

JOINT PROTECTION MONITORING REPORT

1,696

Focus Group Discussion (persons reached)

1,081

Home Visits

168

Direct Observation

1,047

Key Informant Interviews

52%
Men

48%
Women

7%
Disabilities

	Female	Male
Children (0-17)	4%	4%
Adult (18-59)	42%	46%
Elderly (60+)	2%	2%

The Joint Protection Monitoring framework is implemented by the Protection Sector since 2022 to promote the systematic and regular collection, verification, and analysis of violations of rights and protection risks for the Rohingya refugee population in Cox's Bazar.

The Joint Protection Monitoring reports serve to inform protection programming and advocacy through a common and standardized evidence-based information collection to develop a better understanding of the protection situation in the camps through a joint analysis of risks, threats, vulnerabilities, and incidents, as well as patterns and trends.

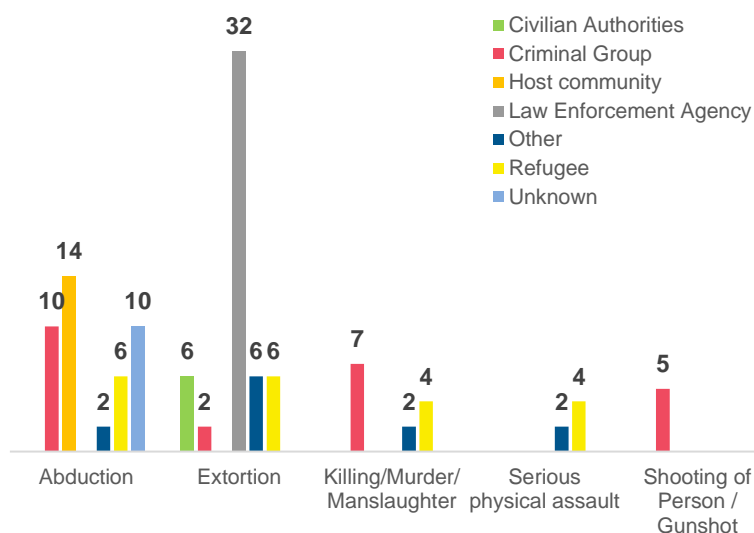
Six agencies (UNHCR, IOM, IRC, DRC, OXFAM and HI) conduct protection monitoring as part of the core programming, covering 33 camps. The report also reflects the contributions of the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Child Protection (CP) Sub-Sectors and the Anti-Trafficking Working Group.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

During the period under review (April - June), 118 serious incidents have been reported by partner organisations through the Joint Protection Monitoring across camps in Ukhiya and Teknaf.¹ This constitutes a considerable increase compared to the previous reporting period (44 incidents in the first quarter) and in large due to the inclusion of extortion (52 cases) in the serious incidents. Other incidents included, abduction (42), killing/murder/manslaughter (13, all victims were refugees), serious physical assault (6) and shooting of person/gunshot (5).

The majority of incidents were reported in camps 6, 9, 19, 20, 20EXT in Ukhiya, and camps 24 and 25 in Teknaf. In addition, violent clashes between rival criminal groups were reported in camps 6, 8W and 10. The reported serious incidents were allegedly perpetrated by members of criminal groups as well as by refugees and host-community members.

Alleged perpetrator per category by incident



Though authorities maintain active security surveillance in the camps and have conducted a significant number of arrests related to drug trafficking during the reporting period, drug-related crime remains a notable source of insecurity in the camps.

In total, 52 cases of extortion against refugees were reported in camps 11, 12, 14, 19, 20, 25, 3, 4EXT and 6. 32 cases were allegedly perpetrated by law enforcement personnel, while the remaining 20 cases were reportedly committed by Camp authority staff (6), refugee volunteers (6), influential community leaders (Majhis) (6) and criminal groups (2). Allegations such as harassment, beating, verbal abuse, arbitrary arrest, confiscation of refugee documents and/or personal possessions (mobile phones) by law enforcement personnel continued to be reported, mainly in camps 18, 19, 20 and 20EXT.

