

**GBV SUB-SECTOR**  
**Cox's Bazar**

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# Quarterly Bulletin

**Q4 (October - December) 2025**



**Cox's Bazar GBV Sub-Sector**



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# Key Highlights

## JOINT RESPONSE PLAN 2026

The GBV Sub-Sector (GBVSS) finalized the Joint Response Plan (JRP) 2026 under ISCG guidance, reducing the number of implementing partners from nine in 2025 to six in 2026 to strengthen quality, coverage, and coordination. The response will be delivered by six Appealing Partners composed of UNFPA, UNHCR, IOM, UNICEF, IRC and World Vision together with ten implementing partners, targeting 698,634 people with a funding requirement of USD 21.7 million. This outcome followed a two-day JRP Peer Review Workshop conducted on 17–18 November 2025 with the CP Sub-Sector and the Protection Sector. Twenty-four (24) proposals were assessed against ISCG criteria, Minimum Standards on GBV in emergencies programming and field evidence from the previous year. The finalized plan prioritizes lifesaving GBV specialized services—including survivor-centred case management, strengthened caseworker capacity, GBV information management and Primero, functional referral pathways, provision of dignity kits, and services in Women and Girls’ Safe Spaces—while advancing GBV prevention and risk mitigation through information dissemination, engagement of non-GBV actors, and sector-specific safety audits. Further, the GBV Sub-Sector will continue to enhance efficiency and cost-effectiveness. The integration of CP and GBV services has streamlined interventions, reduced duplication, and ensured coherent service delivery across camps.

## FUNDING REQUIRED FOR PRIORITIZED ACTIVITIES

 **USD 21.7M**

 **USD 18.8M**  
Rohingya Refugees/FDMNs

 **USD 2.9M**  
Bangladeshi Host Community

## PEOPLE IN NEED

 **1.31M**

## PEOPLE TARGETED

 **698,634**

 **616,220**  
Rohingya Refugees/FDMNs

 **82,414**  
Bangladeshi Host Community

 **06**  
Sector Projects

 **06**  
Appealing Partners

 **10**  
Implementing Partners





## 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM 2025

GBVSS observed the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence 2025 from 25 November to 10 December in Cox's Bazar, in collaboration with the Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group (GiHA WG), aligning with the global UNiTE theme, "Unite to End Digital Violence Against Women and Girls." The campaign focused on preventing and responding to technology-facilitated GBV, including cyberbullying, online harassment, and digital safety risks affecting women, girls, and children in Rohingya camps and host communities. The launching ceremony at Camp 4 Extension engaged around 500 community members and humanitarian actors through speeches, participatory dialogue, and cultural activities, promoting survivor-centered approaches, digital literacy, and safe reporting. The closing event at Cox's Bazar Public Library, attended by 150 representatives from government, UN agencies, and NGOs, featured a roundtable on emerging digital GBV trends, awareness gaps, and the need for stronger inter-sectoral coordination. Throughout the campaign, stakeholders reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring that digital access serves as a tool for protection and empowerment rather than harm.





# GBVSS Coordination Updates

- During the quarter, the GBV Sub-Sector convened two Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) meetings and three GBV Sub-Sector meetings. Discussions focused on finalizing priorities for the response cycle and JRP 2026 planning, including the logframe, activity matrix, project submission guidance, and cross-cutting requirements. Additional discussions covered service audits, facility mapping for integrated CP-GBV services, prioritizing local and women-led organizations in SAG, and advancing GBVIMS+ field-level implementation.



[Sharing Experience during the workshop with WLOs](#)

- The GBVSS together with CPSS conducted a five-day Caring for Child Survivors (Version 2) program for 30 caseworkers (22 F, 8 M), strengthening their capacity in survivor-centered responses to child sexual abuse and child marriage, psychosocial support, cross-sector collaboration and staff well-being.

