KEY ACTIVITIES

Access to Cleaner Cooking Energy - Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG)
Since September 2018, UNHCR and IOM have been distributing LPG as cooking fuel to all refugee households to meet their basic needs and mitigate climate change. LPG is a cleaner and more efficient alternative to firewood and has become the primary cooking fuel used by refugees. The distribution of LPG has had a significant environmental benefit by reducing carbon emissions, deforestation, accelerating afforestation efforts and reducing associated disaster risks, protection risks such as gender-based violence and negative health impacts due to smoke inhalation. It also promotes food security, nutrition, and peaceful coexistence in the camps by reducing competition for resources. To enhance fuel efficiency, UNHCR is currently carrying out a pilot to increase fuel efficiency by providing training on improved cooking habits also with the recent improvement in stove efficiency and other accessories a significant reduction in LPG consumption is envisioned.


Excavation and cleaning activities in Shoamar Jhiri SuLMER project.
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Access to Lighting, Electrical Energy and Lightning Protection
UNHCR has approximately 6900 operational solar streetlights across all camps to improve access for refugees to water and sanitation facilities and to mitigate gender-based violence risks. UNHCR is supporting a community-based maintenance strategy for the solar streetlights, promoting continued operation and maintenance of these important assets. The outcome of this process will assure all lights installed are operational, cleaned every two weeks and to the highest degree maintained by refugees. To reduce carbon dioxide emissions from generators, UNHCR has installed solar mini grids to power health facilities, camp offices, communal facilities and refugee shelters with renewable energy greatly enhancing our climate action activities. To protect refugees from the risk of lightning strikes, UNHCR has installed lightning protection systems across the camps and in newly constructed facilities where required.

Environment and Ecosystem Rehabilitation
UNHCR and partners engage refugees and local Bangladeshis to rehabilitate the environment, clean up and prevent pollution of waterways, increase resilience to climate shocks by reducing disaster risks from landslides, floods, droughts, and fires with an emphasis on nature-based solutions. These includes plantation for slope stabilization and water quality management and the establishment of water reservoirs for various uses. Climate Action activities through revegetation with mixed species has been on-going for 4 years utilizing quality materials grown in a nursery at C4X including trees, bamboos, and grasses to enhance erosion control. To ensure the sustainability of interventions, rapid environmental impact assessments are undertaken, and communities, especially youth, are engaged with environmental education training and sensitization on the importance of environmental conservation these youth groups will be expanded in 2023 in both the camps and host community.

Sustainable Land Management and Environmental Rehabilitation Project (SuLMER)
Recognizing that both refugee and host communities live in a shared environment and can be affected by upstream conditions, UNHCR and partners are working to holistically rehabilitate watersheds, which are areas or basins of land where all the streams and rainfall drain to a common outlet. This multi-sectoral approach promotes climate resilience as well as peaceful coexistence and involves stream excavation, bank protection, slope stabilization, revegetation, plant-based wastewater treatment, drainage improvement and construction of silt traps, water reservoirs and firebreaks. Community consultations have begun with refugees on relocation to safe alternative shelters outside the watershed. Currently stream excavation is underway involving both communities.

Wildlife Conservation and Human-Elephant Conflict Management
Since the establishment of the camps after the 2017 influx, the risk of human-elephant conflicts remains a protection concern for both the refugee and the host communities who live in the migration corridor of one of the last remaining herds of wild Asian elephants. To mitigate human-elephant conflicts in the camps and surrounding areas, elephant response team volunteers are trained and equipped with torches and loudspeakers to deter elephants to the nearby forests; they use 99 elephant watch towers to guard the camps. Thorny plants and beehives are being established along the camp boundaries to act as natural deterrents to elephants as part on a Nature based solution (Nbs) approach. Volunteers are also involved in wildlife rescue including snakes that are transported to the local wildlife centre operated by the Bangladesh Forest Department.

SAFE Plus 2: UN-Joint Programme
In close coordination with the Government, UNHCR leads the second phase of the Safe Access to Fuel and Energy Plus (SAFE+2) Joint Programme with FAO, WFP, and IOM. The programme seeks to enable safe access to sufficient and cleaner cooking energy for all refugee households; to rehabilitate and protect degraded environment and ecosystems in the camps and surrounding areas; and to increase resilience among refugee and host community households.

