



CHILD PROTECTION SUB- SECTOR | ROHINGYA RESPONSE | BANGLADESH CHILD PROTECTION Q1 2026 BULLETIN

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SECTION 1

Executive Summary

The Child Protection Subsector maintained full operations throughout Q1 2026, with 20 partner organizations delivering programming across case management, psychosocial support, community-based protection, and GBV/CP response.

Across 33 camps in Cox's Bazar and on Bhasan Char, Child Protection partners recorded over 3,602 new child protection cases and reached nearly 56,492 children through structured and sustained activities including psychosocial support, life skills training, and focused CP recreational activities. Through the relentless work of community child protection volunteers, more than a thousand children at risk of abuse, exploitation, violence, and neglect were identified and referred to appropriate services. Strengthened community-based mechanisms and coordination with service providers have enhanced timely referrals, case follow-up, and access to critical protection services, contributing to more responsive and child-centred protection outcomes across the camps.

Two structural developments deserve particular attention. First, the 2026 Joint Response Plan (JRP) has provided a sharper, prioritised, and integrated framework for Child Protection programming, with clearer accountability for results. This bulletin tracks performance against JRP targets, highlighting areas of strong delivery and areas requiring improvement. Second, the Coordination Transformation process, now in its implementation phase, is reshaping how the CP Subsector is enhancing coordination in line with the broader humanitarian architecture. This edition reflects on where transformation is accelerating coordination effectiveness and where friction points remain.

SECTION 2

Coordination Updates

- ▶ **Joint SAG:** A Joint GBV and CP Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) is being established to improve coherence between GBV and child protection responses, recognizing the close links between related risks and concerns. The Joint SAG will promote more consistent decision-making, reduce duplication, and strengthen the overall impact of GBV and CP interventions. Its Terms of Reference have been developed, and the group is expected to be constituted in Q2.
- ▶ **Joint CP/GBV Programming Guidance:** together with the Gender Based Violence Sub-sector and 18 CSOs, jointly developed a guidance note promoting holistic, survivor- and child-centred approaches ensuring overlapping risks are addressed coherently across both sub-sectors. The Guidance promotes cross-sectoral capacity-building to optimize resources and plan joint initiatives, promoting standardized approaches, consistent messaging, and strengthened adherence to protection standards while maintaining sub-sector-specific mandates (Pending endorsement).
- ▶ **PSEA Training:** CP volunteers received training on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse standards and reporting procedures.
- ▶ **DPISP Endorsed:** The revised Data Protection and Information Sharing Protocol formally endorsed by the SAG, providing clear guidance on safe, ethical, and confidential management of child protection data.
- ▶ **CP Situation Monitoring:** Refresher training conducted for camp focal points on the CP situation monitoring system.
- ▶ **CAAFAG Case Management Training:** Two batches (22-24 February and 2-4 March) for 66 CAAFAG case workers, building skills in assessment, referral, follow-up, and case closure aligned with international CAAFAG standards.
- ▶ **CPIMS+ IM Training:** One-day training on 26 February with 23 participants covering user administration, data integrity, case routing, and system error reporting.
- ▶ **Counter-Trafficking Training:** The CPSS continued to strengthen coordination and collaboration with the Protection Sector (PS) engaging partners through the other Working Groups. Together with the IOM Anti-Trafficking Unit, CPSS coordinated six batches of training for frontline Child Protection staff across partner agencies. A total of 150 participants (72 male and 78 female) successfully completed the training.

Coordination Transformation - Q1 Milestones

JOINT SAG FORMATION - IN PROGRESS

The merger of the CPSS SAG and GBV Sub-Sector SAG into a single Joint SAG marks the most significant structural coordination change in Q1. Draft Terms of Reference developed; call for nominations pending. The Joint SAG will focus on coherence and coordination of both CP and GBV response.

JOINT CP/GBV PROGRAMMING GUIDELINE - DRAFTED

A Joint Programming Guidance Note for CP and GBV was drafted in March 2026, outlining complementary, holistic approaches to overlapping protection risks such as child marriage. Pending endorsement; finalisation expected Q2 2026.

SECTION 3**JRP 2026 Framework Response & Financial Status**

The JRP 2026, co-presented by the Government of Bangladesh and UNHCR, is the principal strategic and funding framework for the Rohingya response. The CP Subsector operates through three strategic objectives:

1,509 CBCPCs active across 33 camps & host Majority women-led	280 Multipurpose centres operational incl. 21 on Bhasan Char	59% Child marriage prevalence (girls 13-17) UNFPA/UNICEF Assessment, Feb 2026	USD 13.3M JRP 2026 funding gap Against USD 22.5M requirement	20 Active partner organizations 7 INGO 10 NNGO 2 UN 1 GOV (DSS)
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Financial Requirements & Funding Status

CATEGORY	REQUIRED	GAP
Overall CP Requirements	USD 22.5M	USD 13.3M
Priority 1	USD 10.1M	USD 4.6M
Priority 1 + 2 (Combined)	USD 14.9M	USD 7.9M
Priority 3	USD 4.6M	USD 3.2M
Resilience and Solution	USD 2.9M	USD 1.8M

