



Ahead of, and during, the monsoon season, UNHCR's partners distribute shelter materials to help refugees build sturdier and more waterproof shelters to better protect themselves. @UNHCR/Caroline Gluck

Objectives

- 1 Develop a master site plan for refugee settlements in collaboration with relevant sectors
- 2 Improve shelter design that meets the minimum standard for safe, dignified and appropriate living
- 3 Improve the living environment in refugee settlements for better protection of refugees and access to services and facilities

Progress (January - June 2021)

Regular shelter material support: Over 16,000 households were reached with shelter material, including bamboo and tarpaulin to ensure regular maintenance of refugee shelters. In preparation for the monsoon season, UNHCR continued to distribute tie down kits to all households, consisting of rope and wire to reinforce shelters.

Emergency shelter material support: In response to heavy rain and winds, including during Cyclone Yaas, nearly 2,000 households received material and support to fix damaged shelters. Emergency shelter assistance is provided following damages from winds, rain and flooding. Following technical assessment, refugees are provided with necessary shelter materials, including porter support and labour for extremely vulnerable families to help them rebuild their shelters.

Transitional shelter support: Using more durable materials, including steel or concrete footings, 185 transitional shelters were constructed. Following lockdown, more will be built. UNHCR also received pre-approval from the Government for new shelters in Nayapara Registered Camp, and construction of 99 shelters is complete.

Community facilities:

- The construction of a new 250-bed hospital at Sadar District Hospital started on 14 January. Building works are 25% complete and expected to be finished in April 2022.
- A new laboratory in the Intensive Care Unit at Sadar District Hospital was constructed and opened on 20 June.
- UNHCR provided technical support to health partners for the construction of a medicine warehouse in Cox's Bazar town.
- The construction of new non-food items depot in Kutupalong Registered Camp is 70% complete, and depots in Camps 1 East, 4 and 5 are 65% complete. These projects are on hold until lockdown is lifted.

Emergency site development and site improvement:

- In preparation for monsoon season, 12,057m of drainage infrastructure was constructed over 35 different areas.
- To improve access within the camps, 6,814m of roads and footpaths, 784m of pedestrian bridges, and 2,391m of stairs were constructed.
- To reduce the risk of landslides in areas where shelters are located, 6,686m of retaining walls were constructed. Slope stabilization activities also protect other buildings that provide community services from damage from landslides.

Site development: A newly completed road, connecting Camp 26 and 27, has considerably improved accessibility. The road is 1.1km long, and 4.37m wide, and crosses two major streams.

Challenges

Although it remains possible to provide emergency shelter material support as part of the monsoon response, lockdown has impacted the regular shelter maintenance programme. UNHCR and shelter partners have not been able to conduct the shelter-to-shelter assessments to ensure that refugee shelters remain in good condition.

