

World Refugee Week: Caritas Australia raises awareness of the world's largest refugee camp.

This week Caritas Australia is shining a light on the plight of the one million people in the world's largest refugee camp, Kutupalong in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, which is made up of 33 highly congested camps. The Rohingya Emergency in 2017 caused hundreds of thousands to flee there, with the plight of an estimated half a million child refugees having captured global attention.

Caritas Australia's [Displaced People Crisis Appeal](#) supports Caritas partners with programs that assist refugees in the region. Programs provide access to clean drinking water and sanitation facilities, as well as essentials such as food, shelter, hygiene kits and psychosocial support.

Caritas Bangladesh operates in camp number 13 of Cox's Bazar, which has a population of 45,550 people. On May 24th a devastating fire broke out leaving 1,300 people without shelter and destroying the Caritas Bangladesh warehouse that contained shelter materials worth millions. Fires are unfortunately common in camps like Cox's Bazar, as people typically cook on open stoves in small shelters made of combustible materials.

Setu Barai, Project Officer at Caritas Bangladesh said of the inherent dangers of working in camps like Kutupalong, "We may die but we have to support people. That's the risk humanitarian people have to take. When you see people suffering, we are human, we have a soft heart, so if we see people suffering, we intend to help them".

The fire damaged 221 shelters, 45 small shops, two child friendly spaces, one community safe space, one warehouse, 125 water and sanitation infrastructures including toilets, taps and bathing spaces, and 8 community infrastructures including a Mosque and an Islamic teaching centre.

Following a recent visit to Bangladesh, **Alistair Dutton Secretary General of Caritas Internationalis** said "We must not forget the Rohingya people. Rohingya families are among the most vulnerable people in our world today, living on marginal land, without the right to work. Over the past six years, more than 200,000 children have been born in the camps. They have never seen their home country and have no nationality. They are stateless."

Since the refugee crisis began in 2017, funding has dropped dramatically, with the global funds supporting food for refugees sitting at **\$11** per person per month, despite record inflation in the country. During that time the Caritas network has provided \$45 million in emergency efforts for Rohingya, assisting nearly 1.7 million individuals, and has committed to provide an additional \$7 million in support for 2024.

Alistair Dutton expressed that he left Bangladesh "deeply inspired by the humanity, compassion and solidarity" he saw, while reminding us that Rohingya families, "need our attention, resources, love and prayers more than ever".

The people in Cox's Bazar are part of a global population of 120 million displaced people worldwide, of which 43 million are children. The Caritas Australia Displaced People Crisis Appeal supports refugees across the world, from Bangladesh, to Ukraine and Moldova, as well as Sudan and South Sudan.

To support Caritas Australia's Displaced People Crisis Appeal, visit www.caritas.org.au/displaced or call 1800 024 413 toll free.

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