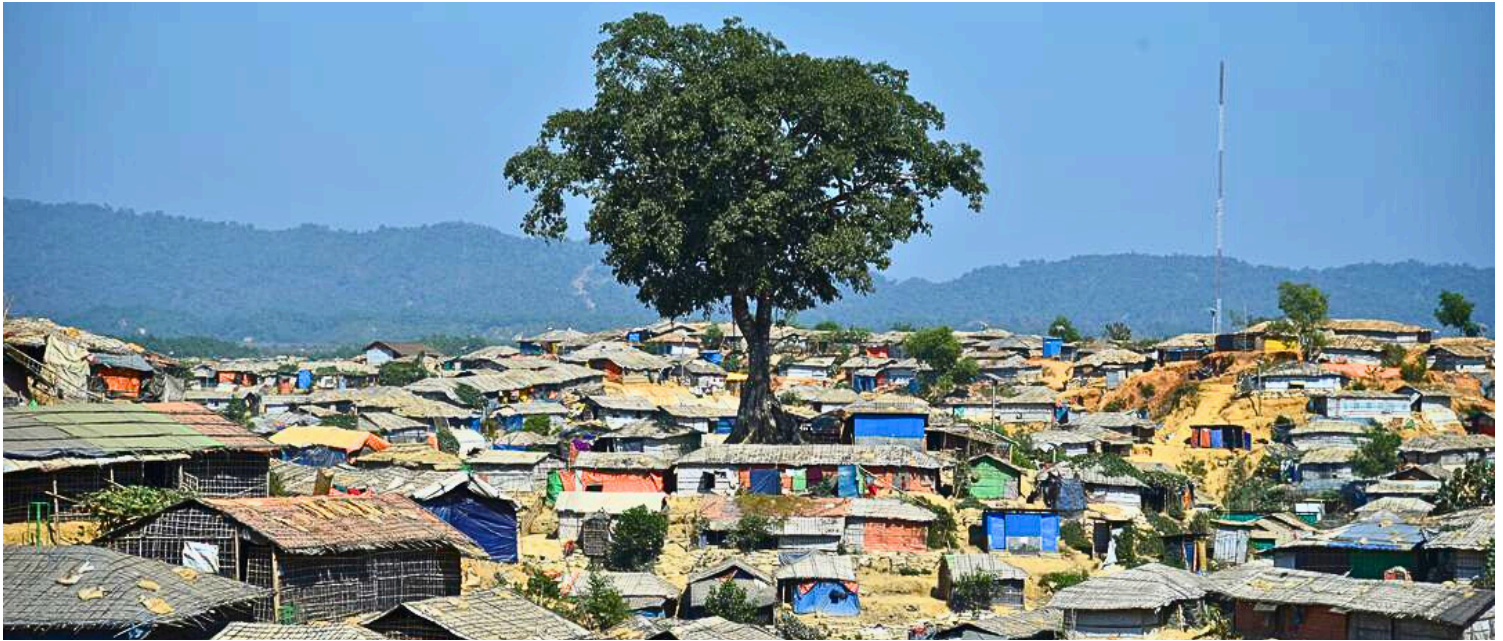


FEDERATION-WIDE REPORT

Population Movement Operation (PMO)
Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh



