

# BANGLADESH

15 January – 28 February 2019

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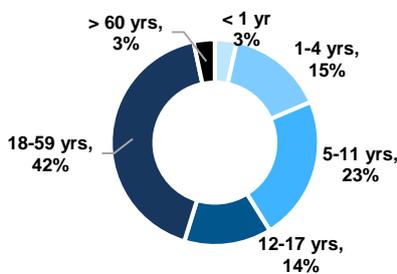
In the first two months of 2019, 53,778 refugees were registered by the **Joint Government of Bangladesh-UNHCR Phase 2 registration exercise**. In a new phase, the exercise moved to Kutupalong at the end of January 2019. Four sites have been newly opened resulting in increasing numbers by the day. Extensive community outreach information is being provided to accelerate the overall process, with the aim of completion of all registration within 2019.

UNHCR and its partner, the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society distributed Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and cooking sets to 31,005 refugee families in both Kutupalong and Nayapara settlements during the first two months of the year. During the same period, **LPG refills were provided to 96,255 families**. UNHCR completed the roll-out of LPG to 16 refugee settlements by the end of February 2019. The completed roll-out in all 34 settlements is scheduled for mid-2019.

**POPULATION FIGURES** (as of 28 February 2019)

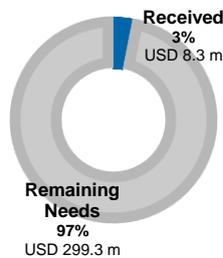
**909,840** Total number of refugees in Cox's Bazar  
**740,993** Estimated new arrivals since 25 August 2017

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



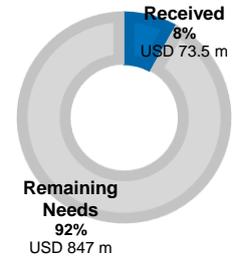
**UNHCR FUNDING REQUIREMENTS 2019**

 **USD 307.6 m**



**JOINT RESPONSE PLAN FUNDING 2019**

 **USD 920.5 m**



*At Chakmarkul refugee camp in Bangladesh, UNHCR Special Envoy Angelina Jolie speaks with Rohingya women from Myanmar. The Special Envoy spent two days in the refugee settlements in Cox's Bazar to see the scale of displacement and understand better the experience of refugees. © UNHCR/Santiago Escobar-Jaramillo*

## Special Envoy Angelina Jolie visits Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar

From 3 to 6 February, Angelina Jolie, Special Envoy for UNHCR, visited Cox's Bazar, stating that the world must not turn away from the nearly one million Rohingya refugees who have fled from Myanmar to Bangladesh.

Jolie began her three-day visit in Chakmarkul and Kutupalong refugee settlements where she heard testimonies from Rohingya women, children and men who have endured a lifetime of persecution and discrimination. There she witnessed the humanitarian response efforts to date, including the joint UNHCR and Government of Bangladesh registration exercise that is providing many refugees with a legal identity for the first time. She also visited a transit centre for newly arrived refugees and a hospital giving much-needed care and support to women and girls.

During her visit, the Special Envoy held official meetings with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen, in which she expressed UNHCR's gratitude to the people and Government of Bangladesh for their generosity in receiving over 700,000 refugees since August 2017. She reiterated UNHCR's support for collective efforts to enable Rohingya refugees to live dignified lives in Bangladesh and the pursuit of lasting solutions.



*UNHCR Special Envoy Jolie engaging with the community in Chakmarkul refugee settlement where she spent her first day, listening to the experiences of refugees and seeing how UNHCR and others have supported the response to date.*  
©UNHCR/Santiago Escobar-Jaramillo

She urged continued support, until the Myanmar authorities show the genuine commitment needed to end a decades-long cycle of violence and displacement. She also raised concerns that without an urgent expansion and strengthening of educational opportunities for refugees in Bangladesh, the future of a generation of Rohingya children would be at risk.

The Special Envoy's visit came just ahead of a new funding appeal, the 2019 Joint Response Plan, launched in Geneva on 15 February by UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies. It seeks to raise more than USD 920 million to assist Rohingya refugees and affected local communities this year. The Special Envoy said that until the Rohingya refugees can voluntarily return home to Myanmar, we have a collective responsibility to ensure that they can continue to live dignified lives in Bangladesh.

The Special Envoy focuses on major forced displacement crises, representing UNHCR and the High Commissioner at the diplomatic level. This is her first visit to Bangladesh. She has also met with forcibly displaced Rohingya people during a prior visit to Myanmar in July 2015 and in India in November 2006.

