Rohingya refugees have been staying in the Bangladesh camp since 1991. Condition of the makeshift shelters requires immediate improvement.

Without us, refugees can experience dangerous gaps in vital aid. • With us, they can get the all-round, practical assistance and protection they so desperately need.
UNHCR relief reaches more than a million displaced people in Pakistan

In May, a government offensive against militants in north-west Pakistan triggered the “largest and swiftest” displacement of civilians in nearly twenty years.

UNHCR’s response to the crisis was also large and swift. As thousands of families flooded south from the mountain districts of Swat, Buner and Dir, our emergency teams quickly established camps for the displaced people and distributed food, tents, water containers and other survival items.

“It’s been amazing the way we have responded,” said UNHCR’s Emergency Coordinator, Urooj Saifi speaking in June at the height of the crisis. “First of all we managed to set up a few of camps very fast. Within a couple of days we had three camps. We are working in new camps every day and identifying new sites. Our site planners are working every single day to enlarge the camps and get them ready to receive more people.”

Within a month, UNHCR had helped to establish 21 camps for the displaced, providing shelter, food and services for some 250,000 people. At the same time, our staff are operating ‘humanitarian hubs’ in urban centres like Peshawar, distributing relief packages to the thousands of displaced families sheltering with relatives and friends.

Now, as peace returns to Pakistan’s beautiful mountain valleys, most of those who fled the fighting want to return to rebuild their houses and lives.

With the help of your donations, UNHCR is providing ongoing assistance for families making the journey back home, providing kits of essential household items and building materials.

To date, UNHCR has distributed relief and shelter packages to more than 193,000 displaced families in Pakistan, reaching an estimated 1.3 million people. This huge relief operation is now close to being fully funded. Thank you for your extraordinary support!
October 16th was World Food Day! According to reports from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) - United Nations, armed conflict has seriously affected cereal production in developing countries and demand for food imports in neighboring countries is high. Devaluation of national currencies, unstable trade policies and inefficient transportation has all contributed to a still soaring food price in the developing world. UNHCR points out that high food prices has weakened the agency’s capacity to purchase food aid. Currently, more than 80% refugees in the world are undernourished and have developed symptoms of anemia.

This year was the first time the UNHCR Hong Kong office has organized a mini concert in Telford Plaza on World Food Day to raise public awareness towards the fact that food insecurity is endangering the lives of millions of refugees.

The concert began with exciting African drum music, followed by a beautiful singing performance from acclaimed singer / refugee song writer Ms. Helen Mottee and Ms. Bethan Davies. The concert was brought to a close by a musical performance by Ms. Fanny Cheng, Ms. May Kwong and friends. They also helped the UNHCR to appeal to the public to help save the lives of undernourished refugees.

With tremendous support from supporters listed below, the World Food Day event was a success. Thank you to ALL!

Andrew Ying  discuss.com.hk  imotor.me
Barry Chung  Enoch Lo  Jetsomarket.hk
Bethan Davies  鄭瑞芬  Jim Ling
Cheng Ming Magazine  HD-DC.com  廖文珊
CyberCTM (Macau)  Helen Mottee  NOWCYBER.com

PC Station  Smartie Production Company
Philippines Star HK Edition  Telford Plaza
Qooza.com  TVB Weekly
Sharing's African Drumming Arena  X-life Magazine
she.com
Home for me?
Rohingya protracted in refugee camp 18 years
漂浮無根 — 羅興亞人蝸居難民營十八年

September 16th: As this part of Bangladesh is slightly above sea level, a shower in the morning revealed the flooding problems that Bangladesh faces. All the rice fields soaked into the water, an hour drive to the camp gave the land rover a total mud bath!

When I arrived in Kutupalong refugee camp, some children ran to me! I wanted to give them each a warm smile, but more and more children came and gathered! At the end, hundreds of kids surrounded me in a circle. My local colleague raised his voice, “She has come to visit you from far away Hong Kong!” Most of the children kept walking with me, lot of adult men walked along in the outside circle, women wearing the traditional Burkha stood far away but looked at me in curiosity! Social norms did not allow them to talk to a stranger.

