

Burma and Bangladesh – Regional Crisis Response

MAY 24, 2023

SITUATION AT A GLANCE

4.5 MILLION	1.4 MILLION	5.4 MILLION	960,539	1.5 MILLION
People Targeted for Humanitarian Assistance in Burma	IDPs in Burma Displaced Since February 2021	People Adversely Affected by Tropical Cyclone Mocha in Burma	Estimated Number of Refugees in Bangladesh	People Targeted by 2023 Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis Joint Response Plan
UN – January 2023	UNHCR – May 2023	UNHCR – May 2023	UNHCR – March 2023	UN – March 2023

- Tropical Cyclone Mocha made landfall over Burma's Rakhine State on May 14, adversely affecting approximately 5.4 million people in Burma and an estimated 2.3 million people in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar District.
- Access restrictions imposed by military authorities hinder the delivery of aid to cyclone-affected individuals across Burma.
- USG partners provide life-saving assistance to thousands of households adversely affected by Tropical Cyclone Mocha in Burma and Bangladesh.



TOTAL U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN FUNDING For the Burma and Bangladesh Response in FY 2023

USAID/BHA ¹	\$154,430,960
State/PRM ²	\$25,900,000

For complete funding breakdown with partners, see detailed chart on page 6

Total **\$180,330,960**

¹USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA)

² U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM)

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Additional 3.2 Million People in Need of Humanitarian Assistance in Burma Following Tropical Cyclone Mocha

Tropical Cyclone Mocha made landfall over Burma's Rakhine State—located approximately 130 miles southeast of Cox's Bazar District—on May 14, resulting in at least 202 deaths in Burma, displacing thousands of households, and damaging or destroying critical infrastructure and shelters across Burma and Bangladesh. In Burma, relief actors estimate that the cyclone adversely affected approximately 5.4 million people, and 3.4 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance as a result of the storm, according to the UN. Notably, Tropical Cyclone Mocha compounded the humanitarian needs of more than 1 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) across Burma. In Rakhine, the cyclone damaged or destroyed a significant amount of public infrastructure—such as power lines, and roadways—including nearly 90 percent of all public infrastructure in Rakhine's Rathedaung township and multiple IDP camps in Rakhine's Kyauktaw, Mrauk-U, Pauktaw, and Sittwe townships. In northwest Burma's Chin State and Magway Region, the cyclone damaged or destroyed nearly 9,000 houses and at least one displacement site hosting approximately 3,000 people. Populations in affected townships, many of whom were already in need of humanitarian assistance prior to Tropical Cyclone Mocha, remain in urgent need of emergency food, health, shelter, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) assistance, according to the UN. Administrative access challenges, security concerns, and storm-related damages to roads and telecommunications systems are hindering the ability of relief actors to conduct damage and needs assessments and adequately support populations in need. Local authorities are restoring telecommunication lines across cyclone-affected areas, but heavily damaged infrastructure continues to restrict communications between vulnerable communities and humanitarian personnel.

Despite these challenges, various U.S. Government (USG) partners have deployed staff to storm-affected townships to conduct damage and needs assessments and have adapted ongoing programs to support the additional health, protection, shelter, and WASH needs generated by the cyclone. USG partners in the UN—coordinated by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)—activated their Emergency Response Preparedness Plan the week of May 8 and pre-positioned emergency relief supplies and personnel in areas forecasted to be affected by the storm. USAID/BHA partners are also providing food, health, shelter, and WASH assistance to vulnerable population across Rakhine and northwestern Burma. In addition, USAID/BHA partner the UN World Food Program (WFP), in coordination with the Food Security Cluster—the coordinating body for humanitarian food activities, comprising UN agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other stakeholders—distributed emergency food assistance—including cooking oil, high-energy biscuits, pulses, rice and salt—and cash for food assistance to support an estimated 800,000 people for up to three months. Additionally, the UN released an appeal on May 23, requesting \$333 million to reach 1.6 million people adversely affected by the storm with critical food, protection, shelter, and WASH assistance. Moreover, the UN activated \$10 million from their Central Emergency Response Fund to provide immediate relief—including protection, shelter, and WASH assistance—for individuals adversely affected by the cyclone. As of May 23, USAID/BHA had announced \$17 million in humanitarian assistance to support the immediate needs of cyclone-affected communities across Burma.

