



## Safe Access to Fuel and Energy Plus, Phase 2 (SAFE+2)

### ANNUAL PROGRAMME<sup>1</sup> NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT REPORTING PERIOD: 6 JULY 2022 – 31 DECEMBER 2022

Programme Title & Project Number	Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results <sup>2</sup>
<p>Programme Title: Safe Access to Fuel and Energy Plus, phase 2 (SAFE+2)</p> <p>Programme Number: MPTF00293 &amp; XI-IATI-UNPF</p> <p>MPTF Office Project Reference Number:<sup>3</sup> 00132257</p>	<p>Bangladesh, Cox's Bazar region. Strategic result areas include: cleaner energy provision, regional environment and ecosystems, and enhanced resilience for refugee and host communities.</p> <p>Strategic Priority Area 1: Access to Cleaner Energy Strategic Priority Area 2: Environment and Ecosystem Strategic Priority Area 3: Resilience</p>
Participating Organization(s)	Implementing Partners
<p>FAO, IOM, UNHCR, WFP</p>	<p>FAO worked with the Forest Department, Water Development Board, Department of Environment, Local Government Engineering Department, Office of the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner Office (RRRC), district and sub-district administration, local government organizations, the Coastal Division, the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) and the Mukti Foundation.</p> <p>IOM provided liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) distributions through direct implementation and worked with NF Enterprise as supplier/service provider. The agency directly implemented a livelihoods study. The organization works with</p>

<sup>1</sup> The term “programme” is used for programmes, joint programmes and projects.

<sup>2</sup> Strategic Results, as formulated in the Strategic UN Planning Framework (e.g. UNDAF) or project document;

<sup>3</sup> The MPTF Office Project Reference Number is the same number as the one on the Notification message. It is also referred to as “Project ID” on the project’s factsheet page the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

RRRC and its sub-divisions for overall programme support.

UNHCR works with the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) and Help the Needy (partner of the Bangladesh Export Import Company Limited, BEXIMCO) to enable LPG distributions. The agency also works with RRRC and its sub-divisions. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) supported UNHCR with research on refugees' LPG consumption levels and in the identification of energy savings with pressure cookers.

WFP implements resilience, disaster risk reduction (DRR) and environmental rehabilitation activities with Helvetas, as well as the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED), the Centre for Natural Resource Studies (CNRS), Stichting Cordaid, CARE and Christian Aid. Coordination is maintained with the sectors of the Inter Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) including its Site Management and Site Development (SMSD) sector. WFP's skills development activities are implemented by ActionAid Bangladesh, Community Development Center (CODEC), and HelpAge ISCG's Food Security Sector (FSS). Overall coordination is done with other SAFE+2 partners and the Government of Bangladesh.

#### Programme/Project Cost (US\$)

-Total approved budget as per the signed project document: USD 282,039,934  
 -Total amount of funding disbursed to each implementing UN agency in 2022:  
 FAO: USD 1,818,732  
 IOM: USD 4,163,637  
 UNHCR: USD 4,095,006  
 WFP: USD 1,361,189

#### Programme Duration

Overall Duration: 33 months  
 Start Date<sup>4</sup> (06.07.2022)  
 Original End Date<sup>5</sup> (31.03.2025)  
 Current End date<sup>6</sup>(31.03.2025)

<sup>4</sup> The start date is the date of the first transfer of the funds from the MPTF Office as Administrative Agent. Transfer date is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

<sup>5</sup> As per approval of the original project document by the relevant decision-making body/Steering Committee.

<sup>6</sup> If there has been an extension, then the revised, approved end date should be reflected here. If there has been no extension approved, then the current end date is the same as the original end date. The end date is the same as the operational closure date which is when all activities for which a Participating Organization is responsible under an approved MPTF / JP have been completed. As per the MOU, agencies are to notify the MPTF Office when a programme completes its operational activities.

