

BANGLADESH



Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated and environmentally vulnerable countries in the world, with deepening economic and social tension following a mass influx of Rohingya refugees fleeing Myanmar.

Country Context

In recent years, Bangladesh has made substantial gains toward its development, alleviating poverty and making progress in its counterterrorism efforts. However, widening inequality, climate change, rapid urbanization, and a massive influx of refugees have significantly increased development pressures. In 2017, Bangladesh became one of the largest refugee host countries following the mass displacement of Myanmar's Rohingya population. While Bangladesh and Myanmar have attempted to reach an agreement and facilitate refugee returns, they are simultaneously making alternate plans with the U.N. to relocate refugees to a low-lying island in the Indian Ocean. However, until such a relocation occurs, Bangladesh's capacity to accommodate the additional population, as well as its ability to respond to natural disasters, remains strained.

How is the U.S. Involved?

The U.S. has provided over \$542 million in humanitarian aid for the Rohingya refugee population.

Key Figures



1.3 million

in need of humanitarian assistance



25%

of all landmass is less than seven feet above sea level



Over 63 million

people live below the poverty line



Over 90%

of youth and adolescent Rohingya refugees lack access to education



\$871 million

in humanitarian funding requirements

On-the-Ground Perspective

- There is limited access to refugee camps in Bangladesh. Humanitarian organizations face bureaucratic barriers that delay services to refugees, including issues obtaining project permissions and staff visas.
- Bangladesh is the second-largest exporter of ready-made garments in the world, employing more than 4 million workers, most of whom are women. According to recent research by ActionAid, 80% of female workers either experience or witness sexual abuse or harassment at work.

Responses and Actions

- With USAID support over the last two decades, Bangladesh reduced maternal and child mortality by two-thirds and increased access to health services through 399 clinics and 10,700 satellite clinics that cover all of Bangladesh's 64 districts.
- USAID promotes biodiversity conservation and better natural resource management of more than 2.5 million acres of wetlands and forests, helping to nearly triple rice production over 20 years and increase farmers' incomes.
- Mercy Corps is working with a local NGO to address an immediate need of the displaced population by installing 60 solar lights in 10 of the toilet clusters as a protection measure against gender-based violence within the camps.

InterAction has a Rohingya Response working group; to request a briefing, contact policy@interaction.org. References available at [interaction.org/2020globalsituationreport](https://www.interaction.org/2020globalsituationreport).

