

# CARE's monsoon preparedness

## for Myanmar Refugees in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh



Since August 2017, Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh has become one of the fastest growing and densely populated refugee shelters. Crossing over with mere belongings, the hundreds and thousands of the refugees spent weeks under the open sky. Bangladesh Government, NGOs, INGOs, private donors and host communities helped them build temporary settlements. However, due to unavailability of free land, they had to take refuge in the crevices of hilly areas in Ukha and Teknaf Upazila.

Before the refugees could settle down and live without anxiety, they are forced to count their days for the arrival of seasonal monsoon in Bangladesh. Tropical cyclones, storms, nor'westers are known recurrent

phenomena in Bangladesh, especially in this coastal region, with rainy season lasting for next three-four months.

With emergency shelters of tarps and bamboo, located on ridges and hill sides, the refugees are living under imminent risk of their houses being destroyed by flood, landslide and strong cyclonic/stormy winds.

*"Once the monsoon storms hit, thousands of these makeshift shelters that refugees have built themselves will be destroyed, leaving them in an even more dire situation than what they are in today."* says Zia Choudhury, CARE's Country Director in Bangladesh.

In order to prepare for the coming monsoon and prevent the refugees from becoming homeless again, CARE is already active in the field. So far, over 22,000 refugees in Camp-16, Potibunia received extra tarps, bamboo, sandbags, rope and shelter upgradation tools to reinforce their existing shelters. In addition, CARE has built new drains, roads/footpaths, railings and stairs, installed solar powered streetlamps, trash bins and more deep tube-wells while also clearing and reinforcing the latrines so that they can withstand the monsoon. Families who are living in most vulnerable conditions, are being relocated to a safer location within the camp while other protection measures are also being taken to prepare against landslides.



To help keep people dry and structures standing, CARE has disbursed shelter upgradation kits to 22,000+ people that contained bamboo, tarps, and rope etc. to strengthen the shelters from wind and rain.



Given the Camp's terrain, 810 households require relocation so they won't get washed away. CARE has been working closely with these families, relocating to safer places, building new shelters, latrines, wells and other facilities.



Built on hilly terrain, the pathways on steep slopes were likely to be damaged. CARE has built 60 staircases and installed 9,790 meters of railings to improve accessibility.



To prevent contamination of safe water, additional 9 deep tube wells have been installed. These hold greater volume at increased pressure and are less likely to be contaminated.



With 22,000+ living in Potibunia, drainage and waste management is a serious issues. CARE installed 500 meters of large drains and 3,392 of smaller drains and 34 trash cans. Each meter of drainage can help decrease flooding.



Six months have passed since the influx in Aug'17. Many of the latrines are overflowing and the rain could wash away the waste and contaminate water supplies. CARE has emptied 135 latrines, built 210 new toilets and 525 bathing facilities are being newly constructed.



Walking through the cramped camp was challenging for drains and dumped waste. To address this issue and for ease of navigation, CARE has constructed 11,468 meters of footpath and 488 meters of fencing.



For many households in Potibunia mudslide is a major threat. CARE has identified the vulnerable areas and is constructing barrier walls to mitigate against erosion and slides.