

## Flash Update on Landslides, Flooding and Waterlogging Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

Issued on 16 September 2024

### Overview

**7,404**

Rohingya refugees temporarily displaced by monsoon rains (12 – 14 September)

\*Figures are subject to ongoing verification

**1,177**  
damaged shelters

**1,504**  
households relocated

**379** major and  
minor landslides  
reported

**33 camps**  
affected by  
landslides and flooding



### Situation Overview

Seasonal monsoon rains have continued to hit the Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar repeatedly throughout the 2024 monsoon season, resulting in landslides, flooding and waterlogging. With nearly one million people living across 33 camps, taking refuge in basic shelters made of tarpaulin and bamboo, the heavy rainfall has been disastrous. With earlier flash updates released in June and July, this update follows the significant flooding that took place from 12 – 14 September. Below is an outline of the impacts, response and challenges across sectors in the Rohingya response. Sadly, it is reported that three individuals lost their lives in Camp 14 during this period, including two children aged 6 and 7.

### Immediate Needs and Response



#### Shelter-CCCM Sector Lead Agencies: IOM and UNHCR

- In the reporting period, 1,177 damaged shelters were referred to shelter teams. Assessments have been completed for 471 of these shelters with assessments on-going/urgently scheduled for the remainder. From shelters assessed, 21 were fully/severely damaged and 242 were partially/moderately damaged.
- Of the 1,504 households (7,404 individuals) who were relocated from landslide, flood and other hazard prone locations to safer areas, 409 households (2,126 individuals) are yet to return to their shelters and are currently hosted in learning centers and/or are staying with relatives.
- 379 instances of major and minor landslides have been reported.
- All 33 camps have been impacted by the latest heavy rains, with 27 camps experiencing landslides and 26 camps undergoing flooding.
- In response to the damage reported, shelter materials were distributed to 215 households, with further distributions planned over the upcoming days. Partners have prepositioned shelter materials in their warehouses and will continue to distribute covering all eligible households.
- Nine extremely vulnerable households in need of shelter repairs have been prioritized for support, including shelter material transportation and labour support for reconstruction.

- For 3,988 households living in identified landslide risk areas, alerting the community about the risks and mobilizing the households to move to communal shelters for their safety continues to be a priority activity of Site Management Services (SMS).
- Notably, slope stabilization responses cannot be initiated until the rain stops. Emergency site development works are nonetheless ongoing.
- The security situation in Camps 14 and 15 has prevented teams from moving inside the blocks, with the damage assessment and verification solely carried out by the community volunteers. As a result, distributions were delayed due to movement restrictions.
- Heavy rainfall and flood also affected the host community, directly impacting the movement of response teams there.
- There continues to be limited safe space available within camps for relocation of those affected.



### **Food Security Sector Lead Agencies: FAO and WFP**

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- As of 15 September, WFP had provided fortified biscuits to 1,561 affected households (7.8 MT) in the refugee camps and 2,650 households (13.2 MT) in the host communities (Ukhiya and Teknaf).
- A total of 17,116 hot meal packages have been distributed (6,160 lunches and 10,956 dinners) to the 15,297 affected individuals in 23 refugee camps.
- Additionally, WFP provided fortified biscuits to 7,350 affected household (36.5 MT) in 19 unions in Cox's Bazar Sadar (15 September) and will distribute in Chakoria Upazila on 16 September.
- FSS partners have continued Cash for Work (CfW) activities providing direct cash to households as part of the food security resilience/livelihood building interventions which assist in the recovery from these weather events. The CfW activities are related to Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR).
- Partners are collecting resilience/livelihood activity damage information to inform their response.



### **Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) Sector Lead Agency: UNICEF**

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- A total of 301 latrines were damaged or flooded, 58 bathing cubicles, 7 water-networks and 5 fecal sludge infrastructures. In 7% of these cases, the infrastructure was fully damaged and will need to be built back better (with an estimated cost of USD 15,000-20,000).
- In the host communities (Teknaf and Ukhiya), assessments are ongoing, however the level of damage appears to be more significant as 286 tubewells have been flooded/damaged as well as approximately 2,000 latrines, representing a significant risk of diarrhoea (93% of the damage reported is in Ukhiya).
- Repairs on partially damaged infrastructures is already taking place in the camps and partners responding in the host communities are distributing water-treatment pills to affected persons.



### **Education Sector Lead Agencies: UNICEF and Save the Children**

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- Around 16,720 learners are affected due to the current monsoon. In some cases, learners are unable to access learning centres (LC) due to the high level of water obstructing pathways.
- A total of 209 LCs were reported as fully or partially damaged due to heavy rain, landslides and waterlogging in 22 different camps (Camps 1W, 1E, 2W, 2E, 3, 5, 7, 8E, 8W, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 17, 18, 19, 21, 24, 25, 26 and 27).
- 57 LCs have been used as temporary shelter for those affected.