I walked along the main road of the camp site and was introduced to various facilities including school, medical centre, latrine, vocational centre, community wells and food distribution centre etc...

Quiet and shy – Sajeda

Sajeda is 14 and completed 5 years basic education in the refugee camp. As a result, she was lucky to be selected for the UNHCR computer training course. Before the training, she never saw a computer. After 6 month training, she was the best student in class! Now, she has become a computer training teacher in the camp.

Although there is unlikely to be jobs in the camp, Sajeda wants to use her knowledge to teach her people and to be proud to be a Rohingya no matter where she is! Bangladesh or her home, Myanmar!

“I want to resettle to any country which has peace. I want to have more education opportunities and don’t want to stay in the refugee camp.”

9月16日，早上下了一場大雨，讓我見識到孟加拉。因為地處海拔以上只有數公尺的關係，只要一場細雨都可令稻田浸泡在泥水中，一小時的車程裏已令吉普車身鋪滿了泥漿。

當我到達Kutupalong難民營，幾個孩子跑過來，正想給他們每人一個微笑問候時，更多的小孩子跑出來了，到後來可能有百多個孩子把我們完全的包圍在內，令我寸步難行，直至當地同事大聲說道：「她是我的同事，從很遠的香港來探望你們的！」我才能在小孩堆中間開出一條小路。大多數成年人在眾外有點好奇又不想跟著小孩呆在一起。穿著回教傳統服裝的婦女在旁邊遠遠望著我，好像有話要說卻礙於教派規條，不可與陌生人說話。

沿著營內的主要道路往前走，同事介紹著營內的設施，包括10間提供基本教育的學校、醫院、婦科診所、男及女性社區中心、職業及電腦培訓中心、肥皂及節能灶工場、洗澡間、廁所、水井、糧食分發中心、加上難民的房屋組合而成一個小社區。

遇上害羞的莎達

14歲的莎達已經完成了5年的基本教育，剛好遇到聯合國難民署的電腦培訓班招生，幸運地被選上了。在此之前，她從來未接觸過電腦，但經過六個月的培訓，她成為了班上成績最好的一個。如今她和五位同學將會成為導師，在營內新設立的電腦中心教導其他學員。

在將來的日子，雖然在營內的生活有很大限制及很少工作機會，莎達仍然希望學有所用，希望有一天可以為身為羅興亞人而感到光榮，為族人服務，無論身在孟加拉或緬甸家鄉。

「我希望可以被安置到任何有和平的地方，可以接受更多教育，不想再留在難民營！」
Home sweet home?

Walking into one of the typically small huts for a family of six, the wall made by mud and bamboo is covered by plastic sheet, 200 square foot house divided into living room and kitchen, the only thing you could find in the house are cooking utensils with the rough ground as a mattress. The temperature outside is 36°C, it felt much higher in the house, very soon, I felt regret for the women who had to bear the heat because they needed to stay a long time in the house.

Refugee camps usually do not have permanent structures as refugees are only temporary residents of the camp and the goal is for them to resettle to another country or integrate into the local community as quickly as possible. Their muddy houses cannot resist strong winds and storms. The refugee(s) have to rebuild them every time it falls. Although public bath cubicles and latrines are available in the camp, the lack of lights and electricity is the reason, women are afraid to go out at night.

Is this Home forever for me?

Most of the refugees have been living here for 18 years, over 60% of the population born in the camp. To return home is a dream for most of the refugees. In theory, it is so close in distance but so far in terms of having a durable solution. Resettlement to a third country is the most likely solution for the Rohingya, but the chance is low and the population numbers are large.

Lot of the shelters are old and fragile, UNHCR is committed to raising HK$3 million to improve the camp’s condition, to give a better shelter for the Rohingya in exile and for a protracted situation. However! We cannot make it without your support!

Why Myanmar Rohingya in Bangladesh?

