

### 1. Crisis overview<sup>i</sup>

<b>4 / 5</b>	<b>7.95 million</b>	<b>3.8 million</b>	<b>\$986.4</b>	<b>41.6%</b>
Inform severity index	People in need of humanitarian aid (JRP 2024 & HRP 2024-2025)	People targeted in the response plan (JRP 2024 & HRP 2024-2025)	Required to reach the target (JRP 2024 & HRP 2024-2025)	Of the required funding secured (JRP 2024 & HRP 2024-2025)
<b>77 MSEK</b>	<b>15 MSEK</b>	<b>32.5 MSEK</b>	<b>124.5 MSEK</b>	
Initial allocation	Additional allocation	Flexible funding	Total Sida funding 2024	

Bangladesh is vulnerable to both disasters and climate change and is ranked the seventh most disaster risk-prone country in the world as per the Global Climate Risk Index. This triggers humanitarian crises on a cyclical basis and in 2024 over 18.4 million people have been affected by four climate emergencies in Bangladesh. Cyclone Remal in the southwest followed by devastating floods and heavy rains in the north and eastern parts of the country have displaced millions, destroyed crops, shelters and infrastructure, and disrupting education and livelihoods which will likely exacerbate the needs of the 16.5 million people already facing acute food insecurity (IP Phase 3 or above). In August, largescale anti-government protests resulted in violence and hundreds of casualties, leading to the resignation of the Hasina government.

It is now seven years since the start of the Rohingya crisis. Close to 1 million Rohingya have been displaced from Rakhine State in Myanmar following systematic ethnic violence. The Rohingya mainly reside within 33 camps in Cox's Bazar district which are the largest and most densely populated camps in the world. Due to its location, Cox's Bazar is particularly vulnerable to flash floods during monsoon seasons and frequent cyclones. Restrictions of the rights of Rohingya refugees continue with limited freedom of movement, no right to livelihood and income generation, formal education and without any durable solutions in sight. These restrictions contribute to a deteriorating security situation and already severe protection crisis, with an increase in organised crime (drugs and human trafficking, kidnapping and abductions), homicides, suicide and political violence. The dire conditions have led to an increase of refugees leaving Bangladesh, often embarking on dangerous routes at sea. Despite escalating violence in Rakhine State, Myanmar, the government maintains its 'closed border' policy, denying access to safety in Bangladesh, with reports of thousands of incidents of refoulement in recent months.

## 2. Humanitarian needs & affected population

In the past year, Bangladesh has seen a rapidly deteriorating situation of acute food insecurity in several parts of the country. The highest percentage of population in IPC 4 (emergency phase) are the Rohingya refugees and people living in Sunamganj and Kurigram districts. Food insecurity is fuelled by a 12-year high inflation of 11.66 per cent, reduced purchasing power, high unemployment and record high food prices, especially in agricultural areas affected by recurring climate shocks. Following the landfall of Cyclone Remal on 26 May 2024, more than 4.6 million people were affected by extensive flooding and destruction across 8 coastal districts. This was soon followed by flooding in north-eastern regions of the country in June, causing further damage to homes, infrastructure and livelihoods of 3.7 million people. In July, another 7 districts in north-western region were flooded, impacting over 5 million people. In August, 11 districts in eastern Bangladesh were struck by flash floods, affecting an additional 5.8 million people. In total, more than 18.3 million people have been affected by climate emergencies since May, including 4.8 million who had their agricultural livelihoods impacted and at least 1.5 million people who were displaced. As a result, the risk of waterborne disease has increased along with food insecurity, further depleting community resilience and forcing people to resort to negative coping mechanisms such as child labour, child marriage and school dropouts. The July 2024 curfews, internet restrictions and disruptions to communications have disrupted supply chains and led to further deterioration in the food security situation across the country.

