

# BANGLADESH

## | Working environment |

### • The context

In what constitutes one of the most protracted displacement situations in the world, Bangladesh hosts more than 29,000 refugees from Myanmar's northern Rakhine State. These refugees, who are members of an ethnic, linguistic and religious minority in Myanmar, reside in the two camps of Kutupalong and Nayapara in Bangladesh's south-eastern district of Cox's Bazar. This population is what remains of the 250,000 refugees from Myanmar who arrived in 1991, most of whom subsequently returned home.

The Government estimates that another 200,000 unregistered people of concern from Myanmar live in Bangladesh without any legal status, mostly in the villages outside the camps. Up to 40,000 of them live adjacent to or near Kutupalong and Nayapara camps, forming two settlements called the Kutupalong Makeshift Site and the Leda Site.

Bangladesh is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention nor its 1967 Protocol. In the absence of a national refugee law, UNHCR conducts refugee status determination (RSD) of urban asylum-seekers in Dhaka. Currently there are around 230 refugees supported by UNHCR, mostly non-Muslim Myanmar nationals from Rakhine State.

Though Bangladesh is among the world's least developed countries, with a population density of more than 900 people per square kilometre, government policies have brought some improvements to the lives of registered refugees over the past few years. The quality of life for most refugees, however, remains very poor. Moreover, high levels of poverty and illiteracy in Cox's Bazar district contribute to negative attitudes towards the refugees, affecting the unregistered population in particular. This has resulted in some 30,000-40,000 unregistered people of concern from Myanmar settling spontaneously outside Kutupalong Camp, where sanitary conditions are poor, and the malnutrition rate is even higher than in the registered camps.

In the years 2006-2010, more than 900 refugees were resettled to third countries. However, in November 2010, the Bangladesh authorities suspended resettlement pending the formulation of a refugee policy. UNHCR has made strong

appeals to the Government to revoke its suspension of the resettlement programme.

### • The needs

UNHCR will continue its protection and assistance programmes for refugees from Myanmar's northern Rakhine State, as well as for small numbers of refugees and asylum-seekers in urban areas.



## Planning figures for Bangladesh

TYPE OF POPULATION	ORIGIN	JAN 2012		DEC 2012 - JAN 2013		DEC 2013	
		TOTAL IN COUNTRY	OF WHOM ASSISTED BY UNHCR	TOTAL IN COUNTRY	OF WHOM ASSISTED BY UNHCR	TOTAL IN COUNTRY	OF WHOM ASSISTED BY UNHCR
Refugees	Myanmar	29,870	29,870	30,780	30,780	31,690	31,690
	Various	30	30	40	40	40	40
People in refugee-like situations	Various	200,000	-	200,000	-	200,000	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>229,900</b>	<b>29,900</b>	<b>230,820</b>	<b>30,820</b>	<b>231,730</b>	<b>31,730</b>

Despite some tangible improvements in recent years, the living conditions of refugees do not meet minimum international standards. The 2011 nutrition survey in the two camps found that 17 per cent of children aged 6-59 months suffer from acute malnutrition, which surpasses emergency thresholds. Similar rates prevail among lactating and pregnant women (14 and 15 per cent, respectively).

UNHCR will continue to meet basic needs in education, health, nutrition, sanitation, shelter and self-reliance, in anticipation of and preparation for durable solutions. Community mobilization and self-management will continue to be another important feature of UNHCR's programme in 2012.



Market in refugee camp Nayapara.

UNHCR / K. MCINSEY

## Strategy and activities

UNHCR's regional strategy with respect to the Muslim refugees from Myanmar's northern Rakhine State aims at stabilizing the communities in the countries where they currently reside, while addressing the root causes of their displacement. In Bangladesh, in addition to improving the conditions in the camps, UNHCR and its partners will seek to ensure that basic services (such as health care, education and access to justice) are provided without discrimination to all people in Cox's Bazar district.

Due to the competition over scarce natural resources and employment, local residents in Cox's Bazar feel pressured by the presence of the large number of refugees in the district. Tension has been escalating over the years between local villagers and refugees. Host-community programmes are critical to fostering co-existence between the two groups. UNHCR collaborates with the Government and other partners to improve the situation of both the host community and the unregistered population from Myanmar, mainly through community-based support and the provision of training to NGOs.

