

NRC's operations in Bangladesh

Humanitarian overview

2022 marks the fifth year of displacement for the Rohingya people. Since violence broke out in the Rakhine state of Myanmar in 2017, over 898,000 men, women and children have fled across the border into Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh, joining an estimated 212,000 refugees already living in the area.

As the Rohingya lack secure legal status and cannot move freely or work, they must rely entirely on humanitarian aid. Considered stateless, the Rohingya now make their homes in one of the most congested refugee camps in the world, living in bamboo shelters perched precariously on land prone to extreme weather events including flooding and landslides, and uniquely vulnerable to the ongoing impact of Covid-19. Access to basic services, including adequate sanitation, healthcare, livelihoods and education, remains limited.

Refugees have certainly put a strain on the half a million Bangladeshis living in Cox's Bazar, including on the environment, but the Bangladeshi community—who were the first to respond when the Rohingya arrived—continue to generously host and support refugees.

NRC's operation

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) works in Cox's Bazar in response to the Rohingya crisis, and in areas such as Sylhet in the north-east addressing the impacts of climate change. Alongside partners, our integrated operations include shelter and water, hygiene and sanitation (WASH), responding to weather-related emergencies, ensuring education continuity through in-person and digital learning, and scaling up information counselling for refugees and host Bangladeshis, reaching over 150,000 people per year. Our approach to humanitarian action focuses on principled aid delivery and promotes the agency and dignity of impacted populations.

NRC Bangladesh

Legal registration	2018
International staff	5
National staff	95



NRC Bangladesh

Country office

Dhaka

Areas of operation

Cox's Bazar District, Sylhet



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Education

Our education programme responds to the needs of refugee and Bangladeshi adolescents and youth in Cox's Bazar. We engage youth in formal and non-formal education activities in safe spaces through:

- life skills sessions that help youth and adolescents avoid threats and mitigate protection risks
- training teachers and building capacity in psycho-social support, health and hygiene, and disaster risk management to support the wellbeing and safety of youth
- non-formal education for adolescents and youth through community-based spaces including basic literacy and numeracy

We are also working with local NGOs to establish curriculum guidelines and tools to support skills development and vocational activities. NRC co-leads the youth working group in the Rohingya refugee response.

Information, counselling and legal assistance (ICLA)

ICLA's team of trained lawyers work with national and international agencies and volunteers to assess protection concerns, mediate disputes, and facilitate negotiations between Rohingya refugees and host Bangladeshis. ICLA's strategic objectives include:

- assisting individuals with obtaining identity and/or civil documents
- assisting individuals with overcoming legal and procedural obstacles related to the security of tenure
- contributing towards solutions of identified and documented issues of concern through advocacy initiatives
- improving condition of and access to judicial mechanisms for affected community members

We also support the Housing, Land, and Property (HLP) Technical Forum, establishing an evidence base through eviction monitoring, land tenure mapping, and conflict analysis.

Shelter and WASH

We help Rohingya refugees and the most vulnerable host community members facing deterioration of shelter, a lack of adequate lighting, and access to safe, hygienic facilities by:

- carrying out our partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to provide transitional shelter assistance
- providing solar household systems kits to promote renewable solutions
- constructing water points and submersible pumps

Emergency

We maintain an emergency roster of staff with various backgrounds who are ready to be deployed within 24 hours. We respond to emergencies through:

- multi-purpose cash grants
- WASH and shelter support to assist early recovery
- contingency stocks and emergency assistance including hygiene kits, and non-food items

Advocacy

Advocacy is a pillar of NRC's work and underscores our commitment to the protection of the rights of displaced communities. We work with partner agencies, donors, and authorities to communicate the voices and needs of affected populations, and push for sustainable solutions, through:

- reports and white papers, including our assessment of youth inclusion in the response
- donor engagement, including quarterly briefings to inform response trajectory
- public scholarship and partnerships with national and international outlets, and reputable think tanks
- grassroots relationships with refugee youth to amplify community capacity to self-advocate

Climate resilience

We are committed to providing emergency assistance and contributing towards the early recovery of affected communities across the country. Our ongoing emergency response is aligned with our goal to serve climate-affected Bangladeshis, one in seven of whom might be displaced by 2050.

We commit to working within the scope of our core competencies, and in tandem with local and national partners, to respond to and support people to adapt to changing environmental conditions in ways that increase resilience and assist recovery.

NRC Bangladesh is grateful for the generous support from our donors:

