

BANGLADESH

16 – 31 August 2018

IN THIS UPDATE:

- *Refugees switch to eco-friendly cooking fuel*
- *Tree planting by refugee volunteers takes root across settlements*
- *Thai Red Cross provides medical support*
- *Improvement in refugee nutritional status*
- *Continuation of refugee registration & verification*
- *Refugee arrival trends*
- *Quick facts and figures*

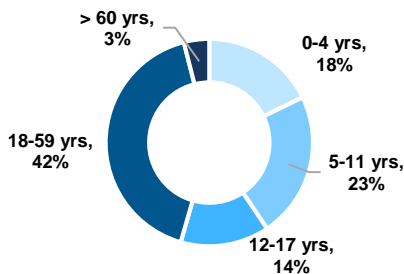
As monsoon rainfalls decreased, UNHCR continued the **relocation of refugee households** at high risk of landslides, affected by remedial construction activities, or new arrivals. A total of **13,392 refugees** were relocated from settlements managed by UNHCR to available plots on the sites, **Camp 4 Extension**, or the emergency site in Chakmarkul. Approximately 55% of these refugees lived in areas at high-risk of landslides.

UNHCR, supported by the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS), started distribution of **Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) cylinders, single burner stoves, and associated accessories** to **7,000 refugees and host families** in Chakmarkul and Nayapara on 19 August 2018. The project aims to **support environmental response and improve refugee health and protection.**

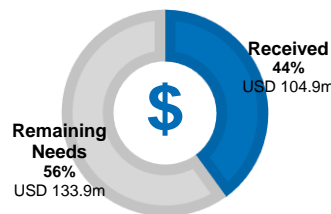
POPULATION FIGURES (as of 31 August 2018)

891,878 Total number of refugees in Bangladesh
725,412 Estimated new arrivals since 25 August 2017

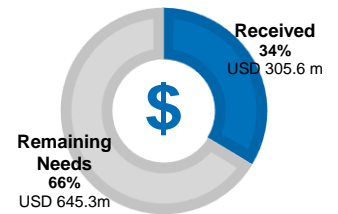
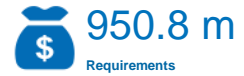
Age breakdown of refugees in Bangladesh



UNHCR FUNDING 2018



JRP FUNDING 2018



Children at Orchid Learning Centre in Kutupalong paint their favourite Sesame Street characters. About 40 refugee children took part in the painting event in the run-up to the upcoming pilot to enhance learning and protection for 4,420 children attending 40 Learning Centres and Child-Friendly Spaces. The new UNHCR-Sesame Street partnership will leverage the latter's experience in the development of audio-visual learning materials to enhance children's learning experience. ©UNHCR

Refugees switch to eco-friendly cooking fuel

In conjunction with IOM and FAO, and as part of a joint and sustained effort to stop deforestation, UNHCR, with the support of its partner Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS), is piloting **the distribution of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) cylinders, single burner stoves, and associated accessories** to an initial **7,000 refugees and host community families in Chakmarkul and Nayapara**. The distribution, which started on 19 August 2018, is being carried out by commercial LPG supplier Total and its local partner, NF Enterprise. A storage and distribution facility is to be established in Nayapara, which will support local host community employment and the economy. In Chakmarkul, suitable land is being sought to build a similar facility. Once expanded to its full capacity, **UNHCR's provision of LPG will cover about 100,000 households, starting in mid-September until mid-november.**

LPG
distribution



7,000

households, including 6,200 refugees and around 800 families in host communities, will benefit from the pilot LPG project.

The first phase of LPG distribution included **trainings on the safe use of LPG, energy-efficient cooking techniques, and training on how to assemble the stove**. UNHCR's distributions were coordinated with other agencies engaged in LPG distribution activities, including IOM, FAO, Caritas, IFRC, and Tearfund, to capture best practices and avoid duplication.