Total amount disbursed to UN agencies in 2022:

**USD 11,438,563**

Contributions provided by donors in 2022:

Canada: CAD 15 million/ USD 11,554,104

Sweden: SEK 61,5 million/ USD 5,842,559

(received mid-December 2022, disbursed to UN agencies in 2023)

**TOTAL: USD 17,396,663**

**Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.**

Assessment/Review

☐ Yes    ☒ No

Mid-Term Evaluation Report

☐ Yes    ☒ No

**Report Submitted By**

- Name: Geoffrey Carliez
- Title: Senior Project Coordination Officer
- Participating Organization (Lead): UNHCR
- Email address: carliez@unhcr.org

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Building upon the successes of the first phase of the SAFE+ programme; SAFE+2 partners in Bangladesh made progress in all three of the programme's strategic priority areas, including refugees' access to cleaner energy, environment and ecosystems and resilience. Notable results were also obtained in the areas of coordination, government liaison and fundraising, though more work - especially on the latter - remained to be done.

Results related to the programme's Strategic Priority 1 focus on 'Access to Cleaner Energy' and include the continued distribution of LPG (by IOM and UNHCR) to over 190,000 Rohingya households comprising some 920,000 refugees located in 33 refugee camps. Both UN and independent surveys confirm that between 98 to 100% percent of refugees currently use LPG as their primary cooking fuel. Stanford University research published during the reporting period indicates that the continued provision of LPG to the Rohingya refugees in the Cox's Bazar area prevented the daily burning of firewood equivalent to some 900,000 kilos from around 6,000 hectares of forest per year. It also directly linked the LPG distributions to refugees' improved nutritional status and mental health; increased food purchasing power and increased time for care and study; reduced domestic violence and gender-based violence (GBV) incidents; averted respiratory illnesses; and improved refugee-host community relations.

Results under Strategic Priority 2 focus on 'Environment and Ecosystems' and include the revegetation of 32 hectares of land inside the camps and the planting of 20 hectares of coastal belt plantations in host communities. This was facilitated by FAO and supported by cash for work activities. The indicated reforestation activities come in addition to the restoration of 2,334 hectares of degraded forest land that was completed in refugee and host community areas during the first phase of the SAFE+ programme, implemented from January 2019 – June 2022. FAO SAFE+2 activities during the reporting period included care and maintenance activities of earlier planted areas and, under Strategic Priority Two, will increasingly focus on disaster risk reduction (DRR), with inclusion of watershed management and landslide stabilization, but also on strengthened refugee-host community relations in relation to management of natural resources.

Strategic Priority 3 focuses on 'Resilience' and exclusively comprised green skills development and capacity building implementations for Rohingya refugees during the reporting period. No host community activities could be funded from SAFE+2 allocations during the reporting period due to limited available funding for the activity. WFP conducted vocational green skills development trainings for 4,921 participants (1,812 males, 3,109 females), of which 2,522 were persons with disability or elderly. IOM conducted a skills development service mapping exercise to obtain insight in the varying skills development services offered by different agencies in the host community and refugee camps. FAO implemented homestead gardening activities in the refugee camps for a total 600 households (80 male-headed HHs/520 female-headed HHs). They also concluded a cost-benefit analysis of different vegetable production methods.

In terms of coordination, the SAFE+2 agencies convened monthly SAFE+2 coordination meetings in Cox's Bazar, where the programme's multi-partner approach allowed for information sharing and joint approaches on technical and operational matters, such as on fuel efficient stove assessments and reviewing distribution modalities. UNHCR, as convening agency, recruited a SAFE+2 Coordinator, who joined at the beginning of November 2022. He supported the SAFE+2 agencies among others by sharing information, liaising with donors, fundraising, strategic planning budgeting and reporting, discussing areas of research, troubleshooting operational issues, convening ad-hoc meetings on strategic priorities when required, as well liaising with the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO).

Donor support and fundraising remain key to the SAFE+2 programme. All SAFE+2 activities implemented during the current reporting period were made possible with the generous contribution of Canada (GAC).

Their financial support during the reporting period amounted to a first tranche allocation of USD 11.4 million for the SAFE+2 partners in Bangladesh. The SAFE+2 partners were grateful to also welcome Sweden (SIDA) to the SAFE+2 programme during the reporting period. Sweden's first contribution tranche of USD 5.8 million was received by the end of 2022 and disbursed to SAFE+2 partners in Bangladesh by the beginning of 2023.

