

Bangladesh – Complex Emergency

May 9, 2024

SITUATION AT A GLANCE

1.55 MILLION	1.35 MILLION	943,000	35,000	\$852.4 MILLION
Number of People in Need in 2024	People Targeted for Humanitarian Assistance in 2024	Number of Rohingya Refugees in Cox's Bazar	Number of Rohingya Refugees on Bhasan Char Island	Required Funding to Meet Needs of the 2024 Joint Response Plan
<i>UN – March 2024</i>	<i>UN – March 2024</i>	<i>UNHCR – March 2024</i>	<i>UNHCR – March 2024</i>	<i>UN – March 2024</i>

- The USG announced nearly \$31 million in additional humanitarian aid to support Rohingya refugees and host communities in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar District and Bhasan Char Island on May 9.
- The 2024 Joint Response Plan for the Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis requests \$852.4 million to reach 1.35 million people—including both Rohingya refugees and host community members—with humanitarian assistance in Bangladesh.
- Humanitarian actors have raised concerns about a rise in reported protection incidents in Cox's Bazar, such as killings, abductions, extortion, and physical assaults, as well as forced marriage and psychological abuse.



TOTAL U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN FUNDING

For the Rohingya Regional Crisis Response in FY 2024

USAID/BHA¹ \$89,000,000

State/PRM² \$28,530,000

For complete funding breakdown with partners, see detailed chart on page 5

Total \$117,530,000

¹ USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA)

² U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM)

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

USG Announces Nearly \$31 Million in Additional Humanitarian Assistance for Rohingya Refugees and Host Communities in Bangladesh for FY 2024

The U.S. Government (USG) announced nearly \$31 million in additional humanitarian aid in support of Rohingya refugees and host communities in Bangladesh and the region, during a visit to Bangladesh by U.S. Representative to the UN Agencies for Food and Agriculture Jeffrey Prescott on May 9. The funding includes approximately \$29 million via the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM) to support partners, including the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), to provide education, health, nutrition, protection, shelter, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) assistance. The additional funding through USAID/BHA will also support UNICEF with \$2 million to prevent malnutrition amongst Rohingya Refugees residing in Cox's Bazar District and Bhasan Char Island—a silt island in the Bay of Bengal—through ready-to-use therapeutic foods (RUTF), formulated to treat wasting—the deadliest form of malnutrition—which remains a prevalent concern in Rohingya children ages five years and younger. The announcement brings the total USG assistance in response to the Rohingya refugee crisis to nearly \$2.4 billion overall—including more than \$1.9 billion for refugees and host communities in Bangladesh alone—since August 2017.

The 2024 JRP Aims to Reach 1.35 Million People Across Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char with Humanitarian Assistance in 2024

An estimated 1.55 million people across Bangladesh—including Rohingya refugees and Bangladeshi host communities—will likely require humanitarian assistance in 2024, according to the 2024 Joint Response Plan (JRP) for the Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis released by the UN in March. In response, the JRP requests more than \$852 million to reach 1.35 million people—comprising approximately 932,000 Rohingya refugees and 346,000 host community members in Cox's Bazar and an anticipated 75,000 Rohingya refugees in Bhasan Char—with multi-sector assistance during the year. The combined effects of high inflation, socioeconomic challenges, and stressed public services and infrastructure, compounded by recurrent natural disasters—including cyclones, fires, floods, and landslides—have exacerbated the needs of refugees and host communities, according to the UN. During the launch of the JRP in Geneva, Switzerland in March, the UN noted that underfunding of annual JRPs in previous years has had serious implications for Rohingya refugees in the camps, 95 percent of whom rely on humanitarian assistance to meet basic needs due to a lack of livelihood opportunities. Meanwhile, the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) had relocated approximately 35,000 refugees to Bhasan Char as of March 2024, and plans to relocate up to 100,000 by the end of 2024; humanitarian actors plan to adjust the scale of assistance provided to the refugees on the island depending on the number that relocate there during the year, in coordination with the GoB.

Addressing food insecurity is a high priority for the 2024 JRP, which aims to support 1.23 million people in Cox's Bazar and an anticipated 75,000 people in Bhasan Char with emergency food assistance during the year. Nearly 433,000 Rohingya refugees experienced Crisis—IPC 3—or higher levels of acute food insecurity in February and March due to reduced food rations, lack of access to livelihood opportunities, and repeated climatic shocks in the country, according to an April 2024 IPC analysis.³ The analysis

³ The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is a multi-partner initiative that developed a standardized scale to classify the severity and magnitude of food insecurity. The IPC scale, which is comparable across countries, ranges from Minimal—IPC 1—to Famine—IPC 5—for acute food insecurity.

estimated food insecurity would worsen for these populations between April and October due to the effects of the annual cyclone season, with more than 581,000 refugees projected to experience Crisis or higher levels of acute food insecurity, representing approximately 60 percent of the total Rohingya refugee population in Bangladesh.

