

Executive Summary

In 2023, the operational environment for the Rohingya response became significantly more difficult due to cuts to humanitarian funding and deteriorating security. Severe weather-related hazards posed a grave risk to the camps and host communities, exemplified by Cyclone Mocha (May 2023). However, the Sectors continued to make notable progress and achievements in the face of challenges and setbacks throughout the year.

In the Cox's Bazar camps, the **Food Security** Sector provided monthly food assistance to 914,976 refugees and homestead gardening support to 104,674 households, although ration cuts increased malnutrition and protection risks. The **Health** Sector provided over 5.5 million outpatient consultations, contained outbreaks of dengue and cholera, and rolled out a general health card for continuity of care; however, funding shortfalls worsened maternal and under-5 mortality rates, and led to a scarcity of specialized medical resources. The **Nutrition** Sector reached over 294,000 refugee children under 5 and pregnant and breastfeeding women, and developed a multi-year strategy to strengthen the nutrition situation, but security issues and heavy rains impeded service accessibility, while global acute malnutrition rose to its highest level since 2017 due to ration cuts.

The newly-merged **Shelter-Camp Coordination and Camp Management (SCCCM)** Sector distributed LPG for cooking, provided emergency shelter/non-food item (NFI) support, and developed options for safer, more cost-effective and weather-resistant shelters. **WASH** interventions ensured access to water and sanitation, with improvements in solid waste management, but underfunding increased the risk of health- and nutrition-related diseases, and compromised the dignity and privacy of women and girls. **Protection** programming included continuous registration and documentation of 932,431 refugees, volunteer training, awareness campaigns, and protection monitoring. Case management was provided to 88 per cent of identified at-risk **children**, and a sector-wide **GBV** service audit was conducted for 31 women and girls safe spaces in 17 camps.

The **Livelihoods and Skills Development** Sector finalized vocational training materials for all approved occupations, enrolled 4,051 refugee youth in skills training and developed a standardized package for accelerated adult learning. Meanwhile, the **Education** Sector successfully rolled out the Myanmar Curriculum for Kindergarten to Grade 10 and an accelerated learning programme, reaching 336,766 learners, including through early childhood development, and youth and adolescent interventions. In preparation for its phase-out, the **Emergency Telecommunications Sector** added data connectivity to 30 new sites, while providing data connectivity and security telecommunications services to 790 and 921 humanitarian workers, respectively.

Working closely with national and local authorities, JRP partners supported over 322,000 Bangladeshi **host community** members affected by the financial, social, and environmental impacts of the Rohingya crisis in Cox's Bazar District. At ISCG, a new coordination hub was inaugurated in February 2023 and a Development Unit was established to strengthen coordination and support for host communities. Rationalization efforts continued and coordination was streamlined for better decision-making, while the Government's extension of the FD-7 project period from 6 to 12 months improved humanitarian access. Meanwhile, **cross-cutting issues** were mainstreamed across the Sectors, while non-Sector and non-JRP partners contributed to the response with complementary programmes in the camps and host communities.

On **Bhasan Char**, the humanitarian response coordinated by UNHCR focused on meeting the needs of over 32,000 Rohingya on the island. Monitoring of relocations confirmed that refugees' decision to relocate to Bhasan Char was generally voluntary in nature. Collaboration with government authorities ensured that protection, health and nutrition services were strengthened, while school enrollment and the use of e-vouchers for food assistance both increased. Access to WASH services, as well as hygiene and core relief items, was ensured, and a plastic recycling plant and solid waste incinerator were established. Although more remains to be done to improve skills, productivity and resilience, most households were allocated land for agriculture and 1,650 refugees received skills training. Challenges remained, however, with the lack of power and market linkages, as well as the remote location affecting service delivery (e.g. specialized health care) and weather conditions affecting transportation and commodity storage.

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Situation Update

In 2023, the efforts of the Government of Bangladesh and the international community have been crucial to sustaining humanitarian assistance to the almost 1 million Rohingya refugees/Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals (FDMN) in Bangladesh. Having passed the six-year mark since the largescale arrival of refugees from Myanmar in August 2017, the Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh is becoming more protracted, necessitating an approach that promotes the wellbeing, dignity and resilience of the refugees, as well as the cost-effectiveness of the response.

People living in the camps and host communities remained highly vulnerable to weather-related hazards in 2023, as witnessed during the Camp 11 fire and Cyclone Mocha (March and May 2023 respectively). Lessons learned from such incidents continue to inform preparedness activities while highlighting the importance of advocacy on building back safer and better, to improve the safety of refugees and reduce maintenance costs. Security in the camps also deteriorated significantly in 2023 due to the increasingly prevalent and violent actions of organized groups, despite the efforts of Bangladesh law enforcement agencies.

2023 saw the continued reduction of humanitarian funding, which necessitated cuts in assistance packages, including two reductions in lifesaving food assistance, as well as soap. Given the reliance of refugees on humanitarian assistance, such cuts have direct impacts on their protection and well-being. More robust, predictable and sustained funding for longer term investments in the Rohingya camps in Cox’s Bazar and Bhasan Char, and in the surrounding communities, is acutely needed, particularly for the most critical activities.

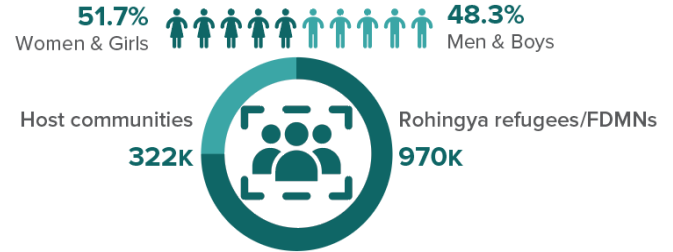
We count on the continued engagement and support of all partners to the Rohingya response to build on the successes outlined in the Joint Response Plan (JRP) 2023 report below and to help navigate the many challenges ahead in 2024. We thank the Government and people of Bangladesh, and the international community, for their generous support to the Rohingya response.

Key JRP 2023 Figures

1.47M PEOPLE TARGETED



1.29M PEOPLE REACHED

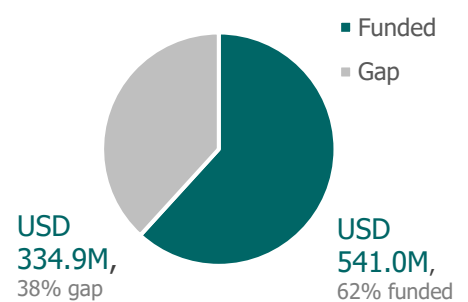


USD 876M TOTAL REQUIREMENTS

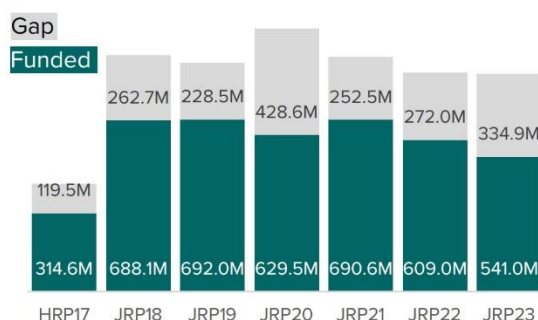


*This includes 59 appealing partners and 85 implementing partners (of the appealing partners, 28 are implementing activities under other projects).

