

BANGLADESH

1 – 15 September 2018

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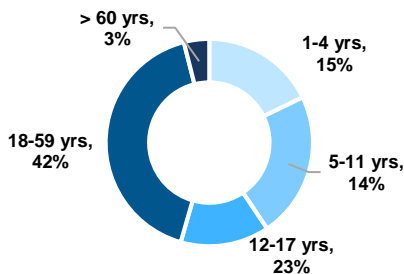
UNHCR and partners relocated **33 refugee households/144 individuals** at high risk of landslides, as well as new arrivals, and families affected by ongoing construction within the settlements, to safer areas during the reporting period. **Thirty incidents**, including 18 landslides, were recorded from 1-13 September, affecting **154 refugee families in all settlements**. Over half of the families in need of safe relocation have been assisted so far.

UNHCR, with support from the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and BRAC, planted **5,447 seedlings of five plant species, covering over 2 hectares of land in six locations** in Kutupalong settlement. The project is an effort to address **environmental damage from deforestation**. IUCN sowed 4,947 seeds of indigenous plants that will help regenerate vegetation, stabilise land, and control erosion, while BRAC planted 500 saplings.

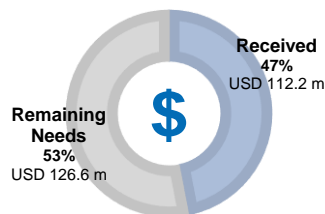
POPULATION FIGURES (as of 15 September 2018)

894,262 Total number of refugees in Bangladesh
727,164 Estimated newly arrived since 25 August 2017

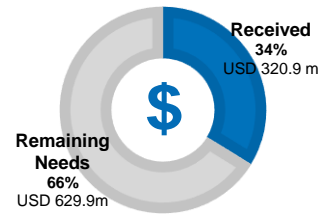
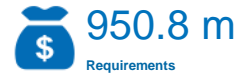
Age breakdown of refugees in Bangladesh



UNHCR FUNDING 2018



JRP FUNDING 2018



UNHCR and its partner Technical Assistance Inc. installed a library at a refugee site in Kutupalong settlement. The library is equipped with reading space and materials. The communities are excited to find books and the opportunity to engage in study, especially those unable to continue further schooling. The new library brings the total number of libraries in refugee settlements to three.
 ©UNHCR/M.N.Absar

UNHCR increases community outreach coverage across settlements



Community Outreach Members (COMs) assisting a refugee in need of medical assistance. ©UNHCR

Alongside the current corps, UNHCR recruited **75 Community Outreach Members (COMs)—Rohingya refugee volunteers—in three additional settlements in Kutupalong** in Ukhiya sub-district. The new refugee volunteers received an intensive induction course, including familiarisation on basic protection principles and the UNHCR Code of Conduct, as well as briefings on key community concerns in their settlements. Already, they identified and raised attention to issues around fuel, household and camp-level lighting, as well as inadequate water points in one area they cover.

Volunteers were selected through an interactive workshop which encouraged participants to identify existing community concerns that will be used to tailor outreach and response work to specific camp context.

Since January 2018, **260 COMs** (182 men, 78 women) in nine settlements have conducted 15,485 home visits, meeting 56,273 refugees (26,457 male and 29,816 female). They also organised **10,798 awareness raising sessions** on key lifesaving and protection issues, including protection concerns; diphtheria; fire safety; emergency preparedness; landslide risks; return discussions between UNHCR, UNDP and Myanmar; and

hygiene issues, for 227,869 refugees (115,235 or 50.6% male and 112,634 or 49.4% female). In the course of their various interactions with other refugees, the COMs identified **14,875 cases in need of support**, of which 1,158 required urgent intervention, while providing 3,112 instances of direct support to refugees, and referring 3,004 cases to UNHCR partners TAI and BRAC.

