

# Bangladesh: Situation Report #4

## Measles Outbreak

21 May 2026

*This report was produced by the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group, in collaboration with cluster coordinators and humanitarian partners, members of the Humanitarian Coordination Task Team. It covers the period from 6 to 20 May 2026.*

## Highlights

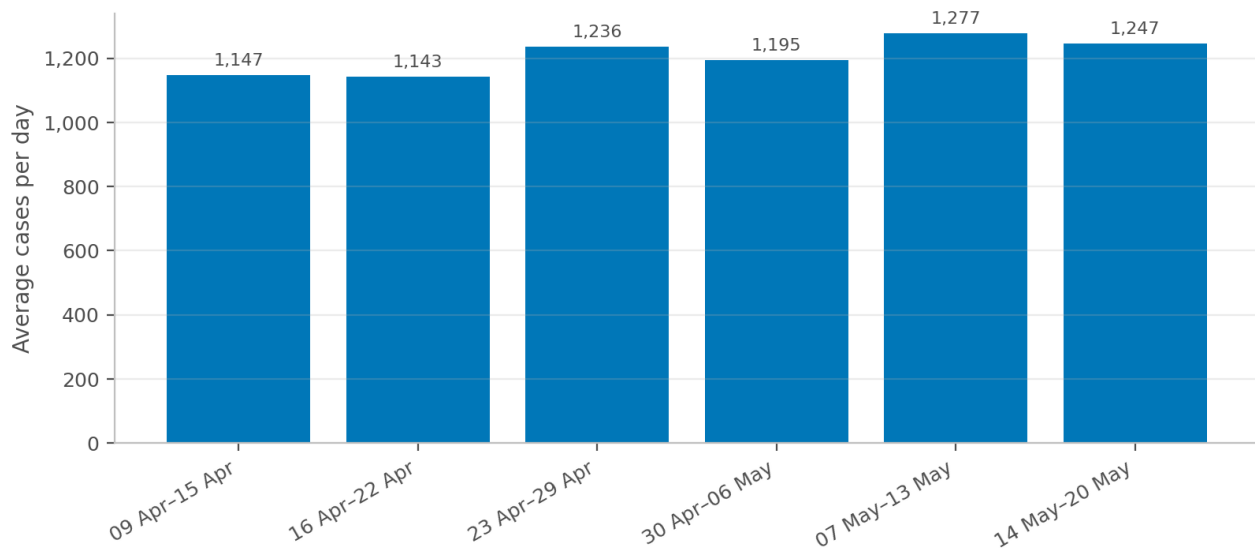
- Bangladesh has reported 57,856 suspected measles cases and 8,067 confirmed cases across all 64 districts as of 20 May, with children under five accounting for 81 per cent of reported cases.
- More than 18.3 million children have been vaccinated through the nationwide measles-rubella (MR) campaign, surpassing the initial target and reaching 102 per cent coverage.
- Weekly measles transmission remains high, with average daily reported cases exceeding 1,100 since 9 April, despite declines observed in several high-priority upazilas following the start of vaccination activities.
- In Bhasan Char and Cox's Bazar camps, vaccination campaigns reached most targeted children, while 595 suspected cases, 60 confirmed cases and five deaths have been reported among Rohingya refugees to date.
- Humanitarian partners have supported surge response measures at priority health facilities, including the deployment of frontline health workers, the establishment of temporary triage and isolation capacity, and the procurement of critical medical supplies and equipment.
- The Government is considering extending the MR vaccination campaign by one month, particularly in underserved and hard-to-reach areas where transmission remains high.

## Situation Overview

The measles outbreak continues across Bangladesh, with transmission reported in all 64 districts, including urban centres and hard-to-reach communities. As of 20 May, Government official data reported 57,856 suspected cases and 8,067 confirmed cases, including 401 suspected deaths and 80 confirmed deaths. Cases reported in the first months of 2026 have already exceeded the full-year 2025 total. Children under five account for 81 per cent of reported cases.