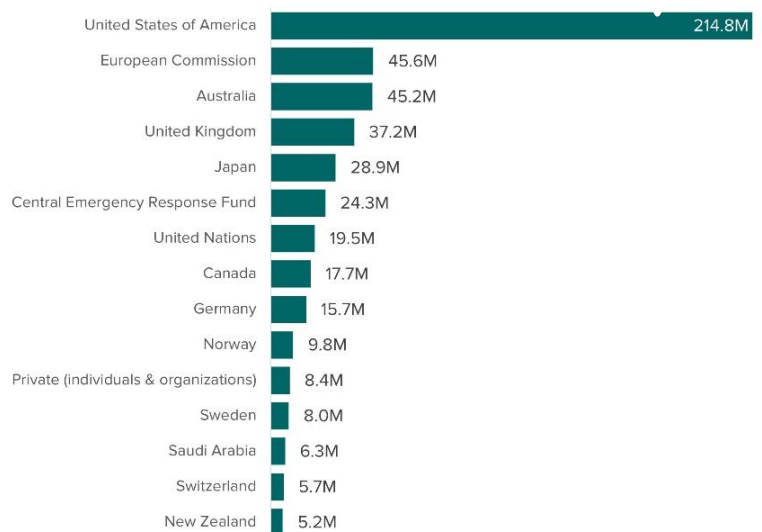
USD 541M RECEIVED**



2017-2023 FUNDING COMPARISON**



2023 FUNDING BY DONOR**



** Funding status reflects figures reported in the Financial Tracking Service as of 4 April 2024. These figures do not account for funding outside of the JRP.

Highlights from the Cox's Bazar Camps¹

Education



Achievements

- Working closely with the Office of the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commission, the Sector and its partners successfully rolled out the Myanmar Curriculum (MC) for Kindergarten to Grade 10, and an Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) for Rohingya children. In total, 336,766 learners (164,809 girls)² were enrolled and supported by the Sector, including early childhood development, and youth and adolescent interventions, representing a 91 per cent achievement against the target (371,393 children). In the 2023-24 academic year, secondary education saw an increase from 17 per cent to 24 per cent in refugee girls' enrollment compared to 2022-23.³
- The Sector coordinated 5,624 learning facilities in the camps (3,563 learning centres, 1,873 Community-based Learning Facilities, and 188 Cross-Sectoral Learning Facilities).
- 128,573 children (65,398 girls) in grades 2 and 3 participated in a learning status check. 10,336 children (5,052 girls) were identified as needing more support.
- 9,183 children (1,414 girls) in grades 6-9 who completed one academic year in the Myanmar Curriculum sat an end-of-year assessment with 97.5 per cent successfully transitioning.
- 68,538 children (31,941 girls) who were learning using the old LCFA curriculum (the Learning Competency Framework and Approach), and out-of-school children, sat a placement test to assign them to a Myanmar Curriculum grade for the 2023-2024 academic year. 67,535 children (31,459 girls) successfully transitioned to the Myanmar Curriculum and the LCFA is no longer being used.
- 6,118 Rohingya teachers and facilitators (2,187 females), and 2,772 host community teachers and facilitators (1,937 females) participated in professional development (pedagogy, subject-based or basic/foundational training).

Challenges

- The main impact of underfunding was the lack of targeted assistance to support the most vulnerable children, adolescents and youth to participate in education programmes, including out-of-school children, adolescent girls and children with disabilities who had no or limited enrolment in Myanmar Curriculum or skills and vocational programmes. Additionally, the number of teachers involved in continuous professional development was limited, impacting the quality of instruction, and the number of education materials available for distribution in the camps decreased.

Sector Lead Agencies: UNICEF, Save the Children

91% of targeted Rohingya FDMN/refugee children, adolescents, and youth aged 3 to 24 accessing inclusive and quality learning opportunities

91% 9%

87% of enrolled Rohingya children, adolescents and youth aged 3-24 who achieved grade level competencies for MC and other alternative learning (target: 80%)

87% 13%

6,118 Teachers/Facilitators, Master Trainers and mentor teachers from the Rohingya communities (with 2,187 females) trained in thematic education principles and pedagogy, in line with the Teacher Professional Development Framework, including the Myanmar Curriculum (target: 4,608)

133%

Achievement against target | Gap | Not targeted

¹ The green boxes in the Sector summaries present the achievements against selected key indicators. The achievements against all JRP Sector indicators can be found on [Humanitarian Action](#) (under 'Population data by sector' next to Sector Objectives for outcome level indicators, and next to Sector Activities for output level indicators).

² A total of 328,608 Rohingya children (girls 159,072) were enrolled and supported by Education Sector partners in 2022.

³ In the 2022-2023 academic year, the enrollment of girls in secondary education stood at 1,832 out of 11,060 children, whereas in 2023-2024, it increased to 4,045 out of 17,209.

Emergency Telecommunications



Achievements

Sector Lead Agency: WFP

- The Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) added data connectivity to 30 new sites, including e-voucher outlets; and facilities from the Nutrition, Shelter–Camp Coordination and Camp Management (SCCCM), Health, and Protection Sectors. Connectivity services continued to be used by 790 humanitarian workers from 21 organizations, while 921 humanitarians from 10 UN agencies used ETS security telecommunication services in the camps. As part of a major upgrade, the ETS relocated its data centre from Ukhiya to Cox’s Bazar town to improve monitoring and cost-effectiveness.
- User satisfaction was at 87 per cent, similar to 2021 and 2022. The stability of ETS connectivity services was improved through the use of backup radio links for sites susceptible to cuts, and costs were reduced through increased usage of internet service providers competitive value.

