

BANGLADESH

1 – 15 December 2018

IN THIS UPDATE:

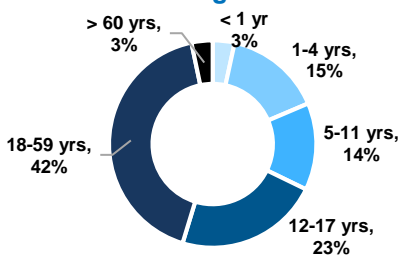
- *16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence campaign*
- *Upgrading shelters at reception centre*
- *Kicking off with football coach training*
- *Peace in the home and community*
- *Support for persons with disabilities*
- *Nutritional survey results*
- *Forward with cleaner water*
- *Rohingya artisans display craft heritage*
- *Registration/verification*

16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence campaign ended on 10 December. A series of events organized by UNHCR and other agencies operating in the Rohingya response **increased attention on issues in particular affecting women and girls.** The Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner and camp authorities strongly collaborated with the agencies to demonstrate Bangladesh's commitment to ending gender-based violence for refugees.

UNHCR and nutrition sector partners completed the third nutrition survey in selected areas of Kutupalong and Nayapara refugee settlements. The survey revealed that **Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) among refugee children has reduced** from 12.1% to 11.0% in the Kutupalong areas surveyed, and from 13.6% to 12.1% in the Nayapara survey areas. The current **prevalence of anemia is of high concern,** especially among children.

POPULATION FIGURES (as of 15 November 2018)

904,373 Total number of refugees in Cox's Bazar
736,404 Estimated new arrivals since 25 August 2017
Age breakdown of refugees in Cox's Bazar



UNHCR FUNDING 2018



JOINT RESPONSE PLAN FUNDING 2018



An awareness raising walk in the Kutupalong refugee settlement by the authorities, UNHCR and its partners, and refugees to draw attention to the availability of legal assistance in a newly opened Integrated Community Centre. UNHCR is running legal assistance services with partners in a number of camps to familiarize refugees with Bangladesh's laws, pursue legal avenues to address conflicts that arise in their homes and community, and the availability of mediation. Legal assistance services are offered through BRAC, TAI and BNWLA. *Photo: TAI*

16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence campaign

The 16 Days of Activism against gender-based violence campaign ended on 10 December (Human Rights Day) but the fight for an end to violence and the pursuit of gender equality continues.

As part of continuing efforts, UNHCR gender and community-based protection teams conducted focus group discussions (FGDs). Thirty male and female refugee community members participated in FGDs to discuss behaviour and attitudes towards women's participations in public affairs, as well as men's views on gender equality.



Community outreach volunteers tell a different story when they take a camera into their communities. Rohingya women volunteers have taken photography lessons recently. They also took an introduction class on social media opening up opportunities to tell the story of their community, and also the story of Rohingya women. © UNHCR/F AI -Khateeb

Barriers to women's participation in decision making in the camps were identified and attributed to cultural and religious concerns within the community on the role of women engaging in activities outside the home. Women felt strongly that they should be given the opportunity to engage in public discussions, in spite of the challenges within the community. They also pointed out that sensitisation is needed for both men and women (including adolescents and children) on the benefit of wider participation, provision of income generating opportunities for women, confidence and self-esteem building among women in order for them to speak up in public, and adult education for older women.

Notwithstanding lower educational levels among women and gender dynamics in the community,

a growing number of Rohingya women are serving in their communities through outreach programmes, service projects, and as elected Block and Camp Leaders.

UNHCR's community-based protection and site management teams, along with gender working group partners in Cox's Bazar, also continue to strengthen the capacity of elected women leaders and facilitate their involvement in coordination fora with service providers and the authorities.

UNHCR upgrading shelters at a reception centre for new arrivals

UNHCR has started to replace emergency tents at its reception centre (also known as the Transit Centre) in Kutupalong with Refugee Housing Units (RHUs). The RHU is an innovative shelter solution, designed by the Refugee Housing Unit, Sweden, and UNHCR, with the support from IKEA Foundation.

Each unit is composed of several basic elements, including a lightweight steel frame, roof and wall panels, door and windows, floor covering, solar energy system (for lighting and a telephone charger) and an innovative anchoring system. UNHCR will install 130 units at its reception centre adjacent to the large Kutupalong settlement, with 68 completed to date.

More than a year after the violence of August 2017, the reception centre continues to receive new refugee arrivals from Myanmar. Some 15,000 refugees arrived in Bangladesh from January this year until 15 December. They continue to raise concerns about their security and the lack of rights they can exercise in Rakhine State.



Refugee Housing Units go up in UNHCR's reception centre adjacent to the Kutupalong refugee settlement. Each unit takes over four hours to erect. © UNHCR/S O'Brien, K Shahnam

Currently there are some 640 individuals, comprising 165 families that are waiting for relocation to the main settlement. Due to limited land availability and shelters in the main settlements, the relocation of new arrivals has become slower and families need to stay at the reception centre for longer periods.

