

BANGLADESH

1 – 15 November 2018

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UNHCR conducted assessments of intent to return to Myanmar among some refugee families in two settlements from 13 to 14 November, upon request from the Government of Bangladesh. The process started after the concerned refugees were informed by the authorities that their names had been cleared for return by Myanmar. UNHCR shared the findings with Bangladesh authorities. By 15 November, no refugees had expressed their intention to return to Myanmar at this time.

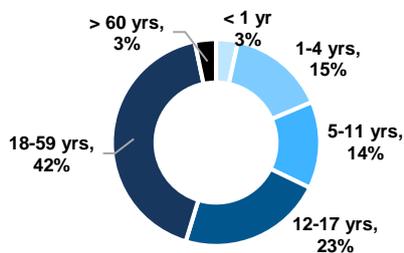
UNHCR is providing technical support to the third round of the emergency health and nutrition survey (the SMART survey) in all refugee sites in Ukhiya and Teknaf sub-districts. Data collection is ongoing until 20 November. The survey, led by Action Against Hunger (ACF) on behalf of the Nutrition Sector, assesses refugees' health and nutrition status a year after their arrival and identifies underlying factors affecting their nutritional wellbeing.

POPULATION FIGURES (as of 15 November 2018)

901,185 Total number of refugees in Cox's Bazar

733,415 Estimated new arrivals since 25 August 2017

Age breakdown of refugees in Cox's Bazar



UNHCR FUNDING 2018



JOINT RESPONSE PLAN FUNDING 2018



A refugee from a men's volunteer group is conducting a discussion on cyclone preparedness at a mosque in Kutupalong settlement in Ukhiya sub-district. UNHCR works with partner agencies and refugee volunteers to prepare for potential cyclone emergencies through awareness raising sessions and upgrading shelters and other community buildings that could be utilised as temporary shelters during a cyclone response. ©UNHCR

Assessment of voluntary return intentions of refugees Following an agreement reached during the third meeting of the Bangladesh-Myanmar Joint Working Group on repatriation held on 30 October, the Government of Bangladesh requested UNHCR to assist with an assessment of the intention and willingness of some Rohingya refugee families cleared for return by the Government of Myanmar. In line with UNHCR's international protection mandate and under the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of Bangladesh, UNHCR conducted a preliminary assessment of intent among a group of refugees on 13 and 14 November, after they were informed by the Bangladesh authorities that they had been cleared for return by the Government of Myanmar.

On 15 November, no refugee family had expressed their willingness to UNHCR to return to Myanmar at this time. Meanwhile, the Government of Bangladesh demonstrated its readiness to facilitate returns and reiterated its commitment to the principle of non-refoulement and to the voluntary character of repatriation. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees has highlighted in a [statement](#) that the best way to provide that knowledge to Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh is to allow them to go and see the conditions in Myanmar for themselves.

Although UNHCR does not believe current conditions in Rakhine State are conducive to the voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable return of refugees from Bangladesh, UNHCR remains committed to supporting the Government of Myanmar's efforts to create such conditions, under the terms of the tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by UNHCR, UNDP and Myanmar authorities in June 2018. UNHCR also remains deeply grateful to the Government of Bangladesh as it continues to generously host Rohingya refugees until they can voluntarily return to Myanmar in safety and dignity.

Refugee volunteers completed over 200 community service projects



Refugee volunteers take part in community service projects in their settlements. Male refugees from the men's group repaired a shelter belonging to a woman who did not have a caretaker in Camp 4 settlement (photo left) and girls from the youth group helped install a small bamboo bridge in Camp 26 Shalbagan settlement in Teknaf with technical guidance from UNHCR partner's Technical Assistance Inc. (photo right) ©UNHCR

Rohingya refugees are **volunteering in their community to help with small projects and engaging community members in discussions on issues of concern to help find solutions**. Since January 2018, **33 Community Groups** are operational, with **218 community service projects** completed by over **700 refugee volunteers** (73 by men, 66 by women and 79 by youth).