- As part of efforts to improve GBV case management, GBV SS regularly updated the GBV referral pathway for all 33 Rohingya camps through the contribution of 33 GBV Camp Focal Points, to ensure timely, safe, and survivor-centered referral to essential services. Additionally, the GBVSS engaged Data Gathering Organizations (DGOs) in the quarterly task team meeting, focusing on DGO onboarding and signatory processes, reviewing key findings from the Q3 GBVIMS Factsheet, considering a confidential data request for global trend analysis, and receiving operational updates on system administration and 2026 JRP readiness.



[Group exercise ongoing during CCS V2 training](#)



[Water Point visit and observation by the enumerator \(GBV Case Worker\) as part of safety audit](#)

- GBVIMS Q1, Q2, and Q3 2025 data identified public pathways, water points, markets, and toilets as high-risk spaces for women and girls, both day and night. In response, the GBV Sub-Sector, together with the Shelter-Camp Coordination and Camp Management (SCCCM) and WASH sectors, conducted GBV-SCCCM and GBV-WASH safety audits to assess GBV risks in public spaces and inform targeted risk-mitigation measures.



# GBVSS Coordination Updates

- The GBVSS mapped 3,809 dignity kits for emergency response during the monsoon season. Moreover, GBVSS responded to the fire in camp 24 on 28 December in partnership with UNFPA, Mukti and IOM, providing psychological first aid to 115 (F:69, M:46), psychosocial support to 21 (W:14, G:7) and facilitating 164 (F:102, M:62), referrals to safe multisectoral services such as health, food, child protection, site management, shelter, LPG. Beneficiaries included 6 persons with disabilities and 2 pregnant women. Dignity kit needs were assessed, and distributions are planned the first week of January 2026.



[PFA is being provided by the volunteer as part of Camp 24 fire response](#)

- The GBV SS published a 5W dashboard on the [Rohingya refugee response website](#). The major advocacy products published in collaboration with the GBV SS members, GBVIMS DGOs and the Protection sector during the reporting period include [Q3 2025 GBVSS Bulletin](#), [Q3 2025 GBVIMS Factsheet](#) and [Q3 2025 Joint Protection Monitoring Report](#).