The upgrade to the RHU will ensure that those needing to remain at the reception centre for longer periods will have better shelter. The emergency tents in use were degraded by rain and mould during the monsoon season thus are no longer a feasible option for accommodating newer arrivals. This marks a shift in the operational response as it graduates out of an emergency to enhancing standards all round.

Coaches Across Continents kick-off with football coach training

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) and Asian Football Confederation (AFC), alongside Coaches Across Continents (CAC), introduced coach training for Rohingya football players in the refugee settlements in Cox's Bazar from 7 to 11 December. UNHCR supported to identify players and a space to play, as well as working with CAC on community messaging. The project will run until the spring in 2019.

CAC worked with 75 participants to impart football coaching skills and showcased how the young coaches can use sport to create a social impact on key issues in their communities. Teaching games can enhance education around health and wellness, child rights, and other issues to help people strive to reach their full potential and create safe communities.



The first day of CAC coach training for refugees in Kutupalong. Photo: S. O'Brien/UNHCR

Peace in the home, peace in the community

UNHCR is harnessing the talent of young Rohingya refugee community members to build peace in the home and the community. The trained community outreach refugee volunteers, known as COMs, work alongside UNHCR and its partners BRAC and TAI. Their community work includes sharing information, identifying concerns, and making referrals. They will now also promote initiatives that aim to build a protective environment for everyone – such as the peace in the home and community campaign.

Using drama and art - notably *origami* paper-folding -, the campaign is encouraging and organising small community gatherings in relaxed settings to introduce art and to nurture open and frank discussions on the community's perceptions of peace. Origami folding is introduced with the story of Sadako Sasaki, a Japanese atomic bomb survivor who fell ill years later, who is famous for making 1,000 cranes and wishing for peace.

Community participants in the first sessions were enthusiastic about the chance to fashion figures from colourful paper that was donated by the Embassy of Japan in Dhaka, and were at ease in speaking about their lives at home and domestic concerns and tensions which grow often from the pressure of living in the refugee settlements.

UNHCR's community outreach programme has developed in the last year as a key line of communication with the refugee community in Cox's Bazar. Since January, 331 active community outreach volunteers conducted 25,000 home visits and met over 88,000 people. They conducted 22,000 awareness raising sessions on health, emergency preparedness, and protection matters (e.g. return, trafficking) for over 400,000 people.



Community outreach volunteers prepare to go out into their communities to develop communication around domestic and community harmony and explore concerns. © UNHCR/V Pongtrangoon

Support for persons with disabilities in the refugee settlements

On 3 December, the world marked International Day of Persons with Disabilities. UNHCR is working with many Rohingya refugees with disabilities to ensure they have access to vital services. It is immensely challenging in a terrain that is hilly, beset yearly by monsoon conditions, and other challenges and hazards. As of 30 November, 8,458 households or 4% of the total counted families have at least one person with disabilities in the family.

UNHCR has worked with other protection actors in Cox's Bazar to improve the situation for persons with disabilities by raising awareness of their needs and risks. In the event of any emergency within the settlements due to monsoon or other events, a rapidly deployable team called the Protection Emergency Response Unit (PERU) has been created to respond and support specific cases including persons with disabilities to ensure they can reach a safe place where they can access support.

UNHCR also partners with Handicap International (HI) in Cox's Bazar to conduct the identification of individuals with disabilities and provide mental health and psychosocial support, functional and physical rehabilitation, protection support, basic health, recreational activities and referrals. HI has provided over 557 assistive devices to help refugees better cope with daily life in the settlements this year. HI also supports caregivers because their care for vulnerable individuals can be stressful and impact on them and others. The response to services is positive, with referrals continuing to grow.

UNHCR's partner Gonoshasthaya Kendra (GK) also operates a physiotherapy and rehabilitation center in Shamlapur with two physiotherapists and two assistants, which serves refugees and the host community. Some **1,059** patients received **3,570** sessions of treatment in 2018. A GK physiotherapist supported by UNHCR also serves in four health facilities in Kutupalong on rotation each week.

Initial survey results indicate improving nutritional status among refugees

UNHCR and nutrition sector partners successfully completed the third nutrition survey in Kutupalong and Nayapara refugee settlements. The survey revealed that Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) among refugee children has reduced from 12.1% to 11.0% in Kutupalong, and from 13.6% to 12.1% in Nayapara.

Anemia among children aged 6-59 months increased in the selected areas over the past six months. The current prevalence of anemia is 39.7% and is of high concern due to the impacts on child development and increased susceptibility to diseases it leads to in children. Children in the age category 6-23 months remain the most affected group as observed in the last three surveys conducted since the onset of the refugee emergency in 2017.

UNHCR and its nutrition partners continue to scale up the implementation of lifesaving health and nutrition programs and strengthen malnutrition prevention programs. Efforts to improve appropriate infant and young child feeding practices and dietary diversity are being strengthened to reduce anemia and prevent malnutrition.

Moving forward with cleaner water

On 12 December, UNHCR kicked off the operation of the first new piped chlorinated water systems in Kutupalong refugee settlement. This is one of a series of 11 piped chlorinated water systems currently under construction for two camps in Kutupalong settlement by UNHCR, BRAC and MSF.

