

Summary of Humanitarian Access and Service Delivery

Daily Updates – 6 August 2024

Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh



Situation Overview

Following the telecommunications shutdown that began on 18 July 2024, and the nationwide curfew announced on 19 July, the Rohingya refugee response in Cox's Bazar, was constrained to only essential lifesaving activities. This resulted in a period from 21 July to 23 July, where only critical missions were authorized by the RRRC's Office, with a convoy led by the APBn. Daily situation reports were [published](#) at the time to share updates on the humanitarian access and service delivery in the camps. The Internet was restored shortly thereafter, and normal service delivery resumed from 24 July to 3 August.

Despite a brief resumption of activities, the situation across the country continued to evolve with rising unrest in the capital and other cities, and on 3 August UNDSS advised that field missions to the Rohingya refugee camps be limited to lifesaving activities from 4 August. As anticipated, on 4 August the situation escalated countrywide and an indefinite curfew was declared from 6pm, as well as three days of national holidays. On 5 August, humanitarian staff movements to the Rohingya refugee camps were impacted and the internet and mobile networks were disrupted. By the afternoon, the Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina announced her resignation, with the formation of an interim government to follow.

On 6 August, the curfew was lifted from 6am and telecommunications were functioning normally. The earlier declared public holidays were rescinded. Given the significant political events unfolding in Bangladesh at this time, and the impacts this has on the Rohingya Refugee Response, below is a daily update on the humanitarian access and service delivery in the camps across sectors.

Inter-Sector Updates: 6 August



Shelter-CCCM Sector Lead Agencies: IOM and UNHCR

Impact/Response

- On 6 August, UN movement from Cox's Bazar to Ukhiya and Teknaf was not possible due to a UNDSS security advisory which was also followed by nearly all SCCCM partners. Core critical activities were carried out in the camps through some SCCCM partners with reduced staffing or volunteers. Most SCCCM partners continued to work from home and remotely monitored activities that were undertaken through volunteers in the camps.
- All SCCCM critical and non-critical activities were disrupted, including disaster risk management, site improvement, emergency and regular shelter repair and maintenance, emergency Non-Food Item (NFI) distribution, site management. Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) distribution was partially disrupted. Movement restrictions also impacted the resupply of shelter materials.
- LPG and NFI distribution continued in some camps. Emergency volunteer teams were deployed to support soil and drainage cleaning in some camps. Site management activities such as service monitoring, complaint feedback and response desks, and emergency relocations, were conducted by volunteers. Shelter kit distribution, shelter verification, and shelter construction for extremely vulnerable individuals were undertaken in some camps through volunteers.

Challenges

- Movement restrictions, coupled with the lack of APBn presence in the camps, significantly impacted operational camp presence and service delivery for all SCCCM activities for UN agencies and partners. There were also reported fuel shortages in petrol stations near Ukhiya.
- As a result of the current situation, reforestation and plantation operations have halted. There has also been a delay in site preparations due to disengagement of refugee volunteers and the delivery of planting materials has been hampered.



Food Security Sector Lead Agencies: FAO and WFP

Impact/Response

- On 6 August lifesaving food assistance activities resumed in the camps after a one-day hiatus. The 19 food distribution outlets operated by implementing partners were all operational.
- Food security resilience partners worked from home due to the insecurity and essential staff worked in the camps. No access issues were reported.
- Due to the disruption in internet services, lifesaving food assistance conducted through e-vouchers was done through an offline platform, which although slower than the online system, has been recently upgraded for increased efficiency.
- Food security resilience activities were substantially reduced on 6 August. Decisions around the implementation of activities going forward will be taken on a day-to-day basis.

Challenges

- Lifesaving food assistance distributions may be slower than usual under the circumstances, however 100% of refugees will receive assistance as planned by the end of the month.



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

Impact/Response

- WASH partners delivered WASH services through different modalities. Most partner staff were working from home and monitoring activities remotely. Some WASH partners sent reduced staffing to the camps, while a quarter of partners engaged their full teams in the camps.
- The Joint Assessment and Response Team (Health and WASH) postponed their activities.
- The Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) kit distribution was postponed.
- Basic WASH services have been ensured by refugee volunteers including household waste collection, desludging/maintaining latrines, and water production via the water networks.
- The desludging volume is very high due to the ongoing heavy rain and flash flooding.

