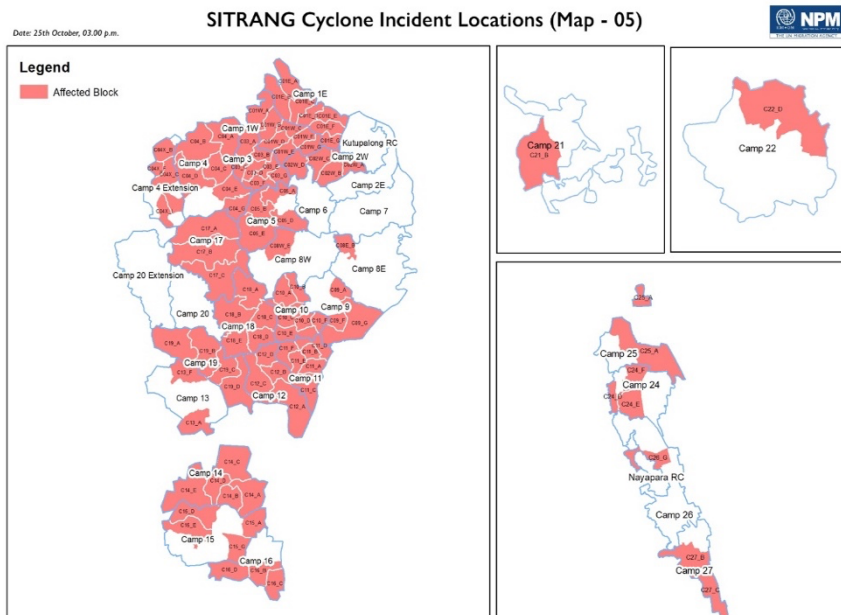


Impact and Response of Cyclone "SITRANG" on the Rohingya refugee camps and adjoining areas.

Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, 26 October 2022

Background

The deep depression over the east-central Bay of Bengal and adjoining area moved north-north-eastwards and intensified into a cyclonic storm "Sitrang" (pronunciation: si-trang) on 24 October 2022. The effects of the cyclone in Cox's Bazar gradually intensified from the evening of Sunday 23 October until the morning of 25 October with wind-speeds of up to 88km/h (55mph) and a storm surge of about three metres (10ft) that flooded low-lying coastal areas.



Cautionary Signal Level 3 for the coastal areas of Cox's Bazar was declared by the Government on 23 October and continued to increase to Danger Signal Level 6 as of the morning of 24 October. It was reduced to Cautionary Level 3 in the early hours of 25 October.

Cox's Bazar with a population of around 2.28 million persons (Ukhiya: over 207,000 persons; Teknaf: over 150,000 persons) as well as the refugee camps that is host to over 900,000 refugees, avoided the brunt of the cyclone. Instead, storm surges, rain and heavy wind impacted the region. In the camps, heavy winds resulted in damages to shelters and infrastructure.

Coordination

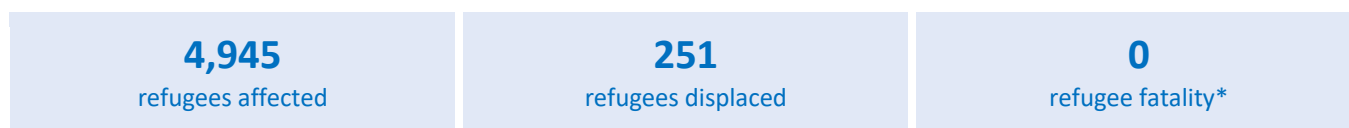
The humanitarian community in Cox's Bazar operated under the overall framework of the Multi-Hazard Response Plan (MHRP) that was endorsed by the SEG earlier this year. The scope of the MHRP includes the refugee camps and host communities in Ukhiya and Teknaf (although resources permitting, we can extend this to other sub-districts in dire circumstances). In accordance with the MHRP, the **emergency classification of the response did not exceed Category 1** (moderate emergency that does not require significant additional resources from other Sector partners).

The Deputy Commissioner of Cox's Bazar convened the District Disaster Management Committee on 23 October and activated the Disaster Management Committees in all Upazilas. Similarly, the Office of the RRRRC activated the camp-level Disaster Management Committees on the 24 of October.

The Emergency Preparedness and Response Working Group met twice on the 24 and 25 of October. Following this report, no other updates will be issued. However, an after-action review will be undertaken.



