

ROHINGYA IN BANGLADESH

Facts and Figures (24.10.2017)

Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated countries of the world: 1,110 inhabitants per square kilometre, this is five times as much as in Germany. The country is currently experiencing an extreme high influx of refugees from Myanmar. On August 25, 2017, violent confrontations happened between Rohingya rebels and the Myanmar police and army. Since that day, more than 600,000 Rohingya have fled violence and moved to Bangladesh. This situation is a challenge to Bangladesh. In addition to the support of the refugees, the country still has to cope with the effects of severe flooding which happened in the middle of this year. Heavy monsoon rainfalls and the ongoing influx of people have also worsened the situation of the refugees dramatically. To provide aid services to the people, who are often traumatised, is getting more difficult. The challenges for the host country are big.

WELTHUNGERHILFE ON THE GROUND

- Welthungerhilfe has been working in Bangladesh since 1975.
- At present the organisation runs 6 development projects reaching 15,000 people.
- Project regions are the Southeast of Bangladesh: Chittagong Hill Tracts, Haor and die Char Region.
- In Cox's Bazar, where refugees from Myanmar arrive, Welthungerhilfe works with its long-standing local partner organisation ANANDO and coordinates activities with its Alliance2015 partners Concern Worldwide, Helvetas and ACTED.
- Focus of project activities are the support of sustainable agriculture, adaptation to climate change, sustainable food and nutrition security and emergency aid.
- For its development cooperation, Welthungerhilfe receives private donations and public funds by the German ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development(BMZ).
- The Welthungerhilfe project activities in Bangladesh are coordinated by the regional office in India. Members of the emergency team have been sent out to support the local partner ANANDO.

CURRENT SITUATION

- Despite a growing economy, the population of Bangladesh suffers from hunger. The 2017 Global Hunger Index (GHI) for Bangladesh is 26.5. Among a list of 119 countries with a calculated GHI, Bangladesh is at position 88 of the 2017 Global Hunger Index.
- It can be stated that in total the hunger figures for Bangladesh have improved (GHI 2016: 27.1), but the nutrition situation is still "serious".
- Bangladesh suffers from the effects of climate change. Recently, the country experienced severe flooding caused by heavy rains, which also affected the situation of the refugees from Myanmar.
- In total, about 809,000 people have fled from Myanmar to Bangladesh; of these around 603,000 since August 25, 2017.
- Every day, United Nations count about 10,333 individuals on average arriving in the overcrowded refugee camps. About 60 percent of the recent arrivals are children, UNICEF states there have been 320,000 since August 2017.

- The people arrive with almost no belongings and depend on humanitarian aid: They need shelter, clean water, food and hygiene articles as well as support to cope with what they have experienced. They talk about abuse, killings and rape. Many of them have lost relatives.
- The sudden and strong influx of people produces high pressure on the infrastructure and the population of Bangladesh, because the capacities to help are already overwhelmed. The reception camps are overcrowded.
- There is a high risk of diseases due to the lack of hygiene and sanitation infrastructure.
- Small children are malnourished, mothers and their babies need medical care, a daily routine like going to school is hardly possible.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES OF WELTHUNGERHILFE

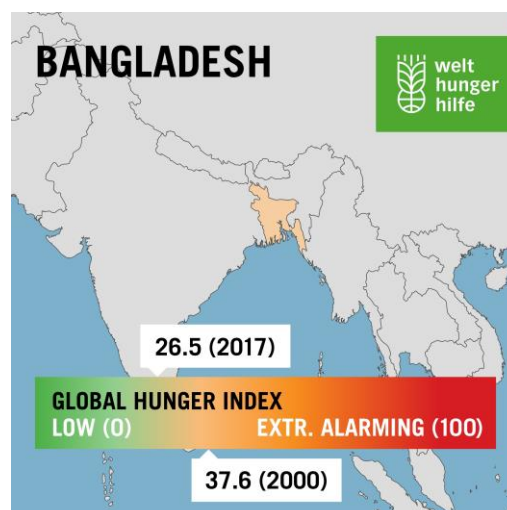
- Together with the local partner ANANDO Welthungerhilfe supports people in a refugee camp in Cox's Bazar (Leda Camp), Bangladesh.
- At present, 2 food distributions are planned for 1,600 households (5 – 6 individuals) each: The food packages include: 4kg lentils, 2kg oil, 1kg sugar, ½ kg salt. Each package provides food for about 2 weeks and will be distributed in addition to the rice portions of the UN World Food Programme.
- Furthermore, the distribution of 1,000 hygiene kits is being prepared.
- Welthungerhilfe elaborates project proposals to raise funds for relief operations for a period of 3 to 6 months.

FINANCES

- As a first response, already in September 2017, Welthungerhilfe has offered an immediate emergency support of 50,000 Euro. The total funding now has been increased to 110,000 Euro. More funds will be applied from public donors to extend the relief operations. Private fundraising has also been initiated.
- International aid organisations announced the financial need of 434 million US-Dollar to support 1.2 million people for a period of 6 months. Until today, the needs are covered by only 30 percent (24.10.2017). The largest donor countries so far are England and USA.
- The needs are still increasing. At a donor conference in Geneva on October 23rd, 2017, the international community has committed to provide funds of about 344 million US-Dollar. The EU offers around 30 million Euro. These funds now must be provided to cover the total needs.

PERSPECTIVES

Daily, thousands of people from Myanmar are still arriving in Bangladesh. Official refugee camps are absolutely overcrowded and the people settle wherever they find a spot to stay even when far from the established infrastructure. Thus, to reach them and provide the people with emergency aid is getting more and more difficult. After a long and unsafe journey, their health condition often is dramatic. Given that the conflict situation in Myanmar still has not been solved, the people will continue to flee to Bangladesh. But the host country experiences a great challenge with the current quickly extending crisis. The international community now has to take action.



Sources:

- Staff of Welthungerhilfe and the local partners ANANDO on the ground; example: <http://welthungerhilfeindia.org/we-walked-for-days-without-food-a-rohingya-paddy-farmer/>
- ReliefWeb (23.10.2017): <https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/rohingya-crisis-numbers>
- UNICEF (20.10.2017): <https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/unicef-child-alert-october-2017-outcast-and-desperate-rohingya-refugee-children>
- OCHA (24.10.2017): <https://www.unocha.org/rohingya-refugee-crisis>
- Financial Tracking System (24.10.2017): <https://fts.unocha.org/appeals/628/summary>

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