

# BANGLADESH

16 – 30 September 2018

**IN THIS UPDATE:**

- *Rohingya women taking a more active role in the settlements, including as youth volunteers*
- *Distribution of family kits for selected Bangladeshi communities*
- *Midwife training to ensure safer reproductive health*
- *Hygiene promoters trained on improving hygiene practices*
- *Registration and verification progress*
- *Arrival trends*
- *Quick facts and figures*

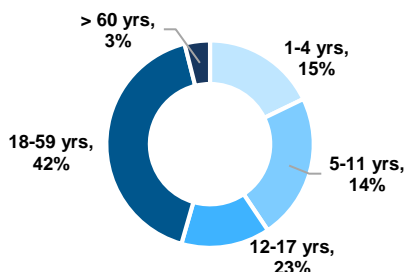
UNHCR will **scale up the distribution of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and cooking sets in October** to reach around 60,000 refugee and Bangladeshi families in Cox's Bazar. The clean energy project, which is **the largest fuel intervention in UNHCR's humanitarian operations to date**, was piloted in August 2018 as a **joint effort with IOM, FAO, WFP, and the ICRC to stop deforestation**. It will include training and construction of storage and distribution facilities in various locations.

UNHCR and partners relocated **146 households (645 individuals)** at high risk of landslides, as well as new arrivals and families affected by ongoing construction within the settlements during the reporting period. This includes relocation to Camp 4 Extension in Kutupalong, bringing the total number of refugee families relocated to this site to 1,147. **Sixteen incidents of landslides, windstorms, lightning and floods** were recorded from 16 to 30 September, affecting **86 families across all settlements**.

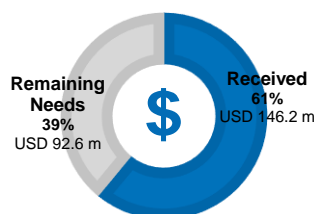
**POPULATION FIGURES** (as of 30 September 2018)

**895,631** Total number of refugees in Cox's Bazar  
**728,306** Estimated newly arrived since 25 August 2017

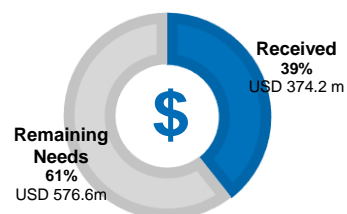
**Age breakdown of refugees in Cox's Bazar**



**UNHCR FUNDING 2018**



**JRP FUNDING 2018**



UNHCR's partner BRAC organised a Clowns without Borders performance for around 3,000 refugee children and adults in two settlements. In addition to bringing smiles to children's faces, the clowns also helped create awareness on trafficking, separation of children, abuse, and the power of togetherness using humour, questions and answers, and other communication methods. ©UNHCR/BRAC

## Rohingya women taking a more active role in refugee settlements

UNHCR is integrating **women and adolescent girls empowerment** in all its activities. With the support of UNHCR and partners, female refugees of all ages are **taking initiative** and **becoming involved** in a range of activities, both in women-only and mixed groups, including in **camp governance** and **volunteering for community services**.

In Camp 4 Extension refugee settlement in Kutupalong, two female refugees were recently elected as members of a block committee representing about 300 families. The new four-member committee has started working in the community. The block-level election aims to **increase participation in, ownership and accountability of the refugee governance system**, with block leaders eventually electing the camp leaders. Other block elections are to follow.

The election of women in Camp 4 Extension follows a successful camp-level election in Shalbagan refugee settlement (in Nayapara) in June, which also saw Rohingya women elected as community representatives and camp and deputy leaders. Female refugees have remarked that having **female refugee leadership has helped facilitate the reporting of important and often sensitive issues that affect women and girls**, such as Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV).

Participation by Rohingya women in community activities is slowly growing since the start of the emergency last year. They are increasingly active as volunteers in different volunteer groups across settlements. Some 78 volunteers, or 30 per cent, of the 260 Community Outreach refugee volunteers—



*One of the photos submitted for a recent competition among female refugee volunteers that sought to depict the life of women and girls. This photo was shortlisted for its ease of composition and naturalness, capturing of colours, vibrancy, and camaraderie among women as they congregate together to chat and discuss their day. ©UNHCR/U. Kulsum*

known as Community Outreach Members (COMs)— are women. They **work hand-in-hand with their male counterparts in the community to gather information on needs, raise awareness on key issues affecting refugees, and organise referrals to the appropriate service providers.** As part of their work, they receive protection training as well as skills development trainings.