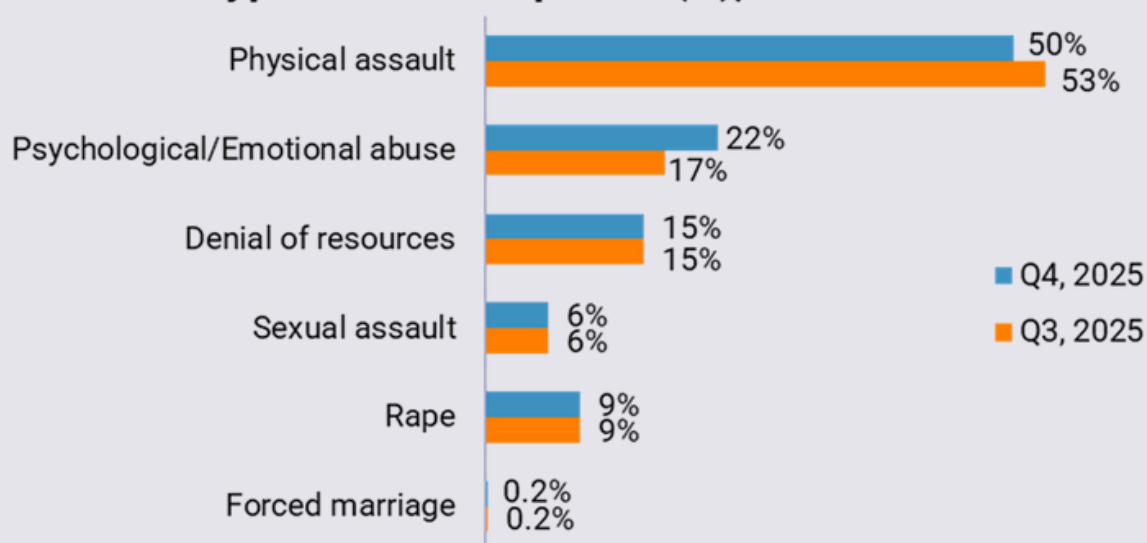
# Overall GBV Trends

In Q4 2025, GBVIMS data recorded a **marginal 0.1% decrease** in reported GBV cases compared to Q3; however, field observations, focus group discussions, and Camp Focal Point feedback indicate that GBV incidents and risks have, in fact, intensified across the camps, particularly within households and intimate relationships. Females accounted for 98% of reported cases, with 82% involving married women and 0.9% involving persons with disabilities. Rising activities by organized groups targeting women-headed households and families with relatives abroad, increased exposure to abduction, extortion, sexual harassment, and intimidation, creating heightened fear and vulnerability.

## KEY INSIGHTS



## Types of GBV Reported (%), Q4 2025



**Physical violence** remained the most reported form of GBV in Q4 2025, accounting for 50% of all cases, despite a 3% decrease compared to Q3. This decline does not reflect reduced risk, as incidents remained widespread within households and intimate relationships, with women and girls experiencing slapping, beating, kicking, and assaults using household objects. While the majority of cases occurred in domestic settings, approximately 6% of reported violence involved organized groups, reflecting a concerning overlap between household violence and broader insecurity.

**Emotional and psychological abuse** increased by 5%, with survivors reporting verbal threats, humiliation, blackmail, cyber harassment, and coercion, including restrictions on movement, finances, and access to basic needs. **Denial of resources** remained steady at approximately 15%, reinforcing dependence on perpetrators and limiting women's autonomy, while disputes over food rations, household items, or financial responsibilities frequently triggered violence.

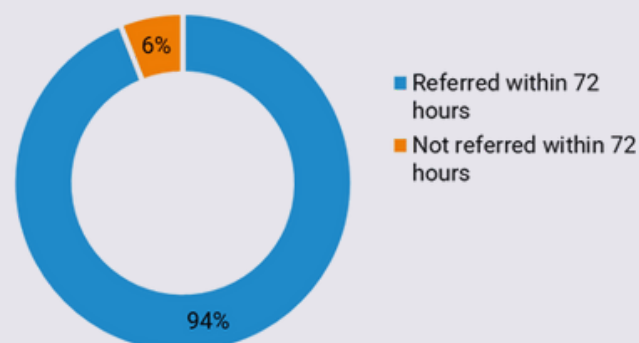
**Sexual violence, including rape (9%) and sexual assault (6%),** remained consistent with Q3, occurring predominantly within intimate relationships—including marital rape—and in public spaces with poor lighting and weak security oversight. Forced marriage, although accounting for only 0.2% of reported cases, persisted as a concern, particularly with adolescent girls being married remotely or abroad under financial or protective pressures.



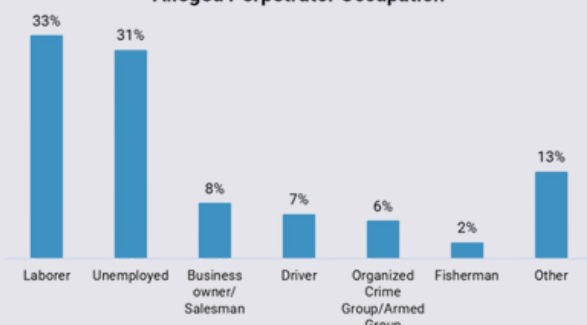
# Overall GBV Trends

The large majority **94%** of survivors were able to access lifesaving **Clinical Management Rape (CMR) services** for all rape incidents reported within 72 hours. 59% survivors declined legal assistance due to fear of reprisals. As per the FGDs with GBV case workers and Camp Focal Points, community-level interference, confidentiality breaches, and intimidation by influential actors further discouraged reporting and reinforced a culture of silence.

Percentage of rape cases referred/treated within 72 hrs of the incident, Q4 2025



Alleged Perpetrator Occupation



Overall, 69% of incidents were perpetrated by intimate partners, 9% by neighbors or family friends, and 9% by other family members, with 88% of cases occurring within the home, confirming that households remain the most unsafe environment for women and girls.