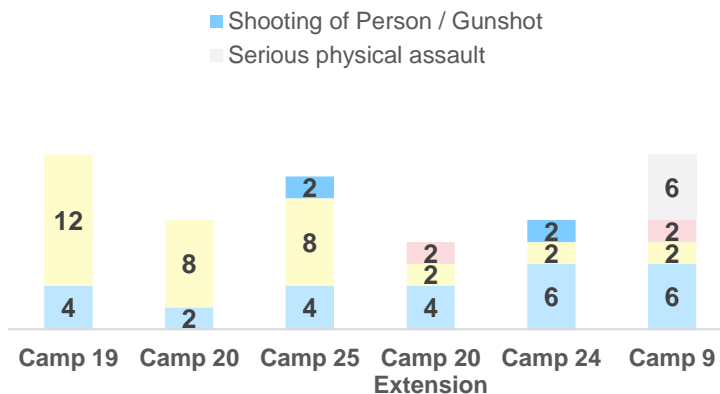
¹For the purpose of the report, the serious incidents collected are related to the following incident categories only: abduction, extortion, killing/murder/manslaughter, serious physical assault and shooting of person/gunshot.

Despite the law enforcement operations against criminal groups, the groups seemingly are trying to regain dominance in the camps. From April to June, five refugees were killed, allegedly by members of a criminal group, two of whom were Majhis in camp 18. The Majhis may have been targeted for their active collaboration with law enforcement, including in night patrolling. It was also reported that Majhis that are closely collaborating with authorities received threats from criminal groups.

The frequency of abductions of refugees is also increasing, and on numerous occasions, victims have been subjected to harsh abuse and ordered to pay ransom.

The above safety and security concerns (8), insufficient shelter space due to increased family size (8) and other unspecified reasons (4), have triggered spontaneous movements of a total of 20 refugee families comprising of 123 individuals to other camps. The number of households and individuals moving camps remained similar to the first reporting period albeit within fewer camps. In camps 9 and 10, it was reported that adolescent girls and male youths are leaving the camps to travel onward to Malaysia, either through land routes via Myanmar or by boat.

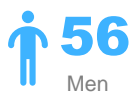
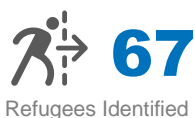
Top 6 camps by incidents reported



Camp	To Camp	Refugees	# of HHs
Camp 22	Camp 22	117	18
Camp 9	Camp 8W	3	1
Camp 18	Camp 20 Extension	3	1
Total		123	20

For the period April - June, 67 cases of **human trafficking** were registered. While a considerable increase in cases from the previous reporting period (30 victims identified in the period January - March), the profile of victims, type of trafficking and modus operandi of traffickers remained largely the same. The majority of human trafficking victims were male (79%), trafficked under the promise of paid labour and ended up in forced labour. In addition, 3 minors (2 girls and 1 boy) were identified as victims of trafficking as well. "Home" (shelter) was indicated as the main place for recruitment or initial engagement into the trafficking situation (79%) and the majority remained in Cox's Bazar (55%) or were brought to Chittagong (39%).

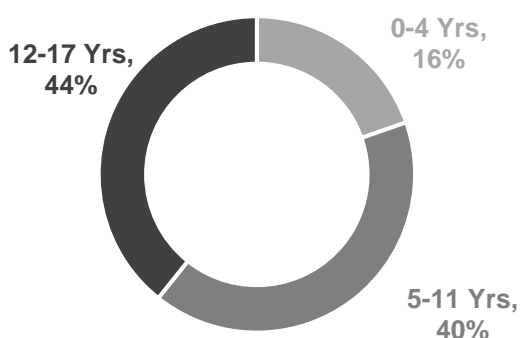
More details in the Quarterly Dashboard produced by the Anti-Trafficking Working Group (AT WG), available [here](#).



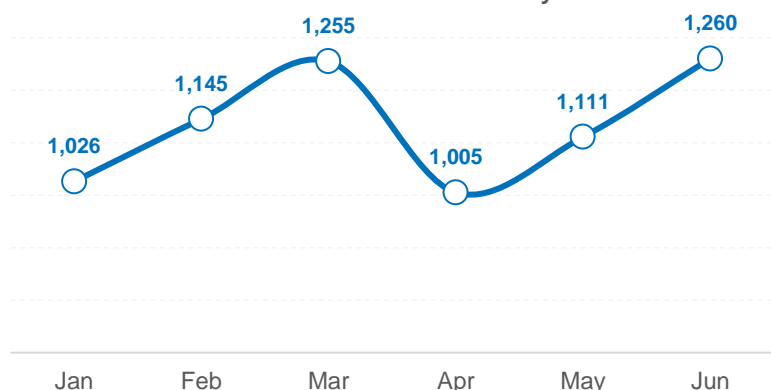
In quarter 2, a total of 3,384 children accessed **child protection** case management services, of which 53% were boys and 47% girls. The majority being in the age group of 12-17 years old (44%). After an initial decline in April, a new annual high of child protection cases per month was reported in June.

