



## Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis Appeal:

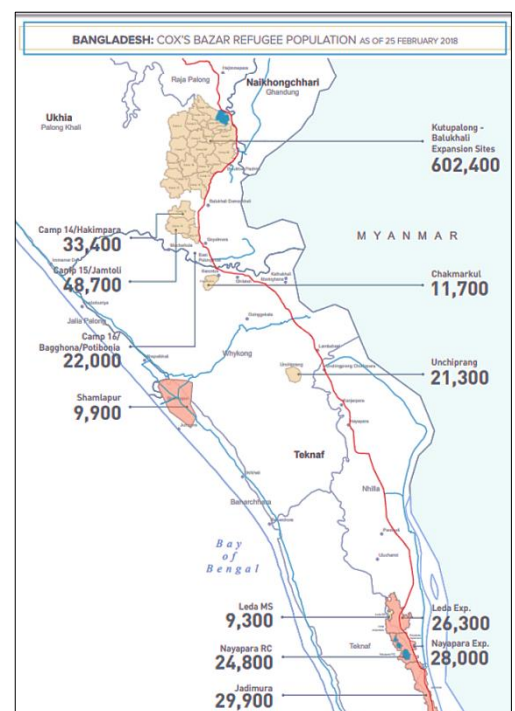
### *Weathering the storm: providing a safer site for the largest refugee camp in the world housing vulnerable refugees in Bangladesh*

Rohingya refugees have been fleeing violence and human rights abuses in Myanmar at a staggering rate –and the numbers keep growing. Since 25 August 2017, over 671,000 Rohingya have fled to Bangladesh in search of safety. Most are women and children, who have walked for days through jungles, mountains, and vast rice fields; or who have risked their lives in makeshift boats. These Rohingya refugees arrive exhausted, hungry and sick, some having survived on just rain and groundwater for days. They speak of the extreme violence that they have seen or experienced; and many have lost family members, before they fled or during their journeys. They urgently need protection, shelter, food, water and medical assistance.

The host population has been overwhelmingly generous and welcoming. But the new arrivals have joined over 300,000 Rohingya refugees already in Cox’s Bazar, who fled Myanmar in earlier waves of displacement; and **there are now over 950,000 Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh**. Infrastructure, health and water services are under massive pressure; as is the local environment and its natural resources. The existing camps at Kutupalong and Nayapara were already full, resulting in massive overcrowding with the huge and swift influx of new arrivals. Families have found shelter in makeshift sites, local villages and temporary settlements; and the government has since granted another 4,800 acres of land to help extend the camps. Kutupalong camp has become a sprawling settlement, now home to over 600,000 refugees; and around 56,000 new arrivals are estimated to have been absorbed into the local host community. Humanitarian agencies like UNHCR have been working intensively to create the necessary infrastructure and ensure that new arrivals have the essentials for survival. But despite the generous support of donors, humanitarian needs continue to outpace funding. **Now these hard-pressed refugee and host communities face a new, urgent risk – the forthcoming monsoon and cyclone season.**

### We urgently need your help

The rainy season in Bangladesh runs from April to October, bringing torrential rains and cyclones in the Bay of Bengal. Thousands of refugees are living in temporary shelters ill-equipped to withstand strong winds or rain; whilst others have taken refuge in areas that will flood or risk being devastated by mudslides, once the storms hit. The very real risks are that 150,000 refugees will lose their homes as they have been identified as living in hot spots where monsoon rain is expected to cause life threatening damage. These people need to be moved urgently to safer ground. Equally, for the rest of the people, sanitation will be compromised and water supplies contaminated, as heavy rain degrades the clay hills where many shelters and facilities are perched. Loss of access routes throughout the Kutupalong mega-camp will mean that families cannot access vital supplies and services – exacerbating already severe levels of malnutrition, stunting and anemia, and affecting health.