# Emerging GBV Risks

## Escalating Coercion and GBV Linked to Organized Groups

Q4 2025 reflected heightened pressure from organized groups, with women and adolescent girls increasingly exposed to threats, intimidation, and coercion linked to forced recruitment of male relatives and extortion. Women-headed households, particularly those with relatives abroad, remain more visible to these groups. The absence of men and adolescent boys from camps continued to shift risk exposure towards women, reinforcing fear and limiting mobility and access to existing protection and reporting mechanisms.

## Evolving Harmful Marriage Practices as a Risk Mitigation Strategy

An emerging trend is the evolution of harmful marriage practices, including growing reports of remote and phone-based marriages involving adolescent girls and unknown partners abroad. These practices are often framed as protective or economic coping strategies in response to insecurity and resource constraints. Marriages between Rohingya women and host community men were also reported in 6 camps, presenting new protection considerations related to access to services, legal pathways, and longer-term safety.

## Safety Concerns and Constraints on Service Access

In Q4 2025, perceptions of safety were affected by fear of retaliation from organized groups, confidentiality concerns in densely populated camp settings, digital safety risks, and ongoing infrastructure gaps—particularly inadequate lighting in public streets, pathways, markets, and at distant WASH facilities. These factors contribute to delayed reporting and increased reliance on informal coping mechanisms, including restricted mobility and limited engagement with available services.



# Challenges and Mitigation

During Q4 2025, there were increased requests from various stakeholders for access to GBV case numbers and, in some instances, case-related information, which raised concerns regarding the protection of survivor confidentiality.

Unrealistic expectations regarding resettlement persisted, leading to harmful behaviors and increase in GBV risks.

Confidentiality  
and  
Data Protection

Persistent  
Resettlement  
Misconceptions

In response, the GBVSS continued to strengthen sensitization and orientation efforts through field engagement with newly engaged actors and planned continued engagement in 2026 to reinforce survivor-centered approaches and adherence to established GBV SOPs and data protection standards across all stakeholders.

GBVSS continued to disseminate guidance aligned with the UNHCR Resettlement FAQ, reinforcing accurate information to communities and partners to mitigate GBV risks and support protection interventions.

## Resources and Data

- Updated GBVSS Member list ([LINK](#))
- For more information on GBVSS Coordination, visit the Rohingya Response, [GBV Sub-Sector web page](#)





## GBVSS PARTNER'S INPUTS

### Nari Maitree



Nari Maitree aims to promote gender equality and empower women and girls, ensuring their rights, safety and meaningful participation in society. The organization works to prevent and respond to gender-based violence, women empowerment, strengthen livelihoods, and improve access to education, health, and protection services for marginalized communities. Through community engagement, advocacy and partnerships, Nari Maitree contributes to inclusive and sustainable social development.

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Provided GBV prevention services in Camps 1W, 1E, 3, 4, 4Ex, 14, 18, and 25, as well as in the host communities of Rajapalong and Whykong, supported by UN Women.
- Completed a 15-day Engaging Men through Accountability Practice (EMAP) training for EMAP volunteers at the field level to strengthen community-based GBV prevention capacity.
- Conducted a gender assessment in 8 camps with support from UN Women, UNDP, and ISCG to inform evidence-based programming.
- Implemented the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence in collaboration with GBVSS and GiHA.
- Strengthened coordination and community engagement with camp stakeholders, women's groups, and youth volunteers to enhance GBV prevention and referral mechanisms.

## MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

- Introduced **EMAP** at the community level conducting 190 community meetings, strengthening awareness and engagement on GBV prevention.
- Strengthened **referral pathways for GBV and non-GBV survivors** by linking them with appropriate service providers for timely support and protection.
- Conducted **Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)** to develop a Women's Leadership Curriculum, supported by UN Women.