Published 6 October 2025

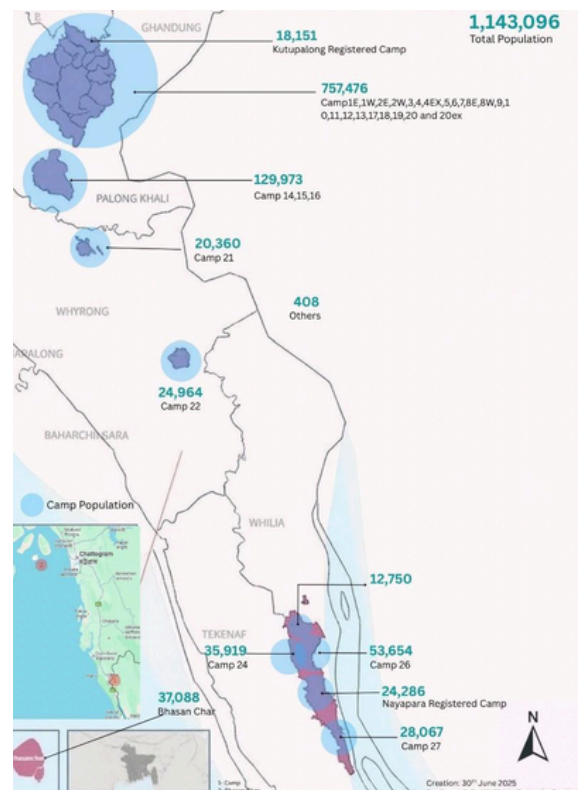


Executive Summary

This report documents **the major collective achievements of the Federation-wide response to the Population Movement Operation (PMO) in Bangladesh** between 2017 and 2024. It provides an evidence-based account of how the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS), supported by the IFRC Secretariat and 28 Partner National Societies, worked together to deliver lifesaving and resilience-building assistance to displaced people from Myanmar.

Since the mass influx in August 2017, Bangladesh has hosted more than **1.1 million displaced people** across 33 camps in Cox's Bazar and on Bhasan Char. **Over seven years, the goal has been to reach 1.07 million people** through Disaster Risk Management in 33 camps and targeted sectoral interventions in 17 camps, as well as surrounding host communities. As of December 2024, **the PMO has reached 907,500 people** (676,153 from the camp settlements and 231,347 from host communities) with a variety of humanitarian assistance.

Many of these interventions have been delivered consistently for the past seven years, strengthening community resilience and improving living conditions. **Despite underfunding, assistance has helped families survive, recover with dignity, and build resilience against future shocks.**



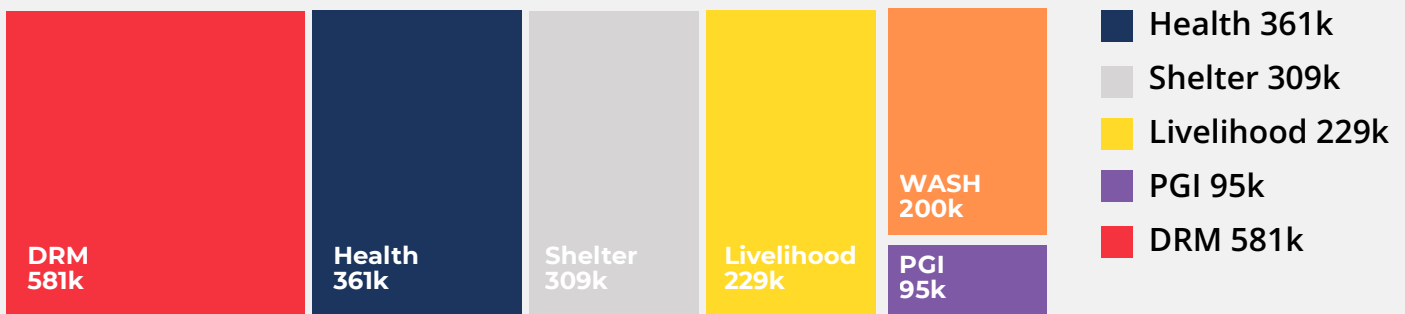


Background and Context

The Population Movement Operation (PMO) began in 2017 following the unprecedented influx of displaced people from Myanmar. An initial emergency has evolved into a **protracted humanitarian crisis**, with around 30,000 newborns added each year, further straining limited resources. Host communities in Ukhiya and Teknaf have also faced economic pressure, environmental degradation and social tensions. The PMO was designed to address both **displaced and host community needs**, guided by the Federation-wide One Window Framework agreed in 2018 by BDRCS, IFRC and Participating National Societies.