Previous water quality campaigns clearly showed that most of the drinking water in Kutupalong refugee settlement is contaminated through the process of collection, transport and storage at household level. Providing chlorinated water will reduce the risks that refugees face as a result of fecal contamination.

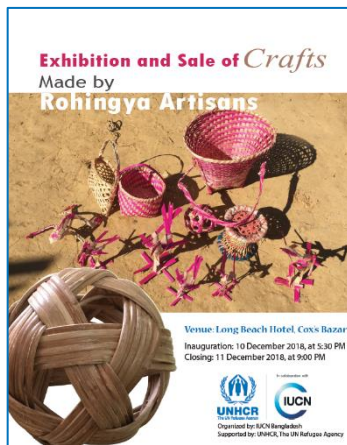
The water system starting up in a northern area of the camp will enable UNHCR and its partners to supply safe chlorinated water to about 15,000 people through 33 tap stands that have been positioned based on consultations with users, and to provide 20 liters per person per day in line with UNHCR standards.



Chlorinated water tap that has started operating in Kutupalong with the support of UNHCR's water, sanitation and hygiene

The system encompasses two 75m³ tanks fed by three boreholes, which were commissioned following water quality analysis. The network is solar powered in order to reduce costs but equipped with a fuel generator as a back option to ensure continuity of safe water supply in case of breakdown of the solar system. An auto-dosing chlorination system ensures continuous chlorine concentration in the supplied water. In addition to supplying safe drinking water, the water network includes a dedicated water storage capacity to be used for firefighting purposes. It is expected that all 11 systems will be completed by March 2019. Once operational the systems will provide safe water to about 85,000 people.

Artisans display the craft heritage of the Rohingya community



UNHCR and its partner International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) held a crafts fair on 10/11 December in collaboration with refugee artisans showcasing artisanal products and the rich craft heritage of the Rohingya refugee community in Cox's Bazar.

At present, refugees in Bangladesh do not have the right to work. The majority of refugees are reliant entirely on aid distributions. However, the opportunity to develop some of the crafts as alternative

livelihoods to strengthen self-reliance and resilience remains an option for support in the future, if a policy environment allows for its development. Investment in artisans can support in enhancing skills for potential future livelihoods opportunities in country of asylum and, if the individuals decide to return voluntarily, in their country of origin.

In a further arts-related endeavor, Artolution has converted a UNHCR/Caritas-built structure in Kutupalong refugee settlement into a studio for Rohingya artists to support and foster art and creative activity in the refugee community.

UNHCR provided materials and will further work with Artolution and the camp authorities to replicate the art studio venue in other locations if the initial pilot is a success.



Artolution arts studio in Kutupalong refugee settlement, proudly painted by staff and volunteers. © Artolution

Progress on Joint Government of Bangladesh-UNHCR Phase 2 registration/verification exercise

To date, **over 32,799 individuals have been verified/registered through the joint Government of Bangladesh-UNHCR Phase 2 registration/verification exercise.** An ID card, commonly referred to as the 'smart card', is issued to all refugee women, men, girls and boys above the age of 12 and replaces two existing cards that they already possess – a Ministry of Home Affairs (white) registration card and a Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (yellow) family counting card.

The benefit of the card is that it provides a secure identity documentation for refugees. It will help with more efficient delivery of assistance at distribution points as well as helping to improve services through the information collected. The process will also eliminate duplications in the existing database, ensuring equality in distributions.

Quick facts and figures on UNHCR protection services and assistance

Access to Education



45,820

children supported by UNHCR and its partners currently access Early Childhood Development, primary, and lower secondary education in refugee settlements

Education Facilities



381

classrooms constructed, providing learning spaces for over 40,000 children

Child Protection



40,810

Children provided with psychosocial support

Community-Based Protection



401,842

refugee men, women and children received information on hygiene, the use of *aqua tabs*, and Acute Watery Diarrhea, from community volunteers (COMs) since January 2018

Information Points



2,502

refugees received information or referral through Information Points during the reporting period. Popular inquiries are on shelter (40%) and fuel (24%)

Transit Centre



26

individuals newly arrived and sought assistance from 28 October to 10 November 2018 in Kutupalong's Transit Centre

Shelter Locks



79,529

households supported with padlocks to ensure their shelters are secure and better protected

LPG Distribution



25,942

refugee families received Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) bottle and a cooking stove as part of a roll-out of this fuel support. Some 6,287 families received LPG refills. The distributions are part of UNHCR's SGBV prevention, health, and environmental protection efforts, by reducing unaccompanied trips to collect firewood, reducing harmful fumes in shelters, and addressing deforestation through reduced tree cutting

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, including:

ACF (Action Contre la Faim) | **ACTED** (Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development) | **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) | **CSI** (Center for Social Integrity) | **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) | **IRC** (International Rescue Committee) | **MTI** (Medical Teams International) | **NGOF** (NGO Forum) | **OXFAM** | **PIN** (People in Need) | **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 6,500 **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 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 238.8m (as part of its Supplementary Appeal for 2018) 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 2017 and 2018:



With thanks to the many private donations from individuals, foundations, and companies such as the Arab Gulf Fund, Calouste Gulbenkian 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