

Flooding and Landslides Update #3

8 to 13 August 2021



UNFPA is the sexual and reproductive health agency that ensures that women and girls live in safety and dignity. Both in the Rohingya refugee camps and in the host community, UNFPA envisions a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe, and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

Despite COVID-19 pandemic, UNFPA has been continuously providing SRHR services and protection to the flood affected populations including women, girls, adolescents and young people.

Background

Heavy monsoon rain provoked flash floods and landslides in the refugee camps in Cox's Bazar and in the Bangladeshi host communities, in the night between 26 and 27 July 2021. Rains continued uninterrupted for the following week, leaving 71,015 refugees affected. As of ISCG data - flash update on monsoon response #3 of 8 August 2021, 24,909 displaced and 8 refugees' fatalities have been reported so far.

UNFPA'S RESPONSE

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)

- The situation has significantly improved with receding rains and flooding across the affected Rohingya refugee camps and host communities. SRHR service utilization at the facilities has also improved to near normal levels, whilst utilization of Mobile Medical Teams (MMTs) has declined as facilities become accessible. As at 10th August, a total of **130 Women of Reproductive Age (15-49 years old) had received SRHR services from midwifery outreach teams in the flood affected areas.** This includes **74 women who received Family Planning counselling and methods;**
- UNFPA has also stepped up **community engagement and awareness** to ensure that SRHR service utilization is restored quickly. **Community Health Workers / Volunteers deployed in the flood affected camps had reached a total of 2,954** [Male 430: Female 2,524] including 251 adolescents [Boys 37 : Girls 214] with SRHR and COVID-19 awareness as at 10th August 2021;
- UNFPA has been working around the clock to **improve storage capacity to minimize damage to commodities and supplies**, whilst at the same time working on medium to long term solutions to **improve the warehouses capacity to ensure reproductive health commodities are secured.**



Road situation in the camps right after the flooding ©RTMI

During the flooding Ms. Parvin was about to reach a UNFPA-supported health facility in camp 6 for her third antenatal care check-up before delivery. However, she was not feeling well beforehand, and asked her husband to accompany her. Due to road blockages and heavy rains, they found themselves doubtful about what to do.



“The road is too risky; we cannot go the health facility” her husband told her. Sad and worried, Ms. Parvin waited in her shelter. Luckily, the following day of her

scheduled appointment, midwife Roksana shows up at her doorstep “I have not seen you coming at the health facility, so I came to you” she said. Relieved and grateful, Ms. Parvin undertook all the check-up tests required, directly from her home. “Thank you for coming Roksana, with you my baby is safe”. While there, Roksana also took the opportunity to explain to Ms. Parvin the danger signs of pregnancy, as well as counsel her on family planning methods. During this flood period where access became a challenge, UNFPA and its partners ensure that SRHR services reach the affected people at their doorsteps.



Midwife Roksana checks Ms. Parvin's health before baby delivery, in her shelter in the refugee camps

Gender based violence in emergencies (GBVie)

- UNFPA has distributed **602 dignity kits, 122 umbrellas and 902 reusable sanitary napkins** to the flood affected women and girls. One of the women who received an umbrella shared her feelings as below:



*Women collecting dignity kits, UNFPA ensures their safety, protection and dignity, in climate-related disasters
©UNFPA Bangladesh*

“This is very comfortable to use and also protects our menstrual health. However, most of the women do not feel it is easy to buy sanitary pads from the market because the men always sell such items in the shops. Moreover, most of the time, we do not have enough money to buy them. I am very happy to receive these items from the WFS where there are only women and also we can reuse them for a longer period”

- Beneficiary of camp 2W expressed her feeling after receiving the sanitary napkins

Another woman who received umbrella during this distribution mentioned,

“This umbrella is very nice and I can go out easily during the rain. This will also help us to maintain our dignity because we can use these umbrellas to cover ourselves while going to the market, hospitals and any other service points”



Women receiving umbrellas to protect themselves from both rain and sun ©UNFPA Bangladesh

- The GBV MHPSS team with **94 trained GBV case workers** along with **91 community volunteers** provided **730 Psychological First Aid (PFA)** sessions to **flood affected** and displaced refugees;
- **A total number of 1,683 beneficiaries (1265 Females and 418 Males)** were reached through **awareness raising sessions and key information dissemination** on monsoon, flood mitigation and safety measures, GBV services through home to home visit, one to one and small group sessions.