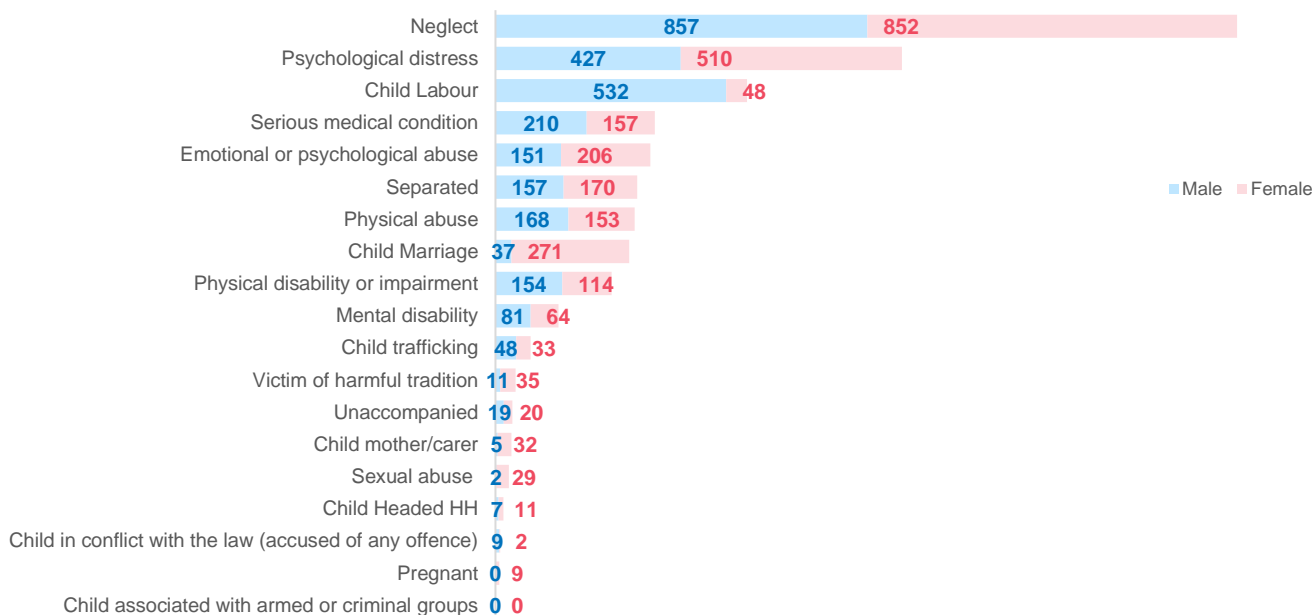
Based on the Child Protection Information Management System (CPIMS+) data, the main protection concerns for children have been identified as: neglect (31%), psychological distress (17%), child labor (10%), serious medical conditions (7%), child marriage (6%) and physical abuse (6%). The current trend confirms the ongoing need to continue working on mitigation strategies to reduce the risks of child protection concerns.

Child Protection Cases – Disaggregated by Age Group



of New Child Protection Cases by Month



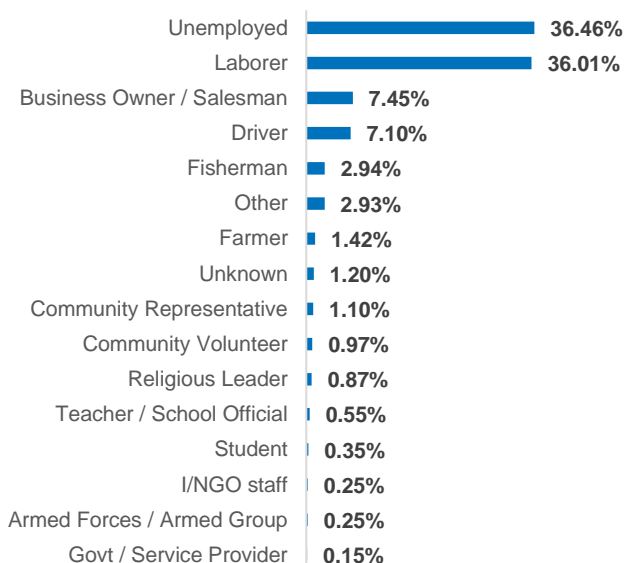


The top 4 types of **Gender-Based Violence (GBV)** incidents reported in the Gender-Based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS)² for the reporting period, remained the same as in Q1: physical assault: 51%, denial of resources: 22%, psychological/emotional abuse: 19% and sexual assault: 3%. During this reporting period, 99% of the identified survivors were female and 1% was male. The incidents on female refugees have increased marginally by 0.5% since Q1. Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) constituted 85% of those incidents, although marginally decreased by 1% since Q1. 0.5% of the survivors were identified as persons with a disability.