Federation-Wide Achievements 2017–2024

Heatmap of people reached by sector



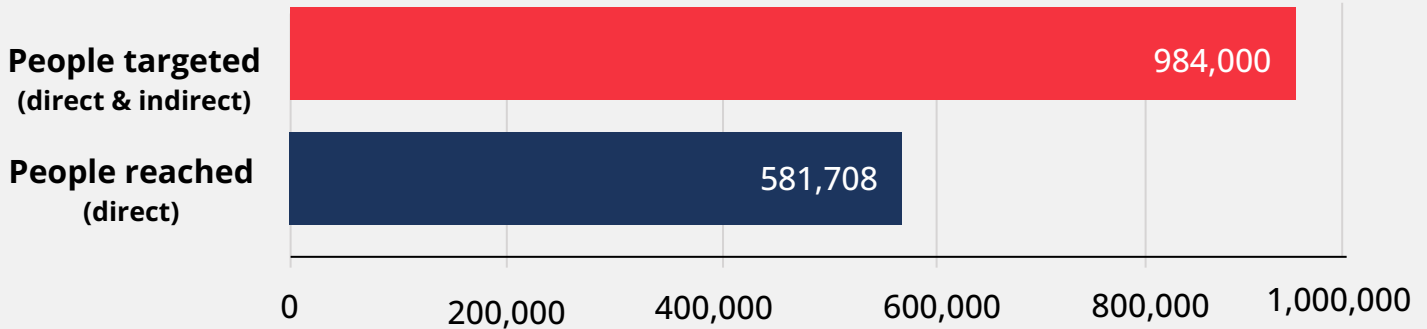
[Read the story.](#)

on how BDRCS and the IFRC network continue to collectively address vulnerabilities and deliver services to displaced people from Rakhine.



Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery

People reached by disaster risk management



Note: Targets in the Federation-wide “people reached” charts reflect the sectoral targets outlined in [Operational Strategy 2](#).

Achievements:

Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery activities have reached over 581,000 people, helping displaced people and host communities **become safer and more resilient in disaster-prone environment**.

According to [ISNA 2024](#), 97 per cent of households practice basic preparedness, such as tying down shelters and stockpiling food and water, and 34 per cent participated in capacity-building. Trained camp volunteers now lead early warnings and act as first responders during cyclones, floods, landslides and fires.



Community preparedness drills safeguard lives in the camps, ensuring people can act before and during a disaster. (Source: IFRC/BDRCS)



10,000+

community
volunteers trained
and equipped.



141,000

households received
disaster risk mitigation
support.



9,800

preparedness drills
and awareness sessions
conducted.

Remaining Needs

Cox's Bazar camps remain acutely disaster-prone: over one million people live in fragile shelters on congested, unstable terrain, exposed to monsoons, cyclones, landslides, and fires. Climate change is intensifying these hazards while funding declines, placing preparedness gains at risk.



[Read the story](#)

of volunteers, men and women, mobilizing to prepare residents of the camp settlement for the cyclone season. All volunteers featured in the story are of Rohingya ethnicity.

Health and Care

People reached by health and care services



Achievements:

The PMO delivered more than 2.4 million medical consultations since 2017, addressing major health risks in the camps and host communities. The Red Cross Red Crescent Emergency Hospital alone treated 43,000 patients in its first year, providing obstetric, surgical and trauma care.

Community confidence in services is strong: satisfaction with community-based health and first aid reached 96 per cent (ISDB Evaluation, 2023), while 98 per cent of respondents expressed satisfaction with mental health and psychosocial support (BDRCS Survey, 2023). Beyond urgent care, the programme has built trust, encouraged health-seeking behaviour and reduced preventable illness. Today, the Red Cross Red Crescent is recognized as a reliable health provider in Cox's Bazar, leaving a lasting legacy of improved access and well-being.



2.4+ million

consultations provided through BDRCS field hospital and health facilities.