In Nayapara, the volunteers undertook **85 projects** jointly identified with their communities, including **tree planting, repair of damaged pathways, and reinforcing shelters for persons with specific needs or in need of community support**. In addition, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were held with all

Community Groups to **consult on how refugees would like to use and improve the existing community centres (CCs) in the settlements**. The results of the FGDs will be used to further develop programs for **wide and diverse community engagement to increase social cohesion** within the communities. Some proposed activities include hosting social and cultural events, and using the CCs as a knowledge hub by providing reading and education materials.

During the reporting period, men's, women's and youth groups held a series of **community discussions on child marriage, domestic violence, menstrual hygiene, public harassment of girls, human trafficking, and education, to encourage the community to raise awareness and identify community-led solutions together with service providers**.

Bangladesh police trained on refugee protection

UNHCR, with support from the European Union, conducted its second two-day information session (5-6 November) for **50 Bangladesh police officers** stationed in Cox's Bazar Sadar, Ramu, Ukhiya and Teknaf sub-districts hosting the Rohingya refugees. The sessions co-facilitated by UNHCR and senior police officers aimed to **build the local capacity on refugee protection as well as create a platform for discussion and information sharing** between UNHCR, its legal partners, and the Bangladesh law enforcement agencies. The first information session was held in March 2018.



UNHCR staff facilitates a discussion during the 'Access to Justice for All' information session for police officers in Cox's Bazar. ©UNHCR/I. Ahmed

Officers were given briefings on international refugee protection principles and relevant Bangladesh national laws, international human rights law, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), trafficking, child protection, monitoring and identification and response to protection matters. They also discussed **the roles and responsibilities of the Bangladesh Government and UNHCR**

for refugee protection. Police officers and UNHCR staff shared their experience on dealing with protection issues in refugee settlements and worked together on **recommendations for the improvement of protection environment in the refugee settlements and surrounding communities, provision of legal support to refugees, and reduction of security incidents**.

The government has set up police posts inside seven refugee settlements to date, including two posts in the Kutupalong and Nayapara Registered Refugee Camps which were established before the influx in August 2017.

UNHCR also **supports police activities with materials and equipment for enhanced safety and security in refugee settlements through support for daily patrol** in refugee settlements and surrounding areas, and a **multi-screen CCTV monitor** for Cox's Bazar police surveillance activities.

Refugees lead the Greening campaign in Kutupalong

Refugee community members in Camp 17 in Kutupalong settlement have been working together with UNHCR and BRAC on **environmental rehabilitation, reforestation and conservation in and around the community centre recently opened in their settlement.**

Refugee community consultations helped identify key concerns and issues, including the **need for planting trees and others to help soil stabilisation, wind protection, and shade.** Planting small crops and fruits also **complements their nutritional needs** and creates **a pleasant and safe environment for living.** Community consultations informed **the need to restore the land to its former beauty** to promote good relations with the host community.

In October and November 2018, refugees started to **actively plant areas around the community centre** with technical support from UNHCR and BRAC. The project has demonstrated the **capacities within the refugee community** to build an environment suitable to their needs, as well as highlight their **commitment to larger environmental goals, including by greening the settlement where they live, which has been affected by deforestation.**



As monsoon season concludes, communities are planting new trees on the hillside in front of the community centre in Camp 17 to stabilise the slope. ©UNHCR/I. Susanti

Since the planting activities in five refugee settlements started in September 2018, about 35,454 tree saplings have been planted, covering an estimated 14.2 hectares of land. Some 35,000 shrubs now cover an estimated three hectares of land in those settlements. UNHCR and partners have also planted 960,000 vetiver grass plants on about 23.6 hectares to stabilise slopes.

Bangladesh journalists attend refugee protection reporting workshop

UNHCR continues to **strengthen its relationships with Bangladeshi media** and **support quality reporting on refugee issues.** On 10 November, UNHCR organised a half-day information session in Dhaka for **50 Bangladeshi journalists from the Crime Reporters Association of Bangladesh (CRAB).** The participatory session focused on general principles of international refugee protection and standards, with emphasis on the protection of the most vulnerable group of women and children who face disproportionate risks of human trafficking and SGBV.