Bhasan Char
With the Government, UNHCR and partners are working to mainstream Climate Action initiatives to mitigate, adapt and increase resilience to climate shocks on Bhasan Char. Environmental protection is being mainstreamed in coordination with livelihoods and WASH sectors. Wildlife conservation interventions are informed by a completed biodiversity assessment and in consultation with the Bangladesh Forest Department. Energy access and safety is being enhanced by retrofitting existing electrical and solar systems to offer services to refugees including registration and health facilities. UNHCR's partners are monitoring existing street lighting and lightning protection systems and will establish community-based structures for ongoing care and maintenance. In collaboration with operational partners that are currently distributing LPG, UNHCR will support cooking energy efficiency through needs assessment, training and pilot use of existing biogas installations and introduction of fuel efficient technologies. UNHCR-BDRCS are maintaining the batteries for the solar systems in the Multi-Purpose Cyclone Shelters and refugee houses that power lighting and solar water pumping in the clusters.

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ROHINGYA REFUGEE RESPONSE IN BANGLADESH

Energy & Environment Factsheet - as of 30 September 2022

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

KEY FIGURES COX'S BAZAR CAMPS

160
Metres of beehive fences installed as natural deterrents to elephants

51
Hectares of mixed vegetation maintained by refugees and host community

1,098
Volunteers supported to implement environmental protection activities

824
Rohingya and Bangladeshis engaged as Elephant Response Volunteers

6,900
Solar street lights operational

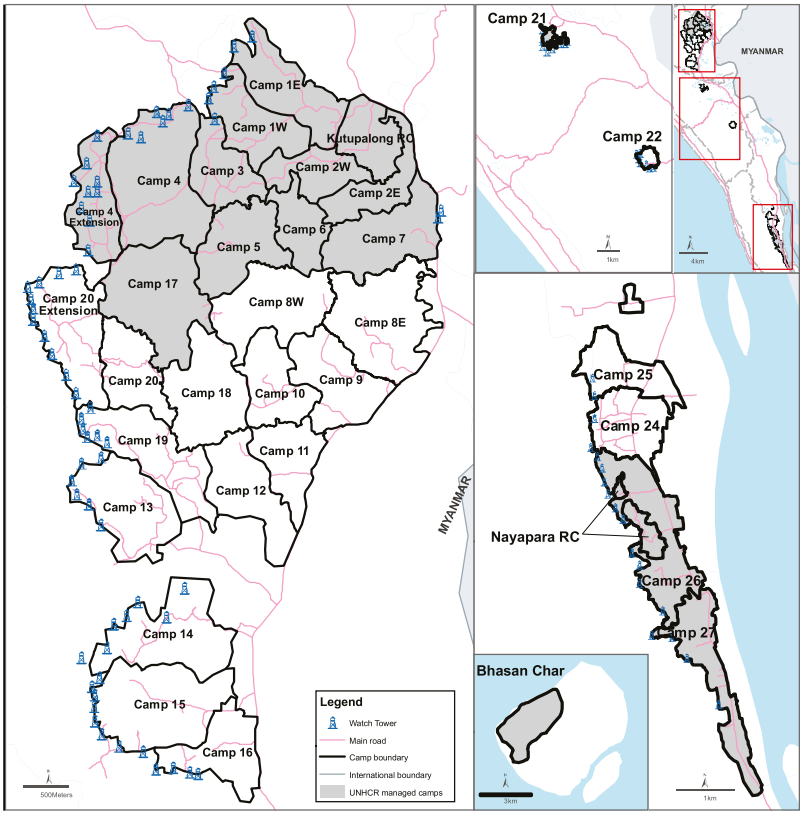
90,034
Refugee households received gas cylinder refill (Liquefied Petroleum Gas)

60,178
Bamboo plantlets planted

99
Elephant watch towers maintained

127,313
Seedlings raised in the nursery to plantation age and height

UNHCR MANAGED CAMPS



KEY FIGURES BHASAN CHAR

1
Registration centre electrification completed

5
Assessments completed including lightning protection system, biodiversity and solar street light (site-wide)

4
Electrification of health facilities (20 bed hospital, 2 primary health centres and medical warehouse) in progress

200
Refugees engaged on World Nature Conservation Day

90
Government, partners staff and refugee volunteers trained about snake awareness

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