

SAFE+2

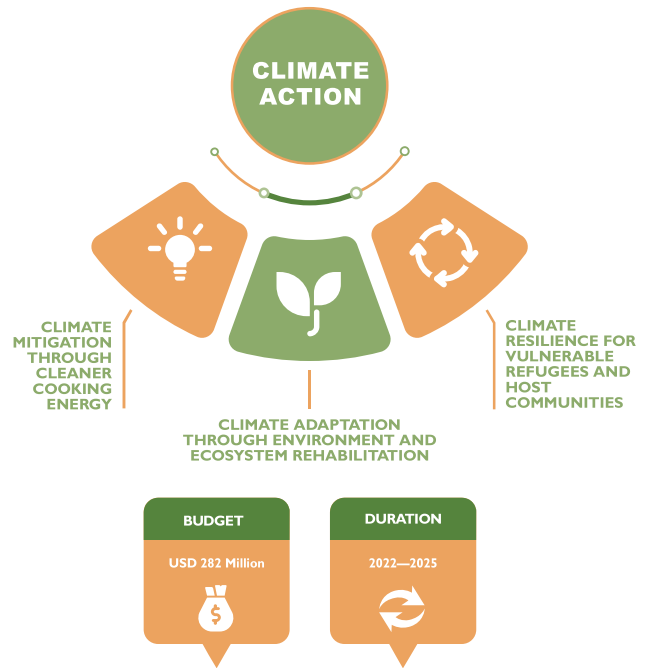
SAFE ACCESS TO FUEL AND ENERGY

Following the influx of over 700,000 Rohingya refugees to Bangladesh in 2017, the Government allocated a 2,500-hectare area of protected forest to expand an existing settlement which now consists of 33 refugee camps in the Cox's Bazar District. The area of hilly land, already home to over 2.5 million Bangladeshis, is prone to landslides, flooding and lightning strikes and became even more exposed to soil erosion during the monsoon season when forest cover was cleared, and waterways encroached upon shelters and camp infrastructure. Agricultural land, owned by Bangladeshis, is affected particularly by flash floods and a high level of salinity jeopardizing farmer's production capacity. The 2017 influx exacerbated the demand for limited natural resources, food, and livelihoods opportunities, in an already fragile ecosystem.

Lacking access to alternative cooking fuel to prepare meals, refugees were forced to rely on firewood which contributed to the loss of vegetation and increased exposure to disaster risks and gender-based violence against women and girls who struggled to collect upwards of 700 tonnes of firewood daily to meet their needs.

In close coordination with the Government of Bangladesh and donors, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the UN World Food Programme (WFP) launched the second phase of the Safe Access to Fuel and Energy Plus (SAFE+2) UN Joint Programme in 2022. This programme builds on the successes and learning from SAFE+1 across the three integrated areas of intervention.

At a glance



Strategic Priorities

The SAFE+2 Joint Programme will use a coordinated, holistic, and multi-sectoral approach targeting vulnerable households:

1. To enable safe access to sufficient and cleaner cooking energy for some 190,000 refugee households.
2. To rehabilitate and protect the degraded environment and ecosystems which will benefit over 167,000 refugee and host community members from the improved ecosystem and resource management in their surrounding environments.
3. To increase resilience among some 50,000 refugee and 50,000 host community households.

Strategic Priority One: Targeted households have safe and sufficient access to cleaner cooking energy to meet their basic needs

Strategic Priority One is continued distribution of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) to over 900,000 refugees (190,000). To cook with LPG safely, refugees are trained on the proper use of the cooking sets that they receive consisting of a fuel-efficient stove, regulator and hose, and LPG cylinder.

The provision of LPG across the camps mitigates protection risks such as gender-based violence and negative health impacts due to smoke inhalation. It promotes food security, nutrition, and peaceful coexistence in the camps by reducing competition for resources. With these proven benefits, it is critical to sustain access to LPG to meet the essential needs of refugees and avoid renewed degradation of recently restored landscapes.

This priority is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 7 to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all and directly mitigates climate change, deforestation, environmental degradation helping to preserve one of Bangladesh's key natural resources, the forested hills of Cox's Bazar that are also home to one of the last herds of endangered Wild Asian Elephants.