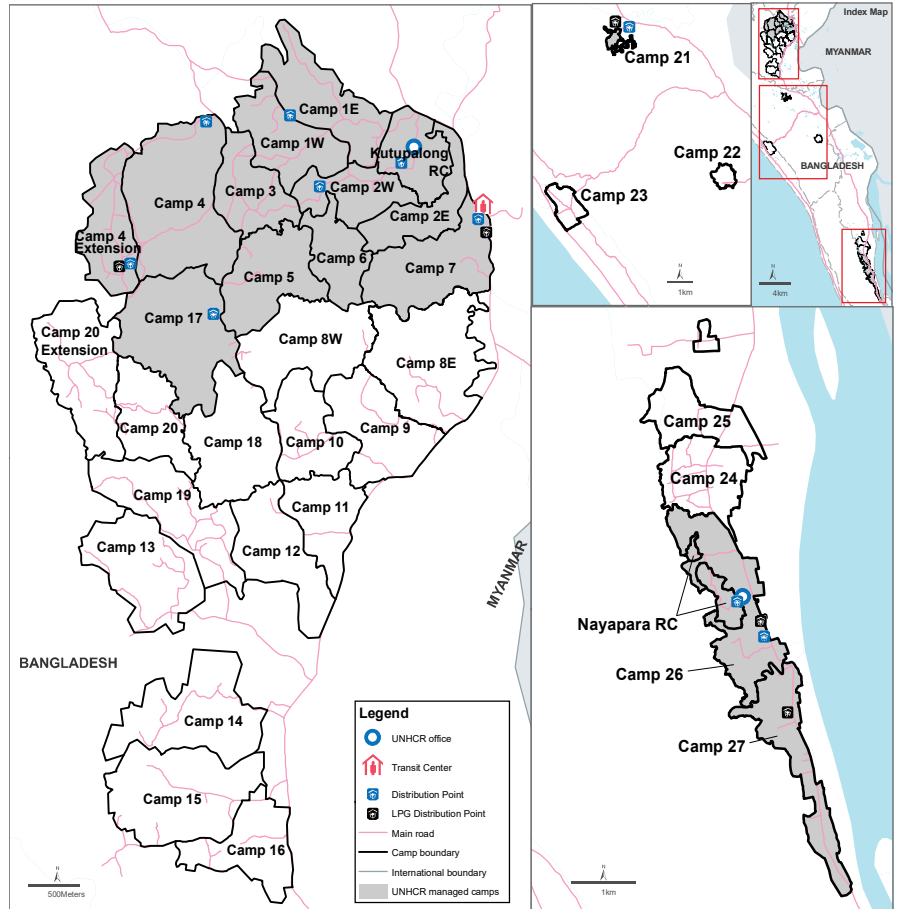
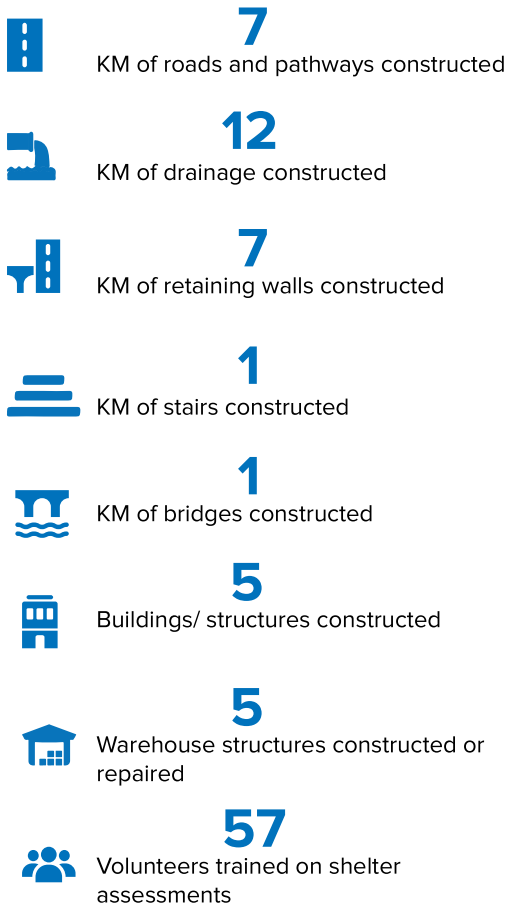
The refugee camps in Cox's Bazar have a very high population density, in some areas significantly higher than the most densely populated cities in the world. This results in insufficient coverage of WASH facilities and inadequate access to services and creates residential safety risks including vulnerability to fire and natural disasters. With a view to mitigating these issues, UNHCR and partners have introduced double-story shelters to make use of limited space and to ensure space for fire breaks, in consultation with the authorities. The Government has approved the construction of pilots of double-story shelters in some of the camps and UNHCR will continue to advocate for construction of such shelters across all camps.

Way Forward

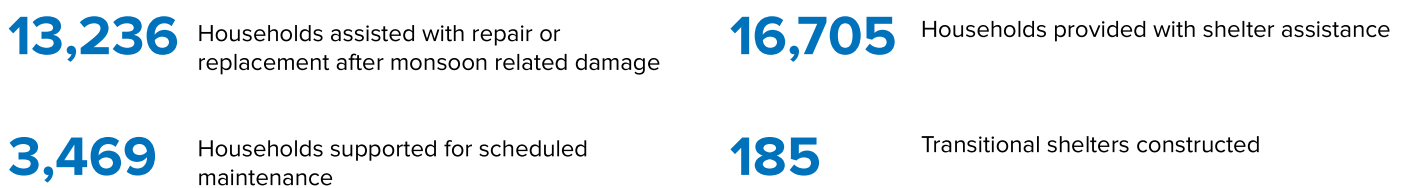
UNHCR and partners will continue to support refugees with emergency shelter material support throughout the lockdown and monsoon season in line with government directives.

As heavy infrastructure construction projects remain a significant part of UNHCR's activities such as roads, drains and community facilities, when the monsoon season ends, the opportunities to move forward to maintain and rebuild sites and infrastructure affected by the heavy rains and winds will increase

Key Figures (as of June 2021)



Achievements (January - June 2021)



Trends