As of 19 May, more than 18.3 million children had been vaccinated, surpassing the initial target of 18 million and reaching 102 per cent coverage. In the 30 initial high-priority upazilas, reported measles cases declined sharply after mid-April, following the start of vaccination. By 27 April, vaccination coverage was high across most targeted upazilas.

In the Cox's Bazar camps, an MR vaccination and Vitamin A supplementation campaign, supported by WHO, UNICEF and humanitarian partners, was launched on 26 April, reaching 95 per cent of the 178,000 targeted children. The campaign was expanded to Bhasan Char on 18 May, reaching 78 per cent of the target within the first two days of implementation. In the Rohingya refugee camps, 595 suspected and 60 confirmed cases have been reported, with five deaths recorded to date. Among confirmed cases in the camps, 63 per cent are children under five, including 20 per cent aged under nine months, who are not yet eligible for MR vaccination under the routine immunisation schedule.



**Figure 1.** Average daily reported cases by reporting week. Weekly averages have remained above 1,100 cases per day since 9 April.

## Government Coordination and Response

Following the launch of the emergency measles-rubella (MR) vaccination campaign on 5 April, the response expanded nationally from 20 April, with continued support from Gavi, UNICEF, WHO and many other partners and donors.

As part of ongoing efforts to sustain routine immunisation services in 2026, the Government has procured vaccines valued at US\$83.6 million, equivalent to about 96 million doses across multiple antigens. UNICEF has facilitated the advanced procurement and delivery of about 26 million vaccine doses to prevent stock-outs and maintain uninterrupted immunisation services. The delivery of 17.5 million syringes has also been completed.

To support measles case management, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has coordinated the distribution of vitamin A capsules. Around 90 per cent of districts have collected supplies from the Central Medical Stores Depot. Under the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) allocation mechanism, each district received 7,500 capsules of 100,000 international units and 15,000 capsules of 200,000 international units to support treatment and reduce the risk of measles-related complications.

## Humanitarian Response

### Child Protection Cluster

The Child Protection Cluster, co-led by the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MoWCA) and UNICEF, are supporting safe and equitable access to measles response and immunisation services for children most at risk. MoWCA and the Department of Social Services (DSS) are using child protection community hubs and community-based platforms to share protection messages, orient front-line workers and strengthen the identification and referral of vulnerable children, including those who have not yet been reached by vaccination services.

Through MoWCA community hubs, 1,962 awareness sessions have reached more than 40,500 people, including 26,900 women and girls, with messages on measles prevention, vaccination and care-seeking. The DSS social workers have reached 19,200 people, including 9,100 women and girls, through outreach and referral support, helping improve access to vaccination services for children who are at risk of exclusion.

## Education Cluster

Education partners are supporting risk communication and community outreach through schools, youth networks and civil society platforms. Through collaboration with Volunteer for Bangladesh and youth-led organisations, the “One Vaccine One Life” campaign has reached 54,200 primary school learners and over 652,700 parents, caregivers, teachers and young people across 203 schools, with outreach to additional schools ongoing.

Following joint orientations with the Directorate of Primary Education, over 250 district and sub-district education officials are sustaining awareness efforts, extending outreach to 20 million students and 385,000 primary teachers nationwide. In parallel, the National University and the National Union of Students Development Foundation initiative is mobilising 3.4 million students as Young Change Makers. Civil society organisations have reached 65,000 out-of-school children and 130,000 caregivers, while awareness messages disseminated through national job platforms have cumulatively reached over 423,000 people, further amplifying campaign outreach.