Violence and Other Protection Incidents Continue to Increase Inside Cox's Bazar

Serious protection incidents—including killings, abductions, extortion, and physical assaults—in Cox's Bazar's 33 refugee camps increased by 10 percent between October and December 2023, compared to the July-to-September 2023 period, highlighting continued risks to the safety of vulnerable populations, according to the February Protection Sector's Joint Protection Monitoring Report, based on monitoring by two UN agencies and four NGOs. The rise in insecurity in the camps has led some refugees to attempt to relocate from Cox's Bazar via dangerous journeys by sea to other countries. Additionally, the rise in violence between multiple armed criminal groups within the refugee camps has driven community leaders and volunteers to resign, indicating a breakdown in community leadership, according to the Joint Protection Monitoring Report. This insecurity and resultant lack of safe mobility in the camps, combined with reductions in basic services, have resulted in heightened risks of gender-based violence (GBV), including assault, forced marriage, and psychological abuse. GBV remains severely underreported in the camps due to various factors including fear among survivors, according to camp focal points for GBV response.

Restrictions Increase Along Bangladesh–Burma Border Due to Escalated Fighting in Rakhine

On February 7, the GoB announced increased restrictions along the Bangladesh–Burma border, citing security concerns due to a rise in armed clashes in Burma's Rakhine State, which neighbors Cox's Bazar, and an increase in crime in Cox's Bazar, as well as a lack of sufficient international support for humanitarian assistance within the refugee camps, according to international media. The border restrictions follow multiple unsuccessful GoB attempts to facilitate repatriation of Rohingya refugees to Burma. Humanitarian actors remain highly concerned about the potential repatriation of Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh to Burma before conditions for safe, voluntary, and sustainable returns exist due to the ongoing violence and humanitarian access constraints in Rakhine. Furthermore, Bangladesh border guards have allegedly denied access to hundreds of civilians, including Rohingya, fleeing violence in Burma between January and April 2024, according to an NGO.

KEY FIGURES



\$87 Million

In USAID/BHA support for emergency food assistance and nutrition in FY 2024

U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

USAID/BHA provides funding to the UN World Food Program (WFP) to deliver emergency food assistance, such as food vouchers, to refugees and host communities in Bangladesh. USAID/BHA also supports complementary nutrition services, as well as coordination and capacity-building activities among other food security actors in Bangladesh to strengthen response efforts. In addition, State/PRM supports IOM, UNHCR, UNICEF, and NGO partners to deliver complementary livelihood and nutrition services to refugees and other vulnerable individuals in Bangladesh. USAID/BHA also supports UNICEF to provide nutrition assistance, including malnutrition screenings for mothers and children and the delivery of RUTF.



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USG partners supporting protection assistance programming

PROTECTION

USAID/BHA and State/PRM support humanitarian partners to address protection concerns among host communities and Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar. USG-supported protection activities focus on increasing access to protection services such as GBV prevention and response, child-friendly spaces, community-based mental health and psychosocial support, and legal assistance.



70,000

Households received tie-down kits from USG partners for cyclone and monsoon prevention during FY 2023

SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS

USAID/BHA works with partners in Bangladesh to enhance community resilience to cyclones and other natural disasters by conducting disaster risk reduction activities, as well as infrastructure rehabilitation in host communities in Bandarban and Cox's Bazar districts. State/PRM-supported shelter assistance in Bangladesh includes disaster preparedness, emergency shelter repairs, and distribution of shelter materials, such as plastic sheeting to prevent roof leaks, complemented by site coordination capacity-building activities. USG partners also provide cash assistance for host community members and refugees to purchase local shelter materials to improve the resilience of their living spaces to natural disasters.



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USG partners implementing critical WASH programming

WASH

With State/PRM funding, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), IFRC, IOM, UNHCR, and UNICEF address critical WASH needs in Cox's Bazar by improving drainage and waste removal systems, installing handwashing stations and latrines, providing hygiene supplies and safe drinking water, and strengthening community awareness of proper WASH practices to reduce the spread of disease.

