



The arrival of refugees to Cox's Bazar from Myanmar put a large strain on the local environment. During the initial phase of the emergency, hundreds of thousands of refugees struggled to build emergency shelters with the materials they could find, and used firewood from forest areas for cooking. This led to being cleared and trees being cut extensively. UNHCR has worked with the authorities and other humanitarian agencies in Cox's Bazar over last 2 years on solutions to mitigate the impact on the environment and protect and restore it with the help of refugees.

ENERGY & ENV. OBJECTIVES

100,423 refugee households reached with Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and cooking kits, these provide a cheaper, safer, and a more efficient and cleaner source of energy

UNHCR is working to create a better environment by:

- 1 **Reducing the environmental impact** of hosting refugees through environmental protection efforts, restoration work & raising awareness raising among refugees
- 2 **Increasing the use of safe and alternative energy sources** in both refugee and host communities
- 3 **Improving protection, safety and wellbeing** in refugee settlements through solar street lights and other environment-friendly energy initiatives

PROGRESS

The LPG distribution programme of UNHCR is on-going and proving to be critical for the protection of the local environment. 99% of the refugees have started some cooking with LPG since April 2019. A biomass survey is being realized together with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and it will allow to quantify the positive impact of the LPG programme on deforestation and the preservation of ecosystem. The distributions of LPG to host community families was initiated after a vulnerability survey of 23,000 families locally. A pilot project on pressure cookers is being rolled out and expected to generate a 30% fuel efficiency for LPG users. A scale-up will be decided based on the results of the pilot project. UNHCR has shared a Solar+ programme consisting of the implementation of minigrids in the refugee camps. A minigrid that will power, amongst others, a clinic and market stalls is about to start.

Planting, using 27 species of tree saplings, grass, legumes and shrubs was completed in 62 ha of degraded land within 16 camps. This aims to control soil erosion, riparian protection, improve soil health and promotion of shade availability and nutrition. Refugees are engaged to protect the saplings following an agro-forestry model. 160 refugee households were engaged and supported with training on environment-friendly agricultural techniques that ensure minimum disturbance to soil, less water use by the crops, and bio-pesticide control methods.

Watershed management, enhancing reservoir capacity, bank protection with plants, biological waste water treatment are all being piloted in one important stretch of Madurchhara watershed aiming to be replicated and scaled up the area. Watershed management will secure livelihoods undertaken by host communities living downstream and improve habitat conditions for the refugees as well as contribute to improving the habitat for the biodiversity that live there.

596 Elephnat Response Team volunteers from host and refugee communities are engaged in monitoring the elephant movements around the camp using 96 watch towers, and managing the potential context of human elephant contact. The capacity of the environment programme was boosted by providing 176,111 individuals with environmental education approximate.

A comprehensive assessment to measure the impact of the LPG programme in controlling deforestation is ongoing.

CHALLENGES

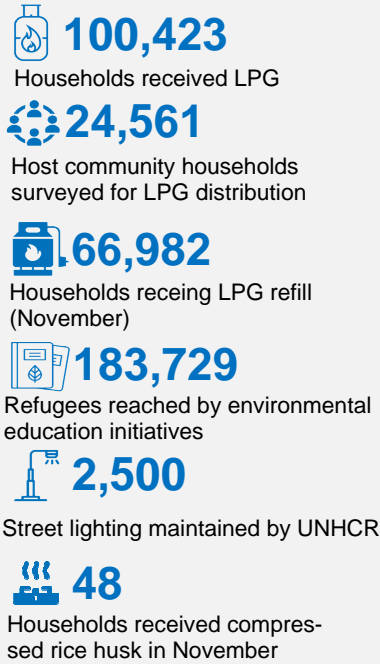
- Maintenance of solar street lights, including recycling of e-waste. As some type of batteries, such as lithium ion cannot be recycled in Bangladesh;
- Lack of space in the camps. Numerous projects are hampered due to not being able to find space (for saplings, for control rooms, etc.);
- Further conservation measures needed to address the situation of wild Asian elephants as the refugee settlements are on a vital migration corridor they once used.

WAY FORWARD

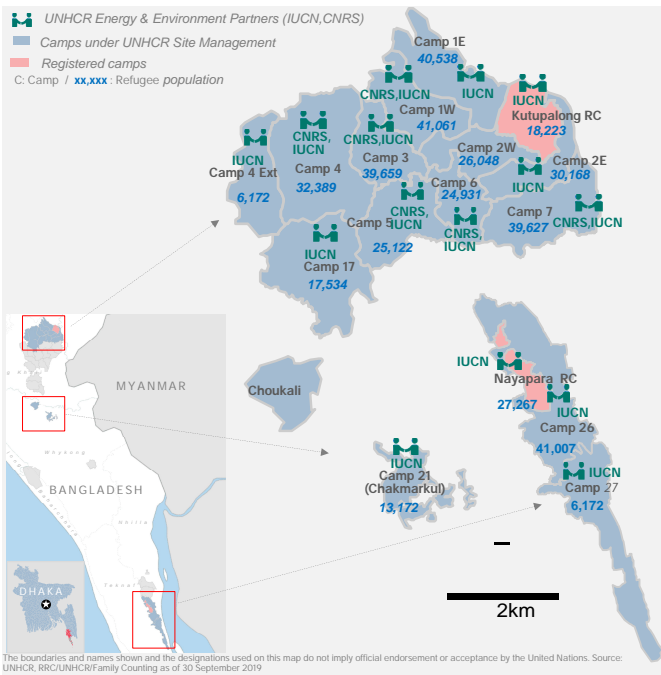
UNHCR is looking at ways to make the LPG programme more economical and sustainable. Pressure cookers may be a solution to achievements to achievements and a detailed monitoring and evaluation of an ongoing pilot will allow UNHCR to test this proposal. Solar street lights are expensive and not durable. UNHCR is aiming at gradually phasing in minigrids and phasing out solar street lights.