Food Security



Achievements

Sector Lead Agencies: WFP, FAO

- The Sector provided life-saving food assistance to all Rohingya refugees registered to receive food assistance (914,976 people) on a monthly basis. E-voucher shops offered beneficiaries the freedom to choose from 34 assorted products at fair prices. The most vulnerable individuals received an additional \$3 monthly top-up to access fresh foods.
- 104,674 refugee households benefitted from homestead gardening projects conducted by 19 Food Security Sector (FSS) partners. The provision of training, agricultural tools, seeds, and technical support for homestead gardening has enabled refugees to grow fruits and vegetables, complementing their food supply and enhancing their nutrition and resilience.
- A Standard Operating Procedure for Emergency Rapid Food Assistance was jointly developed for the unified and coordinated multi-hazard response.
- FSS coordinated three emergency responses in the camps with 16,100 affected refugees receiving fortified biscuits, 114,000 hot meal packages distributed, and 3,011 complementary dry food packages provided during these cyclone and fire responses. Following Cyclone Mocha, 7,820 affected households in the host communities received complementary dry food packages and 1,800 hot meal boxes were delivered in coordination with the Sector.

914,976 refugees received regular food assistance through the primary sources of e-voucher outlets and fresh food corners

101%

104,674 refugee households reached with on-farm resilience building activities (target: 68,669)

152%

Achievement against target

From the targeted 78%, only **30%** of refugee households reached an acceptable Food Consumption Score (FCS) (based on REVA-7 conducted in December 2023)

30%

60%

10%

Acceptable FCS | Borderline FCS | Poor FCS

Challenges

- Life-saving food assistance for refugees was underfunded throughout the year (24 per cent underfunded as of end-2023), compelling the Sector to lower the US\$ 12 monthly transfer value to US\$ 10 in March 2023 for regular food assistance, then to US\$ 8 from June-December 2023. As a result, global acute malnutrition increased to 15.1 per cent by the end of 2023, the highest since

the 2017 influx. The ration cuts weakened the primary lifeline of the refugees, straining individual and family wellbeing, affecting peaceful coexistence, increasing protection risks across the camps (e.g. child marriage/labour, GBV, trafficking), with a trickle-down effect across the entire response. Agricultural crop activities within the camps were underfunded by 53 per cent (including homestead gardening, a critical priority to maintain refugees' nutritional diversity and complementary access to food; improve resilience; and prevent negative coping mechanisms).

Health



Achievements

Sector Lead Agency: WHO

- With considerable support from the Ministry of Health, Directorate General of Health Services, Sector partners provided more than 5.5 million outpatient consultations to Rohingya refugees (5.3 consultations per person per year, which is above the threshold for emergencies per international humanitarian standards).
- Outbreaks of dengue and cholera were mitigated and contained in a timely manner, avoiding an uncontrolled spread across the 33 camps.
- The Sector rolled out a general health card for the entire Rohingya population to reduce duplication of services and ensure continuity of care.
- The Mass Drug Administration (MDA) to control scabies infection was successfully completed with almost 1 million people treated with the two doses required. The immediate impact showed a 51 per cent drop in skin diseases compared to the pre-MDA, which also contributed to reducing the overall burden of consultations. This is the first large-scale refugee operation in which such a large number of people were treated for this neglected tropical disease.
- Together with its partners and other stakeholders, the Health Sector updated the 2020 Minimum Essential Health Service Package (MEHSP) tailored to the specific needs of the Cox's Bazar camps. The approved package provides evidence-based standards for secondary healthcare services for the first time and aligns primary healthcare services with 2023 global guidance. Once published in 2024, the tool will help ensure quality and minimum standards across primary and secondary healthcare sites.

5.3 outpatient consultations per person per year (attendance rate or consultation rate) (target: ≥ 2)

75% of antenatal care coverage - at least four visits (target: $\geq 80\%$)

75% 5% 20%

87% of Penta 3 among <1 year old covered (target: $>95\%$)

87% 8% 5%

Achievement against target | Gap | Not targeted

Complementary programmes

- To improve the health status and well-being of refugees, ensure availability and access to essential health services, and reduce excess morbidity and preventable mortality from common causes, the Sector ensured structured coordination between the Health Sector and non-JRP partners (e.g. MSF, IFRC, AFAD). As such, out of the total outpatient consultations, 15 per cent were provided by non-JRP partners in addition to 30 per cent of major surgeries.

Challenges

- The provision of primary health care services is an essential lifesaving activity. Funding shortfalls reduce the capacity of the Sector to provide accessible health services to the Rohingya population and hosting communities. Maternal and under-5 mortality rates have notably deteriorated, with 84 maternal deaths reported in the camps (295 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births compared to 179 per 100,000 live births in 2018, one year after the influx). To improve the quality of services and access to specialized facilities, coverage and referral mechanisms must be maintained and expanded. Medical services such as the treatment of Hepatitis C (a curable disease), are funded

for a pre-determined number of patients. There is chronic scarcity of human resources with the required expertise, as well as specialized medical equipment and medications. Repercussions are severe for individuals with chronic underlying medical conditions. This situation is exacerbated for vulnerable populations, such as children under 2, pregnant and breastfeeding women, and individuals undergoing treatment for TB/HIV and diabetes.

Livelihoods and Skills Development Sector



Achievements

Sector Lead Agency: UNHCR

- The Sector finalized all vocational training materials for occupations approved by the Government of Bangladesh, which Sector partners will use for skills training of Rohingya refugees in 2024. Competency-based training packages were adapted from the Myanmar National Qualifications Framework (MNQF) or Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Qualifications Reference Framework. 4,051 refugee youth (2,303 young women and 1,748 young men) enrolled in pilot vocational skills training.
- During the vocational training pilot phase, it was identified that low adult literacy levels was the main obstacle to enrollment of refugees into skills training courses. The Sector developed a standardized, integrated package for accelerated adult learning that will be introduced in 2024. Composed of basic and functional literacy, numeracy, and life skills, this will help equip refugees with skills that they can use to pursue productive, dignified, and meaningful lives during their stay in Bangladesh, and support sustainable (re)integration upon their return to Myanmar or their resettlement.

8,140 refugees received awareness raising and soft skills sessions

54% 46%

755 refugees engaged as Livelihoods and Skills Development Sector (LSDS) volunteers

16% 84%

53% of targeted refugees completed comprehensive vocational training - successful completion and receipt of certification (at least once, based on equivalent hours per formally recognized curriculum/certification programs) (target: 90%)

53% 37% 10%

Achievement against target | Gap | Not targeted

Complementary programmes

- 8,590 Bangladeshis from the host communities were supported with different livelihoods and skills development initiatives complementary to the JRP. These activities were undertaken by IOM, Oxfam, Prantic, RDRS and WFP (Sector partners under JRP 2024), as well as CAID, CWW and IRC (not Sector partners).

Challenges

- More accommodating and flexible policies would enable refugees to expand livelihood activities, allowing them to be self-reliant and less dependent on humanitarian assistance. This would enable them to be engaged in a meaningful and productive way as they seek durable solutions either through voluntary return to Myanmar or complementary pathways like labour mobility or resettlement in third countries. While refugees can earn incentives when engaged as volunteers in the camps, these opportunities are limited and the level of remuneration for volunteers is very low.