Tropical Cyclone Mocha Exacerbates Humanitarian Needs Among Host Communities and Rohingya Refugees in Cox's Bazar

In Bangladesh, severe winds and heavy rains due to Tropical Cyclone Mocha adversely affected an estimated 2.3 million people—including nearly 37,000 Rohingya refugees and approximately 335,000 vulnerable host community members—and damaged or destroyed tens of thousands of houses,

as well as critical infrastructure, particularly among host community members, according to the Government of Bangladesh. Notably, in Cox's Bazar—where more than 960,500 Rohingya refugees currently reside—cyclone-related floods, landslides, tidal surges, and winds had damaged or destroyed approximately 16,000 Rohingya refugee houses and nearly 3,200 WASH facilities, including bathing facilities, latrines, and sources of safe drinking water as of May 18, according to the UN. Within host communities, nearly 60 percent of latrines were damaged beyond use, further exacerbating WASH concerns among cyclone-affected households, USAID/BHA sources report. Displaced populations, particularly an estimated 15,000 women and girls sheltering in multi-purpose emergency displacement sites, are at heightened risk of protection violations such as gender-based violence, the UN reports. The cyclones also damaged or destroyed roadways across southeastern Bangladesh, hindering relief actors' ability to quickly reach populations in need and exacerbating pre-existing humanitarian needs among Rohingya refugees and Bangladeshi host communities, particularly food, shelter, and WASH needs.

In response to the cyclone, USG partners rapidly mobilized to support affected Bangladeshi and Rohingya refugee populations. State/PRM partner the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR) provided emergency rations to approximately 3,000 Rohingya refugees between May 13 and 14, while also hosting more than 600 cyclone-preparedness workshops for more than 5,200 people. Additionally, State/PRM partner the International Organization on Migration (IOM) prepositioned emergency items for refugee shelters and supported shelter repairs for Rohingya refugees adversely affected by the cyclone. As of May 22, USAID/BHA partner WFP had distributed food assistance to more than 6,200 Rohingya refugees who are unable to return to their shelters in Cox's Bazar.

Hostilities Generate Further Displacement, Obstruct Humanitarian Access in Southeastern Burma

Persistent clashes between ethnic armed organizations (EOs), the Myanmar Armed Forces (MAF), and People Defense Forces in southeastern Burma—comprising Kayah, Kayin, Mon, and southern Shan states, as well as east Bago and Tanintharyi regions—displaced an estimated 96,000 people in 2023 and exacerbated protection risks, including physical attacks against civilians and GBV, according to UNHCR. Across the region, an estimated 440 thousand people have been internally displaced by violence since the February 1, 2021 coup d'état as of May 1, UNHCR reports. Hostilities between the MAF and EOs further intensified in southern Burma during early April, prompting nearly 10,000 people to seek temporary refuge in 13 displacement shelters across Thailand's Tak Province in early April. In Kayah State, hostilities—including airstrikes, artillery fire, and drone strikes—resulted in dozens of casualties from early to mid-April and the recurring displacement of thousands of individuals, according to the UN. Meanwhile, security concerns and administrative restrictions are hindering the delivery of critical assistance across southeast Burma, particularly in Kayah and Kayin where two humanitarian organizations recently relocated staff to nearby sites due to violence and an additional organization delayed field activities in Kayah due to the presence of landmines, the UN reports.

