

16 May 2023



Photo: IOM Rohingya refugee volunteers.

Situation Overview - IOM Area of Responsibility key figures



15,366
individuals
affected



3,171
households
affected



2,745
shelters partially
damaged



250
shelters totally
damaged



11
water points
damaged



48
latrines
damaged

Cox's Bazar, and the Rohingya refugee camps located there, are in one of the most disaster-vulnerable areas in Bangladesh and around the world. The camps have approximately 930,000 Rohingya refugees divided into thirty-three camps. These camps are located near the northern edge of the Bay of Bengal. Refugees' shelters are largely constructed from bamboo poles and tarpaulins - making them highly vulnerable to the impacts of cyclones, including flooding and landslides. Women, children, the elderly and people with disabilities are the most vulnerable.

Cyclone Mocha made landfall on 14 May 2023 around the Bangladesh - Myanmar border. "Danger Signal 10" had been declared by the Government of Bangladesh in Cox's Bazar and neighbouring coastal districts. Three flags – the highest warning signal – were hoisted in the camps of Cox's Bazar and neighbouring areas.

While Cox's Bazar was largely spared the full force of the cyclone. The intense and heavy wind and rainfall destroyed or damaged shelters, water points, latrines, culverts, bridges and other key community infrastructure. Prior to 14 May, IOM supported with much of the preparedness work on a 'no-regret' basis in coordination with the authorities and humanitarian agencies, as well as continuously observing the situation as it unfolded.

429,377
Bangladeshi
nationals affected
in Cox's Bazar,
Chattogram,
Noakhali and Feni

930,292
Rohingya refugees
in Cox's Bazar

Sources:
Bangladesh: Cyclone Mocha
Humanitarian Response
Situation Report as of
15 May 2023



In preparation of the storm, IOM's work included the following:

Disaster response teams across the camps assessed the integrity of roof tie-downs, and tested ropes and covers. As needed materials were repaired or replaced.

Teams prepositioned contingency stocks of emergency items for refugee shelters and host community families.

Teams removed obstructions from drainage systems and replaced rotten or damaged construction materials.

Bangladeshi volunteers were mobilized in the camps to spread messages on shelter tie-down, ties and connections, and proper drainage.

Community emergency preparedness meetings were held.



Impact on the Refugee Response

This year's Joint Response Plan for the Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis is only 16 per cent funded as of May 2023. This means that without extra support, any additional needs will not be able to be met. Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh have been facing a particularly challenging year; General Food Assistance for refugees was cut to 17 per cent earlier this year, and further cuts are expected in June. WASH operational costs were cut by 25 per cent, the infrastructure rebuilding plan has been suspended, and monthly soap distribution has been cut by 38 per cent for the time being. If additional funding is not secured, soap distribution will need to be totally stopped in IOM areas or responsibility. Emergency funds were utilized to support 16,000 refugees who lost their homes in a fire in March.