Challenges

- The quality and quantity of work carried out by WASH volunteers is impacted by the lack of partner staff supervision.
- In most camps, female volunteers are not comfortable moving freely around.
- One WASH partner's office in Ukhiya was affected by the unrest, although their camp office remained functional, so service delivery continued.
- Regular activities were interrupted due to the ongoing security concerns.



Health Sector Lead Agency: WHO

Impact/Response

- Out of 27 health partners, 15 partners were not able to operate Health Posts due to the current situation.
- Some health sector partners suspended the non-emergency services in their health facilities.
- One partner operated 18 static points and 4 hospital-based service points, providing services through tele-provision and mobilized volunteers.
- Primary Healthcare Clinics (PHCs) were operational with basic and emergency health care services. Regular reporting has reduced due to the limited staff.
- Overall service delivery was reduced, with limited outpatient services capacities at the PHCs. At the same time the patient load has increased at the outpatient departments.
- Due to travel restrictions, physical services were interrupted, and high-risk cases left unaddressed.
- Partners focus on providing priority service (e.g. emergency, delivery, stabilization and referral, and critical lab investigations).
- One partner is providing tele-services for rehabilitation follow-ups and Mental Health and Psychosocial support (MHPSS). Additionally, volunteers conduct home-based screenings and follow-ups for low-risk cases.

Challenges

- There is an increasing number of patients and the emergency and critical patient load could surpass the PHCs capacity.
- Surveillance services are lifesaving and need to be carried out.
- Staff movements are constrained due to the curfew and overall security concerns.



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

Protection:

Impact/Response

- Due to safety concerns, staff across Protection partners were largely not present in the camps on 6 August, except for emergency cases. Activities continued with the support of refugee volunteers and staff working remotely. Emergency cases, including those related to health and security, were addressed on a case-by-case basis using an inter-sectoral approach.
- On 6 August the Camp-in-Charges (CiC) offices remained closed, and this impacted the operations of the help desks and legal support located within these offices.
- Delays in responding to Housing, Land and Property (HLP) disputes can make individuals more vulnerable. Limited internet access continued to hamper the sharing of relevant information and communication and disrupted regular activities.
- Rohingya refugees are experiencing tensions due to the ongoing situation in Bangladesh and the limited presence of humanitarian agencies in the camps.
- Some Legal Assistance services require coordination with Police, APBn and these actions are delayed due to the current situation.
- Clashes among the criminal group members have increased in the camps due to diminished presence of humanitarian workers and authorities.

- All registration activities have been cancelled until further notice. Registration appointment desks situated in CiC desks are closed.
- Protection focal points are providing remote assistance via mobile phones. This approach has allowed partners to maintain communication with beneficiaries and offer guidance and assistance.
- Case management continued over the phone. The ability of partners to support effectively is reduced when done remotely, however, and phone networks are unreliable.
- Protection monitoring has continued with available staff. However, with reduced staffing partners are limited in gaining an understanding of new security threats as not everyone feels comfortable sharing information over the telephone.
- Partners continue to try to provide services remotely or through support from volunteers (keeping in mind the safety risks to volunteers).
- If the current situation continues registration activities will be further impacted.

Challenges

- The absence of Protection Focal Points (PFPs) is inevitably affecting the delivery of protection services as, due to the sensitivities, it is common that refugees do not want to reveal their cases or queries with another refugee even he/she is a protection volunteer.
- Legal partners were unable to follow up on several cases requiring support at police stations including the One-stop Crisis Centre and access to court representation, along with jail visits. In Camp 8E, 9 and 10, legal partner offices are closed as they are located inside the CiC offices. APBn are not at the check post since 5 August and are not reachable by telephone.
- In the context of the limited presence of APBn, smuggling (drugs, illegal weapons) activities are increasing. Also armed group members are conducting informal arbitration to mitigate dispute within communities in the absence of LEAs and CiCs.
- For HLP issues, especially related to WASH, shelter and site development, beneficiaries could not access services due to diminished presence of humanitarian agencies.
- In host locations, programming is on hold until the safety of volunteers can be assured. Partners have reported arson incidents in their host community implementation sites.