Nutrition



Achievements

Sector Lead Agency: UNICEF

- Nutrition Sector partners reached over 294,000 refugee children under 5, adolescent girls, and pregnant and breastfeeding mothers with preventive and curative nutrition activities (104 per cent of the target; 73 per cent female). This includes blanket and targeted supplementary feeding, nutrition-sensitive e-vouchers, infant and young child feeding (IYCF), micronutrient supplementation, growth monitoring and promotion, community outreach activities including screening for malnutrition, and the outpatient therapeutic programme.
- The SENS survey revealed that the global acute malnutrition rate increased from 12.3 per cent in 2022 to 15.1 per cent in 2023, reaching very high emergency malnutrition thresholds. Stunting also remains high, exceeding 40 per cent.
- The Sector developed a multi-year strategy for 2023-2025, including protocols and operationalizing existing nutrition strategies, to prevent maternal and child morbidity and mortality, and improve the nutrition situation through strengthened, and improved access to, integrated nutrition services in the camps and host community.
- Quality of service delivery was improved thanks to capacity building training (community management of acute malnutrition, mobile nutrition teams, accountability to affected people, GBV) provided to 241 nutrition staff (110 women, 131 men).

55,686 cases with severe and moderate acute malnutrition newly admitted for treatment

92% 8%

79,372 pregnant and lactating women including caregivers received IYCF counselling

93% 7%

182,456 targeted beneficiaries enrolled in blanket supplementary feeding or nutrition-sensitive e-voucher programmes for children 6-23 months and children 24-59 months respectively

96% 4%

Achievement against target | Gap

Complementary programmes

- During medical visits at MSF sites in/nearby the camps, 128,487 refugee children under-5 were screened for malnutrition as part of their general health check-ups. The majority of children with severe and moderate acute malnutrition without medical complication (12,718) were referred to the nearest sector-run Integrated Nutrition Facility for treatment. SAM and MAM children with medical complications were referred to and treated at either Sector-led stabilization centres or the non-partner centre (1,275 cases), based on the location of their shelters. Pregnant and breastfeeding mothers (1,427) identified with acute malnutrition were similarly provided with supplementary food (BP5) following their healthcare visits.

Challenges

- The deteriorating security situation in the camps restricted the mobility of nutrition staff, resulting in the temporary suspension of important nutrition services for refugees. During the rainy season, fewer refugee women and children attended nutrition facilities due to inaccessibility. Funding shortages in Food Security and WASH Sectors also have direct impacts on refugees' nutrition. Failure to treat malnutrition in a timely manner can lead to an impaired immune system, leading to greater morbidity and mortality.

Protection



Achievements

Sector Lead Agency: UNHCR

- The Government of Bangladesh and UNHCR jointly conducted successful continuous registration and documentation of 932,431 Rohingya refugees.
- Protection partners provided legal aid to 19,963 individuals through 72 camp-based lawyers and 72 refugee paralegal volunteers, and provided disability inclusion training to 16,505 community volunteers to ensure their capacity to identify barriers that limit access to basic needs and services.
- Protection partners reached 902,798 individuals with information and awareness-raising campaigns as well as key protection messaging on topics such as access to legal services, registration procedures, and protection risks, including child marriage, GBV, and the prevention of trafficking and smuggling. The Sector enhanced refugee participation to increase community engagement and quality assurance in the response.
- The Sector advanced rationalization by defining prioritized Sector activities to guarantee coherence and minimum standards, while setting an agreed number of partners per camp per activity to ensure effective coverage and avoid duplication.
- Through protection monitoring (collection, verification, and analysis of information), 1,830 serious protection incidents were reported across all 33 camps in 2023. The Protection Sector strengthened its Joint-Protection Monitoring Tool to effectively assess safety, security, protection incidents and refugees' access to services with information collected and analysed on a quarterly basis by eight protection actors in the camps.
- A Protection Emergency Response Unit comprised of 330 child protection and GBV focal points, including 110 community mobilizers and other refugee volunteers, provided services in each camp to address specific protection needs during emergencies such as cyclones, heavy monsoon rain and fires. They disseminated early protection warning messages (such as evacuation for people with disabilities, and referral pathways for separated and unaccompanied children), identified refugees in need of urgent protection services/assistance, referred people to service providers, as well as monitored the situation of refugees with specific needs in times of emergencies.

932,431 refugees registered and provided with available documentation who are able to access services

103%

30% of individuals targeted (protection actors, authorities, refugees and volunteers) were trained in protection principles and approaches

30%

70%

902,798 refugees reached through awareness raising and key protection messaging and related mitigation measures on non-violence

100%

Achievement against target | Gap

Complementary programmes

- Non-JRP partners (MSF, IFRC and AFAD) providing complementary services were crucial in the protection response and emergency preparedness and response, such as in restoring family links of refugees in need of such services, and monitoring the protection impact in Bangladesh amidst the worsening conflict in Rakhine State.

Challenges

- The security situation continued to deteriorate in the camps, while the Government of Bangladesh stepped up efforts to address the situation through its law enforcement agencies. Acts of intimidation, coercion, abductions and killings by organized groups compromised the humanitarian and civilian character of the refugee camps. Limited access to livelihood opportunities coupled with the absence of clear prospects for durable solutions, renders refugees, particularly women, girls, children and youth, easy prey to trafficking, dangerous onward journeys by land and sea,

exploitation by organized groups, and other negative coping mechanisms, such as child marriage. Barriers that limit refugees' access to formal legal redress mechanisms leave refugees vulnerable to exploitation and marginalization, further exacerbating their situation.

- Inadequate funding limited partners' ability to provide sufficient protection services, leading to less support for survivors, increasing vulnerability, and long-term psychological impacts on affected refugees.

Child Protection



Achievements

- The Child Protection Sub-Sector (CPSS) mapped service coverage into five categories (critical shortage, significant concern, moderate concern, adequate coverage, and excess coverage) to improve service delivery and impact. The rationalization of services and optimized allocation of resources helped ensure that 90 per cent of children and adolescents had access to lifesaving child protection prevention and response services, and that individual case management was provided to 88 per cent of identified at-risk children.
- As part of the 2023 Joint Multi Sectoral Needs Assessment, CPSS introduced a severity scaling methodology to prioritize children based on their vulnerability, helping to ensure that resources were directed to those in greatest need. The Sub-Sector also developed a monitoring system to assess conditions in the camps and host communities, and make timely and effective programme decisions. The tools' implementation enabled more efficient resource allocation, as well as improved outcomes for at-risk children.