Stream restoration plan for two other major stream networks will be implemented soon. Development of an environment sensitive camp management protocol is in progress aiming to mainstream environment in all sectors and consider impact on environment in all aspects of activities in compliance with Bangladesh's environmental laws and regulations.

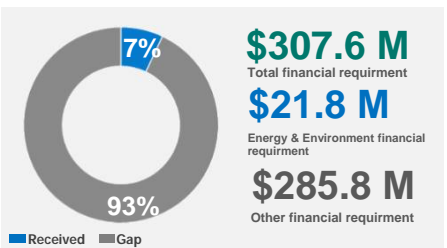
KEY FIGURES



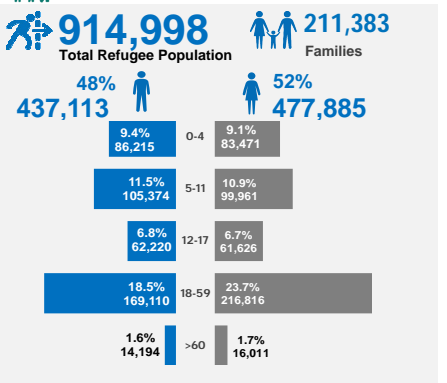
GEOGRAPHIC SITUATION & PARTNER



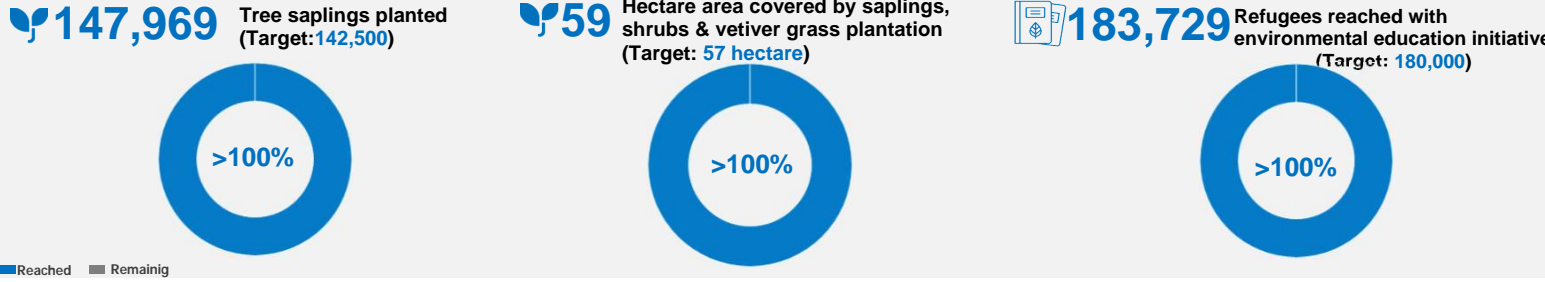
UNHCR FUNDING STATUS



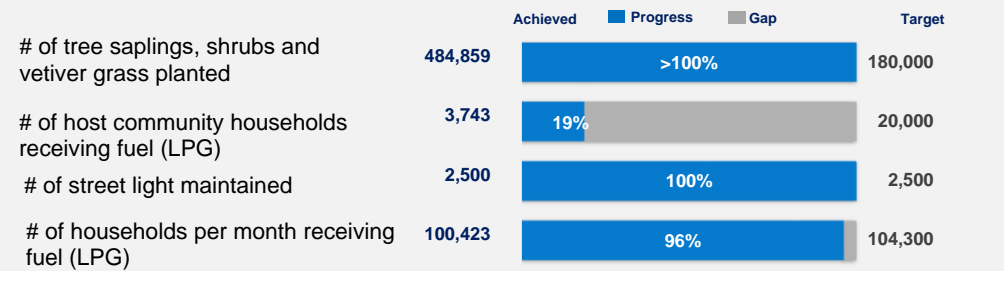
POPULATION BREAKDOWN



ACTIVITY STATUS



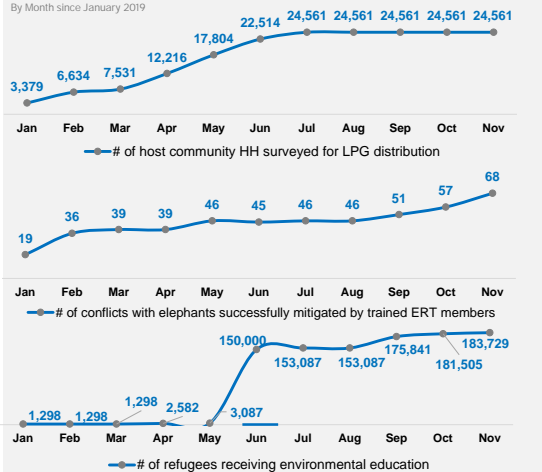
PROGRESS AGAINST 2019 TARGETS



ACHIEVEMENTS OF NOVEMBER

- 1,636 new households have received LPG cylinders while 66,982 households received refills.
- 2,224 refugees participated in environmental education opportunities in November

ACHIEVEMENT TRENDS



TREND ANALYSIS