Jannatul Ferdous is cooking a meal on the new gas stove. ©UNHCR/F. Al-Khateeb

Refugee families responded positively to the new energy-efficient cooking stoves, particularly with distributions taking place before the Muslim feast, Eid al Adha. **The use of LPG stoves will reduce the cost, time, and safety and protection risks associated with firewood collection, freeing up resources for other needs.**

“The gas stove and cylinder made a big positive change for us”, said Tayba, a 26-year-old Rohingya housewife. “On many

days when we're not able to collect enough firewood from the forest, we have to buy firewood from the market. Now, with the money saved, we are able to buy other food and goods we need.”

The switch to clean fuel is **a significant step toward reducing deforestation, eliminating health risks associated with cooking fumes from firewood, and minimising encroachment on the habitats of endangered wildlife**. The **reduction in consumption of resources** on which the local host community depend will also contribute to peaceful coexistence among refugees and the host community. According to a comparative study conducted by UNHCR, LPG is **the cheapest, cleanest, and most sustainable fuel option**, particularly as Bangladesh has an abundant supply of gas.

Tree planting by refugee volunteers takes root across refugee settlements

Throughout August 2018, **more than 100 women, men, and youth volunteered as part of their Community Groups to help improve the natural environment of the settlements where they live.** Refugee volunteers, supported by UNHCR through local partners TAI and BRAC, collectively completed **nine tree planting service projects, with nearly 500 trees of various types planted across several refugee sites in Nayapara settlement.**

The Community Groups selected the planting locations through community consultations. The projects are **a first step by refugees to reverse environmental degradation** that resulted from the growth of rapid refugee settlements

in the forested areas of Kutupalong and Balukhali in Ukhiya sub-district following the refugee influx from Myanmar in October 2016 and August 2017.



Refugee youth volunteers plant trees in Camp 5 in Kutupalong settlement to improve the environment of their community. ©UNHCR

As part of its community-based protection and mobilisation efforts, **UNHCR supports the development of refugee volunteer Community Groups** comprised of men, women, and youth volunteers who collectively identify and complete at least one service project per month. Each group pitches ideas to UNHCR and partners, who provide financial and technical support for implementation, such as tree planting or repairs of roads, pathways, and shelters in their neighborhoods. The volunteers are not paid, but rather work out of their own interest. UNHCR and partners are currently **supporting 23 community groups, including men, women, and youth groups, in eight refugee settlements.** These groups work in parallel but take on different functions as Community Outreach Members (COMs), Safety Unit Volunteers (SUVs), and Community Health Workers (CHWs).

Thai Red Cross medical support for refugees and host communities

Thai Red Cross undertook a one-week mission in Bangladesh to help refugees and the host community in Ukhiya. The team of doctors and nurses supported UNHCR and Gonoshasthaya Kendra's, UNHCR local health partner, efforts to assist the health response at a public health centre in Kutupalong refugee settlement.

This included a training **for 22 doctors, nurses, and midwives on high risk pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and cervical cancer screening, in line with UNHCR's strategy to support capacity-building of Bangladeshi medical partners working in the field of Sexual and Reproductive Health.**



Visiting Thai medical team examines a child in Camp 4 refugee site in Kutupalong. ©UNHCR/R. Mondol

The visiting medical team also treated women and children. The short visit that ran from 24 to 29 August was welcomed by the local host community in Ukhiya, where the Thai Red Cross, in partnership with the BDRCS, provided medical services at Ukhiya high school for the local community.

UNHCR works to improve refugee nutritional status

Though the prevalence of **Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM)** in refugee settlements managed by UNHCR is below the emergency threshold of 15 per cent, the prevalence of GAM remains considerably high at **13.6 percent** in Nayapara Registered Camp and **12 percent** in other refugee sites managed by UNHCR.

UNHCR and partners continue to work to eliminate the aggravating factors. In the last two weeks, **22,866 children up to 59 months of age were screened for malnutrition within the refugee community**. Some **675,160 screenings have been completed to date**, and the exercise is on-going. Malnourished children are referred for a full assessment and treatment by .