## Main objectives and targets for 2012

### Favourable protection environment

- Access to legal remedies and quality of registration are improved.
  - ☞ Legal services and clinics are established and maintained.
  - ☞ Some 5,000 refugees (registered with UNHCR but not with the Government) who are living in camps are duly registered and receive food rations.

### Security from violence and exploitation

- Community security management structures are strengthened.
  - ☞ Approximately 75 per cent of conflicts are resolved through community resolution mechanisms.
  - ☞ The number and severity of incidents related to tensions between refugees and host communities are reduced.

### Basic needs and essential services

- The provision of quality primary education is ensured.
  - ☞ Some 90 per cent of school-age children attend school.
  - ☞ Primary education is expanded from Grade 5 to Grade 6.

- Shelter and infrastructure are improved.
  - ☞ All families of concern live in adequate dwellings.
  - ☞ The construction and installation of all water and sanitation facilities is completed.
- The health and nutrition of the population is improved or maintained.
  - ☞ In-patient medical services are moved to sub-district health complexes to benefit refugees and host communities.
  - ☞ Anaemia among women of reproductive age is reduced to 25 per cent.

### Community participation and self-management

- Community self-management and the participation of women in the relevant structures is enhanced.
  - ☞ Some 40 per cent of the participants in management structures inside the camps are women.
- Livelihood opportunities are improved and the level of self-reliance is raised.
  - ☞ Some 25 per cent of adult refugees aged 18 to 60 earn an income.

## UNHCR's presence in 2012

□ Number of offices	2
□ Total staff	56
International	8
National	34
JPOs	1
UNVs	10
Others	3

### ○ Constraints

The Government of Bangladesh has often raised concerns that the provision of assistance to people of concern from Myanmar could create a “pull factor”. Hence it has applied a restrictive policy on assistance, limiting the protection space for the 29,000 registered Myanmar refugees in the two official camps, and allowing little access to the unregistered Myanmar people outside the camps.

UNHCR's strategy in Bangladesh is geared toward ensuring that the Government and host communities remain tolerant of the unregistered population from Myanmar. Refugees face restrictions on their freedom of movement and lack the right to work. This limits efforts aimed at promoting their self-reliance and preparing them for eventual solutions, including voluntary repatriation.

### | Organization and implementation |

#### ○ Coordination

UNHCR works closely with the Government of Bangladesh, especially with the Ministry for Food and Disaster Management. The Office provides support to the UN Development Assistance Framework in Bangladesh to combat poverty in the refugee-hosting districts. Measures to encourage more national NGOs to work in these areas are also important elements of UNHCR's operations. UNHCR also cooperates with other UN agencies, including WFP, UNICEF and UNFPA, as well as IOM. Finally, it engages international and

national NGOs and civil society to promote refugee protection and the coexistence of refugees and host communities.

At the end of 2011, UNICEF will be phasing out its support for refugee education in 23 primary schools in Kutupalong and Nayapara camps. UNHCR is seeking alternative funding and management for the programme.