Even before food ration cuts were introduced in Cox's Bazar in 2023 due to funding shortages, malnutrition levels amongst Rohingya children were alarming and included wasting (12.3 per cent), stunting (41 per cent), underweight (36.7 per cent) and anaemia (50.5 per cent). The 2023 Standardized Expanded Nutrition Survey results indicate a deteriorating acute malnutrition situation of very high public health concern with a global acute malnutrition (GAM) rate at 15.1 per cent, exceeding the WHO/UNICEF emergency threshold of 15 per cent. The isolated island Bhasan Char which hosts 35,500 Rohingya refugees has not yet been affected by food ration cuts but malnutrition levels remain high amongst children aged 6-59 months with lower yet similar levels of stunting, wasting and anaemia. It is expected that current flooding and increasing food insecurity in the country is likely to have a further negative impact on child nutrition and the overall protective environment for vulnerable groups. This is evidenced in the camps in Cox's Bazar where the dire situation is having a negative impact on the protective environment with organisations on the ground reporting a deteriorating security situation with increased levels of criminal activity and gender-based violence (GBV). There have also been reports of increased tension and conflict between host communities and Rohingya refugees, for example in regard to income opportunities and payment of rent by refugees in exchange for using land. Women, girls, and boys, who make up more than 75 per cent of the refugee population, are vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, and GBV. Children make up more than half of the refugee population and are particularly vulnerable.

The political imperative within Bangladesh to treat the Rohingya influx as a temporary crisis with repatriation as the only solution, is limiting longer-term planning and infrastructural

investment. Rohingya refugees lack freedom of movement outside the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar and on Bhasan Char and have limited access to fulfilment of their rights to basic services and opportunities. There has been some progress in the lengthy advocacy work in improving rights to education and skills development opportunities. However, the Refugee Influx Emergency Vulnerability Assessment (REVA-6) report indicates that 95 per cent of all Rohingya households are moderately to highly vulnerable and remain entirely dependent on humanitarian assistance. The most commonly reported needs for Bangladeshi host communities around the camps in Cox's Bazar include shelter materials, income-generating activities and employment and healthcare. Other priority needs among the host community include cooking fuel, access to safe and functional latrines and clean drinking water.

Forceful repatriation to Myanmar is a constant threat and the construction of transit camps in Rakhine State in Myanmar has been reported. It remains to be seen whether the interim government of Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus will change government policies towards Rohingya refugees. The international community maintains its firm position that conditions need to be conducive for repatriation to take place and that repatriation needs to be voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable. UNHCR must have access to oversee and monitor the voluntary return and reintegration of Rohingya in Myanmar.

### 3. The humanitarian response

The humanitarian responses in Bangladesh are coordinated through two separate structures, both co-led by the UN Resident Coordinator (RC). The humanitarian response outside of the Rohingya response is mostly related to **climate disasters** and is planned and coordinated through the Humanitarian Coordination Task Team (HCTT), which is co-led by the UN RC and the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR). The HCTT develops Humanitarian Response Plans (HRP) for specific humanitarian crises, mostly natural disasters, and has done so in the form of the Cyclone and Monsoon Floods Humanitarian Response Plan (June-December 2024). Following widespread flooding in August 2024, the HRP was revised and extended from June 2024 to March 2025. More than 18.4 million have been affected, with 6.4 million people in need. The revised Cyclone and Monsoon Floods Humanitarian Response Plan (June 2024-March 2025) aim to target 2.5 million people with a revised funding requirement of \$134 million. As of end of September, the HRP is funded at 11.5 per cent. Sector and cluster leads are working closely with authorities and local organisations in assessing needs and coordinating the response, but waterlogged areas and the recent government ouster, and the subsequent changes to leaders in both national and local government authorities, might have a negative impact on the efficiency of the humanitarian response to the multiple natural disasters impacting Bangladesh since the spring.

**Rohingya crisis response:** The Rohingya crisis response is planned in the annual Joint Response Plans (JRP) and led by the Strategic Executive Group (SEG), chaired by the UN RC, UNHCR and IOM, which liaises with Bangladesh's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The current UN-led Joint Response Plan (JRP) 2024 for the Rohingya response targets 1.35 million people,