Sector Lead Agency: UNICEF

13,036 identified girls and boys at risk who received specialized age and gender sensitive child protection services through individual case management services to meet their unique needs

88% 12%

41,000 girls and boys, including adolescents, benefitted from individual or groups based mental health and psychosocial support services (MHPSS)

98% 2%

95,317 adolescents received services including life skills, pre-vocational skills and resilience activities and peacebuilding skills

100%

Achievement against target | Gap

Complementary programmes

- Complementary activities from non-Sector partners (World Vision, Caritas, Sesame Workshop, Educo, and DRC) and non-JRP partner (ASD) enhanced performance on key indicators by an additional 10 to 15 per cent, which mitigated funding shortfalls.

Challenges

- The funding shortfall restricted the Sub-Sector's ability to reach all at-risk children with specialized prevention- and response-related services, increasing their vulnerability and risking the reversal of progress on child protection in the camps at a time of increased protection needs resulting from the challenging security situation in the camps.

Gender-Based Violence



Achievements

Sector Lead Agency: UNFPA

- The Sub-Sector expanded GBV service coverage through comprehensive service mapping, gap analysis, and a sector-wide GBV service audit for 31 women and girls safe spaces in 17 camps.

- GBV mainstreaming and risk analysis was enhanced through a GBV safety audit conducted with the Nutrition Sector across 49 nutrition sites.
- Enhanced engagement, coordination and capacity building of field-level actors contributed to sustainable, localized, community-based protection, increased awareness, and better service provision. Service delivery was bolstered by ensuring required coordination among GBV and protection providers as well as focal points, camp authorities, law enforcement agencies and other actors at the camp level.
- Strengthened information management practices, including increased uptake of the Gender-Based Violence Information Management System+, improved risk monitoring, and the introduction of real-time survivor-centred referral pathways contributed to improved service quality.

636,655 individuals engaged in structured and non-structured GBV prevention activities

106%

128,580 individuals who completed the minimum package of GBV response, mitigation and prevention trainings as defined by GBVSS

60%

40%

93% of sexual violence survivors who presented within 72 hours of incident, had access to timely lifesaving health and clinical management of rape (CMR) referrals (target: 90%)

93%

7%

Achievement against target | Gap | Not targeted

Challenges

- Reductions in humanitarian assistance caused by underfunding had a considerable impact on household dynamics and was observed to worsen GBV, highlighting the need for continued risk mitigation and GBV mainstreaming initiatives. Ration cuts, compounded by limited livelihood opportunities and deteriorating security, led to increased debt accrual, child marriage and other harmful coping mechanisms, and was associated with a rise in the number of female-headed households. A reduction in services and safe mobility due to the increased insecurity and fear of organized groups resulted in increased confinement of women and girls, placing them at further risk of GBV. Congestion in the camps, floods and fires also exacerbated GBV.

Shelter-Camp Coordination and Camp Management



Achievements

- In 2023, following the merger of the Site Management and Site Development Sector with the Shelter and Non-Food Items Sector as part of the Rohingya response streamlining process, the newly established SCCCCM Sector led a more cohesive and rationalized planning of activities, and better integration of SCCCCM assistance delivery – which included distribution of liquified petroleum gas (LPG) for cooking, timely emergency shelter support and life-saving NFIs for households affected by disasters.
- The Shelter Task Force designed four alternative shelter material options, which are now awaiting approval by the Government of Bangladesh, focused on weather resistance; fire safety; the availability of proposed materials; capacity for safe installation; maintenance frequency and cost; and ease of decommissioning.

Sector Lead Agencies: IOM, UNHCR

44% of Rohingya households reached with Shelter assistance (TSA, R&M, MTS, HH-level site improvement) (target: 60%)

44%

16%

40%

68% of Rohingya households reached with NFI assistance (target: 60%)

68%

32%

Achievement against target | Gap | Not targeted

Complementary programmes

- The Sector worked closely with BDRCS to develop and implement camp-wide emergency response assistance, including shelter, non-food item (NFI) and LPG distribution. It helped monitor construction of World Bank-funded multi-purpose service centres in the camps with the RRRC and Inter Sector Coordination Group (ISCG).

Challenges

- The Sector experienced a funding shortfall for critical activities. While increased efficiencies took place in 2023, sustaining LPG provision was a major challenge against declining humanitarian funding; any funding shortfalls will increase the risk of deforestation, health problems, exposure to GBV and reliance on negative coping mechanisms. Funding shortfalls for access and safety (e.g. disaster risk management, repairs of mid-term shelters, household-level site improvement, and tie-down kits) resulted in continued vulnerability to multi-hazard emergency incidents such as fires and cyclones. This challenge has been exacerbated by an overall rise in costs across the response.

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene



Achievements

Sector Lead Agency: UNICEF

- WASH Sector interventions ensured 86 per cent of refugees had enough access to water to meet all their domestic needs, and 94 per cent of the water analysis at household level is free of fecal contamination. The Sector conducted a [Water Network Study](#) to identify the overall functionality, quality of network infrastructure and current challenges (only 50 per cent of water-networks are chlorinated). In 2023, a strong focus was given to sanitation as the WASH Sector developed a new, more disaster-resistant [harmonized latrine design](#). While numbers vary across camps, on average, 19 refugees in the Cox Bazar camps share one latrine in line with international humanitarian standards.
- In 2023, only 15 per cent of refugee households reported visible solid waste in the vicinity of their shelters compared to 27 per cent in 2022, while segregated waste collection is now done directly at household level in all camps. The WASH Sector also published its [Fecal Sludge Management \(FSM\) Strategy](#).

2,922 tons of waste are collected every month in the camps (target: 3,500 tons)

83% 17%

50,074 latrine facilities (96%) are functional and desludged (target: 95%)

96% 4%

86% of refugees reporting having enough water to meet all domestic needs (target: 92%)

86% 6% 8%

90% of refugees reporting having soap during assessment (MSNA - target: 100%)

90% 10%

Achievement against target | Gap | Not targeted

Complementary programmes

- The Department of Public Health and Engineering (DPHE) operated two fecal sludge treatment plants and seven material recovery facilities with development support from the World Bank and Asian Development Bank. It also started operating the Omni Processor plant for improved fecal and solid waste management and operated 61 water networks in the camps.

Challenges

- Lack of essential WASH items (such as menstrual hygiene kits and soap) due to funding shortfalls have increased the risk of health- and nutrition-related diseases and compromised the dignity and privacy of women and girls. WASH is mentioned as the most needed Sector by beneficiaries in the host communities and fourth in the camps (MSNA, 2023). Between 2022 and 2023, six key WASH

indicators worsened, including safety of women latrine users at night (-13 per cent), women accessing menstrual hygiene kits (-18 per cent), and WASH corrective actions following complaints (-23 per cent).

