13 Oct) and [Reptile Awareness Day](#) (21 Oct) with stories and photos featuring the brave contributions of Rohingya volunteers.



### 3 FACTS IN 30 SECONDS

[Watch a video](#) explaining key facts on Rohingya refugees living in Bangladesh.