Funding Coverage by Programme Area

PROGRAMME AREA	FUNDING COVERAGE	%
Case Management USD 4,006,421 funded Gap: USD 3,951,972	<div style="width: 52%; background-color: #e67e22;"></div>	52%
CP Situation & Rights Monitoring USD 289,059 funded Gap: USD 98,806	<div style="width: 76%; background-color: #27ae60;"></div>	76%
CP Outreach Activities USD 1,048,663 funded Gap: USD 2,140,470	<div style="width: 36%; background-color: #c0392b;"></div>	36%
Structured & Sustained Activities USD 2,737,623 funded Gap: USD 5,978,424	<div style="width: 35%; background-color: #c0392b;"></div>	35%
Systems Strengthening & Capacity Building USD 196,442 funded Gap: USD 561,501	<div style="width: 30%; background-color: #c0392b;"></div>	30%

CRITICAL FUNDING GAP

! A USD 13M funding gap against a USD 22.5M requirement poses an existential threat to child protection programming in 2026. The shortfall directly threatens access to life-saving services for the most vulnerable boys and girls, and compounds programme quality risks heading into the monsoon preparedness period. Six partner organisations have already reduced case management staff due to pipeline gaps in Q4 2025.

SECTION 4

Thematic Activities & Results

5.1 - Case Management

The inter-agency case management system, operated through CPIMS+ with 14 contributing partner organizations, is the central accountability mechanism for individual-level CP response. Q1 2026 saw the highest single-quarter registration volume since 2022.

3,602 New cases registered	8,932 Total active cases	7,848 Cases closed in Q1
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Case Type Distribution - Q1 2026

CASE TYPE	% OF CASES	PROGRAMME IMPLICATION
Neglect	29.7%	Leading issue — requires stronger family support and prevention programmes
Physical Violence	18.2%	Combined with emotional abuse, violence affects ~30% of cases
Child Labour	11.5%	Reflects negative coping strategies driven by economic hardship
Emotional Abuse	11.3%	Highlights need for scaled-up MHPSS services
Psychological Distress	7.1%	Requires expansion of safe spaces and community-level MHPSS
Child Marriage	7.1%	Reflects economic and social pressures driving harmful practices
Other	15.1%	

CASE QUALITY NOTE

A data quality review (CM TWG, February 2026) found 14% of Q1 cases had incomplete follow-up records at the 60-day mark. Root causes: high staff turnover (especially in NNGOs), caseload-to-caseworker ratios exceeding recommended maximums in 8 of 33 camp blocks, and connectivity challenges in outer camps. Remedial actions including a peer supervision model and offline data entry solutions are being piloted in Q2 2026.

5.2 - Structured & Sustained Activities including Psychosocial Support

Across 280 operational MPCs (259 in Cox's Bazar including host community, 21 on Bhasan Char), a total of 56,492 children accessed services in Q1 2026, exceeding the JRP quarterly target.

GOOD PRACTICE - MPC PROGRAMMING

- > Shift-based scheduling to maximise facility use and accommodate more children.
- > Dedicated time slots for adolescent boys and girls ensuring safety and age-appropriate engagement.
- > Close coordination with the Education sector to avoid schedule overlaps.
- > Deployment of trained volunteers for quality facilitation and child safeguarding
- > Strengthened referral mechanisms for children requiring specialist services.
- > Community engagement and caregiver awareness addressing harmful norms

CONCERN: BHASAN CHAR INTER-SITE TRANSFERS

The absence of a streamlined inter-site transfer protocol between Bhasan Char and Cox's Bazar continues to delay UASC reunification. As of 31 March, 9 children had been awaiting transfer for more than 30 days. UNICEF and UNHCR have jointly written to the Government's National Task Force requesting expedited administrative clearance. A response is expected in Q2.

- ▶ **Male engagement:** 34 structured sessions with male community members on positive masculinity, girls' rights, and economic coping without resorting to early marriage. Post-session knowledge assessments showed improved stated attitudes toward girls' education and marriage age in 71% of participants.

5.3- Community-Based Child Protection (CBCP)

CCPCs represent an investment in the protective capacity of the Rohingya community itself, serving as the early warning and referral backbone of the Subsector's response.



924 CBCPC members received refresher training on referral pathways, information sharing protocols, and community-based PSS facilitation.