Coordination and Cross-Cutting Issues



Building on previous efforts, in early 2023, the coordination structure was **streamlined** for both Cox's Bazar and Dhaka, improving decision-making and accountability, allowing more agile, fit-for-purpose, and cost-effective responses. A new coordination hub was inaugurated in February 2023, accommodating the Sectors and the ISCG Secretariat within one compound. A new Rohingya refugee response [website](#) was also launched in June, creating a one-stop shop for stakeholders to access resources and data.

Rationalization efforts continued in 2023, reviewing Sector activities, agency engagement, and opportunities for cost-savings and efficiencies to ensure effective service delivery across the 33 camps. A programme team was formed, including UN and NGO programme heads, to support Sectors in rationalization efforts and the JRP 2024 planning process.

Thanks to the favourable consideration of the Government of Bangladesh and the collaborative engagement of relevant partners including the NGO Platform, the **FD-7 project period** was extended from six months to one year, which represents significant progress for humanitarian access for partners in the Rohingya response. This development strengthens the operations of national and international NGOs and stands as a testament to the success of collective advocacy efforts.

Now centralized within the ISCG structure, **cross-cutting** issues – whose achievements are outlined below – continue to be mainstreamed across all Sectors and humanitarian partners.

- Comprised of 40+ members, the **Emergency Preparedness and Response** Working Group was reactivated with a revised TOR. In 2023, it drafted a comprehensive SOP on cyclone preparedness, anticipatory action, and response for camp operations, and a Disaster Management Committee (DMC) guideline, outlining the composition and functions of DMCs chaired by respective Camp-in-Charges. Training on disaster risk management was provided to all 627 DMC members and camp-level site management (SMS) partners also received training. The Multi-Hazard Response Plan was revised with stakeholders to enhance coordination. ISCG also supported training on multi-hazard preparedness and response, and SMS agency drills for camp-level volunteers in collaboration with IFRC.
- In 2023, the former Energy & Environment Technical Working Group (EETWG) transitioned to the **Energy and Environment Network** (EEN) as a cross-cutting multi-sector coordination platform, which continued to implement the EETWG Climate Action Strategy (2023-2025). EEN coordinated solar power and energy activities, and linked them to inter-sectoral needs, as degraded solar infrastructure in the camps result in less functional nighttime lighting and increased Protection and GBV risks. Reforestation activities continued with 94 hectares of land planted in 2023, marking a cumulative 720 hectares planted since 2018. Retaining this focus has reduced the frequency of landslide disasters, and improved the rehabilitation of the natural environment, by shifting refugees away from the reliance on wood for cooking fuel. Allocations of LPG must continue to prevent backtracking of the vast environmental progress thus far.
- Given that refugees in the camps are dependent on humanitarian assistance, and considering that there are more than 100 JRP partners in the camps, the operation is considered at high-risk to incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse. 100 per cent of JRP 2023 partners are members of the **Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse** (PSEA) Network, represented by 459 Focal Points and alternates. Through a network of 261 trainers, training on PSEA roles and

responsibilities, reporting and referral pathways was provided to 16,895 humanitarian staff and 25,038 Rohingya refugee and Bangladeshi volunteers in Cox's Bazar. In collaboration with INTERPOL, the Safeguarding and Resource Hub and FCDO, the PSEA Network conducted a Safer Recruitment workshop attended by 34 National and International NGOs and UN agencies, which focused on how to identify known perpetrators and prevent them from being re-hired. The PSEA network also launched the *Together We Say No* initiative and simplified communication materials to provide frontline workers and partners with crucial knowledge on PSEA.

- The **Gender in Humanitarian Action** Working Group supported appealing partners to strengthen the gender responsiveness of their proposals for 2024 JRP projects, advising on the application of the Gender with Age Marker tool and the integration of gender perspectives. It also finalized its report on Gender Equality in the Workplace based on a survey of 600 humanitarian actors, with recommendations to promote gender equality and prevent sexual exploitation and abuse in the humanitarian workplace.
- In 2023, the **Transfers Working Group** (TWG) implemented the Volunteer Engagement Guidance, harmonized volunteer incentives and established clear skill categories for refugee volunteers. All Sectors and partners were briefed on the new guidance and its operationalization. The TWG also identified needs and gaps for the implementation of cash and voucher programmes (namely a lack of resources for strengthening capacity in cash and voucher assistance).
- The newly formed **Accountability to Affected Populations** (AAP) Technical Working Group conducted an assessment to identify gaps and areas for improvement to strengthen AAP. The study reached 3,417 refugees across all 33 camps in Cox's Bazar to assess accountability among various actors in the response and understand refugees' perspectives on the existing complaints and feedback mechanisms. Formerly part of the Protection Sector, the **Age and Disability** Technical Working Group was also created as a cross-cutting, multi-sector platform in 2023.

Highlights from the Host Community

In 2023, working closely with the national and local authorities, JRP partners reached more than 321,000 Bangladeshi host community members⁴ in Cox's Bazar District in need due to the financial, social, and environmental impacts brought on by the protracted Rohingya crisis.

- **Food Security Sector** partners assisted 25,150 host community households (42 per cent of the target) with homestead garden projects. They also supported 28,100 farmers with agricultural livelihood projects and market linkages, including 62 aggregation centers supplying fresh food.
- The **Education Sector** reached 86,293 children at the 271 schools with different education programmes, education materials, and teacher training. Partners distributed learning materials directly to 15,098 enrolled learners (8,559 girls and 6,539 boys).
- **Health Sector** interventions ensured access and availability of quality lifesaving essential services to Bangladeshis living within a 30-minute walk to Sector-supported primary healthcare facilities or within 2 hours to a secondary healthcare facility (Ukhiya and Teknaf Health Complexes; Ukhiya Specialized Hospital). Service provision to host communities rose steadily with a 20 per cent increase in consultations in 2022 compared to 2021, and 30 per cent higher in 2023 (from 2022). Notably, consultations for the host community accounted for 14 per cent of the total consultations in 2023, a significant uptick. The Sector also expanded disease surveillance to cover all of Ukhiya and Teknaf upazilas, and all of Cox's Bazar for COVID-19.

⁴ Details on the number of people in need, targeted, and reached in Cox's Bazar, at inter-sector and sector level, can be found here: [Humanitarian Action](#).