Since May 2018, UNHCR and partners BRAC, Danish Refugee Council (DRC), and TAI have **increased protection services in eight additional settlement areas**, where **protection and registration teams** work with the Government of Bangladesh's **Camp-in-Charge officers, the Army, and other partners, including Action Aid Bangladesh (AAB), IOM, Oxfam, and Save the Children**. The protection teams tackle a range of protection cases such as extortion and child labour, referrals, and community-based protection mechanisms, among others. In addition, during the reporting period, 43 staff including 30 male and 13 female from various non-protection agencies working in two of these settlements received **protection training, including on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)** to help them understand their roles and responsibilities in contributing to refugee protection.

The registration teams also ensure that they are present in these eight settlements every week to **manage complaints about family counting number (FCN) cards, which may impact refugees' access to food and non-food assistance**.

Bangladeshi college students get safe drinking water



A.K.M. Fazlul Karim Chowdhury (third from left), the Cox's Bazar Government College principal and Elisabeth Pelster (third from right), UNHCR Cox's Bazar Senior Operations Manager, are testing the water after inaugurating the water facility. ©UNHCR/C. Gluck

UNHCR is supporting local Bangladeshi communities affected by the refugee influx through improving infrastructure and basic services in communities supporting refugees, as well as livelihood activities.

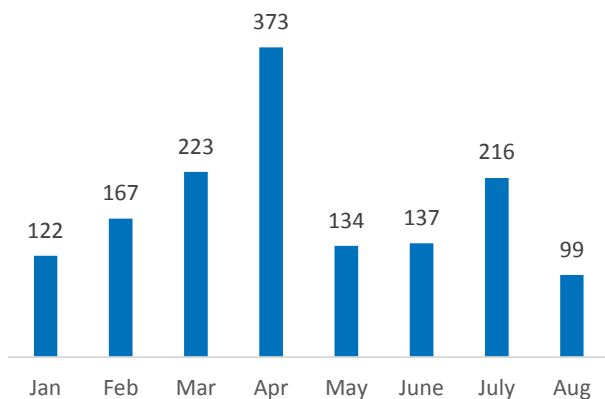
On Wednesday, 5 September, a drinking water facility at Cox's Bazar Government College was inaugurated. The facility provides safe drinking water to 12,500 students.

Since May 2018, UNHCR and partners Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), BRAC, Gonoshasthaya Kendra (GK), NGO Forum for Public Health, and TAI completed the renovation of 10 out of 25 schools in Ukhiya with an additional 15 classrooms, six computer

labs, and eight Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) blocks for boys and girls, who reportedly stopped schooling for lack of appropriate latrines, for altogether 6,000 Bangladeshi students. UNHCR has also completed eight out of 22 projects to improve local infrastructure and basic services, benefitting more than 34,000 refugees and 62,000 members of the host communities.

Other assistance to local communities also include support to the establishment of physiotherapy services, Community Technology Access (CTA) centres providing computer training, and livelihood support through the distribution of lifejackets to local fishermen. By strengthening local social infrastructure, these projects help to create more job opportunities for unskilled labours in the local economy affected by the abrupt social change which is brought about by last year's refugee influx.

Helpline provides protection solutions



Hotline calls received per month in 2018.

Since January 2018, UNHCR's Protection Hotline (+88 017 359 3300) has been playing a key role in providing information on a broad range of protection services, advice, and referrals. The hotline can be called at any time.

In the past eight months, the helpline has received 1,471 calls from refugees. Sixty-five per cent of the callers were male refugees and 35% were female. The top five issues are physical safety (255 calls), registration (252), medical needs (170), distributions of food and non-food items (140), and arrest or detention (118).

UNHCR Protection staff operate the hotline. About 90% of all calls were followed up with action to date.



UNHCR staff discuss the Protection Hotline with members of the refugee community. ©UNHCR/F. Al-Khateeb

Mapping out fecal sludge locations in refugee sites

UNHCR has embarked on a **fecal sludge management (FSM) mapping exercise to capture data on existing facilities in the refugee settlements in Cox's Bazar**. The survey will **inventory their treatment capacities, functionality status, and any operational challenges**. All WASH partners were trained on fecal sludge collection, transfer, and management technologies prior to taking part in this activity to assist in identifying and assessing facilities.