including both Rohingya refugees and vulnerable host communities. The funding crisis forced a reduction of the population targeted among the host community. The 2024 JRP is currently funded to 42.7 per cent. Because of persistent underfunding, WFP was in 2023 forced to introduce a 33 per cent food ration cut for the Rohingya population, soap distribution has been reduced by half and cooking gas distribution cycles have been lengthened. The largest donors to the Rohingya refugee response include the US (USAID and BPRM), EU (including ECHO), Australia, Japan, UK, and Canada. Main donor priorities include multi-sector programming focused on basic needs of the Rohingya refugee population and a number of donors complement their humanitarian funding with resilience and development/nexus support. The US is the largest donor of the response accounting for over half of the humanitarian funding and primarily support food and nutrition sectors, but has recently introduced major funding cuts. Switzerland, Norway and Germany are likeminded and similarly sized donors to Sweden, providing flexible and unearmarked core funds to UN agencies.

In 2022, the humanitarian community finalised a set of principles of rationalisation that aims to ensure that all Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh have equitable access to all basic services in a predictable, efficient, and timely manner, and that the humanitarian community is transparent and accountable in its interventions. Rationalisation and streamlining efforts have continued throughout 2023 and were fed into the JRP 2024. In addition, a further prioritisation of activities identifying those that are “firewalled” as life-saving and should be funded first was introduced in 2023. The first Joint Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (J-MSNA) in four years was also completed and will allow for a review of prioritised needs.

## 4. Sida’s humanitarian allocation

The focus of Sida’s humanitarian assistance to Bangladesh in 2024 is two-fold. Firstly, acute and life-saving needs as well as the support to and advocacy for dignity in the humanitarian response to the Rohingya refugees and host communities in Cox’s Bazar, including access to livelihoods and education, will be prioritised. Secondly, Sida will prioritise the response to acute food insecurity for the most vulnerable households and IPC 4 hotspots in the country and has through flexible funding prioritised the populations most affected by natural disasters.

Given the protracted nature of the Rohingya crisis, Sweden will prioritise support to partners who play a key role in coordination, dialogue with the Government of Bangladesh and have a strong operative presence, provide protection interventions while building local capacity and provide skills development and livelihood interventions. To address food insecurity in IPC 4 hotspots, Sida will prioritise an integrated approach by providing for example food assistance through cash provision, WASH, health, nutrition, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), GBV, protection services, and livelihood support to disaster-vulnerable communities.

Quality funding through a Programme-Based Approach (PBA) will provide partners with flexibility in both the Rohingya refugee response and other IPC 4 hotspots across the country.

The PBA will also allow for monitoring of natural disasters and humanitarian response when climate-related disasters arise.

PARTNER	SECTOR	INITIAL ALLOCATION (SEK)	
		2024	2025
Action Against Hunger (AAH)	Food assistance, WASH, Health, Nutrition, MHPSS, GBV, Protection	11,500,000	-
Islamic Relief	Food security & livelihoods, WASH	12,000,000	-
Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)	ICLA, Education Shelter, WASH, Coordination	9,500,000	-
UNHCR	Multi-sector	24,000,000	-
WFP	Food Security, Nutrition	20,000,000	-
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>77,000,000</b>	

FLEXIBLE FUNDING & ADDITIONAL ALLOCATIONS 2024		
PARTNER	FLEXIBLE FUNDING <sup>1</sup>	ADDITIONAL ALLOCATION
Action Against Hunger	-	10,000,000
Danish Refugee Council (DRC)	3,871,920	-
International Rescue Committee (IRC)	3,832,050	-
Islamic Relief	9,800,000	-
Rädda Barnen	3,000,000	-
Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)	7,000,000	-
Swedish Red Cross	5,000,000	-
UNHCR	-	5,000,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>32,503,970</b>	<b>15,000,000</b>

<sup>1</sup> Flexible funding includes a mix of allocations such as Rapid Response Mechanism and other flexible funding mechanisms.

