



SIX YEARS OF SOLIDARITY

Development and Peace — Caritas Canada’s response to the Rohingya crisis



Development and Peace — Caritas Canada and Caritas Bangladesh have been responding to the Rohingya crisis since its beginning.

Persecution and exodus

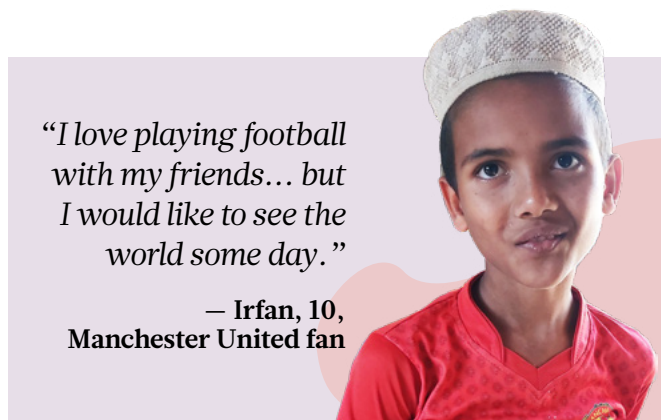
Fleeing a wave of genocidal violence by Burmese armed forces,^{1,2} over 700,000 Rohingya people fled to Bangladesh in August 2017. Locals welcomed them generously, earning plaudits from Pope Francis.³

Over 961,000 Rohingya refugees now live in camps⁴ with no access to durable housing, plumbing, electricity, work and formal schooling.



“Every time we reached what we thought was a safe place, the army attacked, and we’d have to run again.”

— Salim Ullah, 35, Rohingya leader



“I love playing football with my friends... but I would like to see the world some day.”

— Irfan, 10, Manchester United fan

A sustained, holistic response

With **\$5.35 million from Global Affairs Canada (GAC)** and **\$840,000 from generous Canadians**, we have helped Caritas Bangladesh **serve 99,600 people**. GAC grants have funded:



Shelter; water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services; and non-food items (e.g., 25,000 stoves) for 34,625 refugees



Shelter and site upgrades (e.g., solar streetlamps) for 40,366 refugees

Canadians’ generosity has helped provide:



Food, non-food items, shelter and WASH services to 18,126 refugees



Cash-for-work opportunities and skills training to 1,286 people in the host community



Healthcare to 3,327 people in the Rohingya and host communities



Cash assistance to 1,500 refugees during the COVID-19 pandemic



Education and protection services to 664 Rohingya minors and 456 parents

Some examples of our impact



Roofs over heads

Caritas Bangladesh has trained hundreds of refugees in assembling enhanced shelters.

This has brought women like Jigar some income and pride. *“People are very thankful and respect me for the work I do,”* she said.



Smiles on faces

In two dedicated centres, children express themselves and learn through play, art and song.

“It’s nice and clean here, better than outside,” said Mohammed Yaris (left), 10, and Razia Akter, 12. *“This is a joyful place!”*



Helping the hosts

Work opportunities and farming and small business training have improved host families’ incomes and food security.

Mohammed Alam, 45, reported proudly, *“I have ten goats and five cows.”*

A focus on women

In line with Canada’s Feminist International Assistance Policy,⁵ we focussed on empowering women by applying a gender lens to planning; involving women in leadership and technical roles; offering protection services to women and girls; and privileging women’s needs in designing shelters.

Recommendations

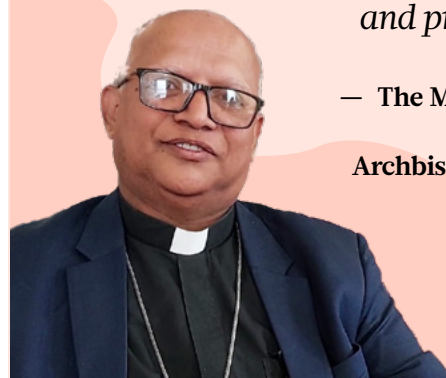
Caritas Bangladesh and its international partners recommend⁶ that:

- The Rohingya crisis remain a priority
- Canada sustain and increase funding for the Rohingya crisis
- The Government of Bangladesh allow the refugees to work, study and build durable shelters
- Burma cooperate for the safe, voluntary repatriation of Rohingya refugees

A vote of thanks

Development and Peace — Caritas Canada, Caritas Bangladesh, and the Rohingya and Bangladeshi people we serve are deeply grateful to our donors and Global Affairs Canada. With the UNHCR now calling for \$876 million in funding,⁷ the need for support and solidarity remains great.

“Caritas Bangladesh is doing a lot that is highly appreciated. Please continue supporting us. I thank you and pray for you all.”



— The Most Rev. Lawrence Subrato Howlader, Archbishop of Chattogram

References

¹ <https://bit.ly/3OYDCpc>

² <https://bit.ly/45vUPgQ>

³ <https://bit.ly/3EjKHff>

⁴ <https://bit.ly/3Eie4OS>

⁵ <https://bit.ly/3EhIUzi>

⁶ <https://bit.ly/3Lku1YZ>

⁷ <https://bit.ly/3qNayZV>