Results from four settlements already collected demonstrate **a wide range of FSM technologies are in use by different agencies**. The majority are open desludging ponds (ODPs) which expose refugees to public health risks, and carry high environmental risks. UNHCR is engaging experts to **work with partners to upgrade these ODPs to more sustainable medium-term options**. A study on **long-term sustainable FSM technologies appropriate for the refugee response in Cox's Bazar** is ongoing. **Plans are underway to pilot this in one of the settlements**. The UNHCR WASH team will work with site management actors to explore innovative way to address the challenge of land constraint to develop new sites for desludging.

Over 700 safety volunteers trained for cyclone preparedness

As part of **cyclone preparedness**, UNHCR held refresher courses for **705 Safety Unit Volunteers (SUVs) from 15 refugee sites from August to September 2018**. It provided **knowledge on cyclones, warning signs, and tools used by the Government of Bangladesh's Cyclone Preparedness Program (CPP) and an understanding of how to respond to a cyclone emergency**.

One such volunteer, Ms. N. B. from Kutupalong refugee settlement, has joined the SUVs for the last eight months. She said she learned new information on cyclones, on how to explain the difference between a storm and a cyclone, and what to do during each weather event, in a training held at Kutupalong community centre on Monday, 10 September. She also said she would inform her children and the community on how to prepare and respond to cyclone.

Refugee community safety committees are established in all 34 identified refugee settlements in Cox's Bazar. Each committee has an SUV team comprising 50 refugees who conduct **preparedness activities and act as first responders** on fire, landslides, cyclones, and other weather events which can affect the settlements where they live. **Twenty out of these 50 refugees are currently assigned to the CPP programme.** The refugee volunteers' training is on fire safety, first aid, and emergency response – conducted by humanitarian community, including UNHCR, in collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh.

The SUVs played an important role in a fire incident near Chakmarkul refugee settlement on 5 September. **The trained volunteers were the first to respond to the fire** by alerting the community and helping affected families evacuate from their shelters to safer areas. As a result, there were no injuries or fatalities from the fire, which burned fifteen shelters and affected 30 refugee families.



A female Safety Unit Volunteer from Kutupalong refugee site discussed cyclone warning signs on 10 September. ©UNHCR/I. Susanti

Progress of refugee registration and verification

The joint Government of Bangladesh-UNHCR verification exercise is ongoing, and to date has verified **over 13,000 individuals**. An ID card with smart features is being issued to individual refugees and replaces two existing cards that refugees already possess – namely, a Ministry of Home Affairs (white) registration card and a Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (yellow) family counting card. **The new card provides a more secure identity document for refugees and is linked to a more efficient system for accessing services and assistance in Bangladesh through continuously updated and more accurate information.** It also affirms in writing on the card the Bangladesh Government's commitment against forced return.

The verification serves to eliminate duplications in the existing database through the use of biometrics and will enable the humanitarian community to plan for needs more precisely as well as tailor the humanitarian response more effectively.

Information dissemination to the refugee community on the card's importance and purpose continues, with various mechanisms being used to spread messages including videos and radio broadcasts. A [short video](#) on the verification has been released to inform refugees about the card.

Refugees continue to arrive from Myanmar

A year after violence erupted in Rakhine State in western Myanmar, refugees continue to arrive to Bangladesh, albeit at a decreasing rate. **Eighty refugees arrived in Bangladesh during the reporting period.**

New arrivals continue to raise concerns about their lack of rights and their security in Rakhine State. They also cite their disagreement with Myanmar over a requirement for them to undergo a nationality verification process, as they consider themselves citizens already.

Since 1 January 2018:

13,764

have sought safety in Cox's Bazar

1-15 September 2018:

80

individuals entered Bangladesh

Most arrived by boat

via the southern peninsula of Cox's Bazar, including Sabrang and surrounding areas.



A trainer from NF Enterprise, a local Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) distributor, demonstrates how to use the gas on a cooking stove. UNHCR, with support from Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, completed the LPG distribution for Rohingya refugees on 3 September. More than 6,000 refugee households received LPG, single burner stoves and associated accessories from commercial LPG supplier Total and its local distribution partner, NF Enterprise. The pilot LPG distribution is a joint initiative with other UN agencies, IOM and FAO, to stop deforestation. A scaled-up LPG distribution is planned for October 2018. ©UNHCR/M. Edon



Quick facts and figures on UNHCR distributions and services

Education

36,834

children with access to Early Childhood Development, primary and lower secondary education.