## 5. Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus

Sweden has used a HDP nexus approach to support the Rohingya crisis since the 2017 influx. Sweden's current strategy for development cooperation with Bangladesh (2021-2025) has the ambition to address the Rohingya crisis through four strategic areas: democracy, human rights, rule of law and gender equality; climate and environment; inclusive economic development; and health and sexual and reproductive rights. Current development support to Cox's Bazar that will continue into 2024 will address cooking fuel needs, environmental restoration and resilience through green skills development for Rohingya refugees and affected host communities through the second phase of the UN Joint Programme Safe Access to Fuel and Energy Plus (SAFE Plus 2), empowering Rohingya and host community women through leadership, learning and livelihoods by UN Women, as well as upholding quality health services through WHO. These three development contributions amount to a total multi-year allocation of 188 MSEK. One concrete example of nexus financing in Bangladesh is the development support to SAFE Plus 2, an inter-agency effort including UNHCR, IOM, WFP and FAO, that is based on the distribution of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) to decrease deforestation and support environmental rehabilitation. SAFE Plus 2 is a continuation of the project named SAFE Plus which has had a positive impact on many different levels since 2019. The positive effects range from securing cooked food/nutrition levels, healthier in-door environments, re-greening of the camps and surrounding areas, decreased protection risks - particularly related to gender-based violence, a slowing down of deforestation and decreased tensions between refugees and host population over forest reserves in Cox's Bazar.

Possibilities to use synergies with the longer-term development cooperation in the bilateral strategy's support area of inclusive economic development are being explored through the ongoing contributions. The Government of Bangladesh's recent endorsement of the Framework on Skills Development for Rohingya refugees as well as the Guidance on the Engagement of Volunteers for the Rohingya refugee camps will be used to increase engagements in skills development in the camps and livelihoods in the host communities. Providing support to livelihoods and skills development opportunities creates meaningful engagement for the community and mitigates risk of resorting to negative coping mechanisms. In addition, providing a cash alternative to the refugee community enhances their ability to meet their needs in dignity as well as prepares them for a potential return to Myanmar.

A challenge in the Rohingya response is that the heavy dependency on humanitarian aid leaves the refugees very vulnerable to funding cuts, most recently seen through the multi-sectoral impacts of the food ration cuts. The Swedish Embassy in Dhaka has therefore been involved in political dialogue and advocacy at both national and regional level to allow for more development actors to engage. The Embassy has also actively participated in the development of the Swedish pledge to "enhance resilience and expanded solutions for Rohingya refugees through supporting self-reliance initiatives, access to education and climate action, and to expand solutions by supporting the creation of conditions for sustainable return" that was announced at the Global Refugee Forum in December 2023.

For non-Rohingya related humanitarian issues, the HCTT issued the HCTT Nexus Strategy for Climate-related Disasters 2021-2025 as a humanitarian preparedness and response strategy to support the National Plan for Disaster Management 2021-2025 and complement the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for Bangladesh in relevant areas. A collective outcome was identified “to improve systemwide coherence in support of coordinated efforts for saving life and livelihoods of vulnerable and exposed population”. The UN is promoting change within the humanitarian system towards more Anticipatory Action to help save lives, mitigate suffering and ultimately lower the cost of responding to the humanitarian consequences of shocks. Accordingly, the Swedish development cooperation strategy supports the Government of Bangladesh’s priorities for climate adaptation and mitigation, most especially the National Adaptation Plan and the Nationally-Determined Contributions. The Embassy is also supporting locally-led adaptation efforts centred around integrating community-driven solutions into local development planning processes, and strengthening both communities and local authorities.

In this way, while Sida’s development funding is benefiting both the refugee and Bangladeshi communities through long-term norms-changing initiatives or responses requiring a systems-building and strengthening approach, Swedish humanitarian funding is better safeguarded for a needs-based, principled approach to assist the most vulnerable people in Bangladesh.

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<sup>1</sup> The 2024 initial allocation of humanitarian funding is based on Sida’s humanitarian allocation analysis methodology. The methodology was updated during 2023 to more clearly inform an allocation of funding that is proportional between crises, in line with Humanitarian and Good Humanitarian Donorship principles. Key changes in funding levels between the initial allocations for 2023 and 2024 for specific crises are therefore not only reflecting changes in the humanitarian situation but also changes in the analysis methodology. The analysis reflects the current humanitarian situation across crises and is being updated continuously with the latest available data, thereby allowing future allocations to be informed by how indicators have changed since previous allocations. The information in the HCA is based on reports, data, and information from partner organisations and other entities, as well as observations from field visits and dialogue with partners.