287 children aged 6-59 months, newly identified with severe acute malnutrition (SAM), were admitted to Outpatient Therapeutic Feeding Programs during the reporting period. The cumulative figure of SAM cases identified and sent for treatment is 9,965 since August 2017. Children with SAM with medical complications are treated on an inpatient basis in the Stabilisation Centre. A further **176 children were newly admitted to Targeted Supplementary Feeding programmes** targeting children aged 6-59 months with moderate acute malnutrition (cumulative figure: 2,902). A total of **52 pregnant and lactating women were also newly enrolled for Blanket Supplementary Feeding Programs** aimed at assisting in the prevention of acute malnutrition in children. To date, **3,020 individuals** have been registered in the Program. Overall, there a steady improvement has been observed in nutrition, and further surveys on the nutritional status of the population, including



Refugee children play with a makeshift ferris wheel during Eid al Adha celebration. ©UNHCR/F. Al-Khateeb

the third round of SMART nutrition survey, are planned before the end of the year to further improve results, enhance malnutrition detection, and bolster efficient nutrition programming.

Continuation of refugee registration and verification

The joint Government of Bangladesh-UNHCR verification of refugees has reached **over 13,000 individuals** to date. An ID card with smart features is being issued to individual refugees through the process. The card replaces two existing cards— namely, a Ministry of Home Affairs registration card and a Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner family counting card. **It provides for better protection of refugee families and is linked to a more efficient system for accessing services and assistance in Bangladesh through better tracking.** It also affirms the Bangladesh Government’s commitment against forced return to Myanmar.

The verification serves to eliminate duplications in the current database through the use of biometrics, and enable the humanitarian community to capture specific needs more precisely to ensure more effective response to needs by the humanitarian community supporting Bangladesh.

A short video on the verification has been released to inform refugees about the card. Information dissemination on the verification exercise through community meetings, meetings with elders and community leaders, and through other refugee volunteer groups in the settlements is underway.

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. Around 256 refugees arrived in Bangladesh in August, as compared to 413 in July. New arrivals continue to raise their concerns about 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 of Myanmar.

Since 1 January 2018:

13,233

refugees have arrived in Cox’s Bazar

1-31 August 2018:

256 (estimate)

refugees entered Bangladesh

Most refugees arrived by boat

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



Quick facts and figures on UNHCR distributions and services

Education



33,484

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

Non-Food Items



91,702

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

WASH



59,891

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

Shelter



196,162

refugees with 47,089 padlocks to ensure their shelters are secured and better protected.

Shelter



90,524

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

Shelter



80,737

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

Child Protection



1,888

children at risk, including 909 boys and 979 girls, benefitted from referral services and home visits.

Child Protection



24,397

children, including 13,072 boys and 11,325 girls, with psychosocial support.

Community-Based Protection



194,510

refugees targeted with awareness raising on diphtheria, fire safety, emergency preparedness, landslide, cholera, MoU on Return and Verification Exercise, undertaken by refugee volunteers since January 2018

Health



266,635

medical consultations at primary level provided in 2018.

Health



2,474

medical referrals made in 2018.

Working in partnership

UNHCR co-chairs the 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 Protection Working Group in Cox's Bazar. UNHCR welcomes its valuable partnerships with other agencies (WFP, UN-HABITAT, UNDP) and coordinates the delivery of its assistance with UN agencies and other 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). In close cooperation with IOM and UNDP, UNHCR is also providing tangible support to coordination efforts of local government entities in Cox's Bazar, Ukhiya and Teknaf. 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 (including 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:



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

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.

CONTACTS: **Ivy Susanti**, Reporting Officer, UNHCR Bangladesh, susanti@unhcr.org
Mai Hosoi, External Relations Officer, UNHCR Bangladesh, hosoi@unhcr.org

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