Clashes in Sagaing Displace 30,000 People, Exacerbates Humanitarian Needs

Violence escalated across Sagaing in March and April, with more than 100 violent incidents—including airstrikes, drone attacks, landmine explosions, and village raids—generating increased displacement and exacerbating humanitarian needs during the two-month period, according to USAID/BHA partners. MAF airstrikes resulted in at least 171 civilian deaths—including 27 women and 38 children—in Sagaing's Kanbalu township on April 11, with military authorities preventing medical assistance and humanitarian access to the attack site through roadblocks, according to international media. Additionally, raids of Sagaing's Khin-U township on April 19 destroyed hundreds of civilian houses and displaced approximately 30,000 people to informal IDP sites, nearby forests, and surrounding villages, where they

remained in urgent need of emergency food, health care, shelter, and WASH assistance as of April 25, according to UNHCR. Across Sagaing, recent village raids and armed clashes have raised concerns among relief actors regarding the contamination of surface water, which is challenging peoples' ability to access safe drinking water, as well as grow crops and raise livestock, and is further exacerbating humanitarian needs among populations in conflict-affected areas, a humanitarian analysis group reports. Additionally, as of mid-May, the presence of numerous military checkpoints across Sagaing continued to hinder people's ability to access essential services and humanitarian assistance, according to the UN.

Rohingya Delegation Visits Burma Amid Pilot Repatriation Plans

Rohingya refugees, accompanied by Government of Bangladesh officials, traveled from Cox's Bazar refugee camp to Rakhine on May 5 to view facilities built by military authorities and assess preparations ahead of a pilot repatriation program planned to commence in late May, the European Commission's Department for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations reports. Following the visit, Government of Bangladesh officials shared overall positive impressions of the repatriation site in Rakhine, while refugees expressed unwillingness to return to IDP camps conditions—where Rohingya returnees would face insufficient access to basic services, livelihood opportunities, and limited humanitarian assistance—reiterating the need for guarantees of full citizenship rights ahead of any return to Rakhine.

KEY FIGURES



**\$136.3
Million**

In dedicated USAID/BHA
FY 2023 support for
food security activities



6

USG partners
implementing stand-
alone protection
interventions in FY 2023

U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

FOOD SECURITY

USAID/BHA provides funding to WFP to deliver emergency food assistance—including cash transfers for food; food vouchers; and in-kind food assistance through local, regional, and international procurement—to populations in Burma and Bangladesh. USAID/BHA also supports complementary nutrition services, as well as coordination and capacity-building activities among other food security actors in the two countries to strengthen response efforts. In addition, State/PRM supports the IOM, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNHCR, and NGO partners to deliver complementary livelihood and nutrition services to refugees and other vulnerable individuals in Bangladesh.

PROTECTION

USAID/BHA and State/PRM support six humanitarian partners to address protection concerns among displaced and violence-affected populations throughout Burma; host communities and Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar; and Rohingya refugees residing across Southeast Asia. USG-supported protection activities in Burma and Bangladesh focus on increasing access to protection services such as gender-based violence prevention and response, child-friendly spaces, community-based mental health and psychosocial support, and legal assistance. USG partners also work with the broader humanitarian community in Burma to advocate for access to life-saving humanitarian assistance and promote the delivery of protection services in areas with significant humanitarian access constraints.



70,000

Households received tie-down kits from USG partners for cyclone and monsoon prevention

SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS

USAID/BHA works with partners in Bangladesh to enhance community resilience to cyclones and other natural disasters by conducting disaster risk reduction activities, as well as infrastructure rehabilitation in host communities in Bangladesh's Bandarban and Cox's Bazar districts. State/PRM-supported shelter assistance in Bangladesh includes emergency shelter repairs and distribution of shelter materials, such as plastic sheeting to prevent roof leaks, complemented by site coordination capacity-building activities. USG partners also provide cash assistance for host community members and refugees to purchase local shelter materials to improve the resilience of their living spaces to natural disasters. In Burma, UNHCR implements protection-sensitive shelter reconstruction in Rakhine by considering IDPs' specific needs in coordination with local actors.