Since 25 August 2017, UNHCR has airlifted 1,500 metric tons of emergency life-saving aid to Bangladesh – including blankets, plastic sheets, sleeping mats, family tents, plastic rolls, kitchen sets, jerry cans and buckets valued at USD 7.8 million, to assist over 250,000 refugees. More aid is being moved by sea. We now have over 220 members of staff in Bangladesh; and are working closely with the government and other agencies to pre-position and deliver assistance to new arrivals. **But we need the urgent support of donors if we are to enable these fragile communities to withstand the risks and challenges of the forthcoming rainy season.**

**Creating stronger shelters...** Many Rohingya are living in improvised, temporary shelters, built with sticks and plastic sheets. These shelters are dark, cramped, offer little protection from the elements, and are prone to collapse in even moderate wind or rain. **Helping refugees to build sturdier, stronger shelters before the monsoon season hits is a high priority for UNHCR.** Our Upgraded Shelter Kits contain strong bamboo poles, robust tarpaulins, rope, fixings and 20 sandbags to increase the stability of foundations and protect against flooding. They can be used to reinforce or extend an existing shelter, or to build a new one. Community toolkits and expert support are also provided. The new shelters are structurally sound, weatherproof, and larger, offering better and safer accommodation for hard-pressed families. UNHCR has already distributed over 53,000 upgraded shelter kits reaching some 265,000 people – but we want to reach another 135,000 people (270 families) with emergency or upgrade kits before the rainy season starts. In addition, UNHCR is procuring 80,000 pre-monsoon kits (strong rope and 70 cm steel pegs), to provide additional protection to 400,000 refugees living in settlements in Cox’s Bazar District.

### **Creating safer locations...**

**Also pressing, is the urgent need to relocate more than 150,000 of refugees who are currently at great risk of direct impact from flood or landslide.**

We have a ‘Whole Settlements’ scheme of work underway which is a joint engineering project with UN sisters agencies World Food Programme and International Organisation for Migration, to urgently create more stable ground for the safe relocation of families whose homes are in a ‘risk to life’ setting. The further objective for the project is to maintain access throughout the wet seasons, and be first responders for flooding or landslides and address issues affecting multiple camps. The project will have access to its own machinery and operators and will manufacture culverts, road repair materials and pre-fabricate bridges on site. It will also incorporate storage facilities, workshops, casting yard and offices/accommodation for the project staff.



Above, a typical shelter in Kutupalong extension camp, compared to one built using UNHCR’s shelter kit below.



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At community level, we also have a programme underway which we need support to continue and scale up. Across the 14 Camps and Transit Centre under the UNHCR area of operation, improving access and living conditions in refugee sites and adjacent host communities. There are three primary areas of intervention: Drainage, Access, and Stabilisation.

Maintaining access to the settlements throughout the wet season is key to the humanitarian response. The rapidly approaching seasonal weather brings high risks of sections of the population being cut off from support unless we are able to strengthen roads, pathways, bridges and supporting walls to ensure that we can maintain access to all the households.

Each street needs to ensure that there is a safe passage for monsoon run off to flow to protect the integrity of the housing and ensure that the pathways are stepped and can remain in use. On steeper slopes retaining walls need to be built to protect housing and prevent life threatening land slips. Houses need to be reinforced with sand bags to prevent localised flooding. We are also creating or strengthening footpaths and

bridges, adding retaining walls (either with bamboo and/or bricks) to public buildings and building concrete crib walls (to improve slope stabilization). In coordination with our partners, UNHCR will directly implement site improvements, with a focus on larger scale works.

### We need your support...

Hundreds of thousands of Rohingya refugees are already living in desperate conditions in the overcrowded camps and settlements of Cox’s Bazar. The forthcoming monsoon season will bring major new risks to life and wellbeing. But with your support, UNHCR can make sure that these vulnerable Rohingya refugees have a safe site and the protected shelter, water and sanitation facilities support they need to keep them safe and well. **We need you to help us provide funds that will allow our staff on the ground to direct them to the next urgent priority. With the monsoon rapidly approaching we need to fill funding gaps urgently in the right order of priority, and plan ahead until the end of December this year when we expect to be looking after over 1.3 million refugees and local people.** These are some example costs which show you how your money will be helping in the site management area of our response:

SITE MANAGEMENT	Est Cost \$ USD
<b>80+ strong Engineering Staffing Team</b> – Senior Engineers, Plant Operators, Plant mechanics, Machine Operators	\$765,000
<b>Bulk materials</b> including bricks, sand, reinforcement, bamboo, timber	\$950,000
<b>Site Clearance</b> including grading & vegetation removal, geotextiles, drainage, pavement, fencing & guard huts and site lighting	\$905,500
<b>Office &amp; workers accommodation</b> including prefab buildings, septic tanks, water storage & treatment	\$214,500

*We would be enormously grateful for your immediate help to reach as many refugees as possible with vital services, and in time to protect them well from the coming rains*



A family of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar crosses a river swollen by monsoon rains at Kutupalong camp in Bangladesh last year.

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