## UNHCR's new Representative appointed to Bangladesh

Steven Corliss assumed the function of UNHCR's new Representative in Bangladesh on 21 January 2019 after presenting his credentials to Bangladesh's Foreign Minister, H.E. Mr. AK Abdul Momen. Corliss expressed his gratitude to the Government of Bangladesh for the opportunity to work in a country that has long offered safety and care to refugees. He praised the Government and the people of Bangladesh for having shown remarkable solidarity and generosity to the Rohingya refugees, and expressed his support to the Government in protecting and finding lasting solutions for refugees, as well as addressing the impact of the refugee population on the host communities in Cox's Bazar District. Corliss brings more than 30 years of experience with UNHCR in diverse assignments around the world. Most recently, as Special Adviser to the High Commissioner on Internal Displacement. He started with UNHCR in Pakistan

in the late 1980s and later served in Bosnia-Herzegovina as well as Turkey, Yemen and Tanzania. At UNHCR Headquarters in Geneva, he was Director of UNHCR's Division of Programme Support & Management from 2011 to 2017 and Deputy Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa.

## Joint Response Plan for Rohingya launched

On 15 February, UN agencies and NGO partners launched the 2019 Joint Response Plan (JRP) for the Rohingya humanitarian crisis. The appeal seeks to raise USD 920 million to meet the needs of more than 900,000 refugees from Myanmar and over 330,000 vulnerable Bangladeshis in host communities.

UNHCR's High Commissioner called for timely, predictable and flexible contributions in order to meet the humanitarian imperative of stabilising the situation of stateless Rohingya refugees and their Bangladesh hosts, but added that the international community should not lose sight of solutions. He repeated his call to Myanmar to take urgent action to address the root causes of the crisis so that people are no longer forced to flee and can eventually return home in safety and dignity.

In Bangladesh, aid agencies have improved conditions for refugees in partnership with the Bangladesh authorities — providing basic assistance, upgrading living conditions in the camps and putting in place disaster risk mitigation measures for monsoon and cyclone seasons. The environmental impact of the influx has been reduced through the use of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) as an alternative cooking fuel and subsequent reduction in deforestation, as well as exposure and risk of abuse or injuries related to collection of firewood in remote areas. The prevalence of global acute malnutrition at emergency levels in late 2017, dropped below the emergency threshold (from 19 per cent to 12 per cent) food security improved, immunization coverage grew to 89 per cent, and women delivering their babies in health facilities rose from 22 per cent to 40 per cent.



Critical needs remain. While all refugees received basic emergency shelter kits to help them with the rainy season in 2018, safer and more robust shelters are now required. More than 50% need replacement. Resources need to be expanded to ensure better nutrition and health, as well as safer water and sanitation, and additional protection services. Food, water, sanitation and shelter represent more than half of the funding needs this year.

One hundred and thirty-two partners are appealing under the JRP for 1.2 million people. UNHCR is requesting roughly USD 216 million as prioritized requirement in addressing critical basic protection needs.

## Sesame Workshop and UNHCR start activities in Rohingya refugee settlements

UNHCR and Sesame Workshop held community events in Kutupalong refugee settlement on 23 and 24 January 2019 as part of a pilot project in the Rohingya refugee settlements in Cox's Bazar. The events, organized in Camp 4 on the western side of the large Kutupalong settlement, brought children and caregivers together to experience a Sesame journey through different activities at different booths:

- **Viewing booth:** Sesame Street content dubbed in Rohingya language was shown to the children in viewing booths. An instructor explained messages by asking random questions to the viewers.
- **Puzzles booth:** In this booth, children played with educational puzzles. An instructor held a puzzle competition and explained the key life skill messages in them.
- **Drawing booth:** Inspired by the day's events, children were provided paper and crayons to draw whatever they wanted.

*Sisimpur*, a local version of Sesame Street popular in Bangladesh, was another key feature of the community events with its life-size walk-around characters, Halum, Tuktuki, Ikri and Shiku present and engaging with children. The characters engaged children and caregivers with key health, educational and safety messages to raise awareness on important life skills, as well as with the aim of creating a sense of joy among Rohingya children as a respite from their daily challenges, and contributing to their overall development and safety.

In total the events reached an audience of 500 children and 150 caregivers.

The UNHCR/Sesame pilot will run until June 2019, using the materials that have been developed for children, including dubbed videos. These will be used in up to 57 Learning and Early Childhood Development Centres in Cox's Bazar. The aim is to utilize the Learning Centres and Child Friendly Spaces, working with existing education personnel, to diversify existing teaching methodologies as well as tools available to teachers. The pilot will also help inform and prepare the way for a new Sesame Workshop and LEGO foundation partnership that will bring more financial resources to support the programme in the future.



*Rohingya children got into the swing of things at the opening of the Sesame Street activities, interacting with life size characters and cut out boards of other characters, as well as games and other educational materials.*  
©UNHCR/F. Al-Khateeb

## Inauguration of CIC offices in Rohingya settlements

In January and February 2019, UNHCR and the RRRC inaugurated a series of administrative buildings in the camps in Cox's Bazar as part of an effort to ensure that the Government of Bangladesh Camp-in-Charge officers (CICs) coordinating on-the-ground activities have the facilities they need to make their role in the camps as effective as possible, including meeting rooms and workstations.



In total, some 22 buildings were completed in 22 camps in Kutupalong and others settlements.