184, 876

psychosocial support sessions conducted



91, 504

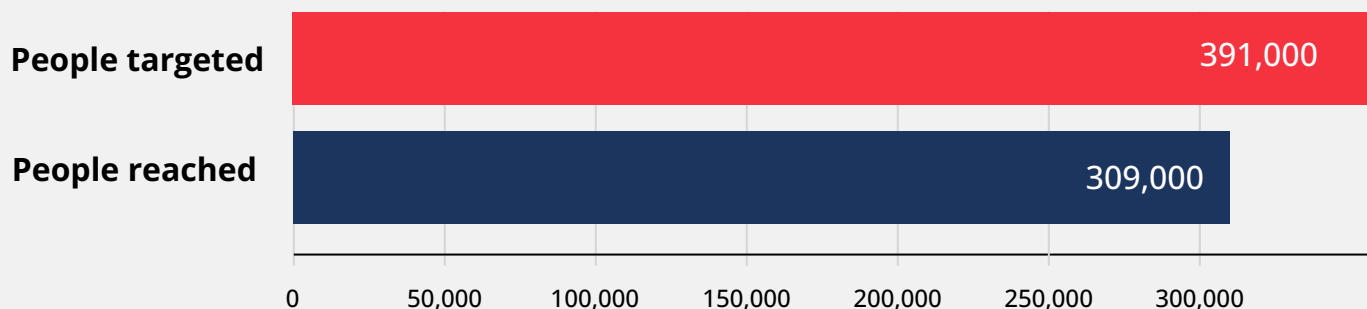
people received community-based health and first aid services

Remaining Needs

Extreme overcrowding and inadequate infrastructure fuel outbreaks of cholera, acute watery diarrhoea and other communicable diseases. According to RRRRC, an average of 23 people share a single latrine, and access to clean water remains limited. Malnutrition, rising non-communicable diseases, acute mental health needs, and gaps in referral systems and skilled staff continue to strain services. Sustained investment is essential to prevent reversal of fragile gains.

Shelter Housing and Settlements

People reached with shelter support



The target no. for this sector has been reviewed and updated to reflect the reality in the camps.

Achievements:

Shelter and settlement support under the PMO has greatly strengthened the safety, dignity, and resilience of displaced people and host communities. Working with the Government of Bangladesh, IOM, UNHCR, and other partners, BDRCS provided emergency, transitional, and mid-term shelter solutions to supported households, along with technical training and preparedness support.

An external [Shelter Evaluation](#) (2023) found that **99 per cent of household reported improved well-being and 95 per cent felt safe inside their shelters**, This was corroborated in a separate external ISDB Evaluation 2023, where 95 percent of women and girls reported feeling safe in their shelters and 92 per cent of households were satisfied with the quality of support. These interventions reduced risks from monsoons, cyclones, and fires while improving privacy and dignity. Training in safer construction equipped families and volunteers with the skills to rebuild and adapt shelters, with knowledge now spreading across communities. As one mother said, *“For the first time since arriving, I feel my children can sleep safely at night.”*



22,423

households received mid-term shelters, improving safety and resilience.



51,256

households received emergency or transitional shelter assistance.



31,411

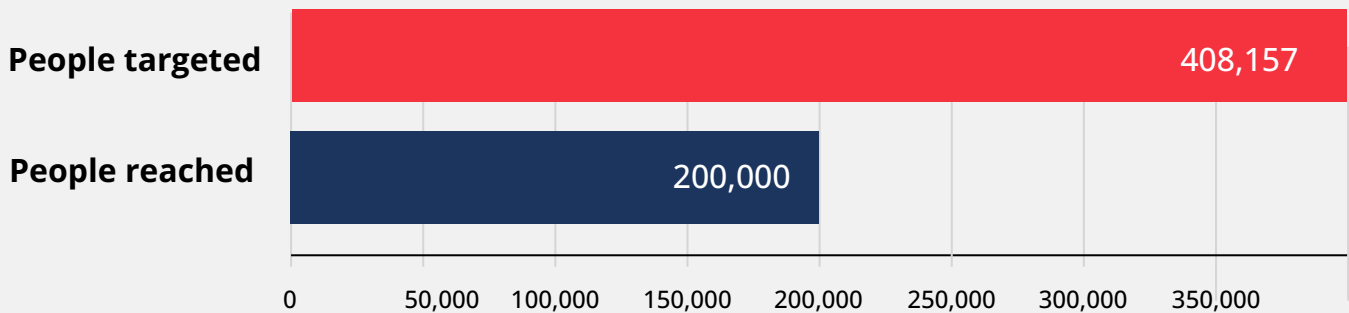
people trained in safe shelter practices.