6

USG partners implementing critical WASH programming in FY 2023

WASH

The USG supports WASH programming in Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char and in violence-affected areas of Burma to ensure access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities, prevent communicable disease outbreaks, and mitigate the risk of wasting—the deadliest form of malnutrition—in children ages five years and younger and pregnant and lactating women. With State/PRM funding, BRAC, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, IOM, Terre des Hommes Foundation, UNHCR, and UNICEF address critical WASH needs in Cox's Bazar by improving drainage and waste removal systems, installing handwashing stations and latrines, providing hygiene supplies and safe drinking water, and strengthening community awareness of proper WASH practices to reduce the spread of disease.

CONTEXT IN BRIEF

- On February 1, 2021, Burma's military staged a coup d'état against the civilian government during which soldiers detained senior civilian government officials, including State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi and President Win Myint, and announced a one-year state of emergency. In August 2021, military authorities extended the initial one-year state of emergency to August 2023. Since February 2021, clashes between the MAF, EAOs, and other local non-state armed groups across Burma have persisted, resulting in continuous displacement and humanitarian needs, particularly in southeastern and northwestern Burma, as well as in Kachin and Shan. Coup-related instability has also resulted in access challenges, restricted banking operations, and limited cash availability, challenging the provision of assistance by relief actors at a time of significant humanitarian need.
- Burma's military forces launched large-scale and indiscriminate military operations—which the USG has since characterized as genocide—in Rakhine's Buthidaung, Maungdaw, and Rathedaung townships following Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army attacks on northern Rakhine checkpoints and police posts in October 2016 and August 2017. More than 799,000 refugees—the majority of whom rely on

humanitarian assistance to meet their basic needs—had fled Burma since August 2017 into neighboring Bangladesh and taken shelter in Cox’s Bazar’s 34 refugee camps as of November 2022, UNHCR reports. Meanwhile, Government of Bangladesh policies limit refugees’ access to basic education services, capacity to engage in income-earning activities, and freedom of movement. Refugees and host communities in Cox’s Bazar are also vulnerable to natural hazards, such as cyclones and flooding. Additionally, the Government of Bangladesh had relocated nearly 29,340 refugees from Cox’s Bazar to Bhasan Char between November 2020 and January 2023.

- As of January 2021, an estimated 600,000 ethnic Rohingya—a minority group not recognized by Burma’s military forces and denied rights to citizenship, freedom of movement, and public services—remained in Rakhine. Many IDPs in Rakhine are Rohingya, including approximately 147,000 people affected by the 2012 clashes who remained displaced as of April 2023. In addition, approximately 78,000 civilians, mostly ethnic Rakhine, remained displaced in Rakhine and Chin states as of mid-March 2022 due to clashes between the Arakan Army and the MAF that erupted in 2018. Displaced populations, as well as other vulnerable individuals, continue to lack access to basic services and livelihood opportunities due to persistent violence and associated movement restrictions.
- On December 28, 2021, U.S. Ambassador Thomas L. Vajda re-issued a declaration of humanitarian need (DHN)/disaster declaration for Burma due to the ongoing complex emergency. Additionally, on November 3, 2022, U.S. Ambassador Peter D. Haas issued a DHN for Bangladesh in response to the ongoing humanitarian needs among Rohingya refugees host communities. On May 15, U.S. Chargé d’Affairs Deb Lynn issued a DHN for Burma due to the effects of Tropical Cyclone Mocha. Additionally, on May 16, U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh Peter D. Haas issued a DHN for Bangladesh to respond to the immediate humanitarian needs of populations affected by Tropical Cyclone Mocha. USG partners are supporting cyclone-affected populations in Burma and Bangladesh with emergency food, shelter, and WASH assistance, as well as other critical relief commodities.