Muslim Rohingya is an ethnic and religious minority in Myanmar. This people has been deemed stateless in accordance with the laws of Myanmar. The systematic and continuous persecution of the Rohingya has resulted in them frequently seeking safety in Bangladesh. The most recent large influx of approximately 250,000 began on 18th July 1991. As of December 2005, 236,618 Rohingya had returned to Myanmar. There are 28,183 whom continue to reside in two camps, most of them not willing to return because of a traumatizing experience or having no confidence for their security in Myanmar.

沒有家具的「家」

低下頭鑽入其中一個典型六人家庭的房屋，泥土和竹搭成的外牆，以帆布遮蓋，二百呎的小屋裏分開了起居室及廚房，除了煮食器皿，沒有床，沒有桌椅，一家人白天席地而坐，夜裡席地而睡，沒有任何家具。當日氣溫高達36度，室內的氣溫更高，令人呼吸困難，可以想像必須長時間逗留在室內的婦女苦況。

和大部份的收容國一樣，難民營內只能有臨時建築物，代表難民不會長居於此。在營地面積，難民以泥土和竹搭成矮小的房屋，每逢強風、暴雨，房屋都會倒塌。營內雖然有鋁鐵搭成的簡陋公共浴室和廁所，但燈光明暗不足，婦女都不敢在晝間上廁所。

何處為家？

最早到達兩個難民營的羅興亞人已在此居住了18年，超過六成的現有人口在營內出生。面對著回不了的緬甸家園，暂时地孟加拉又不接受他們成為國民，重新安置到第三國家成為唯一的出路，但人數太多，困難重重，第三代已經在營內出生，無根的羅興亞人前途仍是一片灰暗。

現時很多房屋已成破舊，聯合國難民署希望可在2009年12月底籌集300萬元改善營地房屋，為長期流亡在外的羅興亞人提供一個可遮風擋雨的庇護所。只有你的支持，我們才可以做到！

為何緬甸羅興亞難民在孟加拉？

因為宗教信仰不同，1991年7月18日緬甸政府宣佈，信奉回教的羅興亞人並非國民，國內發生了大規模迫害及強姦羅興亞婦女事件，超過250,000名難民涌入孟加拉。直至2005年12月，236,618名羅興亞人在緬甸局勢稍為安定時，由聯合國難民署安排回到緬甸，現時尚有28,183名難民未能回國，大部份因為當年被迫害的經驗太痛苦或是對緬甸仍然未有信心。
SURVIVING IN THE CITY - The growing plight of urban refugees

Say “refugee crisis” and most people think of sprawling camps in remote locations. Today, however, around half the world’s displaced people are found in urban centres. Sheltering with family members or living hand-to-mouth in shanty towns and cheap rented housing, many live in extreme poverty without income or access to basic services like healthcare, education, electricity and running water.

UNHCR’s mandate to protect the world’s refugees isn’t limited to refugee camps. We must also ensure that the growing ranks of urban refugees receive our support. However, simply reaching these families can be a challenge. Without legal permits, many live in virtual hiding, fearing deportation. As “outsiders”, they become targets for organised crime, exploitation, harassment and xenophobia.

As the world becomes increasingly urbanised, many more uprooted families are seeking refuge in cities and towns. UNHCR is developing new and innovative ways to protect and assist urban refugees. In cities all over the world - from Abijan to Quito - we run programs to ensure their safety, health and human rights but the needs are enormous and a lot remains to be done.

Helping refugee children return to school

While primary schools operate in most refugee camps, urban-based refugee children can miss out on an education. Lacking the money for uniforms, transport, fees and school materials, impoverished families living in Syria and Jordan have been reluctant or unable to enrol their children in school.

Urgent action was needed to prevent a generation of children growing up uneducated. Late last year, Jordan’s King Abdullah II opened his country’s public school system to all Syrian students, regardless of their legal status. Since then, UNHCR has been running a concerted campaign to boost refugee enrolments and the capacity of Jordanian schools to absorb them.