Given the SAFE+2 programme's high operational costs, partners ensured that a programme specific fundraising strategy was developed during the reporting period. This strategy focuses on fundraising with both traditional and non-traditional donors. Cost saving became another key focus area. Of special concern remained the need to avert a possible LPG pipeline break, which would have the potential to undo years of SAFE+ investments made in the Cox's Bazar area. Towards the end of the reporting period, it also became increasingly clear that, given the decreased funding situation, the SAFE+2 programme would be forced to reprioritize activities outlined in the programme document according to those considered to be the most critical. Fundraising, cost-saving and activity reprioritization will therefore be key focus areas for SAFE+2 programming for the year 2023.

## **I. Purpose**

### **Objectives of the SAFE+2 programme**

The SAFE+ programme was conceived to meet the operational need for a practical, safe and sustainable cooking fuel alternative to firewood through the provision of LPG. The programme objectives also include the mitigation of deforestation in and around the Cox's Bazar refugee camps and ensuring the rehabilitation of impacted ecosystems. It aims to reduce the risk and exposure of GBV against women and to foster greater social cohesion between refugee and host communities through livelihoods and skills development. The SAFE+2 programme, as a second phase of the programme, kept these key programme objectives, yet it refocused on three main Strategic Priorities:

Strategic Priority 1 focuses on Access to Cleaner Energy and concerns the provision of cleaner and efficient cooking energy through the continued provision of LPG and energy efficient cooking equipment to reduce deforestation and contribute to the mitigation of climate change.

Strategic Priority 2 focuses on Environment and Ecosystems and knowledge management related to watershed and natural resource management. This strategic priority also focuses on ecosystem rehabilitation, environmental conservation and climate action, the strengthening of refugee-host community relations and the mitigation of conflicts over natural resources. It includes DRR approaches by preventing landslides, floods and droughts, where possible through Nature Based Solutions.

Strategic Priority 3 focuses on Resilience, and the strengthening of it for refugees and host communities. It encompasses skills development and livelihood practices and ensuring that refugees can be as self-sustainable as possible. This strategic priority also aims to prevent further harm to the environment due to negative coping strategies and unsustainable agriculture practices.

### **Outcomes:**

The SAFE+2 programme's main expected Outcome under Strategic Priority One 'Access to Cleaner Energy' is that targeted households *have safe and sufficient access to cleaner cooking energy to meet their basic needs*. This is done through three Outputs: Output 1: Refugee households have continual safe access

to cleaner cooking fuel (LPG); Output 2: Targeted households have access to energy-efficient, reliable, and modern cooking equipment; Output 3: Energy needs and alternatives are assessed.

The expected Outcome under Strategic Priority Two ‘Environment and Ecosystems’ is that *the environment and ecosystems are rehabilitated to strengthen community resilience to mitigate conflict over natural resources, disasters, and climate shocks*. This is done through the following three outputs: Output: 2.1 Environment and socio-ecological knowledge is managed; Output: 2.2 Watersheds are managed and ecosystems rehabilitated; Output: 2.3 Community Capacity to manage conflicts over natural resources is strengthened.

Finally, the expected Outcome under Strategic Priority Three is *to increase resilience of vulnerable host communities and Rohingya refugees*. Outcomes here have been segregated into vulnerable host communities and Rohingya refugees respectively. Outcome 3A focuses on ensuring that the resilience of vulnerable host communities, especially women, is sustained. This is targeted through the following Outputs: Output 3A.1 Market and value chain analysis is conducted to identify sectors for green economic growth; Output: 3A.2 Vulnerable host community households are producing environmentally sustainable products and services; Output: 3A.3 Established on- and off-farm producer groups are linked to markets.

Outcome 3B focuses on ensuring that the resilience of Rohingya refugees, especially vulnerable groups, is sustained. This is pursued through the following Outputs: Output 3B.1 Approaches are assessed and identified for quality, sustainable and complementary programming in the camps. Output: 3B.2 Rohingya refugees’ green skills developed through training and inputs.