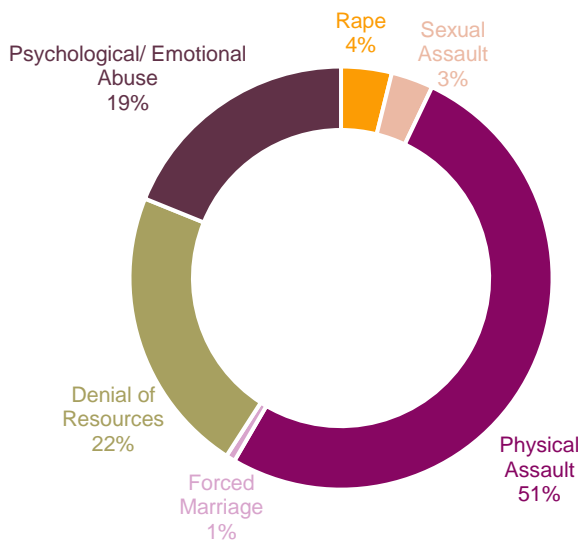
Based on reporting, the trend for the locations for GBV incidents remained largely unchanged compared to Q1 with the majority of the GBV incidents still occurring in the survivors' residence. GBV incident locations such as streets/paths, water collection points, bathing facilities, distribution points, public toilets, bush/forest, and recreational facilities implicate other sectors, and emphasize the need to strengthen GBV mainstreaming prevention and mitigation measures across sectors.

The main categories of perpetrators of GBV remained unchanged (unemployed/laborer) highlighting 2 issues of concern: (1) understanding/addressing the potential link between unemployment and GBV, in particular IPV and (2) the ongoing need for broad awareness raising/sensitization on prevention of GBV.

GBV Prepetrator's occupation



Type of GBV cases



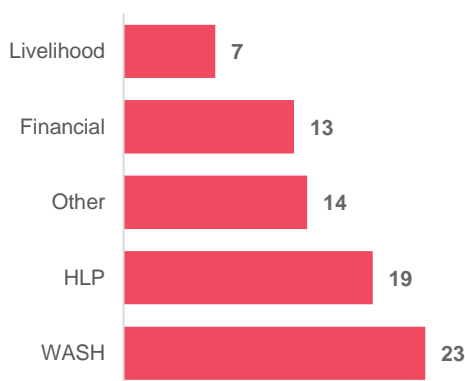
² Intersected incidents can only be reported as 1 type of GBV in GBVIMS (based on GBV classification tool and the process of elimination, determining the most specific incident type that applies to the reported incident.). More details in the monthly [here](#) and quarterly GBV factsheet [here](#).

SOCIAL COHESION AND PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE

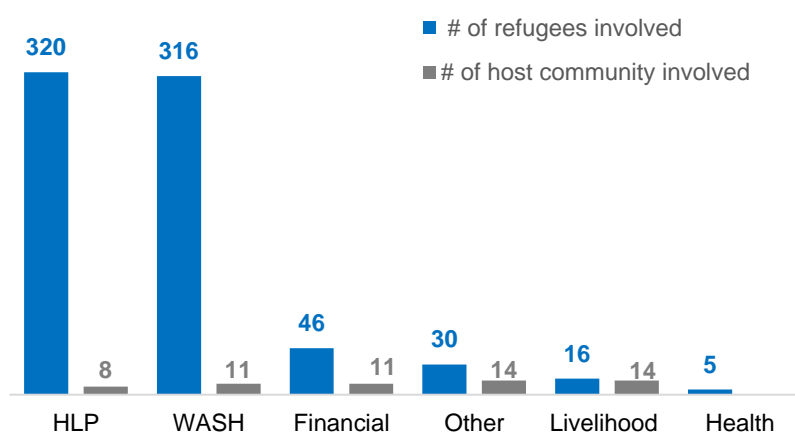
On social cohesion and peaceful coexistence among refugees and between refugee groups and host communities, significant less incidents were registered for the reporting period (77 vs 124 in quarter 1). WASH incidents became the main source of dispute (as opposed to HLP issues in the previous quarter). Cause of the different incidents were linked to limited livelihood opportunities, access to communal WASH facilities (e.g. water collection points and latrines), throwing out garbage, housing/shelter related, personal loan/debt and illicit drug business.