Bangladesh journalists attend an information session on refugee protection organised by UNHCR in Dhaka.
 ©UNHCR/U. Acharjee



Field health and nutrition workers prepare for emergencies

UNHCR and its partner agencies provided trainings for healthcare and nutrition workers, who are at the forefront of patient care in refugee settlements, in order for them to **prevent, respond and mitigate the impacts of potential various natural disasters on health and nutrition services**. The trainings aimed to sustain health and nutrition services during a potential cyclone by bolstering UNHCR's health and nutrition response capacity at the field level and maintaining an optimum disaster response capacity of partner agencies.

UNHCR and Gonoshasthaya Kendra (GK) held two refresher trainings on emergency preparedness and response in early November for 60 healthcare workers from GK, including 15 female, who work in various settlements. Participants, including medical doctors, assistants, nurses, midwives, psychologists, paramedics, waste management supervisors and logisticians, learned about **coordination of medical emergencies** including the roles and responsibilities of each staff during a disaster response, and **referral mechanisms**.

Together with CARE International and Save the Children (SCI), UNHCR held a **nutrition emergency preparedness and response** training for 39 members of the nutrition mobile team, 35 of whom were refugee volunteers. The training focussed on **sustaining nutrition service during a cyclone**. Nutrition mobile team work with UNHCR's partners ACF, Terre Des Hommes and SCI.



A group of Rohingya Community Health Workers (CHWs) receive first aid certificates and kits from UNHCR and its partner Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) in early November 2018. As preparation for a potential cyclone, about 2,045 refugee CHWs from all settlements received first aid training from BDRCS from May to August 2018. The training was part of UNHCR's effort to empower the refugees by building their capacity as first responders for medical emergencies. ©UNHCR/C. Melzer

Progress on refugee registration and Phase 2 Registration

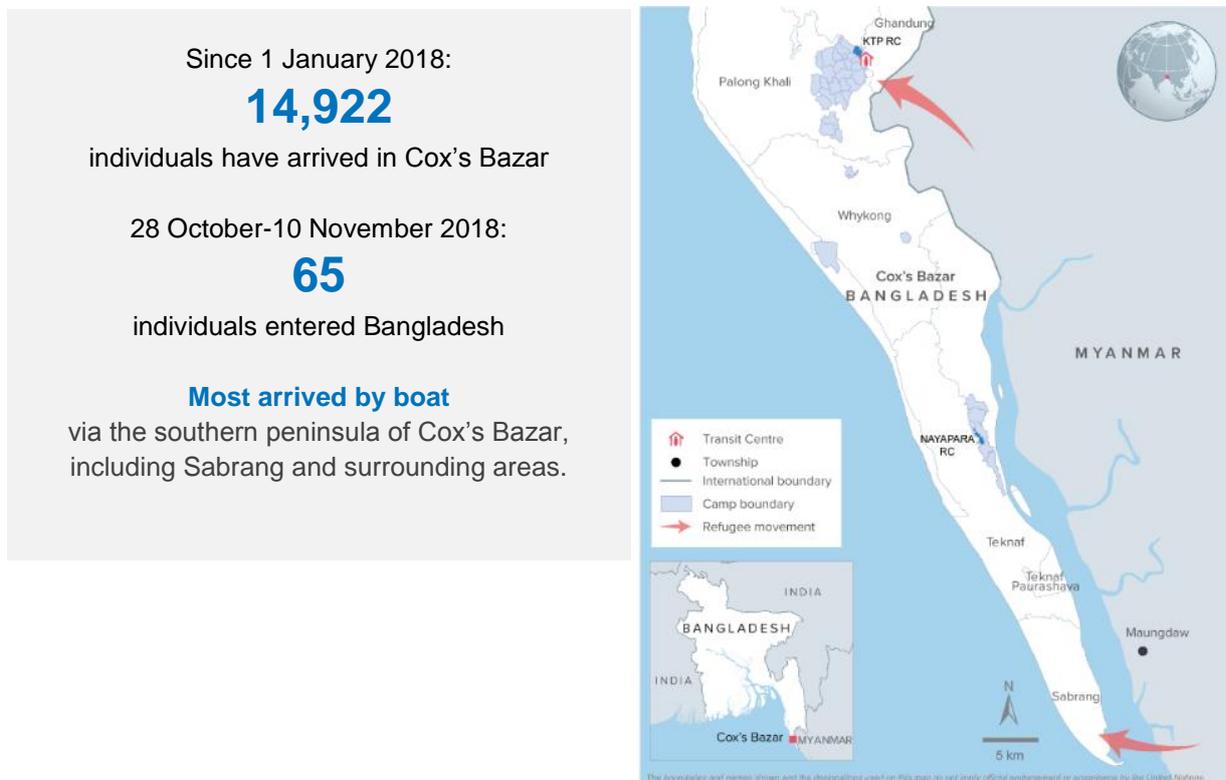
To date, **over 27,400 individuals from refugee settlements in Teknaf sub-district have been verified** through the joint Government of Bangladesh-UNHCR verification exercise. An ID card, commonly referred to as the ‘smart card’, is issued to all refugee women, men, girls and boys above the age of 12 and replaces two existing cards that they already possess – a Ministry of Home Affairs (white) registration card and a Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (yellow) family counting card. The verification exercise will continue in 26 settlements in Ukhiya sub-district, once it is completed for all eight sites in Teknaf.