Adolescents and Youths (A&Y)



Adolescent girls receive menstrual health management kit on 11 August 2021 ©UNFPA Bangladesh

- The first of 1,114 **menstrual health management kits (MHM)** is currently under distribution with **348 MHM kits distributed in Camp 4.**



Menstrual Health Management kit distributed in the camps during the flooding ©UNFPA Bangladesh



The remainder will be distributed throughout this week and next;

- Members of the A&Y team conducted additional field visits during the week to review the current status of the A&Y in the camps and are working to address their unique needs.

GBV Sub-Sector coordination



Despite the flooding, refugee volunteers kept conducting door-to-door awareness sessions on GBV
©UNFPA Bangladesh

- The GBV Sub-Sector Coordination team, organized its monthly meeting attended by 51 partners and with a focus on *Monsoon and the impact of Covid-19 circulars issued by the government*. To mainstream GBV into other Sectors, the GBVSS Coordinator was invited to present GBV-Food security interlinkages at the FSS virtual meeting attended by 48 partners;
- The GBVSS continued **coordinating partners in cooperation with the Protection Coordination team and ISCG members**. Among other activities under the sub-sector, **4,206 dignity kits were distributed to women and girls, whereas 19,975 were prepositioned and ready for distribution after CiCs approval**. Out of **10,103**

prepositioned additional items, 3,345 were distributed, containing MHM kits, Sanitary napkins, masks, solar lights, umbrellas and mosquito nets- to cover specific needs identified by GBVSS partners operating in the field;

- **514 women, 130 males and 2 adolescent girls living with disabilities were referred to MHPSS services, health care, safe shelters, GBV case management**, or to receive food and other essential items (NFI) to respond to their imminent individual needs;
- **30 Women and Girls Safe Spaces (WGSS) and 3 community centers were also used as collective shelters. 49 shelters** were also used to accommodate displaced households affected by the floods;
- GBV focal points provided Monsoon response-GBV integrated updates through **refugee volunteers conducted door-to-door awareness raising sessions** on gender-based violence issues, reaching 3,608 women, 719 girls, 1488 men and 424 boys (2-4 August), and additional 1871 individuals between 5-11 August;
- **483 refugees**, mostly women and girls, **received psychological first aid and psychological support services**.
- **Door to door visit**, support remotely and individual discussion sessions through **154 Rohingya Volunteers and Bangladeshi 62 Case Worker**, Social Mobilizer and Volunteers were conducted;
- Although emergency response activities were allowed to be conducted inside the camps during the floods, access in general continues to be an issue. The GBSS continues tracking movements inside in and out of the camps to better document and monitor service gaps;
- On August 10, the Government of Bangladesh issued a directive on COVID-19 related restrictions to activities and movements to the camps, impacting specifically GBV and MHPSS activities and



facilities. The GBVSS has been strongly advocating with the ISCG to ensure that GBV-related protection activities can continue through **creative solutions**, as well as to assess the strictness of the language to interpret the directive in the most beneficial way through legal gaps, but in line with the government. In

parallel, the GBV SS Coordination team has maintained an open and individual channel with GBVSS partners, in order to listen to their concerns and escalate them to the ISCG to seek broader and faster guidance. To build evidence-based advocacy, the GBVSS coordination team is collecting information from partners to analyse imminent needs or impact on programming due to this directive and agree on the best way to ensure business continuity. In response to that, ISCG calls for an *ad-hoc* meeting on 15 August, followed by a Protection extraordinary meeting to cascade down information and guidance to partners with a unified voice.

CONTACT DETAILS

UNFPA Bangladesh Country Representative: Dr. Asa Torkelsson, torkelsson@unfpa.org

UNFPA Cox's Bazar Head of sub-office: Ms. Roselidah Raphael, raphael@unfpa.org

UNFPA Communications Specialist: Ms. Gaia Paradiso paradiso@unfpa.org