Instances of the host community renting land and housing to refugees (Housing, Land and Property [HLP]) remains the main source of tension between refugees and the host community but a significant increase of refugees and host community members involved in WASH incidents was recorded for the second quarter (643 in quarter 2 vs 258 during the previous reporting period). Reported conflicts with host communities largely concerned access to communal Wash facilities and garbage disposal, financial debts and disputes between families.

of incidents reported

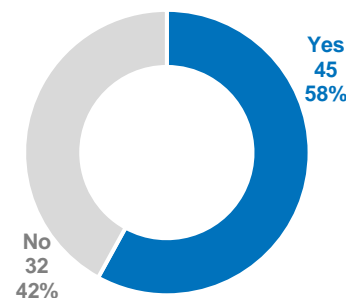


of refugees and host community involved in the incident



Instances where the host communities reported the presence of refugees outside camps have increased, as well as negative media news and reports on presence of refugees. The camps where concerns over conflicts with host communities were most reported were camp 3, 4, 12 and 22. In some cases, these conflicts resulted in refugees trying to relocate to other camps (either submitting formal relocation requests to camp authorities or self-relocation). During the reporting period, at least 5 refugees from camp 22 were abducted due to disputes with host community members. In disputes between refugees and the host community, the authorities have intervened in 58% of the incidents (45) while there was no intervention in 42% of the incidents (32).

Peaceful Co-existence Authorities intervened?



ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Camp-based legal partners provided free legal assistance to a total of 6,532 refugees (54% are women and girls). Since January 2022, 13,076 refugees benefitted from legal assistance. During the reporting period (April-June), 37 refugees were assisted to file cases in police stations and in courts. Legal partners further facilitated release from detention (prison, police station, police post) of 105 refugees through interventions and assisted 210 refugees (64 men, 116 women, 20 boys and 10 girls) to visit their family members and/or close relatives detained in Cox's Bazar prison, liaising with camp authorities, facilitating transportation from and to the camps, and access to the prison.

Majhis and members of criminal gangs remained involved in arbitrary resolution/mediation of disputes between refugees, including in cases of serious crimes, thus diverting refugees from access to the formal justice system. Refugees at times are reluctant to report incidents and seek legal assistance for fear of retaliation by criminal gangs and are sometimes compelled to rely on criminal gangs for mediation. Majhis, at times, continued to misuse their power and take money from parties for their mediation services. Refugees who are able to give more money to Majhis receive their support in mediating disputes affecting them (with decisions in their favour). Law enforcement authorities allegedly were also involved in mediation activities in some camps.

Some refugees are facing challenges in obtaining divorce registration documents due to the reluctance of some camp authorities or their staff to register divorce cases (due to negative personal/cultural perceptions of divorce by the camp authority or that divorce requires additional shelter for separated families which might not be readily available). Legal actors are unable to provide legal assistance to refugees seeking divorce in such cases, with negative consequences deriving from unregistered marriages and divorces

(polygamy, domestic violence, etc.). In some cases of domestic violence, divorce, and polygamy, refugees, without formal marriage registration by the camp authority, office tried to resolve the issues through mediation undertaken by Majhis.

Legal actors continued to report difficulties in filing cases in some police stations in Ukhiya and Teknaf despite continued advocacy and capacity-strengthening being undertaken with the police and camp administration officials. Harder to reach groups such as older persons, persons with disabilities and women face difficulties to access law enforcement and camp authorities due to a lack of information and/or mobility and rely on Majhis to get access. In some camps, refugees are asked by camp and law enforcement authorities to bring Majhis when they approach those offices for service. Refugees have expressed concern on presence of Majhis, feeling they cannot confidentially share their concerns and feel reluctant to speak out.

