

PLACE
Dhaka

PRESS RELEASE

Australia commits AUD 25.25 million to sustain life-saving support for Rohingya refugees and host communities in Bangladesh

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The Government of Australia and UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, announced today, in the presence of Honourable Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman and Assistant Minister for Citizenship, Customs and Multicultural Affairs, Assistant Minister for International Education, Hon Julian Hill, a critical AUD 25.25 million contribution to sustain life-saving assistance and protection for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. This vital, flexible and multi-year funding, part of Australia's 2026-28 humanitarian assistance, will help ensure the continuation of essential services for one of the world's most vulnerable refugee populations their host communities.

At a time when global humanitarian funding is uncertain and under increasing pressure, Australia's timely support provides a crucial and predictable lifeline. It will enable UNHCR and partners to maintain key services across the camps, including protection activities, skills development programmes, and disaster risk reduction measures for refugees living in highly fragile and disaster-prone environments.

"Australia continues to respond to the most significant humanitarian crises in our region, making our region safer, more stable and resilient" said Hon Assistant Minister Julian Hill. "Australia remains committed to supporting the humanitarian needs of Rohingya in Myanmar and Bangladesh. Displaced Rohingya want to return home, but the conditions in Myanmar need to be in place for their voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable return. These can only be met by addressing the root cause of the crisis in Myanmar."

"Nearly nine years on, the Rohingya crisis risks fading from global attention as new emergencies emerge elsewhere," said Juliette Murekeyisoni, UNHCR Representative a.i in Bangladesh. "Australia's continued support sends a strong message that the Rohingya people have not been forgotten. Every refugee I speak to expresses the hope to return home safely, with their rights and dignity restored. Until conditions in Myanmar allow for voluntary, safe, and dignified return with full citizenship, the international community must remain steadfast in its support."

"Australia remains committed to supporting Rohingya and their host communities in Bangladesh," said H.E Susan Ryle, Australian High Commissioner to Bangladesh. "This latest contribution of AUD25.25 million to UNHCR will help to provide critical services to the most vulnerable, including for women, girls and people living with a disability".

Since widespread violence and persecutions forced hundreds of thousands of refugees to seek safety in Bangladesh in 2017, around 1.2 million Rohingya refugees remain displaced there, most in overcrowded refugee camps near Cox's Bazar. The majority rely almost entirely on humanitarian assistance to meet their daily needs. Persistent funding gaps have deepened vulnerabilities, sometimes pushing people toward harmful coping mechanisms, including undertaking dangerous sea journeys in search of better opportunities in the region. According to recent reports, nearly 900 Rohingya refugees went missing or died in 2025 while attempting perilous crossings in the Andaman Sea

and Bay of Bengal. Australia's ongoing assistance to Rohingya and host communities will help promote safer and sustainable coping mechanisms by supporting access to protection and essential services.

Funding shortages continue to disproportionately impact the most vulnerable, including women and girls, persons with disabilities, and older people. Since 2024, an estimated 150,000 new arrivals have joined the camps, many still lacking adequate shelter and access to basic services such as clean cooking fuel.

After years of displacement, most Rohingya refugees remain almost entirely dependent on external assistance. While meeting immediate needs is essential, expanding access to education and skills development is equally crucial for building resilience and preparing refugees for a future beyond displacement.

Until durable solutions are realized, sustained international solidarity, illustrated by this contribution, will remain essential to ensure Rohingya refugees can live in safety and dignity, with access to the protection, assistance and opportunities they urgently need.

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