## II. Results

### i) Narrative reporting on results:

#### Strategic Priority 1: Access to Cleaner Energy

SAFE+2 activities implemented under Strategic Priority 1 and Output 1, coupled with several bilateral allocations in support of LPG distributions, made it possible for over 98 percent<sup>7</sup> of Rohingya refugee households in the Cox’s Bazar area to access to LPG as a cleaner source of cooking energy during the reporting period. Household-level research conducted by UNHCR at the beginning of 2023 even indicated 99.8 percent usage of LPG among the entitled refugee households.

Research also found that over 80 percent of the Rohingya refugees in the Cox’s Bazar area on any day exclusively cooked using LPG. Field observations however confirmed that refugee households at times still supplement their cooking energy with firewood when their LPG runs out before an LPG cylinder refill is due. This firewood was typically purchased from vendors or collected from the forest. As IOM stated in its final SAFE+ phase one end report, which was released during the reporting period; 54 percent of Rohingya refugee households still purchase firewood to supplement their LPG allocation. It was however established that this takes place on a relatively small scale, given that refugee households’ monthly average expenditure on firewood was found to comprise the equivalent of one monthly cooking day (BDT 467 to purchase 4.6 kg of firewood). Other post-distribution monitoring (PDM) and non-food items (NFIs) assessments reflected a similar or lower self-reported firewood usage in parallel to LPG usage.

---

<sup>7</sup> Kwong, H et al. ‘Human Health and Environmental Impacts of LPG Distribution to 1 Million Households in the Rohingya Refugee Camp’, Stanford University and ICDDR, presented 06 December 2022.

## Positive impacts of LPG distributions

A multitude of positive outcomes have been linked to the supply of LPG in the Cox's Bazar refugee operation. One notable observed situational improvement relates to refugees' food coping mechanisms. An assessment among over 900 refugee households found that the introduction of LPG allowed for a 27% decrease in food coping mechanisms and a 39% percent reduction in cooking fuel coping mechanisms. This in turn allowed refugees to spend more resources on food, which enhanced their nutritional status. Putting this in terms of improved spending power per household: the average Rohingya refugee household in the Cox's Bazar area had an additional USD 8.55 to spend on a monthly basis following the introduction of LPG into the Cox's Bazar operation, while also being able to reduce their monthly spending on firewood by an average USD 7.19.

Stanford University and ICDDR's longitude study<sup>8</sup> also found that the introduction – and continued distribution – of LPG in the Cox's Bazar refugee operation enhanced refugees' health at large, both physically and mentally. This was largely done by averting disability and deaths related to respiratory diseases and to a lesser degree wildlife conflicts and other negative factors. Dangerous fine particles levels observed when refugees previously cooked on using firewood, or with plastic in the absence of firewood, were reduced from daily average PM 2.5 levels of some 220, which is linked to significant aggravation of heart, lung, and respiratory conditions to PM 2.5 levels of around 50 maximum per day following the introduction of LPG, which presents an acceptable fine particle level range. As a result, refugees reported that coughs, headaches, lethargy, weight loss and eye problems improved after the introduction of LPG. Female care givers' mental health scores also went up an average 10 percent following the introduction of LPG.

A key observed outcome of the LPG distribution program under SAFE+2, as per the first phase of SAFE+, is that it reduced deforestation and allowed for reforestation - supported by both Strategic Priorities 2 and 3 - to take place. LPG distributions made it no longer necessary for Rohingya refugee households to enter the forest and cut down trees to access cooking fuel. This allowed a large part of an estimated 7,000 hectares of degraded or deforested land to grow back to a state resembling the pre-2017 Rohingya refugee influx situation. The Stanford University/ ICDDR research found that LPG distributions prevented annual extractions of some 330,600 tons of firewood (amounting to some 900,000 kilograms of firewood per day<sup>9</sup>) out of around 6,000 hectares of forest per year. This in turn prevented carbon dioxide emissions of over 407,000 tons, comprising some 200,000 tons during the 06 July – 31 Dec 2022 reporting period.