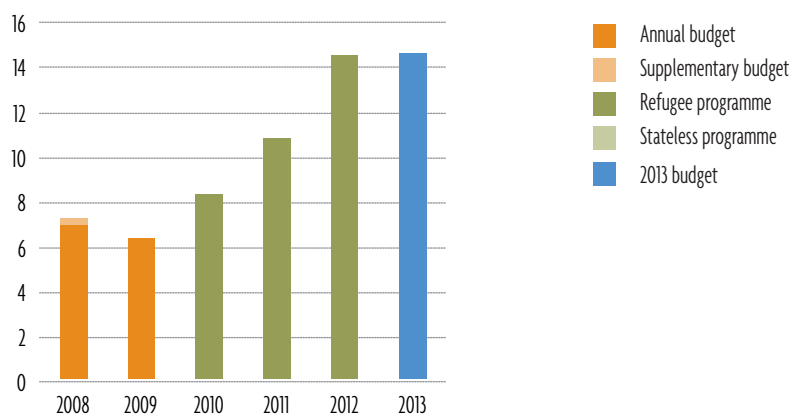
### | Financial information |

More than 90 per cent of UNHCR's Bangladesh budget is allocated to the Myanmar refugee programme. In 2006 and 2007, health and nutrition required the largest proportion of resources. In 2008, 2009 and 2011, the replacement of old shelters and rehabilitation of basic camp infrastructure were priorities. Since 2006, UNHCR has invested in procuring basic household items for refugees, while the refugees themselves have been engaged in producing soap, clothing and household items to aid their self-reliance. UNHCR has also channelled funding over the years to a supplementary feeding programme to address the high levels of malnutrition and anaemia among children and pregnant and lactating women in the camps.

The 2012 comprehensive needs assessment for Bangladesh proposed a budget of USD 14.5 million. In 2011, at the time of writing, UNHCR has received earmarked contributions for Bangladesh that covered some 30 per cent of its comprehensive budget, which has had an adverse impact on the already difficult lives of Myanmar refugees in Bangladesh.

## UNHCR's budget in Bangladesh 2008 – 2013

Millions (USD)



## 2012 UNHCR Budget in Bangladesh (USD)

BUDGET BREAKDOWN	REFUGEE PROGRAMME PILLAR 1	STATELESS PROGRAMME PILLAR 2	TOTAL
<b>Favourable protection environment</b>			
National administrative framework	153,098	0	153,098
Access to legal assistance	168,098	0	168,098
Public attitude towards people of concern	187,476	0	187,476
Subtotal	<b>508,671</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>508,671</b>
<b>Fair protection processes and documentation</b>			
Registration and profiling	149,086	0	149,086
Refugee status determination	142,010	0	142,010
Civil status documentation	108,098	0	108,098
Subtotal	<b>399,193</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>399,193</b>
<b>Security from violence and exploitation</b>			
Prevention of and response to SGBV	584,293	0	584,293
Non-arbitrary detention	480,574	0	480,574
Protection of children	108,098	0	108,098
Subtotal	<b>1,172,964</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,172,964</b>
<b>Basic needs and essential services</b>			
Health	1,707,043	0	1,707,043
Reproductive health and HIV services	271,195	0	271,195
Nutrition	1,371,867	0	1,371,867
Food security	256,195	0	256,195
Water	650,574	0	650,574
Sanitation and hygiene	1,208,816	0	1,208,816
Shelter and infrastructure	1,002,098	0	1,002,098
Basic domestic and hygiene items	648,098	0	648,098
Education	1,928,657	0	1,928,657
Subtotal	<b>9,044,541</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9,044,541</b>
<b>Community empowerment and self-reliance</b>			
Community mobilization	912,048	0	912,048
Co-existence with local communities	425,759	0	425,759
Self-reliance and livelihoods	1,132,391	0	1,132,391
Subtotal	<b>2,470,197</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,470,197</b>
<b>Durable solutions</b>			
Comprehensive solutions strategy	103,098	0	103,098
Subtotal	<b>103,098</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>103,098</b>
<b>Leadership, coordination and partnerships</b>			
Coordination and partnerships	0	55,966	55,966
Subtotal	<b>0</b>	<b>55,966</b>	<b>55,966</b>
<b>Logistics and operations support</b>			
Operations management, coordination and support	712,755	0	712,755
Subtotal	<b>712,755</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>712,755</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,411,420</b>	<b>55,966</b>	<b>14,467,386</b>
<b>2011 Revised budget</b>	<b>10,751,295</b>	<b>27,322</b>	<b>10,778,617</b>

## PARTNERS

### Implementing partners

#### Government agencies

Ministry of Food and Disaster Management  
National Human Rights Commission

#### NGOs

Bangladesh Red Crescent Society  
BRAC  
Empowerment by Law of the Common People  
Research Initiatives Bangladesh  
Research Training and Management International  
Technical Assistance Inc.

### Operational partners

#### NGOs

Action Contre La Faim  
Concern Worldwide  
Handicap International  
International Federation of Red Cross  
Médecins sans frontières-Bangladesh  
Médecins sans frontières-Holland  
Muslim Aid  
Solidarites International

#### Others

IOM  
UNDP  
UNFPA  
UNICEF  
WFP