- 2 LCs have undergone material damage.
- Education Camp Focal Points, Rohingya teachers and education volunteers and partner staff gathered information and communicated with SMS, CiC officials and the Education Sector. Rohingya teachers and volunteers worked to reduce the damage by coordinating and supporting SMS volunteers to clear the waterlogged areas on the way to learning facilities.



## **Protection (including CP and GBV) Sector Lead Agencies: UNHCR, UNICEF, UNFPA**

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### Protection

- Continuous heavy rainfall has damaged WASH facilities, water tap stands, pathways, bamboo bridges, and stairs resulting in reduced access to services, especially for the refugees with disabilities.
- APBn reportedly reduced patrolling due to the weather conditions, increasing the risk of robbery by organized groups, with one such incident being reported in Camp 17.
- Facilities remained open during the downpour, and protection activities continued, though the number of participants plummeted.
- Protection volunteers and community group members from Community-based Protection disseminated awareness messages on monsoon, and Emergency Preparedness and Response.
- Psychological First Aid (PFA) has been provided by protection sector across the camps.
- Protection Emergency Response Unit (PERU) members assisted in emergency relocation of extremely vulnerable households in Camp 14.
- Protection Focal Points (PFPs) maintained regular communication with APBn officers to increase patrolling especially at night.
- The risk of casualties remains high because residents in landslide prone areas are reluctant to relocate, despite efforts by camp authorities, due to many factors including social networks, livelihoods, etc.
- In addition to reduced APBn patrolling, insufficient lighting in the streets may increase the risk of GBV incidents, robbery, abduction, and other organized crimes during the next heavy rainfall.

### Child Protection (CP)

- A total of five Child Protection facilities were damaged due to the flooding and landslides; damage to solar panels and access routes has also been reported.
- It is reported that families are keeping children at home due to fear of further floods and landslides while partners have noticed minor health issues among children like cough and skin conditions due to prolonged exposure to dampness.
- Partners conducted awareness raising on Disaster Risk Reduction with a focus on flooding and landslides with 280 volunteers and 1233 members of Community Based Child Protection Committees (CBCPC). Safe spaces were prepared for children and vulnerable families as needed, and information was disseminated urgently.
- Approximately 1,650 children (700 girls, 950 boys) and 14 persons with disabilities have been reached with awareness messages and PFA and psychosocial support (PSS). The wider community was reached as a collective through open messaging rather than individual outreach.
- Despite flooding, open community awareness activities have continued, encouraging community members to report incidents to relevant stakeholders for a fast response. Regular follow-up and coordination with CBCPCs, community watch groups, social change agents, and ERT teams have ensured continuity in critical services.
- Emergency shelters were provided for 21 children. Coordination between volunteers and case management teams ensured referrals to medical services and shelter support where necessary.

- Managing safe spaces for children and vulnerable families in high-risk areas such as Camp 14, along with the provision of emergency kits (medicine, umbrellas, emergency food), is critical.
- Prolonged closure of learning centres and ongoing psychosocial stress could have long-term impacts on children's well-being.

#### Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

- A total of 9 GBV facilities have been damaged due to the heavy rains and waterlogging: seven Women Friendly Spaces (WFS) and Women and Girls Safe Spaces (WGSS) in camps 4, 3, 6, 17, 20 and 22; one Multi-Purpose Women's Centre (MPWC) in camp 5; and the One-Stop Crisis Centre (OCC) in Teknaf. GBV service disruptions have been registered in WFS/WGSS in Camps 3, 6, 11, 20 and 22.
- GBV facilities registered decreased attendance in regular activities. GBV outreach has been hindered as volunteers/caseworkers faced difficulties in finding suitable spaces for the sessions.
- The GBV facilities have continued to provide lifesaving GBV services, including GBV case management and referrals, and integrated SRH services were operational. Dignity Kits have been prepositioned.
- GBV focal points have coordinated with site management and CIC to ensure safe spaces are available for immediate support to women and girls affected by shelter damage.
- GBVSS partners and GBV Camp Focal Points have coordinated with WASH and Site Management to make appropriate repairs and prevent further flooding, and to ensure safety and accessibility of GBV facilities.
- Community groups and volunteers of the GBV facilities have disseminated awareness raising messages on the monsoon, creating linkages to disaster management groups and collecting concerns from beneficiaries. They have also provided PFA and individual PSS and referred community members to specialised services based on individual needs.
- GBV risks may have increased due to the displacement or movement of families to different shelters for safety. As some WASH facilities are compromised, women and adolescent girls may experience challenges in managing their hygiene in a safe manner.
- Women, girls and boys are psychologically tense due to fear of displacement. In areas most at risk, community members have moved to safer locations, however the fear of losing their shelters and belongings, as well as the fact that they are hosted by other families, is causing tensions and possible GBV risks.