By saving the forest and its natural resources, LPG distributions continued to positively impact refugee-host community relations. As forests were restored in the Cox's Bazar area, natural resources recovered in the hosting community areas. Refugees were no longer forced to pay fees to a select few members of the Bangladeshi host community to enter the forest as had been required earlier, which had resulted in exploitation and had created refugee-host community tensions. LPG distributions also resulted in a reduced number of GBV incidents, as well as wildlife attacks and domestic violence cases, as both male and female refugees were no longer forced to enter potentially dangerous forest areas by themselves. Refugees' time for education and care was freed up by not having to go to the forest to collect firewood or having to scrub blackened pans.

Results related to Strategic Priority One's, Output 2 include the provision of energy-efficient cooking equipment. UNHCR received a bilateral contribution of 100,000 cooking stoves from JTS, a Korean NGO, which were delivered to UNHCR (28,000 stoves) and IOM (72,000 stoves) warehouses in several batches between 31 July and 20 October 2022. Most stoves were distributed, with some remaining in stock for standby purposes. The average fuel efficiency of the distributed cooking stoves was measured at 62.5 percent. This allowed refugees and the operation to conserve LPG.

---

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> FAO earlier established a daily firewood consumption rate of some 700,000 kilograms.

UNHCR during the reporting period also expanded trials with the usage of pressure cookers with the objective to save LPG where possible. A pressure cooker pilot was introduced in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2022 in which refugees' LPG consumption both with and without pressure cookers (as baseline) were measured. Refugees who were provided a pressure cooker also received a detailed training on how to use pressure cookers safely and effectively. Though the trial produced mixed findings and was undertaken from a relatively small sample size of 118 households, findings indicated that energy efficiency savings with refugees using pressure cookers were possible. It was however established that additional research among a much larger sample size was required during the first quarter of 2023, to establish a higher research confidence interval.

Results related to Strategic Priority 1, Output 3, ensured that energy needs and alternatives continued to be assessed. FAO during the reporting period planned for a study on alternative fuels to LPG, which is to trial several alternative energy sources among 300 households and in laboratory settings. A ToR was drafted for the study and a call for proposals circulated. The finalization of the contractual agreement with an implementing partner took place outside the scope of the reporting period.

## Strategic Priority 2: Energy and Environment

Strategic Priority 2 during the reporting period focused on reforestation in refugee camp areas and maintenance, but also on streambank rehabilitation, planting in host community coastal areas, as well as watershed management and facilitation of renewable solar energy technologies.

Under Strategic Priority 2, Output 1, FAO during the reporting period supported the planting of a total 32 hectares of forest plantations of which 25 hectares of land was established on steep slopes. This prevented soil erosion and limited landslide risks, thereby supporting DRR implementation. Under Strategic Priority 2, Output 2, 5.5 hectares of riparian forest was planted to stabilize flood prone areas alongside riverbanks. Planting was also done alongside 0.6 hectares of roadside, 0.5 hectares in the vicinity of a Forest Range Office, and 0.4 hectares in homesteads within camp areas. Work was completed through cash-for-work approaches, with labour for reforestation, watershed management, and riparian site rehabilitation provided by WFP.

Labourers supported by WFP also engaged in the maintenance of existing plantation sites, watersheds, natural streams and riparian plantations comprising some 112 hectares across 21 camps. Under Outcome 2.2, WFP provided cash-for-work to workers supported with equipment for watershed management and environmental rehabilitation activities to the equivalent of 176 'person-days'. They provided another 4,562 'person-days' cash for Strategic Priority 2 activities, however without the workers being provided with specific equipment.

FAO indicates that in the SAFE+2 context significant progress towards achieving Output 2.2 – related to watershed management and ecosystem restoration - was obtained, as out of a planned 27 kilometres of streambank rehabilitation and maintenance, 20 km was achieved. FAO enabled implementation of cash-for-work activities by providing WFP-supported workers with the required materials - such as tools, seedlings, fencing materials, bamboo, rope, sticks, watering cans and spades - and by providing technical guidance. WFP's cash-for-work activities were conducted in coordination with the ISCG's SMSD Sector, the Energy and Environment Technical Working Group (EETWG), as well as with the Bangladesh Forestry Department, the RRRC and other relevant institutions.

