

Bangladesh

1 – 31 December 2020

The Government of Bangladesh has begun its relocation process of refugees from the refugee settlements in Cox’s Bazar to **Bhasan Char**. While the UN has not been involved in the process, reports suggest some 1,600 refugees were reportedly relocated on 4 December, and an additional some 1,800 refugees on 29 December.

The UN has reiterated its request to undertake **protection and technical assessments** to evaluate the safety and sustainability of life on the island and await a response from the Government on the assessment process.

Since the first **COVID-19** case was detected in May 2019, the total number of confirmed cases in the Cox’s Bazar refugee settlements has reached 366, including 10 deaths. UNHCR continues to manage two COVID-19 treatment facilities and is supporting the running of an Intensive Care Unit ward in the main District Hospital. These facilities serve both the refugee and host communities.

POPULATION DATA

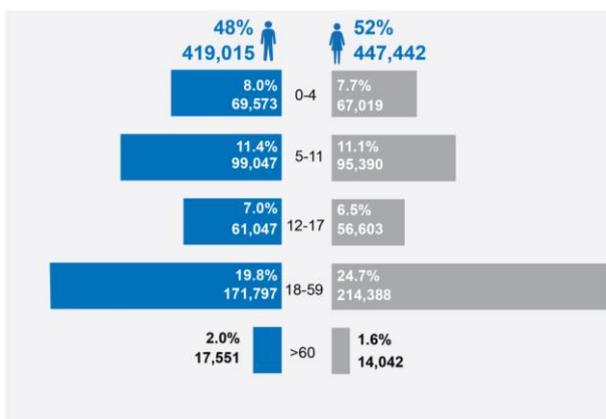
866,457 refugees in Cox’s Bazar district.

*830,938 refugees are registered under the Government of Bangladesh-UNHCR registration exercise. There are also 35,519 refugees from pre-2016 and who reside in the registered camps.

91,711

Number of refugee households who are being supported with cooking kits and Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) cylinders in the camps; 17,148 families in host communities were also being supported with cooking kits and LPG.

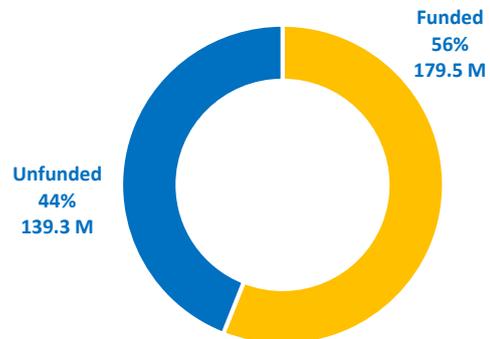
AGE BREAKDOWN OF REFUGEES



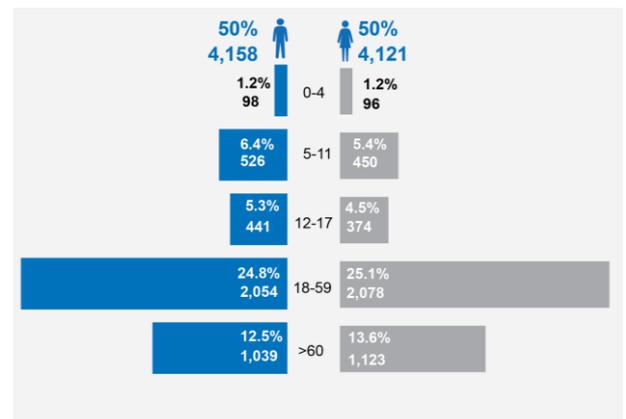
2020 FUNDING (AS OF 5 JANUARY 2021)

USD 318.8 M

requested for Bangladesh



DISABILITY BREAKDOWN OF REFUGEES BY AGE AND GENDER



Operational Context

- Movement restrictions, that were enforced due to COVID-19, have somewhat eased in Cox's Bazar enabling UNHCR and its partners to increase presence in the refugee settlements. All activities are conducted in compliance with COVID-19 preventative measures and the set of 'critical activities only' instruction set out by the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC).
- Since 14 May when the first COVID-19 positive case was detected in the camps, some **366 refugees have been confirmed with COVID-19, and 10 have sadly died**. So far, some 639 patients from the refugee and host community have received treatment at facilities supported by UNHCR.



COVID-19 reports can be found [here](#) on UNHCR's Bangladesh portal.

Updates and achievements



PROTECTION

Briefing of North South University students at UNHCR's office of Cox's Bazar

- On 28 November, a group of graduate students from North South University's South Asian Institute of Policy and Governance, many of whom are government officials, visited UNHCR's office in Cox's Bazar for a briefing by the Representative, Senior Field Coordinator, and Senior Protection Officer. The briefing covered coordination, inter-sector engagement, and UNHCR's operational protection strategy.