Child Protection (CP)

Impact/Response

- Most national partners were able to provide in-person services on 6 August, with some NGOs delivering services through volunteers, while some partners were closed.
- There was low attendance in child protection facilities, and adolescents were missing regular learning sessions and referral services.
- All stakeholders, including children, caregivers, volunteers, and staff, were experiencing stress and anxiety due to safety and security concerns.
- High-risk CP cases were pending follow-ups from caseworkers. CP case management referral services were delayed.
- One Multi-Purpose Centre (MPC) in Camp 4Ext was vandalized on 5 August.
- Structured sessions, such as vocational training and meetings, were postponed to avoid harm to children, adolescents, and women.
- Prolonged service deprivation may lead to increased domestic violence, exploitation, and abuse, particularly among adolescent girls, and could further traumatize children.
- Case management, referrals, and follow-ups were ongoing by caseworkers along with volunteers.

- All CP facilities, including MPCs, adolescent clubs, and child-friendly spaces, were open and functional, providing recreational services facilitated by volunteers.
- Prevention activities continued, with some organizations resuming session-based activities on a smaller scale.
- Activities requiring mass gatherings were avoided due to security concerns.
- Awareness messages on drowning, landslides, monsoon, dowry, and child marriage were disseminated in the camps and host communities.

Challenges

- Staff have been mentally traumatized, with many affected by physical harm, looting, or arson. Despite these challenges, they continued supporting volunteers and completing necessary tasks.
- There have been significant difficulties for field staff to commute to work sites.
- There are reports that minority staff felt insecure and were reluctant to travel around.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Impact/Response

- Some GBV actors reported interrupted activities at the facilities in the camps, whereas some facilities in the host communities remained closed. Heavy rainfall and waterlogging caused the closure of few women and girls' safe space (WGSS) facilities in Camps 11 and 16, but most WGSS were open with the support of volunteers.
- GBV referrals were disrupted due to some specialized services not being fully functional. Follow-up on cases remains a concern, particularly for pending legal referrals.
- Volunteers kept almost all WGSS open, supporting GBV and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) prevention and risk mitigation through awareness sessions (in facility and outreach) and facilitating response by making referrals where possible.
- WGSS continued to provide psychosocial support, awareness sessions, referral services, and information-sharing to those in need.
- GBV case workers and social workers were deployed in a number of facilities (Mukti, AAB, GUK), as well as midwives to continue providing integrated Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) services. In some other facilities, remote case management was provided.
- The One-Stop Crisis Centres and Cells were fully operational, and staff were deployed in Teknaf and on call in Ukhiya.
- Community outreach group members and emergency response team members have been active in identifying GBV risks and providing referral support.
- Communication with the CiC offices regarding beneficiary support is ongoing.
- In Camp 12, four families with 15 members took emergency shelter for two days in one WGSS due to heavy rainfall and partial damage of their shelters.

Challenges

- The increasing fear due to decreased presence of authorities and law enforcement agencies in the camps, particularly in Camps 14 and 15.
- There is a reported increase of harassment of women and girls in the camps, both at their homes and in public spaces.
- High local transportation costs and fear during movements are challenging for volunteers.
- Volunteers were facing some difficulties in referring beneficiaries from the GBV facilities to other specialized services due to absence of staff deployed in the camps.
- Staff and volunteers expressed concerns related to communication and safety in the field.

- Heavy rainfall is affecting program participation, both for beneficiaries to reach the facilities and for volunteers to conduct outreach. There is increased vulnerability of children, the elderly, pregnant women, the extremely ill, and people with disabilities due to heavy rain, landslides, waterlogging, and slippery pathways.
- There is pending maintenance and repair work in WGSSs and an anticipated increase in support requests during the monsoon season.
- There is limited support for gender diverse populations due to the absence of specialized staff.
- Menstruation hygiene management has become challenging and risky; reusable sanitary pads are difficult to manage due to rain.