- **Livelihoods and Skills Development Sector** initiatives reached 7,661 host community members, including 1,993 beneficiaries supported with market linkages. Other activities implemented in support of the host communities included the provision of vocational training (e.g. driver, carpenter, electrician, plumber), awareness training on cross-cutting issues (such as GBV and disaster risk reduction), business development and soft skills training (e.g. problem solving, leadership, communication, teamwork, critical thinking).
- **Nutrition Sector** partners reached over 99 per cent of targeted Bangladeshi children under 5, adolescent girls and pregnant and breastfeeding mothers in Ukhiya and Teknaf with preventive and curative activities, including infant and young child feeding, micronutrient supplementation, growth monitoring and promotion, and targeted supplementary feeding. Global acute malnutrition is above 11 per cent among Bangladeshi communities across Cox's Bazar District, which is classified as 'high'.
- Under the **Protection Sector**, 3,802 Bangladeshi volunteers were trained on disability inclusion with 8,968 local authorities, camp protection focal points and volunteers trained on protection principles and approaches. Direct protection assistance was provided to 365 host community members, and support with civil documentation extended to 1,013 individuals in need of assistance with birth, marriage and death certificates. At community-level, 144,077 Bangladeshis were engaged in initiatives to strengthen peaceful coexistence.
 - The **Gender-Based Violence Sub-Sector** contributed to improved GBV prevention, risk mitigation and response services in host communities through engaging 169,227 host community members in specialized prevention programmes and using mixed modalities including integrated sexual and reproductive health, nutrition, and GBV case management response services. To mitigate risks, the Sub-Sector is supporting the National Cluster to establish host community GBV Focal Points to establish a national GBV referral system.
 - The **Child Protection Sub-Sector** served 237,336 Bangladeshi children and their caregivers, and achieved 97 per cent of host community targets, engaging girls, boys, women and men in awareness-raising on child protection risks and safer environments. Specialized age and gender-sensitive child protection services reached 90 per cent of at-risk Bangladeshi children identified, while mental health and psychosocial support to children and adolescents reached 96 per cent of targets, fostering a supportive environment for children and adolescents.
- Host communities in close proximity to the camps received targeted **Shelter Camp Coordination and Camp Management Sector** assistance, benefitting from risk assessments and emergency preparedness and response planning. Shelter and NFI support to targeted Bangladeshi households included shelter repairs/construction; specific site management and site development activities; household-level lighting; and LPG refills.
- With support of the **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Sector**, 276,620 Bangladeshis accessed appropriate sanitation services in 2023, and 85 per cent of people reported having safe water to meet all their domestic needs. Through complementary assistance outside of the JRP mechanism, 11,207 Bangladeshis accessed safe sanitation services from the BDRCS.

While 10 per cent of 2023 funding received went towards the host community,⁵ JRP funding is only one part of the international community's broader development support to the Cox's Bazar host population. In 2023, the ISCG established a Development Unit and, in collaboration with UNDP, began a mapping exercise of overall host community support to enable better analysis of development needs and gaps, in relation to district priorities, and enhance coordination. The unit has also been engaging with government departments, humanitarian partners and international financial institutions (IFIs) to promote complementarity between the continued support from IFIs and the response in camps and

⁵ In addition to direct support to host communities, JRP partners continued to make significant contributions to the Bangladeshi economy through camp and host community activities. Domestic procurement of services, food and non-food items remained the modality of choice for humanitarian actors, including local procurement directly from Cox's Bazar and Chittagong Division.

host communities. UN agencies will continue to focus on localization in partner selection and capacity-building as part of the long-term investments in host communities.

Highlights from Bhasan Char

The humanitarian response on Bhasan Char island is coordinated by UNHCR through its refugee coordination mechanism and separate from the ISCG mechanism in place for the Rohingya response in Cox's Bazar. On Bhasan Char, close collaboration with government authorities continued to strengthen services and activities to meet the humanitarian and protection needs of over 32,000 refugees on the island. The Government ensured that relocations to the island remained voluntary and based on informed decisions by the refugees. In 2023, the quality of services improved significantly in terms of the provision of protection, site management, education, WASH, health, and food. While Rohingya refugees on the island share similar needs to those in the Cox's Bazar camps, the geographical location of Bhasan Char presents a distinct set of needs and opportunities.

Common Services and Logistics



Achievements

Sector Lead Agency: WFP

- Inter-agency logistics coordination continued to streamline the humanitarian response. Common logistical services such as warehouse management, capacity building, monthly physical inventory for both food and non-food items were provided, including emergency stock facilitation. An average of 602 tons of cargo and 188 humanitarian personnel were transported monthly. The operational network coverage for very high frequency (VHF) radio was improved as a VHF repeater power issue was resolved. Meanwhile, uninterrupted internet connectivity was ensured for all four UN agencies present on the island and government sites.

Challenges

- During the monsoon season, the transportation of commodities was challenging due to rough weather, sudden rains, and a lack of adequate unloading facilities. The absence of adequate commercial transportation options continued to affect the timely rotation and presence of humanitarian personnel. Weather conditions also led to the infestation of commodities and food waste. Delays in handing over the warehouses, accommodation building and common facilities to the Sector further constrained the quality of services provided.

Education



Achievements

Sector Lead Agency: UNICEF

- Eighty per cent of all children on Bhasan Char have access to education. Enrolment in early childhood education, and primary and secondary school increased by 30 per cent in 2023, from 8,865 children (4,466 girls and 4,399 boys) to 11,547 children at year-end (5,717 girls and 5,830 boys). This progress can be largely attributed to robust community engagement with parents of out-of-school children, especially parents of adolescent girls. As compared with 2022, girls' enrolment increased by 28 per cent and the enrolment of children with disabilities increased by 53 per cent (78 to 120 students with disabilities). The number of teachers meanwhile increased by 37 per cent (from 226 to 310 teachers) with the number of female teachers increasing from 71 to 101 women, and, in 2023, 60 per cent of teachers teaching the Myanmar Curriculum completed subject-based foundational pedagogy training.

Challenges

- The current school infrastructure is not suitable for learners with certain types of disabilities, however, structural modification is challenging due to their design and primary function as cyclone shelters. Due to limited funds, some partners experienced difficulties maintaining operations and ensuring education quality in line with the Sector's standards, including timely payment of volunteer teachers' incentives. Additional classrooms are needed, including classroom spaces for girls-only sessions, to increase adolescent girls' enrolment and to bring out-of-school children back to learning.

Food Security



Achievements

Sector Lead Agency: WFP

- All refugee households received food assistance at the full ration through commodity vouchers and/or e-voucher modalities. All relocated refugees received hot meals immediately upon arrival, and thereafter were transitioned to monthly food assistance through commodity vouchers. As of December 2023, 44 per cent of the population was served under the e-voucher modality, and a fresh food market was established to enhance beneficiaries' access to fresh food products at fair prices. Due to logistics challenges and the high costs of investment, the Sector was unable to attract vendors to Bhasan Char.

