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Significant investments in emergency water and sanitation were needed in 2017/18 to address the immediate needs of over 725,000 refugees who fled violence in Myanmar in August 2017, as well as to prevent environmental and public health crises occurring in settlements. There was limited space for new WASH facilities, and a multitude of actors initiated latrine and other WASH responses immediately leading to a lack of harmonized standards. Open defecation was observed as a common practice. Sustainable solutions are also required, as UNHCR and its partners continue to support families who have been displaced for over 20 years.

Progress

The response has developed standards suitable for the topography and the emergency nature of the response, including latrines with larger volume pits. WASH facilities currently cover all refugees within emergency standards. Hygiene kits with water containers for collection and storage were distributed, in addition to water purification tablets, and hygiene promotion activities undertaken. Menstrual hygiene kits were also distributed to girls and women. Small and medium-sized fecal sludge units have been created, while a large-scale unit is being developed. In order to further secure the water supply, a chlorinated water network plan has been designed for 735,000 people in both Teknaf and Ukhiya sub-districts. About 15 per cent of these networks are under construction and concerned WASH sector members are coordinating closely to ensure timely and appropriate implementation of this plan. UNHCR trained WASH field teams to conduct rapid assessments and quickly repair damaged facilities during the monsoon season. Refugee volunteers were also trained in emergency WASH response and preparedness. UNHCR conducted hydrogeological surveys in Teknaf and Ukhiya which guided agencies on identifying location to drill for water.

361,851 refugees in 14 settlements reached by UNHCR as WASH focal agency

20 liters of water person/day reached, as a minimum

>30 persons/latrine reaching minimum SPHERE standards

UNHCR WASH objectives:

- 1 Ensure effective, sufficient and continuous provision of life-saving water and sanitation services
- 2 Ensure refugees have the means and are encouraged to adopt health-seeking behaviors
- 3 Ensure WASH assistance promotes protection, safety and dignity of beneficiaries

6,243 latrines constructed benefitting **> 125,000** refugees

625 tube wells installed, serving over **156,000** refugees

57,913 hygiene kits distributed in areas UNHCR is targeting so far in 2018

677 WASH field staff and volunteers trained in emergency response

Way Forward

To address acute water needs in Nayapara, an upgrade of a water surface reservoir serving both refugees and local communities is being surveyed along with the project to install a productive borehole. Sewage systems to carry and treat waste are being designed to pilot in Kutupalong, as the current manual de-sludging process, combined with limited treatment capacity, will pose a continued public health risk.

Challenges going forward

-  Policy framework needed to guide long-term WASH interventions
-  Technical sanitation management challenges for Kutupalong settlement
-  Poor water quality requires the set up of chlorinated water supply through water networks

Partners

BRAC, OXFAM and NGO Forum. UNHCR is the co-chair of the Water Technical Working Group (TWG), the Sanitation TWG and Ukhiya level WASH coordination platform for Kutupalong settlement.

Working in partnership

UNHCR co-chairs a Strategic Executive Group (SEG) in Bangladesh with the UN Resident Coordinator and IOM. The 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 23 partners, including:

ACF (Action Contre la Faim) | **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) | **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) |

UNHCR would also like to acknowledge the crucial role played by the refugees in the response; with over 1,000 **volunteers from the refugee community** who are **often the first responders on the ground**. UNHCR and partners have trained and work with **safety unit volunteers** (SUVs) who support the emergency response, **community outreach volunteers** who support raising awareness on important issues and in addressing protection risks, **community health workers** who assist with outreach for health and nutrition, and others who provide further critical support to the emergency response.

Donor Support

The response of the Government and people of Bangladesh has been very generous. More support is currently needed from the international community to assist the ongoing humanitarian response in Bangladesh for refugees and host communities. Continued political efforts to work for a solution to the situation remain vital. UNHCR is appealing for USD 238.8m (part of its Supplementary Appeal for 2018) in order to support Bangladesh's humanitarian response to refugees.

Donor country contributions to UNHCR Bangladesh (2017/2018)



UNHCR financial needs for 2018

	Protection	26.7 m
	Basic relief items	5.6 m
	Water, sanitation & hygiene	40.8 m
	Shelter/infrastructure	25.0 m
	Energy and environment	13.4 m
	Education	10.0 m
	Community mobilization	18.1 m
	Health and nutrition	34.5 m
	Logistics	11.0 m
	Camp management	35.3 m
	Support costs	18.4 m
TOTAL		238.8 m

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