UNHCR aims to also co-locate some of its protection and field staff at offices within each of the CIC complexes, in agreement with the RRRC, to support protection coordination on the ground in-camp as part of the goal of strengthening the protection response in Cox's Bazar.

*RRRC and the CIC of Nayapara camp, with UNHCR's Field Officer Andre Threik, unveiling a plaque and cutting a ribbon on the new CIC complex in Nayapara, Teknaf, Cox's Bazar. ©UNHCR*

## Improving healthcare in Rohingya refugee settlements

Adequate access to health care is among UNHCR's aims in its support for the Rohingya community in Bangladesh. A limited number of health services provide access during night time and weekends in the refugee settlements, leaving a critical gap. Currently 25 primary health care health centres (PHC) provide services at night, an additional 11 centres are needed to meet the minimum standard of 1 PHC per 25,000 refugees. UNHCR is supporting nine of the existing facilities and is gradually strengthening services and widening coverage. On 20 January, UNHCR and Relief International (RI) launched a 24-hour health clinic in Camp 3 in Kutupalong's large settlement, which will provide comprehensive services 7 days a week.

The UNHCR/RI facility offers emergency health care, out-patient care, medical referral services, in-ward health care, child health care, maternity and laboratory services, as well as mental health and psychosocial support. It will cover the needs of at least 12,000 refugees living in the immediate surrounding areas.

During 2018, UNHCR and its partners operated a network of 22 health facilities ensuring approximately 439,696 medical consultations for refugee children, women and men. Some 6,369 patients with serious illnesses were referred for secondary, and tertiary healthcare.



*RRRC and CICs at the opening of UNHCR/RI new health clinic in Camp 3 in Kutupalong settlement. ©UNHCR*

Health care is making a difference to lives. The results of access to healthcare have been visible in the decrease of the crude mortality rate among the Rohingya population by 70% from 1.36 in 2017 to 0.38 in 2018.

Refugees within the community are also contributing to health services. Three hundred UNHCR-trained volunteer community health workers are providing health education in the Rohingya language. In 2018 alone they reached 252,824 people with their outreach. This resource within the community has also proved vital in tackling outbreaks, such as Diphtheria in late 2017, and currently they are engaged in sharing information on chickenpox as a key element of the response.

It has been observed that the Rohingya community generally seek healthcare at low rates, due to unfamiliarity with healthcare systems and a trust in services, though this has been improving through outreach and continuous awareness raising. There is a significant gap in knowledge on maternal health and reproductive health, which requires more awareness on ante- and post-natal care, risks of homebirth, and benefits of family planning.

## Registration exercise moves to Kutupalong settlement

The joint Government of Bangladesh-UNHCR registration process for Rohingya in Cox's Bazar has now shifted focus to Kutupalong settlement as of 1 February 2019. Work commenced at 4 new sites located in UNHCR's Transit Centre, Camp 17, Camp 12 and Camp 16. The process aims to cover the majority of people living in the Kutupalong settlement by the end of June 2019.

To date, over 89,214 individuals in 20,373 families have been through the joint Government of Bangladesh-UNHCR registration exercise. Within the short period since it started operation in Kutupalong the four operational sites managed to register a total of 27,482 individuals.

## 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 **28 partners**:

**Action Aid Bangladesh** | **ACF** (Action Contre la Faim) | **ADRA** (Adventist Development and Relief Agency) | **BNWLA** (Bangladesh National Woman Lawyer's Association) | **Bangladesh Red Crescent Society** | **BRAC** (Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee) | **Caritas Bangladesh** | **Center for Natural Resource Studies** | **CODEC** (Community Development Centre) | **COAST** (Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust) | **Danish Refugee Council** | **FH Association** (Food for the Hungry) | **GK** (Gonoshasthaya Kendra) | **International Rescue Committee** | **IUCN** (International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources) | **Handicap International** | **Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation** | **Light House** | **Oxfam GB** | **Relief International** | **Mukti Cox's Bazar** | **NGO Forum for Public Health** | **RTMI** (Research, Training and Management International) | **Save the Children International** | **Sesame Workshop** | **Solidarites International** | **Terre des hommes Foundation** | **TAI** (Technical Assistance Incorporated)

UNHCR would also like to acknowledge the crucial role played by the refugees in the response; with **over 3,000 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 refugee response.

## Donor Support

The Government and the people of Bangladesh have shown extraordinary generosity in responding to the crisis. However, more support and solidarity is required from the international community to assist the ongoing humanitarian response. Continued political efforts to work towards a solution to the situation remains vital. UNHCR is appealing for USD 307.6 million in order to respond to the needs of hundreds of thousands of refugees.

**UNHCR Bangladesh is grateful for the generous contributions of donors who have provided unrestricted and broadly earmarked funds, as well as to donors who have contributed directly to the Operation in 2018 and 2019:**



*With thanks to the many private donations from individuals, foundations, and companies such as the Arab Gulf Fund, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Education Cannot Wait, International Islamic Relief Organization, Kuwait Finance House, 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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