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UNHCR has been supporting primary and junior secondary education for refugee children born in both Kutupalong and Nayapara settlements since the early 1990s. A Government directive limits education to informal learning for any new arrivals who arrived in Bangladesh during and after the 2017 influx.

Educational programs for newly arrived refugee children and youth are conducted in English, Burmese and Rohingya. There are an estimated 540,000 children and youth aged 3-24 years old in need of education, however, current learning centres (LCs) can only accommodate 203,316 students, leaving 47% of children aged 3-14 years without access to primary education. More than 97% of 15-24 years are not able to attend educational facilities.

UNHCR and its partner BRAC completed the construction of the first two-storey LC in Kutupalong refugee settlement in October 2018. The multi-storey building is an innovation to improve refugee's access to education in the settlements where land is limited. Each two-storey LC can accommodate up to 240 students in two classrooms in three shifts per day, or double the number of students currently attending most LCs per day. The first teachers' training centre was also inaugurated in early October as part of a broader strategy to strengthen teachers' capacity and improve the overall quality of education services. The centre also functions as an innovative platform where teachers can hear about and share best practices.

Progress to date

As of December 2018, **45,118 children (37.6%) out of 120,000 children and youth targeted by UNHCR's programs** were provided access to learning. In order to increase the coverage of refugee education, UNHCR and its partners **CODEC** and **BRAC** have put in place the following:

381 learning spaces
including **24**
adolescent clubs set
up

880 teachers (incl. **370**
from host communities)
recruited, trained and
deployed

1085 School Management
Committee Members
mobilised and engaged to
enhance community
involvement

45 Early Childhood
Development (ECD) centres set
up and **120** facilitators recruited
for mobile ECD in **480** locations

UNHCR and partners have expanded educational activities by setting up primary and secondary education learning centres, early childhood development centres, and adolescents' clubs. UNHCR also recruited, trained and deployed teachers and learning facilitators for these new facilities. The program provided existing and newly recruited teachers basic and subject-based teaching skills training that is complemented with continuous hands-on training and mentoring. UNHCR also piloted separate learning sessions for adolescent boys and girls and engaged both groups through Adolescent Groups for Literacy Boost (AdGLiB) programs, ensuring they have opportunities to learn.





540,000 children and youth aged 3-24 (60% of the entire refugee population) need education opportunities

More than 1.5 year of formal educational opportunities have been lost for many

UNHCR is working to improve refugee education by:

- 1** Ensuring access to equitable learning opportunities in a safe environment for refugees and host community children and youth
- 2** Improving the quality of teaching and learning
- 3** Strengthening engagement with refugees and host communities to increase girls attendance in learning centres

Challenges moving forward

-  **Physical Capacity** of current services needs to be enhanced to allow more learners to enjoy education opportunities, including an increase of teachers and support to their capacity development.
-  **Need** to establish more learning facilities across different settlements.
-  **Lack of formal educational activities** which needs to be monitored and advocacy built around observations to build the case for an enhanced education program able to sustain learners.
-  Increase in **negative coping mechanisms** as a result of idleness amongst school-age refugee children, which increases protection risks.

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). 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 with a range of international and national actors. It has a strong network of 28 partners, including:

Action Aid Bangladesh | **ACF** (Action Contre la Faim) | **ADRA** (Adventist Development and Relief Agency) | **BNWLA** (Bangladesh National Woman Lawyer's Association) | **Bangladesh Red Crescent Society** | **BRAC** (Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee) | **Caritas Bangladesh** | **Center for Natural Resource Studies** | **CODEC** (Community Development Centre) | **COAST** (Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust) | **Danish Refugee Council** | **FH Association** (Food for the Hungry) | **GK** (Gonoshasthaya Kendra) | **IRC** (International Rescue Committee) | **IUCN** (International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources) | **Handicap International** | **Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation** | **Light House** | **Oxfam GB** | **Relief International** | **Mukti Cox's Bazar** | **NGO Forum for Public Health** | **RTMI** (Research, Training and Management International) | **Save the Children International** | **Sesame Workshop** | **Solidarites International** | **Terre des hommes** Foundation | **TAI** (Technical Assistance Incorporated)

UNHCR would also like to acknowledge the crucial role played by the refugees in the response; with over 3,000 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 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.

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