CONTEXT IN BRIEF

- Bangladesh hosts nearly 1 million Burmese refugees, the majority of whom belong to the Rohingya ethnic minority group. The refugees fled Rakhine State in August 2017 after Burma's military forces launched large-scale and indiscriminate military operations, which the USG has since characterized as genocide. Nearly 943,000 of these refugees are residing in 33 crowded camps in Cox's Bazar, while more than 35,000 refugees had been relocated to Noakhali District's Bhasan Char Island as of March 2024.
- The potential repatriation of Rohingya refugees to Burma remains a primary concern among humanitarian actors and the international community, due to continued human rights violations against Rohingya populations in Burma and persistent humanitarian access restrictions that would limit relief actors' ability to provide assistance upon repatriation. Since the initial influx of more than 742,000 refugees in August 2017, the GoB has made multiple unsuccessful attempts to repatriate the refugees to Burma in November 2018 and August 2019, as well as renewed talks during 2023, which remain ongoing in 2024. Rohingya in Bangladesh have expressed concern regarding their physical safety should they return and uncertainty regarding citizenship status, voting rights, and ability to return to their home villages.

- Bangladesh is one of the most climate-affected countries in the world, regularly exposed to recurrent natural hazards, including cyclones, floods, monsoon rains, and storm surges. Climatic shocks during FY 2023 exacerbated Rohingya refugee needs in Bangladesh. Tropical Cyclone Mocha in May 2023 and heavy monsoon rainfall in August 2023 resulted in damage to critical infrastructure and temporarily displaced refugees, thereby increasing refugee needs for food assistance, livelihood support, protection services, safe drinking water, and shelter.
- On October 15, 2023, U.S. Ambassador Peter D. Haas re-issued a declaration of humanitarian need for FY 2024 in response to ongoing humanitarian needs among Rohingya refugees and host communities in Bangladesh.

USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE ROHINGYA REGIONAL CRISIS RESPONSE IN FY 2024¹

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	AMOUNT
FUNDING IN BANGLADESH FOR THE ROHINGYA CRISIS RESPONSE			
USAID/BHA			
UNICEF	Nutrition	Cox's Bazar, Bhasan Char	\$2,000,000
WFP	Disaster Risk Reduction Policy and Practice; Food Assistance—Food Vouchers, Local, Regional, and International Procurement (LRIP); Nutrition	Cox's Bazar	\$87,000,000
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING IN BANGLADESH			\$89,000,000
STATE/PRM			
ICRC	Multi-Sector Assistance	Cox's Bazar	\$200,000
IFRC	Health, Livelihoods and Economic Recovery, MPCA, Protection, Risk Management Policy and Practice (RMPP), WASH	Cox's Bazar	\$2,400,000
IOM	Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM); COVID-19 Response; Health; Humanitarian Coordination, Information Management, and Assessments (HCIMA); Livelihoods and Economic Recovery; Logistics Support; Monitoring and Evaluation; Protection; Shelter and Settlements; RMPP; WASH	Cox's Bazar	\$7,600,000
UNHCR	Multi-Sector Assistance	Cox's Bazar	\$9,630,000
UNICEF	COVID-19 Response, Education, HCIMA, Health, Monitoring and Evaluation, Nutrition, Protection, RMPP, WASH	Cox's Bazar	\$6,000,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING IN BANGLADESH			\$25,830,000
TOTAL USG FUNDING IN BANGLADESH			\$114,830,000
REGIONAL FUNDING FOR THE ROHINGYA CRISIS RESPONSE			
IOM	Multi-Sector Assistance	Indonesia	\$2,700,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM REGIONAL FUNDING			\$2,700,000
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING FOR THE ROHINGYA REGIONAL CRISIS			\$89,000,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING FOR THE ROHINGYA REGIONAL CRISIS			\$28,530,000
TOTAL USG FUNDING FOR THE ROHINGYA REGIONAL CRISIS RESPONSE IN FY 2024			\$117,530,000

¹ Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. Funding figures reflect publicly announced funding as of May 9, 2024.

PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for disaster responses around the world can be found at [interaction.org](https://www.interaction.org).
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed, often in the affected region; reduce the burden on scarce resources, such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space; can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietarily, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
 - USAID Center for International Disaster Information: [cidi.org](https://www.cidi.org)
 - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at [reliefweb.int](https://www.reliefweb.int).

USAID/BHA bulletins appear on the USAID website at [usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work](https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work)