Remaining Needs

Over one million displaced people remain in 33 camps in Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char, with population density exceeding 35,000 per km² -- among the highest globally. Since 2018, fires have destroyed nearly 15,000 shelters and displaced over 59,000 people; monsoon-triggered landslides have damaged 7,700 shelters and uprooted hundreds more, underscoring the precariousness of camp life.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

People reached with WASH support



The target no. for this sector has been reviewed and updated to reflect the reality in the camps.

Achievements:

The Red Cross Red Crescent improved daily life and reduced waterborne disease risks in camps and host communities. An independent ISDB Evaluation (2023) confirms the impact: 93 per cent of targeted camp residents and 96 per cent of host community members now have access to improved water sources.

Sanitation use remains high, with 95 per cent of targeted host communities and 88 per cent of targeted camp residents continuing to use equitable facilities, many still in good condition two years after construction. Hygiene has also improved, with 95 per cent of families washing hands before food preparation, reducing preventable illness.



6+ billion

litres of clean water distributed, benefiting over 77,000 people with regular safe water access.



100,000+

people gained safe sanitation



96,000+

people benefited from hygiene promotion.

"At the beginning, we planted trees around the treatment centre, using the fertiliser to help them grow. This fertiliser also helped us grow vegetable gardens."

[Read the story](#)

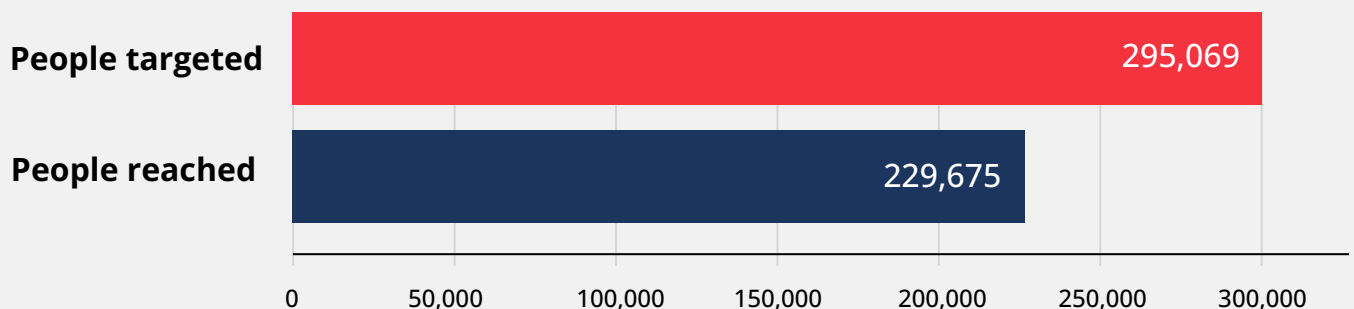
Read the story of Shomshul, a BDRCS volunteer who runs a treatment centre for human waste, turning it in to fertiliser to help reforest the hillsides around the camps while reducing risk of disease with a safer sewage system.

Remaining Needs

These gains remain fragile. Overcrowding, monsoons and landslides regularly damage WASH facilities, while safe fecal sludge management remains a critical gap in this densely populated settlement. Sustained hygiene promotion, especially for new arrivals and the most vulnerable, is essential to maintain progress.

Livelihoods and Cash Assistance

People reached with livelihood and cash assistance



The target no. for this sector has been reviewed and updated to reflect the reality in the camps.