HEALTH

Construction of a new outpatient department in Sardar Hospital

- On 17 December, a "ground-breaking" ceremony was held at Cox's Bazar District Sadar Hospital, to mark the beginning of the construction of a brand-new UNHCR-funded Outpatient Department (OPD). The new modern facility will comprise more than 70 rooms across 3 floors and will be used to provide outpatient care for the population of Cox's Bazar. Construction is expected to complete by early 2022.
- The current space occupied by the OPD will be converted into inpatient wards and specialized services, including a mental health inpatient unit. At present, the inpatient facilities, designed to accommodate up to 250 patients, is serving some 600 patients daily (including 100 Rohingya refugees).
- The new OPD will enhance space available for general outpatient and specialized consultation, as well as outpatient surgery, therefore reducing the pressure on the already overburdened hospital's operation theatres. Additionally, this project will create more space for inpatient services.



ENERGY

Provision of LPG and cooking sets for local Bangladeshi communities

- In close collaboration with local authorities and UNHCR's partner Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS), UNHCR provided liquified petroleum gas (LPG) canisters and stoves to more than 5,770 vulnerable local Bangladeshi families on 28 December. All families will also receive training on the safe use of LPG for cooking in the home.
- To date, some 46,000 Bangladeshi families have received LPG and stoves.
- A recent study by UNHCR and partner IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) showed that the overall market demand for firewood in Ukhiya sub-district has dropped by a remarkable 92%. As a result

of this intervention, the rate of LPG use in the host community has increased from just 7% to 20%, resulting in a 53% reduction in the demand of firewood among them. The combined target is to reach 71,000 host community households.

- Furthermore, due to the availability of LPG dealers nearby, increasing numbers of the local community have also started using LPG for cooking at homes and in restaurants. This will bring long term benefits to the local community and the environment, as alternative energy sources become more accessible and affordable.



Local Bangladeshis receive LPG canisters from UNHCR on 28 December. © UNHCR/H.Macdonald

Working in partnership

UNHCR is a co-chair of the Strategic Executive Group (SEG) in Bangladesh with the UN Resident Coordinator and IOM. The UN Refugee Agency also leads on the protection response, as head of the Protection Working Group in Cox's Bazar. UNHCR has valuable partnerships with a number of UN agencies and coordinates the delivery of its assistance with humanitarian partners through the sectors and working groups, as part of the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG). UNHCR's main government counterpart in Cox's Bazar is the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief and its Cox's Bazar-based Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC), as well as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Home Affairs in Dhaka, among other government ministries and entities. UNHCR staff work closely with the RRRC's Camp-in-Charge officials in the 34 refugee settlements, as well as a range of international and national actors. UNHCR would also like to acknowledge the role played by the refugees in the response, with over 7,000 volunteers from the refugee community who are often the first responders on the ground.

UNHCR's partners

MoDMR (Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief) | Action Aid Bangladesh | ACF (Action Contre la Faim) | Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) | BRAC (Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee) | Caritas Bangladesh | Center for Natural Resource Studies (CNRS) | CODEC (Community Development Centre) | COAST (Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust) | Danish Refugee Council | FH Association (Food for the Hungry) | GK (Gonosshasthaya Kendra) | Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation | Handicap International | IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources) | Light House | Mukti Cox's Bazar | NGO Forum for Public Health | Oxfam GB | Relief International | RTMI (Research, Training and Management International) | Save the Children International | World Vision | Terre des Hommes | TAI (Technical Assistance Incorporated) | BLAST (Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust) | Rights Jessore

Financial Information

Total recorded contributions for the operation amount to some **USD 179.5 million in 2020**. UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors that have contributed to this operation as well as those that contribute to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked and broadly earmarked funds. In 2019/2020, support was generously received from: *Austria, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, China, Denmark, Estonia, the European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Lithuania, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Philippines, Qatar, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America*. UNHCR is grateful for the additional support received from individuals, foundations, and companies worldwide, including: *Athmar Holdings, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, CERF, Education Cannot Wait, Fondation EDF, Mabarrat Ghanaem Al Khair, Qatar Charity, Shih Wing Ching Foundation, and Thani Bin Abdullah Bin Thani Al Thani Humanitarian Fund, Zakat House*.

CONTACTS & LINKS

Mai Hosoi | External Relations Officer | Dhaka | hosoi@unhcr.org

Hannah Macdonald | External Relations Officer | Cox's Bazar | macdonah@unhcr.org

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