Activities include the provision of LPG cylinders and refills, distribution, and training for the use of energy-efficient cooking sets and pressure cookers, research and development to identify, assess and pilot alternative cooking energy solutions.



Rohingya refugee Rofiqua Begum and her family use bottled LPG gas to cook.
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Strategic Priority Two: Environment and ecosystems are rehabilitated to strengthen community resilience to mitigate conflict over natural resources, disasters, and climate shocks

Strategic Priority Two focuses on environment and ecosystem rehabilitation in both refugee camps and host communities. Rehabilitation of ecosystem services and greening activities improve productivity, food security and the overall natural sustainability of value chains while contributing to disaster risk reduction and enhancing climate resilience. These interventions enhance community awareness and capacity for environmental management and address critical areas of concern for the sustainable development of Cox's Bazar District using Nature-based Solutions (NbS).

Land stabilization and reforestation activities protect refugees and local Bangladeshis by reducing the risks of flash flooding and landslides and contribute to climate resilience, mitigation and adaptation. Furthermore, ecosystem rehabilitation and community-based human-elephant conflict mitigation measures support the conservation of biodiversity and wildlife. Research and studies inform sustainable management of watersheds, land use and natural resources, including planning, monitoring, and evaluation to guide implementation and coordination between partners and stakeholders.

This strategic priority aligns with the climate action aspirations of the Government of Bangladesh through improved agricultural practices and diversified income opportunities for local farmers and forest-dependent communities. It helps to strengthen government and civil society institutions involvement in sustainable natural resource management and governance and promotes peaceful co-existence.

Activities include the development and implementation of environmental and watershed management plans, the rehabilitation of streambanks, drainage, reservoirs or walkways, the revegetation and stabilization of slopes and land, including through cash-for-work, supporting tree nurseries, training elephant response teams, promoting renewable energy and engaging youth in environmental conservation.



Strategic Priority Three: The resilience of vulnerable host communities and Rohingya refugees is sustained

Strategic Priority Three focuses on the resilience of vulnerable host communities and skills and capacity building of Rohingya refugees noting that the response is no longer an emergency crisis but a protracted situation requiring longer-term planning and programming. This priority is central in implementing conflict-sensitive programming and drawing linkages between the two communities as much as possible. For instance, market linkage activities in the host community will be strategically linked with demand in the Rohingya camps to further localize the supply of agricultural goods which in turn will support the climate resilience of local farmers while also decreasing waste associated with transportation of goods.

In the host community, environmentally and economically sustainable livelihoods will be promoted across different value chains for off-farm and on-farm production. Activities will build upon the successes of SAFE+1 in focusing on quality improvement and value addition while enhancing marketability and the environmental sustainability of production. Special emphasis will also be given on making markets more approachable for women and the market system development approach will be considered to attract more institutional buyers. Agencies will specifically establish self-help and producer groups, strengthen their capacity, support marginal green business opportunities and ultimately link these groups to markets.

Interventions in the Rohingya camps will work to enhance the skill development and capacity building of refugees through green skills development activities such as community aquaculture, home gardening, re/upcycling of waste into useful products and environmentally sustainable center-based training activities (e.g., reusable mask and sanitary napkin production). All four agencies will work together to implement complementary skills training, capacity building and production activities related to humanitarian and sector-based needs.

Activities in the host community will be informed by market assessments and value chain analyses and include supporting self-help and producer groups as well as farmer field schools through cash, training and market linkages. In the camps activities will also be informed by relevant studies and include training and input distribution for home gardening and community aquaculture activities as well as the development and implementation of an innovative food waste management strategy and center-based training for green skills development promoting a circular economy.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

UNHCR: Romain Desclous, Senior External Relations Officer, desclous@unhcr.org

FAO: Marco De Gaetano, Head of Office, Marco.DeGaetano@fao.org

IOM: Nihan Erdogan, Deputy Chief of Mission, nerdogan@iom.int

WFP: Sheila Grudem, Senior Emergency Coordination / Head of Office, Sheila.grudem@wfp.org