Achievements:

The PMO has enabled vulnerable displaced people and host families to **restore dignity and strengthen resilience through livelihoods and cash assistance**. Programming provided skills training and start-up support, particularly for women, youth and persons with disabilities. This led to improved self-reliance and small income generation. Outcomes Monitoring (2023) found that 57 per cent of households reinvested cash grants in businesses, raw materials or new skills.

A separate survey showed 80 per cent satisfaction with training in gardening, tailoring and other livelihoods in one of the camps. These interventions helped reduce dependency on aid and strengthened coping capacity in both camp and host communities.

Livelihoods training like this maintenance and repair course in Cox's Bazar is helping displaced people living in camps gain practical skills to support their families and community. (Source: BDRCS/IFRC).

These trainings empower participants to find income opportunities and contribute to their communities. By learning hands-on techniques and working together, they gain self-reliance and resilience essential for recovery and integration.



32,288

households received multi-purpose or conditional cash assistance.



2,596

households supported with vocational skills and materials.



6,383

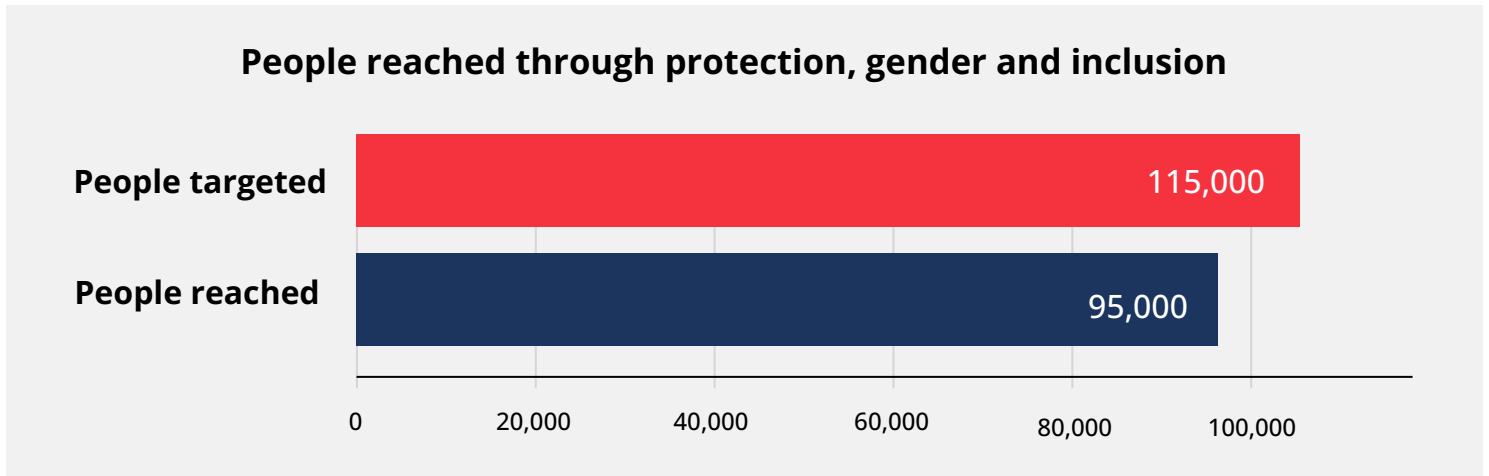
households provided with e-vouchers.

Remaining Needs

Livelihood opportunities remain extremely limited. The 2023 Joint Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (J-MSNA) found that 92 per cent of displaced households remain fully dependent on humanitarian aid. Formal employment is barred, land is scarce, and rising costs increase competition for jobs. Women and youth face barriers to safe and sustainable income. Continued investment in cash and skills programmes is critical to prevent deeper dependency and rising social tensions.



Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI)



Achievements:

The IFRC and BDRCS work to maintain social cohesion and strengthen protection in the camps through **PGI and community engagement and accountability (CEA)** approaches. These efforts foster **safer and more inclusive communities** built on trust and participation. **Dignity, Access, Participation and Safety (DAPS) centres provide safe spaces for children, women, girls and senior citizens.** They offer psychosocial support, safety services and information. Qualitative findings show **increased participation of girls in work, education and volunteering.** Most women and girls in camps (95 per cent) report feeling safe in their shelters (ISDB Evaluation, 2023). In addition, 93 per cent of respondents said they feel confident raising sensitive protection concerns, including gender-based violence, sexual harassment, exploitation, domestic violence and early marriage, through available channels (Outcomes Monitoring, 2023).