## Gender in Humanitarian Action (GiHA) Working Group

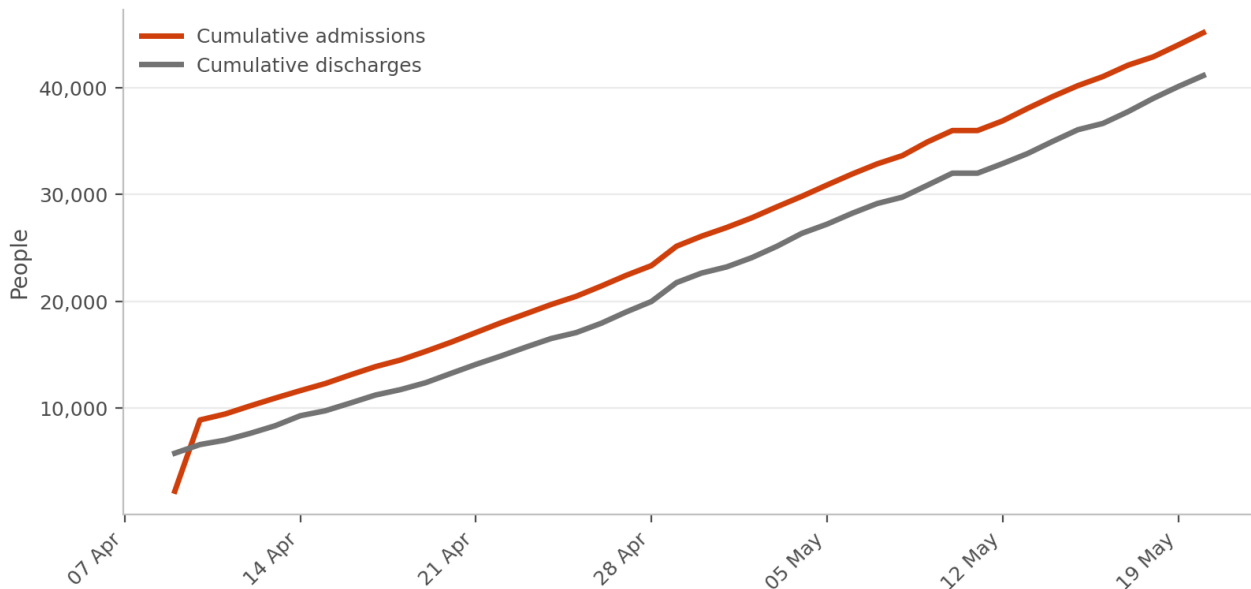
As of 20 May 2026, GiHA partners had supported the measles response across seven districts: Bhola, Chattogram, Feni, Khulna, Satkhira, Sunamganj and Sylhet. Activities focused on community-based risk communication, support to vaccination outreach and referral of children who had not yet been reached, with an emphasis on women, girls, children and gender-diverse people.

GiHA partners reported reaching at least 11,884 people through awareness sessions, courtyard meetings, leaflet distribution and group discussions. In Chattogram, Protyashi partners reached 10,000 people through weekly group meetings on measles vaccination and prevention. In Feni, partners conducted nine awareness sessions, reaching 485 people. In Sylhet, Ashar Alo Youth Welfare Association and Hijra Jubo Kollayan Sangstha conducted six sessions, reaching 141 people, including 35 gender-diverse people. ERA reached more than 300 people in Sunamganj through leaflet distribution from traffic points to the district hospital. Local partners, in Bhola, conducted 19 awareness sessions, reaching 403 women and girls. In Khulna, five partners conducted 19 courtyard sessions, awareness sessions and meetings, reaching 455 people, including mothers, adolescent girls, guardians and staff. In Satkhira, Bindu Nari Unnayan Songhta and Prarona conducted eight courtyard sessions, reaching 260 people, mainly women and girls.

Partners also supported vaccination access, in Satkhira, Bonojibi Nari Unnayan Songhta and Atulia Swapnonir Mohila Somobay Somity helped bring children who had not yet been reached to vaccination centres in Munshiganj and other locations. In Bhola, BASA supported the MR vaccination programme by conducting community awareness. In Sylhet, BRAC collected information from Kanaighat Upazila Health Complex, which reported that 40,987 children had received vaccines through the Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI) between 20 April and 20 May.

## Health Cluster

The Health Cluster, led by WHO and the DGHS, continues to support the coordination of Bangladesh's measles outbreak response. Regular coordination meetings are helping partners review epidemiological trends, identify operational gaps and agree on priority actions. The platform also supports timely information sharing and joint planning among Government counterparts, UN agencies, and partners, enabling response activities to be adjusted as needs change.