Non-Food Items

91,804

households with Core Relief Items that include blankets, sleeping mats, and solar lights since 2017.

WASH

60,176

households with WASH hygiene kits that include jerry cans, soaps, and buckets in 2018.

Shelter

56,368

households with padlocks to ensure their shelters are secured and better protected.

Shelter

90,817

Shelter Upgrade Kits (bamboos, tarps, ropes and tools) distributed since 2017.

Shelter

81,044

Tie-Down Kits (iron pegs, wire and ropes) distributed since 2017.

Child Protection

26,856

children, including 13,903 boys and 12,953 girls, with psychosocial support.

Border Monitoring

Daily

missions to monitor new arrivals at various borders since January 2018.

Transit Centre

738

Persons with Specific Needs/ Extremely Vulnerable Individuals identified and referred to service providers since January 2018.

Protection

3,700

Legal consultations provided to refugees since January 2018.

Health

294,482

primary level medical consultations provided in 2018.

Host Community Support

24,500

Family kits (tarp, wire, rope, bucket and 2 sleeping mats) delivered to the host community of which 4,300 were distributed to destitute Bangladeshi households.

Working in partnership

UNHCR co-chairs a Strategic Executive Group (SEG) in Bangladesh 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 a range of international and national actors. It has a strong network of 23 partners, including:

ACF (Action Contre la Faim) | **ADRA** (Adventist Development and Relief Agency) | **BDRCS** (Bangladesh Red Crescent Society) | **BNWLA** (Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association) | **BRAC** (Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee) | **CARITAS BANGLADESH** | **CODEC** (Community Development Centre) | **DRC** (Danish Refugee Council) | **FH** (Food For the Hungry) | **GK** (Gonoshasthaya Kendra) | **HELVETAS** Swiss Intercooperation | **HI** (Handicap International) | **IUCN** (International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources) | **NGOF** (NGO Forum) | **OXFAM** | **PUI** (Première Urgence Internationale) | **REACH** | **RI** (Relief International) | **RTMI** (Research Training and Management International) | **SCI** (Save the Children) | **SI** (Solidarités International) | **TAI** (Technical Assistance Incorporated) | **TDH** (Terre Des Hommes Foundation)

UNHCR would also like to acknowledge the crucial role played by the refugees in the response; with over 1,000 **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.

Donor Support

The response of the Government and people of Bangladesh is extraordinarily generous. More support is required from the international community to assist the ongoing humanitarian response in Bangladesh for refugees and host communities. Continued political efforts to work for a solution to the situation remain vital. UNHCR is appealing for USD 238.8m (part of its Supplementary Appeal for 2018) in order to respond to the needs of hundreds of thousands of refugees.




Donor country contributions to UNHCR Bangladesh (2017/2018) and unrestricted funding to global operations:



With thanks to the many private donations from individuals, foundations, companies including Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, IKEA Foundation, International Islamic Relief Organization Kuwait Finance House, OPEC Fund for International Development, Prosolidar-Onlus Foundation, Qatar Charity, Rahmatan Lil Alamin Foundation, The Big Heart Foundation, The Church of Latter-Day Saints, and UPS Corporate. Special thanks also to CERF.

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LINKS: [UNHCR data portal](#) - [UNHCR operation page](#) – [Facebook](#) – [Twitter](#) – [Latest stories](#) – [Instagram](#)

UNHCR financial needs for 2018	
	Protection 26.7 m
	Basic relief items 5.6 m
	Water, sanitation & hygiene 40.8 m
	Shelter/infrastructure 25.0 m
	Energy and environment 13.4 m
	Education 10.0 m
	Community mobilization 18.1 m
	Health and nutrition 34.5 m
	Logistics 11.0 m
	Camp management 35.3 m
	Support costs 18.4 m
TOTAL	238.8 m