63,000

people participated in PGI awareness sessions.



89,000+

feedback cases collected

In 2024 alone, 90% was addressed

Remaining Needs

However, without the presence of the BDRCS volunteers and protection provided by our emblem, the security situation in our supported camps threatens to deteriorate. Displaced communities living in the refugee settlements are at risk from violence, exploitation and trafficking. In Q2 of 2024 alone, 510 serious protection incidents were reported, including 183 abductions and 112 physical assaults ([ISCG](#), 2024). In 2023, over 1,800 security incidents were documented across the camps, a 180 per cent increase from the previous year, with more than half linked to criminal groups ([UNHCR](#), 2023).

Host Community Support

Who are the host communities and why are they significant in the context of the protracted crisis?

While global attention often focuses on the displaced people from Rakhine living in camps in Cox's Bazar, the **Bangladeshi host communities of Ukhiya and Teknaf** have also been profoundly affected. These families were the first to welcome those fleeing violence, sharing land, homes and resources despite their own limited means.

Years later, many face **growing pressures**. In several areas, displaced people now outnumber the host population. This strains infrastructure, drives up costs, intensifies job competition and accelerates environmental degradation.

Supporting host communities is not only a matter of fairness; it is critical for the stability of the response itself. When host families are left behind, social tensions increase and the fragile coexistence between communities is put at risk. **Investing in host community resilience** through health outreach, WASH services, conditional cash assistance, livelihoods training, disaster preparedness and more helps **reduce inequalities** rather than deepen them. It also sustains trust, **strengthens social cohesion** and creates the conditions for humanitarian efforts to reach those most in need, regardless of status and background.

Key people reached figures from host communities alone:



230,000+

people reached through multi-sector interventions



4,553

households supported with conditional cash



941

households provided with durable shelter solutions



700

Red Crescent youth (RCY) volunteers remain active since 2017



Shakila Akter and her family are part of the host community in Cox's Bazar.

With support from the BDRCS and IFRC network, they moved into a new concrete house with two rooms and a tin roof, designed to stand up to the storms that regularly affect Ukhiya and Teknaf. For Shakila, having a safe and comfortable home means she no longer worries each time heavy rain begins, and her children have a secure place to sleep at night.

(Source: BDRCS/IFRC [PMO Coffee Table Book](#)).

Looking Ahead (2025–2027)

After almost eight years since the large-scale influx of displaced people into Bangladesh, the situation in Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh remains one of the world's **most protracted and underfunded humanitarian emergencies**. Over one million people displaced from Myanmar continue to live in overcrowded, disaster-prone camps in Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char, with no access to education, jobs, or prospects of return. A new influx has driven a 16 per cent increase in the camp population over the past year, further compounding pressures on already overstretched resources. Host communities are also under increasing strain as rising needs far exceed available support.

The **Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS)**, supported by the IFRC network, has been the partner of choice and one of **the largest local humanitarian actors** since the onset of the crisis, delivering life-saving assistance through its nationwide network and deep community trust. But this critical work is now at risk: **funding gaps are forcing operations to scale back, leaving hundreds of thousands of vulnerable families in deeper crisis. Urgent support is needed to sustain essential services - shelter, health, water, livelihoods, and protection — and to preserve the hard-won gains that contribute to the safety, dignity, and resilience of the displaced communities.**

- The **Population Movement Operation urgently seeks CHF 87 million for 2025 – 2027** to keep vital services running in Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char.
- Between January and June 2025, PMO has reached 503,656 people, including camp and host communities.
- Only CHF 19.5 million (23 per cent of the appeal) is currently secured, leaving a **staggering 77 per cent funding gap**.



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For more information

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Thank you to our partners and donors

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