Meanwhile, in the Syrian capital Damascus, UNHCR has distributed more than 50,000 “school kits” to needy Syrian families. Containing a school bag, uniform, shoes, sports clothes and stationery items, these kits have had a dramatic impact on refugee school enrolments. The attendance of Syrian children in Syrian public schools has increased by 48% over the past two years.

聯合國難民署保護世界各地難民的工作，並不侷限於難民營內。我們也要保障不斷增多的城市難民有機會獲得援助。可是，單靠接觸這些家庭已是一項挑戰。由於沒有合法證明，許多難民都是隱形地生活，終日提心吊膽，怕被逐出境。因此，他們被視為“外來人”的他們往往成為被犯罪組織剝削、騷擾和仇視的目標。

由於世界趨向都市化，更多流離失所的家庭在城市及市區內尋求庇護。聯合國難民署正致力發展一些創新方法去保護及協助這些城市難民。在全世界各個城市一由Abijan到厄瓜多爾首都基多－我們推行項目以保障他們的安全、健康及人權，但是需求實在太龐大，因此還有許多工作尚待完成。

幫助難民孩子上學

所有難民營都必需提供小學基本教育，住在城市的難民孩子卻往往錯失接受教育的機會。

因為沒法支付購買校服、學習用品及乘車的費用，住在敘利亞及約旦的窮苦伊拉克家庭都不願意或沒能力為孩子報名讀書。

因此我們需要作出緊急行動，以免這一代的伊拉克兒童在缺乏教育情況下成長。去年年底，約旦國王阿卜杜拉二世，接受了伊拉克學童的難民身份，開放國家的公立學校系統。自那時起難民署便積極配合，鼓勵難民兒童入學及推動約旦的學校提供更多學額給他們。

在敘利亞首都大馬士革，聯合國難民署派發逾50,000套「上學用品」給有需要的伊拉克家庭。上學用品包內有書包、校服、鞋子、運動服及文具，這些用品對推動難民報名入學極為有效。過去兩年，伊拉克的孩子入讀敘利亞公立學校人數上升了48%。
Star Appeal

Christmas decorations, lightings and festive atmosphere, all remind us of parties, tasty food, presents and happy gatherings with our friends and family members. However, when we are having enjoyable moments with our love ones, there are millions of refugee children and families in different parts of the world struggling for a living in extremely rough conditions. Every day, they have to face problems like persecutions, sickness and malnutrition, but received little or no media attention.

We can help change their lives. How about consider choosing a meaningful and vital gift which can benefit the world’s forgotten refugee children and their families who find themselves far from home this Christmas?

By selecting a gift from UNHCR’s on-line Star Appeal, you can help provide essential assistance to the world’s “forgotten refugees” – refugees who are trapped in extremely harsh conditions.

The UN Refugee Agency is working to ensure that refugees under their care have the food, clean water, shelter, protection and education they need to secure a chance for a better future. Your gift makes all this possible.

The purchase of one or more of our five gifts directs funds towards specific projects. For example, by spending just HK$300 you can provide textbooks, exercise books and pencils for 5 students for a year. By purchasing warm blankets or an all season tent you’ll be contributing to our emergency relief projects. By purchasing seeds and tools, you’ll be directing funds towards agriculture and self sufficiency projects and helping refugees to improve their malnutrition problem. And by purchasing a community well you will be contributing to our water projects for clean, safe drinking water.

Please act now, invite your families, friends, colleagues and working partners to join our Star Appeal www.UNHCR.org.hk, and purchase a really special gift for the “forgotten refugees” which can definitely make a change in their life!