Challenges

- The majority of the population was served through commodity vouchers, and the lack of fixed food distribution points made community mobilization and distribution planning challenging. As the management of island warehouses had not been handed over to the Common Services and Logistics Sector, maintaining the quality of the stored food commodities continued to be challenging.

Health and Nutrition



Achievements

Sector Lead Agency: UNHCR

- All refugees had access to health services with 11,766 cases referred to health facilities in 2023. Children aged 6 to 59 months and pregnant and breastfeeding women were enrolled into the blanket or targeted supplementary feeding programmes (BSFP, TSFP), or outpatient therapeutic programme (children only) according to their nutrition status, with 13,148 children enrolled in the BSFP. General health cards were rolled out, reaching 97 per cent of the refugee population and reducing duplication, which lowered consultation rates by 13 per cent by year-end.

Challenges

- The absence of specialized treatment to address acute medical conditions (e.g., surgery, obstetrics, gynecology, pediatrics) at the 20-bed hospital, and absence of facilities to manage and treat serious mental health cases created a gap in comprehensive health care. Frequent partner staff turnover remained a challenge due to the island's remoteness and limited accommodation facilities.

Livelihoods and Skills Development



Achievements

Sector Lead Agencies: UNHCR, WFP, BRAC

- Vocational skills training, commercial-scale agriculture, aquaculture and livestock rearing continued to improve livelihoods on Bhasan Char. Nineteen actors were active in vocational training, enterprise

development, and facilitation of agricultural, livestock and fisheries activities. Some 1,500 refugees were engaged as volunteers, while 1,650 refugees received skills training. 6,264 refugees received agricultural production kits, of which 1,000 were involved in the field outside the clusters. Refugees produced 200 tons of vegetable, 13 tons of fish and 10 tons of broiler chicken. Most households received a land allocation for agricultural purposes with 1,000 vulnerable households receiving more than 150 square metres.

Challenges

- Several factors continued to hinder efforts to enhance refugees' skills, productivity and resilience. These included: limited literacy and numeracy required for skill training, limited cultivable land, the high salinity of both soil and water, funding shortages, limited connectivity and market linkages, minimal private sector involvement, and lack of access to financial services and markets.

Protection



Achievements

Sector Lead Agency: UNHCR

- Monitoring of five relocations during the reporting period assisted humanitarian partners to confirm that refugees' decision to relocate to Bhasan Char were generally voluntary character in nature. Various protection and security concerns of the relocated refugees identified during monitoring were addressed by humanitarian partners in collaboration with the authorities. Training and monitoring of several crosscutting themes – i.e., protection mainstreaming; child safeguarding; PSEA; AAP; GBV mainstreaming; code of conduct; age, gender and diversity; and gender mainstreaming – were conducted for partners and refugee volunteers. A workplan for mental health and psychosocial support, and prevention of suicide was also developed and rolled out. Through a continuous registration process, refugee population data and biometrics were updated, with 7,735 documents issued. 11 partners were enrolled in UNHCR's global distribution tool, through which stipends are disbursed to volunteers and cash-for-work participants.
- A review of child protection case management and a case clean-up exercise were conducted in the first quarter of 2023. These provided a better understanding of child protection cases and statistical data for evidenced-based planning, and highlighted gaps and areas for capacity building and development. A joint child protection workplan 2023-2024 was also developed and rolled out.
- GBV incident reporting in 2023 increased by 400 per cent compared to 2022, reflecting the community's growing confidence in the response services. The opening of the second legal assistance centre contributed to the strengthened legal response in the form of refugees' access to legal counseling and legal assistance in 2023, including in seeking legal redress on 11 cases related to serious crimes.
- All refugees on Bhasan Char were reached through recreation and protection awareness sessions (6,319 sessions were held) conducted by community outreach volunteers using an age, gender and disability approach.

Challenges

- Due to the remote location and camp set-up of Bhasan Char, several challenges persisted in terms of timely, quality delivery of services, safety, and access to legal assistance for refugees. This included a lack of the following: temporary safe shelters, a one-stop crisis centre, and effective legal assistance for GBV survivors and children at risk. The lack of robust pre-relocation screening mechanisms in the Cox's Bazar camps resulted in the relocation of individuals at heightened risk, including unaccompanied and separated children, child spouses and persons with disabilities to Bhasan Char.

Site Management, Shelter, and NFI



Achievements

Sector Lead Agency: UNHCR

- All refugee households received non-food items and core relief items on a monthly basis and – for new arrivals – shortly after their relocation to Bhasan Char. Despite funding challenges, the supply of LPG for cooking was ensured for all households, except for a five-day disruption in October due to insufficient partner stocks. 9,791 requests and concerns from refugees were effectively processed through the community feedback mechanism desk.
- The Sector developed a response strategy and an inter-sector cyclone standard operating procedure, which were effectively implemented during the three cyclones that affected the response in 2023. 11,094 individuals participated in capacity building and awareness sessions, including on emergency response and planning. A multisectoral workshop was conducted to improve response planning and 53 drills were conducted as part of emergency response planning. 2,403 refugee households received support for shelter maintenance.

Challenges

- The lack of a power grid and effective solar power infrastructure resulted in heavy reliance on diesel generators. The regular maintenance of refugee shelters, facilities, and public infrastructure remains critical.

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene



Achievements

Sector Lead Agency: UNICEF

- All refugees on Bhasan Char had access to functional WASH services. Enhancements were made to WASH facilities, notably to increase accessibility and safety for persons with disabilities and women. All refugee households received WASH items, including soap, menstrual hygiene kits, and water purifying tablets. 1,175 open boreholes were sealed to protect groundwater contamination, and a groundwater monitoring model was developed and monitored regularly.
- To improve waste management, the Sector introduced a plastic recycling plant and solid waste incinerator and began constructing a new sanitary landfill. The solid waste management plant produced an average of 1.7 tons of compost per month for distribution to livelihoods projects.

Challenges

- Continued plastic waste and fecal sludge management, along with WASH facility maintenance, remain critical. Limited understanding of good hygiene practices within the refugee community continued to be a challenge.

Assessments

Cross-sectoral assessments for Cox's Bazar can be found [here](#). This includes the Joint Multi Sectoral Needs Assessment (J-MSNA) 2023 for the [camps](#) and [host communities](#), the fourth J-MSNA conducted in Bangladesh since 2018, and the first conducted with face-to-face interviews since 2019.

To see sector-specific assessments and 2023 information products from Cox's Bazar, visit the respective Sector and Cross-Cutting webpages at rohingyaresponse.org.

The 2023 Bhasan Char Needs Assessment can be found [here](#).