**Figure 2.** Cumulative hospital admissions and discharges<sup>1</sup>. The gap between admissions and discharges remained substantial by the latest update.

The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) have scaled up measles response activities with additional funding amid a recent increase in measles cases among children. As of 19 May 2026, BDRCS and IFRC had completed two batches of Epidemic Control for Volunteers training in Dhaka and Rajshahi, reaching more than 50 volunteers. The trained volunteers will conduct courtyard sessions across 20 subdistricts to raise awareness of measles and other communicable diseases, promote routine immunisation for children and encourage improved hygiene practices. BDRCS, with support from IFRC, has procured 11 ventilators, 30 nebulisers, and 30 oxygen flow meters and has already delivered 3 nebulisers and 3 oxygen flow meters to Holy Family Red Crescent Medical College Hospital.

BRAC is supporting the nationwide MR vaccination campaign across 280 upazilas in 36 districts. Support includes covering union-level miking costs for two consecutive days in each targeted union to increase awareness and encourage caregivers to bring eligible children to vaccination centres. BRAC has also deployed about 550 outsourced vaccinators and volunteers to support

<sup>1</sup> Reported cumulative admissions reached 45,128 by 20 May, while cumulative discharges stood at 41,120, a difference of 4,008 people. These figures represent reported cumulative totals and should not be interpreted as confirmed current hospital occupancy. However, the volume of admissions indicates continued pressure on health-care services during the outbreak period.

field-level vaccination activities. Community mobilisation is being carried out by about 3,000 Shasthya Kormi and 24,000 Shasthya Sebika, who are conducting door-to-door awareness activities and sharing Government-approved information, education and communication materials on measles vaccination. Nearly 1,000 Shasthya Kormi and 6,500 Shasthya Sebika are also supporting vaccination sites through crowd management, beneficiary guidance, and coordination. BRAC is also providing operational and logistics support to the EPI. This includes 1.5 million mixing syringes to support safe vaccine preparation, two full-time assistants, and 36 wheels for vehicles used to transport vaccines. About 100 Programme Organizers are supporting vaccination camp activities and helping display Government-provided banners in visible locations to increase campaign visibility.

Caritas Bangladesh is supporting measles response activities in eight upazilas through its Reproductive and Child Health Development project. Health workers are using existing community platforms, including mothers' groups, adolescent groups and cluster meetings, to share messages on measles prevention, routine immunisation, early care-seeking and vaccine hesitancy. Caritas is also coordinating with local authorities through Upazila Nirbahi Officer meetings and union health committees to align outreach with Government health priorities and support localised monitoring. Through its community network, Caritas is helping identify unvaccinated children, promote adherence to the EPI, schedule, and refer people to health facilities where needed. Trained village midwives and traditional birth attendants are also supporting counselling for pregnant women and new mothers on timely vaccination, child nutrition and safe referrals.

Friendship provided 16 boats during the reporting period to facilitate access for vaccination campaigns in hard-to-reach areas. The organisation also conducted 1,415 courtyard sessions to raise awareness about measles, while health education sessions reached 1,272 people. During these sessions, four suspected measles cases were identified and referred for treatment, including one case to Barishal Medical College and three cases to Ajmeriganj Health Complex.

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) supported the MR vaccination campaign in the Rohingya camps from 26 April to 11 May, in coordination with the Health Sector. Support covered Camp 6, Camp 11, Camp 22, Camp 25 and Nayapara Registered Camp. Against a target of 11,582 children under five, the campaign vaccinated 19,499 children. IRC is continuing enhanced surveillance and reporting through systematic screening and active case finding at primary health-care centres, regular data tracking and timely reporting through the Health Sector coordination platforms. And it is also monitoring suspected measles cases to support rapid response, while scaling up community engagement and risk communication through community health workers, with a focus on measles symptoms, early care-seeking and rumour tracking and mitigation.