Since January 2018, **260 COMs** (182 men, 78 women) who are active in nine settlements have conducted **17,071 home visits** and **met with 61,370 refugees** (28,850 male and 32,520 female). In addition, they conducted **11,732 awareness raising sessions** on protection concerns, diphtheria, fire safety, emergency preparedness, landslide risks, cholera, voluntary return questions, and hygiene issues, **reaching 250,415 refugees** (126,032 male and 124,383 female). Of **16,583 cases identified for support**, **1,217 were referred for urgent intervention**, **4,054 cases were provided with direct support**, and **3,278 others received assistance** through UNHCR's community protection partnerships with Technical Assistance Inc. (TAI) and BRAC.

Recently, UNHCR held trainings on **using technology for data collection such as Kobo toolbox, a tablet-based data collection tool**, to facilitate COMs' field activities. Participation by women in these trainings has increased their confidence in serving their community, provided them with opportunities to utilise their capacities and dedication toward the community, and has helped raise awareness on gender equality.

**A photography workshop was held in early September for about 60 female volunteers.** They learned how to frame their shots and experimented with styles. The workshop was followed by a photo contest on the 'Life of Women and Girls' in the settlements, encouraging the use of their talent for photography among a number of the volunteers.

### *Refugee women and girls make a difference in their communities*



*Girls from the Youth group plant a seedling with male peers in Shalbagan settlement, as part of community-identified environmental projects.*  
 ©UNHCR

Refugee women and girls are also signing up to **Women's and Youth groups**, which are part of community groups established across eight settlements in Ukhiya and Teknaf sub-districts. The largely **self-initiated groups identify community service needs or projects that require follow up or assistance.** UNHCR provides training and guidance to support community consultation along with TAI and BRAC.

**Women's groups** consist of female refugees aged above 15 years old. Over the past two months, these groups initiated **awareness raising sessions on sensitive and complex issues such as domestic violence and child marriage.** The goal is to identify, understand, and prioritise challenges for further discussion or action. **Role modelling** has been actively used as a means of **exploring issues and new ideas, and sharing knowledge in an engaging way.** It has helped **communicate an awareness of issues** ranging from individuals to community level. Each month, female volunteers hold reflection sessions with UNHCR and its partners to review activities and discuss new ideas.

The **youth groups** include adolescent boys and girls from 15 to 25 years old. All girls and boys work together to **lead and implement community projects and services**, with a focus on **assisting persons with specific needs.** The groups have promoted the **recognition of the need for all members of society to play a role in the future of the community.**

The groups hold meetings in public spaces to demonstrate the **positive impact of their voluntary activities** to their communities.

## Family kit distribution to Bangladeshi host communities

UNHCR is working with the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief and the authorities at *upazila* (sub-district) and *union parishad* (rural union) levels to **assist Bangladeshi families in Cox's Bazar district with family kits**. The assistance is targeted to **vulnerable families in areas that have experienced challenges due to monsoon rains**.

The distributions allow UNHCR to engage with host communities and demonstrate the international community's dedication to ensuring that host communities' protection of and assistance to refugees are recognised and supported.

During the reporting period, UNHCR with its partner, Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS), distributed a total of **19,166** family kits to local communities in **eight upazilas** and **75 unions**.

A family kit consists of two sleeping mats, one plastic tarpaulin, one bucket, a rope, and wire. The first distributions started in July 2018. As of 30 September, UNHCR and BDRCS had completed about 80 per cent of the planned total distribution of 30,000 family kits to host communities.

## Midwife training to ensure safer reproductive health

UNHCR and its partner, Research Training Management International (RTMI), held a Reproductive Health Services capacity building training from 22 to 24 September 2018 in Cox's Bazar to improve services at the community level. **Thirteen midwives and medical assistants** from six UNHCR-supported healthcare facilities in Kutupalong refugee settlement attended the interactive training.

The **high proportion of home births** and **wide knowledge gaps in reproductive health and neo-natal care services** have raised concerns. The training seeks to **enhance the quality of service and access to care for mothers and mothers to be**.



*Bangladeshi women from Choto Moheshkhali union in Moheshkhali sub-district await transportation after collecting a family kit from UNHCR. About 350 families from the union received the kit on 20 September 2018. ©UNHCR/I. Susanti*



Sampurna, a midwife from RTMI, said, "I want to learn **new knowledge** especially those related to **prevention of maternal and neonatal deaths**. I want to **ensure safe motherhood** and **prevent maternal and neonatal deaths** in the refugee communities where I work."