FAO additionally supported the Bangladesh Forest Department Coastal Division with the planting and maintenance of approximately 20 hectares of coastal belt plantations and supported 40 farming households – out of 200 targeted households - with two solar-operated charging stations to promote renewable energy technologies. It is noted that not all of FAO's planned Strategic Priority 2 activities could be carried out



during the reporting period due to staffing constraints and funding shortfalls. This is reflected in Annex 1, the Indicator Based Performance Assessment. Activities that could not be completed in 2022 are included in the 2023 workplan.

### Strategic Priority 3: Resilience

WFP supported Strategic Priority 3 on Resilience by promoting a circular economy with minimum environmental impact in refugee camps. They did so, in conjunction with partners, by enhancing refugees' skills development opportunities and by enabling capacity building through centre-based trainings, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and the upcycling of waste. The agency, under Output 3B.2, enabled the development of Rohingya refugees' green skills through training. WFP's self-reliance programme under SAFE+2 supported in total 4,921 refugees (1,812 males; 3,109 females) with various skills development activities including tailoring, reusable sanitary napkin production, technical and vocational training on basic masonry, carpentry, waste management and plumbing.

The agency introduced a tailored disability and age inclusion skills development training with inclusion of sign language training to ensure that refugees with disabilities (especially those with vocal and/or hearing impairments) received an equal chance to participate and could actively contribute to the community. This encouraged participants to not only gain vocational skills, but also to communicate and interact with others in the community.

Skills training activities were promoted in support of a circular economy approach with minimal environmental impact. Waste materials were upcycled into useful products at an 'upcycling' centre, where Rohingya women learn to create products with recycled aluminium packaging and make wallets, bags, bins, baskets, bracelets, and floor mats out of materials that otherwise would have gone to waste. The project includes solid waste management, whereby collected waste (in the form of aluminium wrappers collected from distribution centres and markets) is transported to a sorting facility where participants sort, clean and prepare it for upcycling.

WFP's environmental restoration work and the skills development efforts also partially contributed to Strategic Priority 3, Outcome 2 which relates to the rehabilitation of the environment and ecosystem and Strategic Priority, Outcome 3, which relates to sustaining resilience of the Rohingya refugees. Yet, additional funding would be required to implement all targeted activities in support of these outcomes.

FAO, under Strategic Priority 3, Outcome 3B, facilitated homestead gardening activities through 600 female beneficiaries. They did so with the support of ISCG's SMSD sector and the respective Camps-in-Charge (CiC). FAO also completed the data collection of a resilience measurement study in the Cox's Bazar area using FAO's Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis (RIMA) tool. The analysis and reporting of the findings took place outside the reporting period.

IOM in support of Strategic Priority 3 conducted a service mapping exercise in both host communities and Rohingya camps to better understand the diversified skills development services offered by different UN agencies, NGOs, INGOs, institutions, and government organizations. The mapping observed that 26 organizations were implementing ongoing skills development activities in the host community, while 15 organizations were implementing such initiatives in the camps.

Eighteen of the 26 organizations are facilitating livelihood activities and operate in a total of 79 training centres in the host community, of which 77 are in Ukhiya and Teknaf, and two are in Moheshkhali and Chakaria Upazila. The research conducted by IOM found that transferable skills training was provided to 206,000 host community beneficiaries at the local and national levels by 24 organizations, while soft skills

training was provided to more than 187,000 host community beneficiaries by 21 organizations. Among the 26 organizations providing support to the host communities, 14 provide vocational training to host communities, supporting 61,000 beneficiaries with vocational training in different trades such as driving and electrical maintenance. Agricultural training was found to be particularly prevalent among the supporting partners working in host communities, with 20 organizations providing agricultural training to more than 220,000 individuals.

IOM in support of Output 3B.1 also interviewed 15 organizations including UN agencies, INGOs and NGOs, about their self-reliance activities in the Rohingya community. Out of the total 15 organizations, 12 were found to be providing soft skills training, including communication skills, leadership, and DRR skills to more than 37,000 Rohingya beneficiaries. For more details on IOM's livelihoods service mapping, please see 'Annex 2 Service Mapping Study SAFE Plus II'.