Save the Children supported measles response activities during the reporting period across Barishal, Dhaka North, Gaibandha, Lalmonirhat and Rangpur. Activities included deploying 17 trained volunteers to support vaccination centres, orienting 240 Government frontline health workers, monitoring 10 vaccination centres and reaching communities through awareness sessions, courtyard sessions, school-based activities, video shows and theatre events. The response sensitised 11,194 parents of children aged 0–5 years, reached about 3,300 pregnant women and mothers-in-law, engaged 981 adolescents and mobilised local leaders, youth groups, volunteers and community messengers. The outreach was supported through the distribution of 19,500 leaflets and 4,030 posters.

To date, UNICEF has deployed more than 20 million vaccine doses nationwide and trained over 26,000 frontline health workers in vaccination delivery, reporting, and community engagement. The vaccination coverage remains high across most divisions, with Chattogram, Rajshahi and Rangpur each reaching 103 per cent, while the city corporations collectively reached 104 per cent, with over 1.95 million doses administered. Coverage also improved in previously lagging districts, including Brahmanbaria, Chattogram, Manikganj and Noakhali, following targeted local-level follow-up by health partners. UNICEF is also supporting rapid assessments and response measures at 15 priority facilities, including the Infectious Diseases Hospital in Dhaka, where surge, doctors, and nurses have been deployed, and temporary triage and isolation capacity have been established. Infection prevention and control and intensive care case management training have been completed for 20 critical health staff at the hospital. Facility assessments have been completed in five hospitals, with five additional assessments ongoing. Procurement and distribution of essential medical equipment and supplies, including oxygen systems, pulse oximeters, nebulisers, paediatric care items, diagnostic kits and personal protective equipment, are underway. Rapid assessments to establish paediatric intensive care units in three hospitals have also been completed, with procurement ongoing. The DGHS has established a technical expert committee to develop a standardised national measles case management protocol across all levels of care. The agency continues to strengthen risk communication and community engagement nationwide, including in Rohingya camps, to promote vaccination uptake, early care-seeking and the adoption of preventive behaviours, reaching over 70 million people.

WHO continues to provide critical technical and operational support to the measles response, including surge capacity from its Regional Office. Its field teams are supporting nationwide case-based surveillance through site visits, guidance on case reporting, and data collection and analysis to inform evidence-based decisions. The support has also strengthened laboratory and diagnostic capacity through refresher orientations for national laboratory staff, provision of testing kits and reagents, and improved specimen shipment and data analysis. About 100 technical staff have been deployed across the country to support the vaccination campaign's preparedness, implementation, and monitoring. The sustained monitoring efforts are helping identify gaps and guide rapid corrective action. More than 800,000 children have been assessed through house-to-house visits to verify vaccination status, with findings regularly shared to improve campaign quality, coverage and reach. [A real-time campaign dashboard](#) has been established with partner support to monitor national and subnational coverage and guide corrective action. Health facilities in affected districts continue to report pressure from measles-related complications, particularly among children requiring admission, paediatric care and intensive care support.

World Vision Bangladesh supported the EPI Centre through its existing community platforms in 53 upazilas across 25 districts. During this reporting period, 1,200 Community Health Facilitators reached about 45,000 caregivers of children under five with key messages on measles vaccination and prevention. In addition, 120 Community Health Facilitators were trained on measles prevention and vaccine awareness to strengthen community engagement and referral support. Through community-level activities, 125 children under five with fever and cold symptoms were identified and referred to nearby community clinics for assessment and care.

## Nutrition Cluster

The Institute of Public Health Nutrition, with support from UNICEF, has begun training health workers to manage children with severe acute malnutrition in high-burden measles districts. The training covers nine Upazila Health Complexes across the country. As of 18 May, training had been completed in four facilities, reaching 44 participants, including doctors, nurses and Sub-Assistant Community Medical Officers. Nutrition supplies have also been distributed to 25 health facilities.

For further information, please contact:

**Lorena Dib Oliveira**, Inter-Cluster Coordination Group Chair, [lorenna.diboliveira@un.org](mailto:lorenna.diboliveira@un.org)

### Links to partners' publications on the Measles outbreak:

- [Measles Rubeola Campaign RCM Dashboard](#)
- [UNICEF FAQs on Measles](#)
- [Risk Communication and Community Engagement materials endorsed by the DGHS](#)