



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency



IMMEDIATE NEEDS

In response to the fire in Cox's Bazar refugee camps, Bangladesh



877,710

Total Rohingya
refugees in
Cox's Bazar

48,000

Estimated number of
refugees displaced by
the fire

\$5.9 million

Financial support
needed

UNHCR Bangladesh is urgently appealing for \$5.9 million to support critical humanitarian needs following the devastating fire which broke out on 22 March in the Kutupalong Balukhali camps.

Government emergency services and humanitarian agencies coordinated to put out the fire and provide immediate medical assistance, as well as mental health and psychosocial support. Refugee volunteers and members of the host community were among the first responders, helping people to safety and supporting fire response and relief efforts.

Some 48,000 people have now been displaced, most of whom are temporarily accommodated within the community, and over 9,500 shelters are estimated to have been destroyed or damaged along with more than 1,600 facilities, including hospitals, learning centres, distribution points and a UNHCR registration centre.

The Cox's Bazar-based Inter Sector Coordination Group has been coordinating the emergency response under the leadership of the Government of Bangladesh, with a lead role for IOM as the affected camps are under its management.

As part of the inter-agency response, UNHCR has been rushing to provide critical assistance and protection to some 48,000 Rohingya refugees who lost their shelters and belongings in the devastating blaze, focusing on the below areas of intervention. UNHCR's immediate support to impacted refugees in the first days is detailed in the regular situation reports available on Global Focus [here](#), but further support is needed to sustain the response.

** Figures as of 24 March*

Urgent needs



Protection and registration

- Mobilization of refugee volunteer groups to assist affected families.
- Community outreach by partners, refugee volunteers and refugee leaders such as Imams and members of community-based organizations on available support services to the affected and surrounding camps.
- Family reunification for separated children.
- Reconstruction of the destroyed UNHCR registration site and the issuance of new identity cards and family attestations.
- Deploying protection teams to monitor response, ensure refugees' safety and security and to identify needs and gaps related to access to services.



Public health

- Provision of emergency health services, including through mobile medical teams providing emergency first aid.
- Treatment of injured refugees at UNHCR health facilities.
- Provision of mental health and psychosocial support to those affected by the fire, including separated children as well as frontline responders.



Water, sanitation and hygiene

- Provision of aqua tabs to ensure any water collected and stored is safe to drink.
- Operation of water tankers to deliver safe water to areas where displaced persons are congregating, ensuring provision of the minimum standard of 20 litres per person per day.
- Construction of emergency latrines in affected areas as well as additional temporary latrines and bathing facilities as needed.
- Construction of emergency tap stands in public places to provide clean and safe water.



Shelter and Core relief items

- Provision of temporary emergency shelter support to displaced refugees.
- Provision of core relief items, including tarpaulins, laundry and bathing soap, jerry cans, sanitary cloths, kitchen sets and stoves. As an initial response, UNHCR provided over 3,000 blankets, 20,000 solar lamps, 7,000 kitchen sets, 7,000 mosquito nets and 3,200 female hygiene kits in the IOM-managed camps affected by the fire.

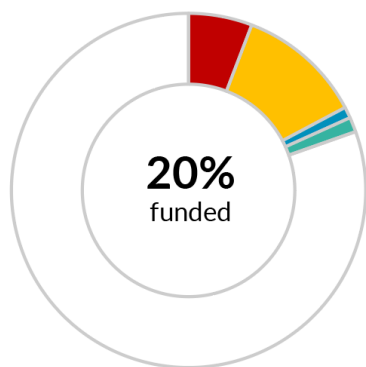


Infrastructure and operations

- Establishment of a solar power system for the health facility in the affected camp along with the provision of solar streetlights.
- Operational and logistical support including deployment of personnel to assist with the response.

Funding the response

The Rohingya situation is now in its fourth year. With the added needs of combatting the COVID-19 pandemic and now this devastating fire, international solidarity is more important now than ever.



- Tightly earmarked
- Earmarked
- Softly earmarked (indicative allocation)
- Unearmarked (indicative allocation)
- Funding gap (indicative)

UNHCR's financial requirements for its Rohingya refugee response in Bangladesh in 2021 are **\$294.5 million**. Within this, **\$5.9 million** is urgently required to address the immediate needs of Rohingya refugees affected by the fire.

To date, UNHCR's operation in Bangladesh is only **20%** funded, additional support is urgently needed.

UNHCR is asking donors to earmark as broadly as possible to the overall operation rather than tightly to this fire response. One key reason for this relates to Bangladesh's high vulnerability to disasters and to the density of the Rohingya camps through which fires have spread in the past, although none of this magnitude.

Flexible funding and funding earmarked at country-level are both critical. Funds like these where available, greatly facilitate kickstarting an emergency response like the one following this fire, as the funds can be allocated to address priority needs outlined above. This helps ensure people in need receive the assistance they need fast and efficiently. Unearmarked funding is limited at this time of year, but key in supporting UNHCR in enabling it to prepare, prevent and respond to any 'emergency within the emergency' that occurs, such as this fire, and in continuing to protect and assist both Rohingya refugees and their Bangladeshi hosts.

Immediate financial needs for the fire response

Response areas/sectors	Requirements (USD)
Protection and registration	903,859
Public health	482,566
Water, sanitation and hygiene	950,000
Shelter, infrastructure and operations	1,760,616
Core relief items	1,800,000
TOTAL	5,897,041

UNHCR is grateful to the donors who have provided flexible funding and support to the Bangladesh Operation to date. Additional information is available on the Global Focus website (reporting.unhcr.org), with the latest situation updates on the operational response along with this appeal available on the dedicated page for [Bangladesh | Global Focus \(unhcr.org\)](https://reporting.unhcr.org/bangladesh).