星願行動

看見商場及街道上的聖誕裝飾及閃爍
燈飾，整個城市充滿著濃厚的節日氣氛，令人不期然聯
想起美酒佳餚，與家人朋友互相交換禮物，一起共享節日
歡樂的情境。在我們歡渡佳節的同時，在世界其他角落，
有無數的難民兒童和他的家庭仍住在極度惡劣的環境下掙
扎求存，舉步維艱，日夜面對著被迫害、疾病、營養不良
等等的威脅，但卻得不到傳媒的關注。

有否想過，選購一份別具意義和重要的禮物，送給世界上
被遺忘的難民兒童和他們的家屬，使他們從中受益？其實
你與我都可以為他們的生命帶來改變。

你只要從聯合國難民署網上的「星願行動」：選取你要捐
贈的禮物，便能為世界各地「被遺忘了的難民」提供重要
的支援。

聯合國難民署致力確保難民在其照顧下，能獲得食物、清
潔食水、庇護所、保護和教育的生活所需。你的捐助將令
難民有更好的未來。

你可以從我們提供的五項禮物中，針對支援不同的項目，
來捐贈一項或多項禮物送給難民。例如，只需港幣300元，
便能為5名難民學童提供一年所需的教科書、練習簿及
鉛筆；選擇保暖毛毯或全年適用的帳篷，便能支援我們的
緊急救援項目；選擇種籽和工具，將能支援難民的農耕及
自給自足項目；有助難民改善營養不良問題；選擇一口社
區井，便可以幫助難民獲得清潔和安全的飲用水。

請即行動！邀請你的家人、朋友、同事及工作夥伴登入：
www.UNHCR.org.hk，為「被遺忘的難民」送上一份特別
的禮物，讓他們的生命得以改變！
WHY I DO IT – Helene Caux

UNHCR Public Information Officer and aid worker Helene Caux spent two challenging months in north-west Pakistan as part of UNHCR’s Emergency Response Team (ERT).

Can you tell us about your experience with the ERT?
I was deployed in Peshawar from May to July and it was both an incredible and a dramatic experience. Pakistan is a fascinating country; I met incredible people there. But it was dramatic because we lost two colleagues. I will always remember Aleksandar, killed in the bombing of the Pearl Continental Hotel. He was a very kind person who wanted to make a difference. It was his first emergency mission.

What was your role in this emergency?
We were dealing with one of the biggest displacements in the past two decades. I spent most of my time in the camps for the internally displaced, trying to show the human face of the operation through stories, videos and photographs.

What was the Emergency Response Team’s role?
The ERT’s role was to assist and reinforce the team already on the ground. Our first priority was to open new camps and ensure that people received shelter and basic assistance like jerry cans, mats and plastic sheeting.

It was extremely hot – sometimes up to 50°C outside. People came from much cooler areas like the Swat Valley and had problems getting used to these high temperatures. Very quickly we decided to cool down the tents and provide the families with fans, which meant that all the camps had to be electrified.

What single incident affected you most?
Meeting with a woman in a hospital in Peshawar. She had lost one of her daughters in the bombing of her house and had been severely burned. Even more traumatic than seeing the burns was the constant howling of people in unbearable pain.

What did you find most rewarding?
Most rewarding was knowing that my stories of these families would be published – would touch other people and inspire them to help. UNHCR can only assist these people in need with the support of its donors. Their donations, no matter how small, make an enormous difference.

Can you tell us about your experience with the ERT?

By May to July, I was deployed in Peshawar, Pakistan, where I worked with the Emergency Response Team (ERT). It was an incredible and dramatic experience. I met incredible people, but it was also a difficult time, as we lost two colleagues.

What was your role in this emergency?
My role was to assist and reinforce the team already on the ground. Our first priority was to open new camps and ensure that people received shelter and basic assistance like jerry cans, mats, and plastic sheeting.

The weather was extremely hot, reaching up to 50°C. People who had previously lived in cooler areas found it challenging to adapt. We quickly provided the necessary support, including fans to cool down the tents and ensure the families’ comfort.

What single incident affected you most?
Meeting a woman in a hospital in Peshawar. She had lost one of her daughters in the bombing of her house and was severely burned. The constant howling of people in pain was incredibly traumatic.

What did you find most rewarding?
The most rewarding aspect was knowing that my stories of these families would be published, touching the hearts of others and inspiring them to help. The support of donors, no matter how small, makes an enormous difference.