#### **Health Sector Lead Agency: WHO**

- No Health Facilities were damaged due to the landslides or flooding. All 46 Primary Healthcare Centers (PHCs) continued to be fully operational, providing a comprehensive health service package including emergency services, general outpatient consultations, and inpatient care.
- While the Friendship Field Hospital (Maternity Center) and MSF hospitals were fully operational, the Field Turkish Hospital (AFAD) was partially operational and limited to emergency and inpatient service. In the Friendship Field Hospital, one Operational Theatre (OT) became non-functional as the tin roof was damaged by rain. However, service continued at another OT.
- Treatment was provided to three Rohingya people who were injured in a landslide in Camp 14.
- Two Mobile Medical Teams (MMTs) conducted ground-level search work in camps 14 and 19 to find any further incidents and to extend support as needed.
- Friendship and Hope Field Hospital have continued Basic Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (BEmONC) and Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (CemONC) along with other emergency services during this time.

- As the Hope Hospital is situated in a low-lying area, the premises were flooded. Currently, there is water inside a few hospital areas/rooms, requiring shifting patients to maintain services.



### **Nutrition Sector Lead Agency: UNICEF**

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- Due to the heavy rainfall, the flow of beneficiaries to nutrition facilities decreased.
- Outreach activities were hindered as the Community Nutrition Volunteers / Community Health & Nutrition Workers could not move easily in the hilly areas due to slippery conditions.
- Outreach teams have reached Nutrition programme participants to follow up on their current condition, provided necessary messages to ensure nutritional and hygiene care, and also followed up with the programme participants that planned to visit the nutrition facilities.
- All precautionary measures were taken to ensure the safety of documents and food commodities before closing the facilities on 12 September. As such, documents and food commodities were kept safe from any damage.
- One of the Integrated Nutrition Facilities (Camp 10 – Site 2) is in a location at-risk of landslide with its retaining walls becoming increasingly vulnerable.
- Due to the heavy rainfall, solar systems do not function properly, and some centres are without power (21 facilities out of 45). In these cases, Nutrition staff have to provide services using flashlights and phones.



### **Livelihoods and Skill Development Sector Lead Agency: UNHCR**

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- Approximately 200 Livelihood and Skills Development Sector (LSDS) beneficiary households in the Host and Local Communities of Ukhiya (30 households), Teknaf (50 households), Chakaria (60 households), and Eidgaon (60 households) upazilas have been affected by waterlogging in their homes.
- Two Skills Development Centres were impacted with one reportedly flooding in Camp 3 and another having a collapsed boundary fence in Camp 9 due to soil erosion. Heavy rainfall has caused extensive damage to approximately 290 beneficiary's field crops in Ukhiya (40 households), Chakaria (150 households), and Eidgaon (100 households) upazilas, with rice fields and vegetable fields ravaged by flood water.
- Household-level activities, which include both livelihood-related work and participation in training programs, have been delayed or negatively impacted.
- The flooding situation has had a detrimental impact on beneficiaries' overall income and development, potentially undermining the objectives of LSDS projects.



### **Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR)**

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Since the beginning of this year's monsoon season, the Inter Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) has promoted a more proactive emergency preparedness and response approach to reduce the consequences of monsoon-induced natural calamities, such as landslides, flooding, and waterlogging in the camps. Steps taken include regular tracking of inter-sectoral hazard preparedness and response priorities and strengthening the EPR coordination mechanism. The focus has also been on harnessing longer lead times for early actions by scaling up alert and advisory communication and dissemination across the 33 camps. The goal was to ensure timely emergency relocation of the most vulnerable Rohingya in high-risk landslide and flood-prone areas to safe spaces. However, despite these efforts, some households remain reluctant to relocate as they are concerned about security and separation from their community as a social and emotional safety net.

Triggered by the tragic landslide occurrences in June and July 2024, a landslide risk analysis has been conducted. The analysis brought strong evidence of hazards, exposure, and vulnerability that informed the ISCG to form a Landslide Mitigation Task Force, a collaborative effort to review and strengthen the effectiveness of the current landslide prevention and mitigation strategies. The landslide risk analysis identified that approximately 8,281 shelters (39,750 individuals) live in landslide-prone locations with above 30-degree slopes and are highly susceptible to landslides.

In response, the Landslide Mitigation Task Force developed an advocacy note highlighting urgent action requirements and pivotal medium to long-term strategies to mitigate the devastating impacts of landslides on the most vulnerable populations. The proposed actions will help protect the Rohingya refugees from experiencing further humanitarian crises and ISCG will be working with the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC), concerned agencies and donors to implement them as soon as possible.

## Contact

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<https://rohingyaresponse.org/>