Response



Site Management and Site Development (SMSD)

Under the leadership of Camp in Charges, camp-level Disaster Management Committees (comprising of camp-level focal points and AoRs) were activated and coordinated the response in all the camps. The relevant flags were raised as part of the cyclone awareness programme in the camps by the Camp Disaster Committees, to alert camp residents and mobilize early-warning, early-action messages thanks to the ongoing efforts by the Red Cross/Red Crescent family. In total, 47 incidents (40 windstorm and 7 slope-failure) were reported in 28 camps. Initial reporting indicated 1,049 households (4,945 individuals) have been affected, 53 households (251 individuals) have been displaced and one person injured. Based on incident reports from the camps, sectors and AoR agencies (IOM & UNHCR) confirmed that the existing camp-based response capacity is sufficient to address current damage and needs stemming from the storm.

Shelter/Non-Food Items (NFI) Sector

A technical verification of damaged shelters is being undertaken to assess the level of support needed. Assessment is based on the Rapid Damage Verification form which is aligned across the camps. Shelter material support will be provided based on four pre-defined categories: partially moderate; partially severe; majorly damaged; or complete shelter destruction. Extremely vulnerable families will be provided with additional assistance of home deliveries of shelter materials and/or will receive labour support to repair their shelters.

As of 16:30 hrs on 25 October, 276 shelters were verified, out of which 107 shelters were not eligible for shelter assistance and 92 households from damaged shelters already received shelter material support. Assessment continues and distribution is ongoing.



Communication with Communities (CwC)

Standard and generic key messages, Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials and guidance (dos and don'ts) were circulated to a wide range of humanitarian stakeholders. Bangladesh Betar and Radio Naf continuously broadcasted Early Warning bulletin and awareness messages in lead up to and throughout the storm. In the refugee camps, CwC Partners, along with the Cyclone Preparedness Programme (CPP) and Disaster Management Unit volunteers, disseminated the early warning and awareness messages on cyclone preparedness through megaphones, portable radio, mobile (on vehicle) and static (mosque based) loudspeakers, group-based awareness sessions and door to door visits. In the last weeks, BDRCS/IFRC/ CPP conducted orientation for the 2,536 camp volunteers in all 33 camps on "CPP Field Discussion Guide" in coordination with respective CiCs and SMSD Agencies.

In the host communities, CwC partners including the CPP/BDRCS mobilized 45 ward-level DMCs (400+ people) to facilitate early warning messaging, checking and preparing cyclone shelters, in their respective location in Ukhiya

and Teknaf. In lead up to the storm, cyclone preparedness messages were delivered using megaphones in both upazilas including high drowning risk areas.

Water Sanitation & Hygiene

Rapid assessments were carried out to determine the WASH infrastructure damage; 362 Latrines (352 partially damaged; 10 fully damaged), 129 Bathing chambers (124 partially damaged; 5 fully damaged) and 19 water points have been affected. No significant damage occurred in water networks or faecal sludge transfer networks. There is no shortage/disruption of water supply in the camps.

WASH partners have already started to repair damaged facilities. In the Ukhiya host community, many latrines and bathing cubic (made from polythene and bamboo) were destroyed by winds and heavy rain. Under the leadership of UNO Ukhiya, assessments are ongoing and will follow-on with repairs.

Education

Stemming from cyclone impacts, 73 learning facilities have been damaged due to heavy rain, winds and landslides in 15 camps (11 in Ukhiya and 4 in Teknaf). Damage has occurred to the roofs of 67 out of 73 learning facilities impacting 1,118 learners. Consequentially, some learning activities have been shifted to other nearby facilities. All 73 learning facilities affected will begin repairs in the coming days.

Food Security

Following preparatory meetings with the FFS Sector members on 18 October, FSS updated the contingency stocks data. Partners provided fortified biscuits for 400 households to UNO office in Teknaf to benefit Bangladeshi families. Since the beginning of the crisis, 30 refugee families of 05 camps have received high energy fortified biscuits, as well as hot meals for lunch and dinner.

Protection

Protection Emergency Response Units (PERU), consisting of Protection, Child Protection and GBV staff and outreach volunteers were activated in all 33 camps in preparation of cyclone Sitrang. The PERU teams took part in camp DMC coordination meetings and disseminated key early warning and awareness messages in the communities on emergency preparedness (floods, landslides, lightning) through megaphone and group-based awareness sessions before the cyclone landfall.

Rapid Protection Assessment teams were put on stand-by but not deployed due to the limited impact of the cyclone. Following the storm, PERU conducted outreach to identify urgent/vulnerable protection cases and referrals with a focus on missing family members including children and provision of Psychological First Aid as needed. Initial numbers of affected beneficiaries are expected to be minimal due to the limited impact of the cyclone. Final reporting will feed into the after-action review to strengthen future emergency response.

All other Sectors have incorporated the response in their regular activities in the camps.

END

