

# In Bangladesh, UN food relief agency chief urges support amid massive Rohingya influx

1 October 2017 – The head of the United Nations food relief agency called today for an end to the horrors driving Rohingyas by the tens of thousands from their homes in Myanmar into neighboring Bangladesh.

On a visit to the region to rally international support to help ease the humanitarian crisis, the Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP), David Beasley, met refugee families in the new settlements in the Cox's Bazar area of Bangladesh, and reiterated the agency's commitment to supporting people fleeing violence in Myanmar.

According to the UN, more than 500,000 Rohingya refugees have poured into Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar since 25 August, having fled their homes after violence erupted in Myanmar's northern Rakhine province. United Nations relief agencies and partner aid organizations are rushing to help cope with the influx.

"I have heard heart-breaking stories today, speaking to [people who ran for their lives](#) and saw loved ones killed before their eyes. These horrors must stop," said Mr. Beasley.

Noting that many of these people were receiving WFP food assistance in Myanmar, he stressed that they will receive WFP food assistance in Bangladesh, until they are able to return home safely.

This is Mr. Beasley's first visit to Bangladesh since his assuming office in April. Having been in the region since Thursday, 29 September, he saw a WFP food distribution in an area adjacent to Kutupalong refugee camp, where hundreds of thousands of people have settled in makeshift shelters over the past month.

The WFP chief also toured the 2,000-acre area that has been allocated by the Bangladesh Government to accommodate the new arrivals. He also saw a WFP e-voucher shop, where registered refugees redeem monthly electronic food vouchers.

"WFP started distributing food as soon as the influx began, and has scaled up operations to reach almost half a million refugees in the past month with life-saving assistance," said Mr. Beasley, adding: "We are grateful for the generous support of the donor community that has made this possible."

Find out more: [Half a million Rohingya arrive in Bangladesh; UN agencies rush to provide shelter, clean water](#)

WFP reported today that it has so far distributed rice to some 460,000

refugees, and has also been providing high energy biscuits to more than 200,000 people as a one-off emergency measure when they arrive in the settlements and at border crossing points.

As the situation stabilizes, WFP plans to transition to more sophisticated programmes, especially with a view to supporting the nutritional needs of women and children and developing electronic voucher programmes that integrate with markets.