Nutrition Sector Lead Agency: UNICEF

Impact/Response

- On 5 August only 6 of the camp's 45 Integrated Nutrition Facilities (INFs) were open with one partner present in the camps, stopping most activities, including specialized food provision.
- By 6 August all 45 INFs in the camps were open to provide essential services and all four Nutrition partners were present to serve beneficiaries. All of the camp's four Stabilization Centres (SCs) were also open to support Severe and Acute Malnutrition (SAM) children with complications.

Challenge:

- The flow of beneficiaries at the INFs was higher than usual due to the service interruption on 5 August, however, partners worked to reach as many beneficiaries as possible.



Education Sector Lead Agencies: UNICEF and Save the Children

Impact/Response

- From 6 August education facilities across Bangladesh were open.
- Learning facilities in the Rohingya camps will remain closed due the end-of-year learning break and will reopen from 11 August 2024 with the start of a new academic year.



Livelihoods and Skill Development Sector Lead Agency: UNHCR

Impact/Response

- Partner staff did not go to the field on 6 August due to unrest in Cox's Bazar city, Ukhiya and Teknaf, and there was no partner staff presence in the Skills Development activities.
- As reported on 5 August, all ongoing vocational training, non-formal technical training and Accelerated Adult Learning (AAL) activity has stopped, due to the current security situation. Capacity Building programs for partner staff and Camp Focal Points that were planned for later this month will be postponed.
- Depending on the situation, partners are planning to resume the vocational training programs from 11 August.

Cross-Cutting Updates: 6 August



Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)

Common messages explaining the decreased presence of staff members in the camps and gaps in service due to internet disruption have been circulated by the AAP Technical Working Group in English, Bangla, Burmese and Rohingya English transliteration via sectors and partners to the field-based staff and volunteers in the camps. The messages also provided information on how refugees can seek emergency support for food, healthcare, LPG, protection, etc. Most community outreach, engagement and awareness activities continued with the support of volunteers, with strengthened messaging on the current situation both at helpdesks and household levels to keep refugees informed and reassured.

The majority of the Complaint Feedback and Response Mechanism (CFRM) channels were operational, with the support of volunteers. Although helplines/hotlines faced limited disruption, some of the help/information desks relying on online portals for recording complaints had to pause/limit service due to internet disruption. Concerns among refugees have risen regarding the current situation in Bangladesh, and complaints were recorded on service disruption, especially, timely delivery of food and LPG. Volunteers reported having to multi-task due to fewer staff members and expressed concerns about the feasibility of such arrangements in the longer term.



Humanitarian Access

On humanitarian access, most partners are currently working remotely except for those providing critical services in the Rohingya refugee camps. No barriers in terms of critical staff accessing or moving within the camps were reported. APBn are located in the camp stations but are reportedly not performing regular patrolling. Most CiCs have confirmed that food and health centres were open on 6 August but that other actors who normally visit the CiC offices were not present.

In Camp 1E, 1W, LPG distribution began but was later halted at 12 pm in consideration of the security situation. The Camp 16 CiC office was reportedly vandalized by members of the host community in the morning when the CiC was not present. Host community members had broken the glass and outside fittings. Being able to reach concerned CiCs and APBn by telephone has been a challenge.



Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR)

The EPR unit has received reports that disruption to regular communications channels is affecting teams in the camps and delaying information sharing. Although essential services and emergency response teams can access the camps, delays in response time have been noted given the reduced availability of personnel, safety concerns, and curfew/movement constraints. In this context, EPR is heavily reliant on the trained community volunteers in the camps and host community in case of any emergencies.

On the ongoing monsoon season, EPR publishes alerts and advisories twice per week to provide updates to all EPR actors working in the camps. However, some partners have been unable to visit the camps regularly due to restrictions and government holidays and the presence of CiCs and Disaster Management

Committee (DMC) members has been more irregular. In this context, it is difficult to obtain the necessary permissions from the government to provide immediate response to vulnerable households and impacted individuals.

According to the incident reporting by Needs and Population Monitoring (NPM), the active monsoon season has resulted in incidents of waterlogging, floods, and landslides in various locations. Temporary relocation of vulnerable household members is another challenge that requires obtaining consent from the affected communities and the respective CiCs. A landslide taskforce has been activated to develop a landslide mitigation strategy as rapidly as possible.

Contact

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<https://rohingyaresponse.org/>