[Gender Assessment Orientation](#)



[15 Days EMAP Training](#)

- Delivered foundational skills training covering **GBV core concepts, gender equality, safeguarding, PSEA**, and related topics to enhance staff and volunteer capacity.
- Reached **18,382 community members (Women: 11,493; Men: 6,889; Women with Disabilities: 119; Men with Disabilities: 103)** through outreach activities, including household visits and awareness sessions on child marriage, online gambling, trafficking, fire safety, and other protection issues.



# GBVSS PARTNER'S INPUTS

## UNHCR



From October to December 2025, UNHCR and partners sustained integrated Gender-Based Violence (GBV) prevention, response, and women's empowerment services across 16 Women and Girls Safe Spaces (WGSS), 10 Male Engagement Centres (MEC), and 25 integrated GBV service points in 18 refugee camps and 6 host community locations in Cox's Bazar. Despite heightened protection risks, high demand for services, and resource constraints, partners ensured continuity of life-saving interventions,

strengthened community-based prevention, and enhanced quality assurance and accountability mechanisms. Services targeted women and girls, adolescents, men and boys, and gender-diverse populations, guided by survivor-centered, rights-based, and inclusive approaches.

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

### Life-saving GBV response

- 100% of identified and reported GBV survivors received survivor-centered case management and psychosocial support in line with Inter-Agency GBV Case Management Guidelines.
- High case closure rates were achieved, with survivors' self-identified goals met through coordinated, multi-sectoral services.
- Client feedback surveys (90% coverage) confirmed strong survivor satisfaction and adherence to confidentiality, safety, and ethical standards.
- Survivors assessed as high-risk were referred to specialized services, including safe shelters and clinical management of rape, with follow-up support.

### Community-based prevention and social norm change

- 292,944 individuals from refugee and host communities were engaged through SASA! Together, Male Role Models, Girl Shine Stars, and outreach volunteers, promoting gender equality, positive masculinity, early marriage prevention, and non-violence.
- Engagement with religious leaders and scholars strengthened culturally appropriate GBV prevention messaging.
- Evidence from endline surveys and community consultations informed adaptive programming and learning.

### Adolescent and caregiver empowerment

- 803 adolescent girls and 821 caregivers graduated from the Girl Shine programme, demonstrating improved life skills, resilience, and protective behaviors.
- 123 Girl Shine Stars conducted peer-led outreach, reinforcing positive norms among adolescents and caregivers.

### Women's Empowerment and Leadership (WELP)

- 1,487 women completed vocational and livelihood skills training and received start-up kits, enabling income-generating activities.
- Women Support Network members were engaged to strengthen leadership, peer support, and community advocacy.
- Women's products were showcased during livelihoods fairs and the 16 Days of Activism, enhancing visibility and market linkages.
- Two women launched their own businesses in 2025 as a direct result of programme support.

### Inclusion of gender-diverse populations

- Gender-diverse individuals accessed tailored GBV case management, psychosocial support, and livelihood interventions.
- Engagement with hijra leaders and allies strengthened inclusive referral pathways. UNHCR and partner Bandhu remained the only actors delivering dedicated GBV services for gender-diverse populations and sex workers in the refugee camps.

### Coordination and capacity strengthening

- The 16 Days of Activism 2025 mobilized communities and strengthened coordination with government and humanitarian actors.
- 1,111 staff and volunteers received GBV training, enhancing quality, harmonization, and accountability across partners.

**A pledge to end violence against women and girls for the 16 Days of Activism campaign. ©BRAC**





# GBVSS PARTNER'S INPUTS

## International Organization for Migration (IOM)



IOM continues to deliver life-saving, survivor-centred GBV prevention and response services across Cox's Bazar, prioritizing access to safe support, continuity of care, and the strengthening of systems that protect women and girls in an increasingly constrained operating environment.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Sustained access to confidential, life-saving GBV services through **emergency safe shelters** and Women and Girls' Safe Spaces (WGSSs).
- Improved quality and coherence of GBV response through strengthened, survivor-centred standards of care across Protection (including General Protection and Counter-Trafficking), Health services, and cross-cutting MHPSS support.
- Expanded **community-based prevention** and referral capacity led by women's support groups.
- Integrated **GBV risk mitigation within WASH services**, informed by frontline feedback and safety audits.
- Timely, needs-based emergency response using **dignity kits** to facilitate safe access to GBV information, disclosure, and services in fire-affected areas.

### MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

#### Ensuring access to life-saving GBV services

- IOM continued to provide survivor-centred GBV response services through nine Women and Girls' Safe Spaces (WGSSs) and dedicated emergency safe shelters, which together provide safe, confidential spaces and form a critical safety net for women and girls facing violence, exploitation, and other protection risks.
- Services include GBV case management, psychosocial support, legal assistance, and integrated trafficking in persons case management where relevant.
- In parallel, trafficking prevention is addressed through broader capacity development and awareness-raising activities. These services enable confidential help-seeking and early identification of risk amid increasing access constraints.

#### Strengthening the quality of survivor-centred, multi-sectoral response

- To enhance the quality and consistency of care, IOM operationalized its Institutional Package for Supporting Survivors through a targeted rollout with GBV, Health, and MHPSS practitioners. The package established a harmonized, survivor-centred standard of care across sectors, strengthening coordination, referral pathways, and the ability of essential services to safely identify, support, and refer survivors of GBV.

#### Extending protection through community-based prevention and women's leadership

- IOM strengthened community-based prevention by supporting 270 women support group members to build collective capacity to identify protection risks, speak up on safety concerns, and engage in community-level dialogue in an increasingly constrained civic space.
- Through strengthened networks, shared analysis, and clear referral pathways, women were better positioned to raise concerns, support peers, and contribute to locally driven solutions that promote safety, resilience, and access to services.

#### Reducing GBV risks through integrated Protection and WASH programming

- IOM embedded GBV risk mitigation within WASH and other essential services through the rollout of its Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and GBV Mainstreaming in WASH Programming Toolkit.
- Safety audits conducted in Camps 10, 11, 12, and 18 directly informed context-specific adjustments to infrastructure, service delivery, and hygiene items, ensuring that GBV risk mitigation measures were translated into practical, programmatic improvements.
- Using dignity kits as protection entry points in emergencies IOM rapidly mobilized dignity kits as a protection response to meet immediate needs in fire-affected areas and other emergency contexts. Distributions were needs-based and linked with protection information, safe disclosure, and referral pathways, enabling timely access to GBV services while reinforcing dignity, safety, and trust during periods of acute disruption.



*Session on general protection for Women Support Group*



*Awareness Raising*



*Dignity Kit distribution and orientation on item usage*



## GBVSS PARTNER'S INPUTS

### Caritas Bangladesh



Caritas Bangladesh is a non-profit organization working in the Rohingya Refugee Response across multiple sectors, including Shelter, DRR, WASH, and Protection. The objective of the Caritas Response is to promote dignity and self-resilience among refugees. Addressing and preventing gender-based violence is a core response priority integrated across all services we deliver.

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- On 17 December 2025, Caritas Bangladesh–Emergency Response Program (ERP) organized a Staff Well-Being and Self-Care Session at Cox's Bazar for GBV staff, with funding support from Global Affairs of Canada (GAC) and Caritas Spain. The session aimed to support Gender Based violence staff's well-being, work-related stress management, and strengthen team building among project staff.
- The session included mindfulness-based stress management and self-care activities that encouraged participants to reflect and focus on their personal well-being and healthy coping practices. Another key expectation of the session was to promote a gender-sensitive workplace environment.
- Team-building exercises and recreational activities followed, creating a relaxed and friendly environment that promoted cooperation, positive interaction, and mutual support. The program concluded with a feedback-sharing session and formal closing, and participants expressed that the initiative was refreshing, motivating, and helpful for maintaining a healthy work-life balance. A total of 33 staff members from different levels and diverse positions attended the wellbeing session, contributing to the successful implementation of the program.



*GBV staff eneged in gender responsive team management in the well-being session arranged by Caritas Bangladesh in CampInCox*



For further information, contact the GBV Sub-Sector Team

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**Cox's Bazar GBV Sub-Sector**