The new card provides a secure identity documentation for refugees. It aims to establish a more efficient system for refugees to access services and assistance through better use of technology and continuously updated and more accurate information. It also affirms in writing on the card the Bangladesh Government’s commitment against forced return.

The verification will eliminate duplications in the existing database and enable all humanitarian actors to capture refugee needs more precisely as well as tailor the protection response more effectively.

Refugees continue to arrive from Myanmar

Refugees continue to arrive to Bangladesh. **A total of 65 refugees arrived** in Bangladesh during the reporting period. New arrivals continue to raise concerns about their lack of rights and security in Rakhine State.



Quick facts and figures on UNHCR protection services and assistance

Access to Education



40,820

children (20,745 girls and 20,075 boys) supported by UNHCR and its partners currently access Early Childhood Development, primary, and lower secondary education in refugee settlements

Education Facilities



344

classrooms constructed, providing learning spaces for over 40,000 children

Child Protection



50,907

children, including 26,469 boys and 24,438 girls, provided with psychosocial support

Community-Based Protection



354,957

refugee men, women and children received information on hygiene, the use of *aquatabs*, and Acute Watery Diarrhea, from community volunteers (COMs) since January 2018

Information Points



1,633

refugees (835 male, 798 female) received information or referral through Information Points during the reporting period. Popular inquiries are on shelter (40%) and fuel (24%)

Transit Centre



30

individuals newly arrived and sought assistance from 28 October to 10 November 2018 in Kutupalong's Transit Centre

Shelter Locks



73,842

households supported with padlocks to ensure their shelters are secure and better protected

LPG Distribution



7,735

refugee families received Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) bottle and a cooking stove as part of a roll-out of this fuel support. Some 6,287 families received LPG refills. The distributions are part of UNHCR's SGBV prevention, health, and environmental protection efforts, by reducing unaccompanied trips to collect firewood, reducing harmful fumes in shelters, and addressing deforestation through reduced tree cutting

Shelter Tagging



15,014

refugee shelters in Kutupalong settlement were tagged to facilitate timely distribution of relief assistance, avoid gaps and duplication, and better tailor protection solutions for persons with specific needs

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 partnerships 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. UNHCR also 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)

UNHCR would also like to acknowledge the crucial role played by the refugees in the response; with **over 6,500 volunteers from the refugee community** who are **often the first responders on the ground**. UNHCR and the partners have trained and worked with **safety unit volunteers (SUVs)** who support the emergency response, **community outreach members** 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 Government and the people of Bangladesh have shown extraordinary generosity in responding to the crisis. However, more support and solidarity is required from the international community to assist the ongoing humanitarian response. Continued political efforts to work towards a solution to the situation remains vital. UNHCR is appealing for USD 238.8m (as part of its Supplementary Appeal for 2018) in order to respond to the needs of hundreds of thousands of refugees.

UNHCR Bangladesh is grateful for the generous contributions of donors who have provided unrestricted and broadly earmarked funds, as well as to donors who have contributed directly to the Operation in 2017 and 2018:



With thanks to the many private donations from individuals, foundations, and companies such as the Arab Gulf Fund, 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.

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LINKS: [UNHCR data portal](#) - [UNHCR operation page](#) – [Facebook](#) – [Twitter](#) – [Latest stories](#) – [Instagram](#)

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