USAID HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE BURMA AND BANGLADESH CYCLONE RESPONSE IN FY 2023¹

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	AMOUNT
FUNDING FOR THE CYCLONE IN BURMA			
USAID/BHA			
Implementing Partners	Food Assistance, Shelter, WASH	Cyclone-Affected Areas	\$200,000
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING FOR THE CYCLONE IN BURMA			\$200,000
FUNDING FOR THE CYCLONE IN BANGLADESH			
USAID/BHA			
Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS)	Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA)	Chittagong District	\$250,000
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING FOR THE CYCLONE IN BANGLADESH			\$250,000
TOTAL USG FUNDING FOR THE BURMA AND BANGLADESH CYCLONE RESPONSE IN FY 2023			\$450,000

USAID/BHA HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE BURMA–BANGLADESH REGIONAL CRISIS IN FY 2023^{2,3}

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	AMOUNT
FUNDING IN BURMA FOR THE REGIONAL CRISIS RESPONSE			
USAID/BHA			
Implementing Partners	MPCA, Nutrition, Protection, WASH	Kayah, Magway, Rakhine, Sagaing, Shan	\$4,100,000

OCHA	Humanitarian Coordination, Information Management, and Assessments (HCIMA)	Countrywide	\$1,500,000
WFP	Food Assistance, Nutrition	Bago (East), Chin, Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Magway, Mon, Rakhine, Shan (North), Shan (South), Sagaing, Tanintharyi	\$50,000,000
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING IN BURMA			\$55,600,000
STATE/PRM			
Implementing Partners	Humanitarian Assistance—Multi Sector	Countrywide	\$1,700,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING IN Burma			\$1,700,000
TOTAL USG FUNDING IN BURMA			\$57,300,000
FUNDING IN BANGLADESH FOR THE REGIONAL CRISIS RESPONSE			
USAID/BHA			
WFP	Disaster Risk Reduction Policy and Practice (DRRPP), Food Assistance—Food Vouchers, Logistics Support and Relief Commodities; Nutrition	Cox's Bazar	\$98,800,000
	Program Support		\$30,960
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING IN BANGLADESH			\$98,830,960
STATE/PRM			
International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)	Humanitarian Assistance—Multi Sector	Cox's Bazar	\$400,000
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)	Health, Livelihoods and Economic Recovery, MPCA, Protection, Risk Management Policy and Practice (RMPP), WASH	Cox's Bazar	\$5,700,000
IOM	Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM), COVID-19 Response, Health, HCIMA, Livelihoods and Economic Recovery, Logistics Support, Monitoring and Evaluation, Protection, Shelter and Settlements, RMPP, WASH	Cox's Bazar	\$8,750,000
UNICEF	COVID-19 Response, Education, HCIMA, Health, Monitoring and Evaluation, Nutrition, Protection, RMPP, WASH	Cox's Bazar	\$8,700,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING IN BANGLADESH			\$23,550,000
TOTAL USG FUNDING IN BANGLADESH			\$122,380,960
REGIONAL UNFUNDING FOR THE BURMA AND BANGLADESH REGIONAL RESPONSE			
STATE/PRM			
IOM	Humanitarian Assistance—Multi Sector	Indonesia	\$650,000
TOTAL STATE/PRM REGIONAL FUNDING			\$650,000
TOTAL USG REGIONAL FUNDING			\$650,000
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE BURMA AND BANGLADESH REGIONAL CRISIS IN FY 2023⁴			\$180,330,960

¹ Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. USAID/BHA and State/PRM funding for the Burma and Bangladesh cyclone response is not included in the \$180,330,960 total USG funding for the Burma and Bangladesh regional crisis response as of May 24, 2023.

² Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. USAID/BHA and State/PRM funding includes funding for both refugees from Burma and asylum-seekers in the region, as well as IDPs inside Burma. Funding does not include USAID/BHA support for activities in Bangladesh that are not related to the Rohingya refugee response.

³ Estimated value of food assistance and transportation costs at time of procurement; subject to change.

⁴ USG funding for populations in Burma and Bangladesh affected by the violence in Rakhine totals nearly \$2.1 billion—including more than \$1.6 billion in Bangladesh and nearly \$409 million in Burma—since the outbreak of violence in August 2017. This includes more than \$1 billion in State/PRM funding and more than \$1 billion in

PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for disaster responses around the world can be found at interaction.org.
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed, often in the affected region; reduce the burden on scarce resources, such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space; can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietarily, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
 - USAID Center for International Disaster Information: cidi.org
 - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at reliefweb.int.

USAID/BHA bulletins appear on the USAID website at usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work