ACCESS TO SERVICES

Refugees are reportedly not provided with adequate medication at camp-based clinics and sometimes, doctors advise them to buy the remaining medicines from the pharmacies. As a consequence, refugees are regularly forced to buy some medication that they need regularly, especially those who have chronic diseases. Persons with disabilities, and especially women with disabilities, face difficulties to access health and rehabilitation care due to their disability. Persons with disabilities are facing problems to access WASH facilities (most notably toilets) as they are at times far from their shelter. This becomes even more concerning at night because of less lightening in the road/pathway and toilets and subsequent safety concerns.

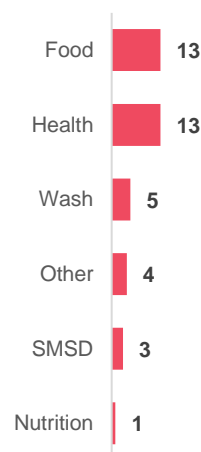
Confiscation of refugee documents by the authorities continued to occur. Camp and law enforcement authorities reportedly confiscated refugee documents in cases of allegations against one of the family members. However, without documents, the refugee family as a whole faces difficulties in accessing humanitarian assistance.

Camp authorities demanded humanitarian actors not to provide food and other services to refugees who returned to the camps from Bhasan Char without prior authorisation, citing an instruction by the RRRC. As a result, several refugees that returned from Bhasan Char on their own were deprived of access to services most notably in camps 18, 20 and 20 EXT (in some cases the Family Count Number card of these refugees were confiscated).

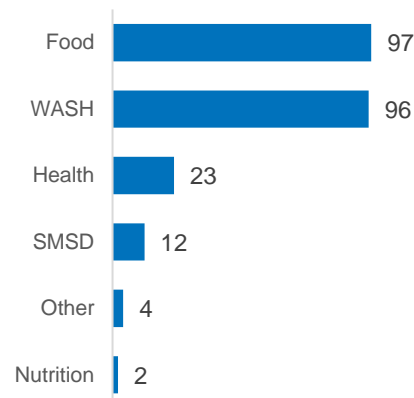
In some camps, refugees have faced difficulties to meet the minimum water supply of daily needs due to the water shortage in the camps. This has mostly affected women and girls who are reluctant to report on their specific hygiene needs.

Refugees across the camps have consistently expressed concerns about Majhis' restriction on refugees' access to assistance and services. Refugees have highlighted that Majhis often collect money from refugees in exchange for including their names on distribution lists for items provided by humanitarian actors. It has also been reported that refugees are reluctant to report on corruption of Majhis due to possible fear of retaliation.

Denial of Services
(# of Incidents by Sector)



Denial of Services
(# of Refugees affected by Sector)



RECOMMENDATIONS

The below recommendations follow key issues identified by the Protection Monitoring agencies during the reporting period for action and follow-up by protection and other humanitarian actors in coordination with the Protection Sector.

- Advocate for reinforced security patrols inside and at the perimeter of the camps and for improved liaison between the refugee community and law enforcement authorities
- Continue and expand training programmes with camp and law enforcement authorities, covering practical questions and issues relating to the personal security of refugees

- Strengthen investigation and prosecution of perpetrators of crimes in the camps to reduce impunity and reduce threats to refugee security, ensuring protection and assistance for refugee victims and witnesses
- Strengthen criminal prosecution and internal disciplinary procedures to punish the abuse by law enforcement personnel
- Advocate with camp and law enforcement authorities to promote and support access of refugees to formal justice mechanisms through legal assistance available to them in the camps
- Further strengthening of the understanding on protection (including CP and GBV) and its core principles with camp-based actors, especially local authorities to enhance coordination with protection actors at camp-level. Provide training to camp authorities and their staff on their role and responsibility on protection and PSEA.
- Advocacy by the UN agencies with the RRRC office to ensure refugees, including refugees returned from Bhasan Char for valid reasons, are not denied access to assistance in the camps
- Coordinate with relevant sectors/Working Groups to effectively mainstream protection in their interventions and to address issues reported through protection monitoring agencies (increased lighting at sanitary facilities, improved access to services for persons with disability and older persons (e.g., medical services, food, and gas collections)
- Promote programmes that reduce social tension within refugee communities, and between the refugee and host communities
- Advocate for refugees' access to livelihood and education opportunities that can help provide better protection and reduce risks of exploitation, smuggling, and trafficking in persons
- Strengthen awareness on the risks and dangers that may arise before, during and after irregular onward movements from Bangladesh
- Engage with the ISCG on ways to expedite feedback from the RRRC on issues raised by camp authorities to protection actors at camp level, most notably on various requests for information on projects, activities, staffing, ... from humanitarian actors.