### Challenges, lessons learned & best practices

Fundraising was identified as a key challenge in facilitating uninterrupted operation of the SAFE+2 programme. Out of initial budgeted SAFE+2 programme comprising USD 284 M, only some 10.5 percent of the indicated funding was raised by the end of 2022. This resulted in the drafting of a SAFE+2 fundraising strategy and increased programme specific fundraising efforts targeting both traditional and non-traditional donors.

Several SAFE+2 specific donor missions supported fundraising activities and were conducted or prepared during the reporting period, with diplomatic mission visits including the Embassy of Norway, the Embassy of Sweden, and the British High Commission. SAFE+2 partners also directly visited or reached out to potential donors, including the Qatar Charity foundation, to explore the possibility of potential funding contributions. Discussions were held with the World LPG Association (WLPGA) to seek the possibility of their support in identifying potential in-kind LPG contributions.

Cost-saving methods were explored simultaneously with fundraising, especially in relation to LPG distributions, given that IOM and UNHCR are required to direct some combined USD 2.7 M per month towards this activity. Technical costs saving methods, with inclusion of energy saving cooking stoves and pressure cookers, were assessed during the reporting period. An adjustment of the LPG cylinder refills was under discussion, though it was agreed during the reporting period that additional research on refugee household average LPG consumption rate and pressure cooker energy savings was needed in the first quarter of 2023 to inform an evidence-based LPG cylinder refill cycle adjustment.

Prevention of an LPG pipeline break remained of special concern in the SAFE+2 context, as any break in LPG provision has the potential to undo years of investment in the programme, especially in terms of reforestation and positive gains achieved over the years. Of noticeable concern would be that an LPG pipeline break may impact Rohingya refugees' continued protection space in Bangladesh as the deforestation and depletion of natural resources are likely to increase negative perceptions toward the Rohingya population among the host communities and the Government of Bangladesh.

The identification and implementation of an exit strategy for LPG distributions comprises another challenge with regard to longer-term SAFE+2 programming. As the Rohingya situation currently does not allow Rohingya refugees to return *en masse* to Myanmar in safety and dignity or to fully engage in livelihood activities in Bangladesh, income earning opportunities are restricted and means to purchase LPG are limited. As such, the refugees remain dependent on the donor community for access to cleaner cooking energy.

As for lessons learned, programme implementation reconfirmed that adopting a participatory approach and human-centred design increased the effectiveness of self-reliance activities. Recruiting female trainers and

creating day-care facilities in skills development centres also made it easier for female beneficiaries to participate in activities.

### Expenditure rates

As the current reporting period comprised the start of a new SAFE+ phase with newly approved activities and project implementations, the project implementation rate varied among SAFE+2 agencies. UNHCR obtained an expenditure rate of 100.49 percent, noting that the 0.49 percent additional expenditure will be compensated with programme funding in year 2023. Nearly all the agency's expenditures related to LPG refills and programme coordination.

FAO obtained an expenditure rate of 24.88 percent over the reporting period, noting that the agency, a) required to finalize and report on pre-scheduled activities under SAFE+1; and b) developed and prepared Letters of Agreement (LoA) with local partners to advance implementations, which involved selection and clearance procedures; c) some activities, such as those related to planting for example, are seasonal in nature, which correlate with increased and decreased seasonal expenditure rates. Planting related expenditures in the Cox's Bazar area are mainly made during the June to August planting season. FAO is working hard to finalize all LoAs and obtain the required government clearances to move implementations ahead.

WFP's expenditure rate comprised 25.45 percent during the reporting period. Lack of funding limited the agencies' ability to influence outcomes under SAFE+2. Recruitment delays influenced the 2022 expenditure rate, with a final candidate for the Emergency Preparedness Officer position declining an offer. WFP, after consultation with GAC, set in motion a second recruitment round. The agency, like other SAFE+2 partners, requested GAC for approval to spread its SAFE+2 funding allocation over a longer programme implementation period. This was approved. Finally, IOM's spread the SAFE+2 allocation it was allocated over the entire duration of the SAFE+2 implementation period. The agency's expenditure rate as such comprised 19.54 percent of allocated resources.