*Ms T.B. and her four-month-old daughter are waiting to see a nutrition counsellor at the UNHCR Counselling Centre in the Transit Centre, Kutupalong. According to the 2018 Joint Response Plan, only 22% of an estimated 60,000 pregnant women arriving in August 2017 are reported to use health facilities for giving birth. ©UNHCR/D. Azia*

## Hygiene promoters trained on changing hygiene behaviour

UNHCR trained **75 hygiene promoters** from BRAC (15-17 September) and NGO Forum (23-25 September) as part of an effort to build **a framework to improve and sustain hygiene promotion activities, in particular to prevent Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD) in refugee settlements**. Refugees' hygiene is a concern with low utilisation of Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) facilities offered in settlements, heightening the risk of AWD. Through its partners, UNHCR has increased latrine coverage in the settlements, thereby reducing the average per-person use of each latrine to fewer than 30 individual refugees, which is less than the SPHERE standards of one latrine for a maximum of 50 people. A recent [WASH infrastructure map](#) by REACH initiative shows that there are 32,277 functional and safe latrines in all 34 settlements identified by the Government of Bangladesh. In collaboration with the WASH Sector actors and Oxfam, UNHCR seeks to promote better hygiene practices through **community participation in awareness raising on positive hygiene practices**.

A **sustainable hygiene promotion activities plan**, meeting minimum hygiene promotion standards, was the outcome of the training. UNHCR has also ensured **continuous training on hygiene and AWD** for its **refugee community volunteers**, who actively conduct awareness raising sessions on water-borne diseases.

## Progress of refugee registration and verification

The joint Government of Bangladesh-UNHCR exercise to issue new identity cards to refugees in Bangladesh has reached **over 14,000 individuals to date**.

The smart ID card is being issued to individual refugees and replaces two existing older cards that refugees already possess: a Ministry of Home Affairs (white) registration card, and a Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (yellow) family counting card.

**The new card provides a secure identity document for refugees. It aims to establish a more efficient system for Rohingya refugees to access services and assistance through the better use of technology available to manage assistance, and a more efficient system for updating information, such as new family additions.** It also affirms in writing on the card the Bangladesh Government's commitment against forcible return.

The issuance of the new card involves a process of reviewing existing registration data on refugees. It helps **eliminate duplications in existing data** through the use of biometrics. The new card, with a more accurate data set on refugees, enables the Government of Bangladesh and humanitarian actors **to plan for refugee needs more precisely and to tailor protection services more effectively.**



*In an effort to extend the coverage of key essential health and nutrition services to hard-to-reach refugee populations, UNHCR works with the Office of the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner's Refugee Health Unit and Gonoshasthaya Kendra to provide essential health and nutrition services during the verification exercise. These include vaccination for eligible children under 5 years old, blanket nutrition screening of children between 6 months and 5 years, screening of pregnant and lactating women, and making necessary referrals to nutrition assistance programs. A total of 147 doses of vaccine are provided to prevent vaccine-preventable diseases through this program, which started on 21 July 2018. ©UNHCR/R. Mondol*

Information dissemination to the Rohingya community on the card's importance and its purpose continues to be conducted through consultations, videos, and radio broadcasts. A [short video](#) on the verification was disseminated to inform refugees about the card.

## Refugees continue to arrive from Myanmar

**More than a year after violence erupted in Rakhine State in western Myanmar, refugees continue to arrive to Bangladesh.** During the reporting period, **168 refugees** arrived in Bangladesh, adding to a total of **228 new arrivals** in September as compared to **203 in August.**

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



Since 1 January 2018:  
**13,946**  
 refugees have arrived in Cox's Bazar

16-30 September 2018:  
**168**  
 individuals estimated to have entered  
 Bangladesh

**Most arrived by boat**  
 via the southern peninsula of Cox's Bazar,  
 including Sabrang and surrounding areas.

## Quick facts and figures on UNHCR protection services and assistance

### Education



**36,834**

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

### SGBV & PSEA



**99**

staff members of non-protection agencies (66 male and 33 female) trained on SGBV and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

### Child Protection



**32,692**

children, including 14,684 boys and 18,008 girls, provided with psychosocial support

### Community-Based Protection



**909**

refugees, including COMs and refugee volunteer group members, trained on Code of Conduct, roles and responsibilities, and other specific activity-based topics

### Legal Assistance



**3,700**

legal consultations provided to refugees since January 2018, including 850 legal assistance to individual cases

### Legal Assistance



**400,000**

refugees reached through 5,990 daily protection missions and 600 advocacy since January 2018

### Shelter Locks



**70,760**

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

### Human-Elephant Conflict Mitigation



**45**

Elephant Response Teams (ERT) comprising around 550 active refugee volunteers mobilised across refugee settlements by UNHCR and partner International Union for Conservation of Nature

### Transit Centre



**738**

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

### WASH



**60,203**

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

### Non-Food Items



**91,832**

households with Core Relief Items that include blankets, sleeping mats, and solar lights since their arrival to Bangladesh