



## Safe Access To Fuel and Energy (SAFE) Bangladesh

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### Saving lives through SAFE cooking

WFP works to ensure that the food assistance provided can be consumed as safely and nutritiously as possible. While cooking may be thought of as a safe activity, in many circumstances, especially humanitarian and emergency settings, it poses serious risks to people's well-being and their environment.

In Cox's Bazar hundreds of thousands of people face a severe shortage of cooking fuel leading to numerous protection, nutrition, health and environmental concerns. WFP's October 2017 SAFE Rapid Assessment observed that refugees are mostly reliant on firewood to prepare their meals with the current set-up leaving substantial gaps for host and displaced populations.

### FACTS Bangladesh

- **Since August 25th, over 600,000 Rohingya have crossed into Bangladesh. They joined some 300,000 refugees in Ukhia and Teknaf who fled in earlier waves of violence.**
- **Refugees are mostly reliant on the distribution of non-cooked food including rice and pulses to cover their meals while only few organizations supply cooking fuel.**
- **Cooking is primarily done on firewood, leading to rapid depletion of available natural resources, deforestation and erosion.**
- **Firewood prices are increasing rapidly, affecting both host communities and Rohingya refugees due to a dwindling supply.**

- **People have reported to be unable to cook their rations, skip meals multiple times a month or eat undercooked food in response to the increasing wood fuel shortage.**
- **Firewood collection in nearby forests leads people to venture into unsafe areas where they are left vulnerable to gender based violence, elephant attacks, kidnapping and trafficking risks.**

### The challenge

Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated countries in the world with levels of vulnerability and food insecurity particularly high in the Cox's Bazar district. Due to its high population density there is a large proportional reliance on wood as an energy source. Sustainable wood fuel management was already challenging before the crisis with wood biomass decreasing 40% since 1994, while population increased by 32% (FAO, 2017). The wide-scale influx of refugees since late August exacerbated this problem. Skewed and unequal supply and demand leaves people facing a severe shortage of cooking fuel.

Access to cooking energy is a critical, life-saving component of humanitarian response and a barrier to the achievement of ending hunger under Sustainable Development Goal 2. WFP's Safe Access to Fuel and Energy (SAFE) initiative can ensure WFP food is cooked and consumed safely.

**WFP has globally reached over 6 million people with SAFE in 18 countries.**



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## Working on sustainable solutions

SAFE relies on an innovative combination of energy-related and income-generating activities addressing various challenges linked to access to cooking fuel. WFP, together with IOM and FAO, developed a joint concept-note to identify the most viable pathways to develop efficient and complementary programming.

## SAFE in Bangladesh

SAFE Bangladesh is a collaborative effort by WFP, FAO, IOM and partners with two primary objectives:

- **To address the increasing lack of access to cooking fuel for Rohingya in Kutupalong.**
- **To curtail environmental degradation and rehabilitate the resource base and economic livelihoods of the host population, while securing a safe and healthy environment.**

## SAFE 2017-2020

The programme has a three year timeframe with short, medium and longer-term interventions with sustainable solutions benefitting both the refugee and host community. This includes the immediate distribution of fuel sources, production of alternative fuels, activities for transitioning towards greater self-reliance when it comes to energy solutions and rehabilitation of environmentally degraded land in a phased approach:

### Phase I: Immediate Needs - Priority Activities December 2017 – February 2018

Project activities will address immediate and growing cooking fuel concerns through direct provision of alternative fuel sources and facilities.

**Activities planned:** Distribution of fuel, training in efficient usage, safe food storage, improved stoves, alternative fuel access, Cash-for-Work activities for refugee and host-communities to rehabilitate degraded areas and protect water sources. These activities will play a role in building social cohesion between the two populations.

### Phase II: Self-Reliance Activities

March 2018 – December 2020

Project activities will address the cooking fuel and environmental concerns for the host communities and refugee population and includes support to community entrepreneurial groups, technical trainings and support to private sector partners providing services to the refugee and host communities.

**Activities planned:** Small-scale to mid-scale alternative fuel production, agro-forestry, farmer field schools, agricultural group formation and collective forest management. Alternative fuel sources and production will be explored for inclusion in WFP's E-voucher to link livelihood and self-reliance activities with increased access to alternative fuels and sustainable market systems.

## Partnership and coordination

Coordination will take place through relevant sectors including the appointed coordinating **NFI-Shelter sector, Site Management, the Food Security Sector, and the SAFE stakeholder coordination group** to ensure effective programming.

Close technical and logistical coordination will ensue with UNHCR and the following Ministries; Ministry of Environment and Forest, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC).

The Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority (SREDA) will function as a consultative partner with independent technical contractors to support the design and programme roll-out.

**A total sum of USD 12,7 million is actively being sought to commence activities.**

**WFP has globally committed to support 10 million people through SAFE activities by 2020.**