### Gender

SAFE+2 partners are committed to ensure gender mainstreaming and empowerment through gender-sensitive approaches at each level of the intervention, with integration of women receiving specific attention. One hundred percent of participants in the SAFE+2-supported self-help group/income generation activities are female. As for self-reliance activities, over 60% of participants are female, while in DRR/reforestation activities, 30% of participants are female. Stanford University/ ICDRR research confirmed that SAFE+ LPG distributions reduce GBV and support gender participation and empowerment by increasing the amount of time available to girls and boys to participate in education.

All site development and management activities are gender and diversity sensitive whereby the most vulnerable households are considered a priority for assistance and support. During LPG distributions, SAFE+2 partners ensure that community engagement considers age, gender and diversity mainstreaming, and that there are dedicated queues and other services for women at the distribution points. SAFE+2 specific indicators are, where possible, segregated by gender (e.g., people involved in skills development), however during the reporting period SAFE+2 gender specific indicators were not yet established. As discussed with SAFE+2 donors, these indicators are to be introduced the soonest possible.

## **ii) Indicator Based Performance Assessment**

Please see Annex 1 for the Indicator Based Performance Assessment.

## **III. Other Assessments or Evaluations**

- IOM conducted a livelihoods study in SAFE+2 context, titled ‘Service Mapping in the Host and Rohingya Communities’ which was published during the reporting period. This study comprises document ‘Annex 2 Service Mapping Study SAFEPlus II’ of this report’s annexes.
- FAO conducted a Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis (RIMA) assessment and a cost-benefit analysis of different vegetable production methods in homestead context which benefitted SAFE+2 implementations.
- UNHCR conducted a small-scale pressure cooker trial in conjunction with IUCN. This study provided a first step in lead-up to LPG cylinder refill cycle adjustment research.
- WFP did not conduct any substantial assessments or studies during the reporting period.
- Stanford University and ICDDR, in coordination with SAFE+2 and other partners, published a study titled ‘Human Health and Environmental Impacts of LPG Distribution to 1 Million Households in the Rohingya Refugee Camp’ during the reporting period.

## **IV. Programmatic Revisions (if applicable)**

Programmatic reprioritization was discussed during the reporting period which, following the reporting period, resulted in a revision of prioritized SAFE+2 activities along with a revised total budget for the remaining January 2023-March 2025 of USD 100 million required for the programme

## List of acronyms and abbreviations

ACTED: Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development  
BDRCS: Bangladesh Red Crescent Society  
BEXIMCO: Bangladesh Export Import Company Limited  
CAD: Canadian Dollar  
CARE: Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere  
CiC's: Camps-in-Charge's  
CNRS: Centre for Natural Resource Studies (CNRS),  
CODEC: Community Development Center  
CORDAID: Catholic Organisation for Relief and Development Aid (CORDAID)  
DAE: Department of Agricultural Extension  
DRR: Disaster Risk Reduction  
EETWG: Energy and Environment Technical Working Group  
FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization  
FSS: Food Security Sector  
GBV: gender-based violence  
HH: households  
IATI: International Aid Transparency Initiative  
ICDDR: International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh  
(I)NGO: (International) Non-Governmental Organization  
IOM: International Organization for Migration  
ISCG: Inter Sector Coordination Group  
IUCN: International Union for the Conservation of Nature  
JTS: Join Together Society  
LoA: Letter of Agreement  
LPG: Liquefied petroleum gas  
MPTF Office: Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office  
NFIs: Non-Food Items  
PDM: Post Distribution Monitoring  
PM 2.5: particulate matter 2.5  
RIMA: Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis  
RRRC Office: Office of the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner  
SAFE+2: Safe Access to Fuel and Energy Plus, Phase 2  
SEK: Swedish Krona  
SMSD: Site Management and Site Development (SMSD).  
TVET: technical and Vocational education and Training  
USD: United States Dollar  
UN: United Nations  
UNDP: United Nations Development Programme  
UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
UNSDG: United Nations Sustainable Development Group  
WFP: World Food Programme

**Annexes:**

Annex 1: Indicator Based Performance Assessment

Annex 2: Service Mapping Study SAFE Plus II