



©UNHCR/S. Chowdhury

The Bangladeshi communities were the first to respond to the massive influx of Rohingya refugees in 2017, providing lifesaving assistance together with the Government of Bangladesh. The rapid increase of population however has strained the already meagre local community resources, infrastructure, public services and affected the economy, particularly in Ukhiya and Teknaf sub-districts. Rise of prices of food and transportation, pressure on water resources and basic services, environmental and infrastructure degradation (e.g. roads), and competition for jobs have contributed to increased social tensions between refugees and host community.

UNHCR recognizes the generosity of local families in assisting refugees and the need to help these communities cope with the influx. UNHCR is working with local government and partners to support communities near refugee settlements. To this effect, quick impact projects (QIPs) are small-scale community-based projects implemented in a short period of time which directly impact the targeted community. UNHCR has also provided livelihood support to the poorest and distributed family kits (tarpaulin, wire, rope, bucket and two sleeping mats) to local families affected by the monsoon.

In addition, UNHCR has repaired public buildings and infrastructure in order to restore host community's capacity to serve local needs, help foster critical support for hosting refugees and therefore create a more favorable environment for refugee protection.

The projects are part of UNHCR's commitment to work with the host community to enhance and develop their capacity in a quick and meaningful way.

Progress

UNHCR works with local and international organisations – BRAC, Gonoshasthaya Kendra (GK), NGO Forum for Public Health, Technical Assistance Inc. (TAI), and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) to support the Bangladeshi communities. Equally, UNHCR works with the Bangladeshi authorities and communities to identify projects that will yield value. The following progress has been made to date:

12 out of 22 quick impact projects in education, water and sanitation, health, shelter and energy **completed**

26 out of 55 schools renovated with additional classrooms, buses, computer labs and latrines

30,000 family kits delivered to local communities, including **4,300** to the poorest

711 destitute women received livelihoods support and **1,172** trained towards graduation from extreme poverty

65 infrastructures, basic services and schools improved and renovated in Ukhiya and Teknaf sub-districts throughout 2018.

30,000 family kits distributed to host families affected by natural disasters.

120,000+ beneficiaries from refugee and host communities.

UNHCR is strengthening the protection environment for refugees through:

- 1 Ongoing consultation** with local communities affected by the refugee influx
- 2 Livelihood support** to affected communities particularly the poorest including women
- 3 Income-generating activities** with short implementation period and direct impact to local communities and the local economy

Challenges going forward



The need for more in-depth evidence-based assessments to understand host community needs.



Weather related events impede on the ability to complete projects within short period of time.



High level of interest in QIPs results in many requests for interventions, which increases time spent vetting for beneficial projects.

Way forward

UNHCR plans to work closer with development actors to scale up its interventions into more substantial ventures. This collaboration will identify development potential that help strengthen resilience and social cohesion through support to the poorest members of the host community. Together with partner organizations and the international community, UNHCR is also exploring ways for greater engagement with affected communities to harness improvement ideas that the communities would be interested to benefit from.

Working in Partnership

UNHCR co-chairs the **Strategic Executive Group** together 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). UNCHR's main government counterpart is the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief and its Cox's Bazar-based Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC). UNCHR 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 28 partners, including:

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) | **CSI** (Center for Social Integrity) | **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) | **IRC** (International Rescue Committee) | **MTI** (Medical Teams International) | **NGOF** (NGO Forum) | **OXFAM** | **PIN** (People in Need) | **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)

Donor country contributions to UNHCR Bangladesh (2017/2018)



With thanks to the many private donations from individuals, foundations, companies including Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, IKEA Foundation, International Islamic Relief Organization Kuwait Finance House, OPEC Fund for International Development, Prosolidar-Onlus Foundation, Qatar Charity, Rahmatan Lil Alamin Foundation, The Big Heart Foundation, The Church of Latter-Day Saints, and UPS Corporate. Special thanks also to CERF.