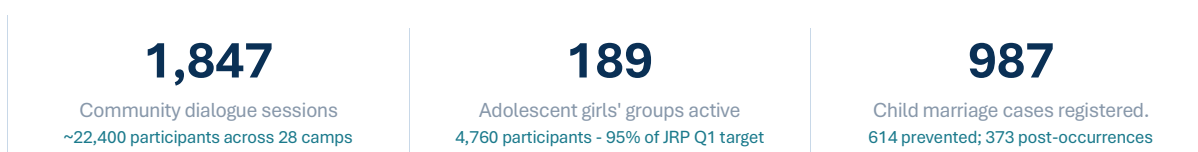
GOOD PRACTICE - COMMUNITY-BASED PROTECTION

- > Involving all types of community leaders to ensure legitimacy and reach.
- > Ensuring representation of children in CBCPCs.
- > Continuous capacity building and supervision to maintain safeguarding standards.
- > Parenting sessions with caregivers promoting positive discipline and child well-being

5.4 CP Situation & Rights Monitoring

Between January and March 2026, Child Protection Situation Monitoring (CPSM) collected qualitative and quantitative information through 458 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with adolescents, caregivers, community members, volunteers, and service providers, alongside 21 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) involving 219 children. In parallel, the CRMM recorded 727 incidents affecting 816 children during the first quarter of the year. Children continue to face multiple and overlapping protection risks, driven by poverty, food insecurity, overcrowding, harmful social norms, limited caregiving capacity, and insecurity.

- ▶ **Violence, neglect and distress:** Neglect remains the most common concern, representing about one-third of cases. KIIs reported high levels of child neglect (72%), child psychosocial distress (62%), and domestic violence by caregivers (47%), while 63% of caregivers said mental health challenges affected their ability to provide adequate care.
- ▶ **Child labour:** remains widespread, with 69% of KIIs reporting that it affects both boys and girls. Boys are more visible in hazardous work, while girls are often engaged in unpaid domestic and informal work. This disrupts education and increases exposure to exploitation, abuse, and other harms.
- ▶ **Child marriage** remains one of the most acute protection risks for adolescents. More than 200 adolescent girls subjected to forced marriages in Q1. 72% of cases involve girls aged 15-17; a significant 27% involve girls aged 7-14. Driven by economic stress, mobility restrictions, and absence of secondary education. Figures almost certainly represent a significant underestimate due to stigma and limited reporting pathways.



STRUCTURAL GAP - ECONOMIC SUPPORT FOR AT-RISK HOUSEHOLDS

Evidence consistently identifies economic support to at-risk households as among the highest-impact interventions for child marriage prevention. Yet only 18% of identified at-risk households in Q1 received any form of economic strengthening or livelihood support due to limited cross-sector coordination and funding.

The CP Subsector has formally requested the Food Security and Livelihoods Sector to include a CP-linked household targeting modality in its Q2 programming discussions.

- ▶ **Trafficking:** The presence of human trafficking syndicates within the Rohingya camps and host community has been reported while these organized groups promote illegal migration to Malaysia, Thailand and Kashmir (India) by presenting false promises of jobs, marriage and safety. In response to these close coordination and collaboration have been strengthened with Anti Trafficking Working Groups (ATWG) along with field level actors and CP case workers to disseminate awareness messages against trafficking and its consequences.
- ▶ **Serious child rights violations Trends:** community members through the child protection situation monitoring, reported organized crime involved in extortion and kidnapping of children targeting families with relatives living abroad. A rise in nighttime harassment incidents also reported targeting vulnerable households, especially single women/widows and adolescent-headed families.

SECTION 5**Bhasan Char - CP Response Update**

Bhasan Char hosts approximately 30,400 Rohingya refugees across 120 cluster blocks, including an estimated 14,000 children. The child protection response is driven by a unified consortium of three primary partners: BRAC, UNHCR, and UNICEF. Services are delivered through 14 Multipurpose centres (MPC) and 38 adolescent clubs. 2,184 children actively reached through and targeted Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) at the end of Q1. With regards to case management, 284 cases were registered. 10 case workers are currently providing case management services albeit Chronic delays in staff rotation and deployments specifically by DSS undermined case management continuity. A total of 28 Community-Based Child Protection Committees (CBCPCs) is actively engaged in prevention and awareness buildup of child protection issues. 547 community members attended CP awareness sessions. Overall, there is a severe shortage of specialist child protection workers to support case management activities. Geographic isolation, restricted staffing, and administrative complexity continue to generate a two-tier response dynamic that the Subsector is actively working to address.

CP Partners active	BRAC, UNHCR, UNICEF
Child Friendly Spaces operational	20
Children reached via CFS/PSS	2,184
CP Cases Registered	284 (6% of total Q1 registrations; cf. ~15% population share)
Coverage Gap Estimate	Significant under-coverage — registration rate approx. 60% of Cox's Bazar equivalent
Key Constraints	Staff rotation delays; inter-island transport; seasonal weather; limited specialist services

PRIORITY ACTION - IMPROVEMENT PLAN

February 2026 coordination visit produced a Bhasan Char CP Response Improvement Plan, endorsed by all five partners. Priority actions:

- > Recruitment and training of 12 additional community facilitators (Q2)
- > Operationalisation of 2 additional Child Friendly Spaces (Q2)
- > Establishment of a monthly on-island CP coordination meeting

SECTION 7

Cross-Cutting Themes

Gender

Gender analysis was mainstreamed across all CP programme areas. Girls constituted 49% of MPC beneficiaries. The February 2026 GBV-CP joint referral protocol update embedded gender-responsive case management principles, including safety planning for adolescent girls and confidentiality procedures for survivors. Male engagement programming reached 1,100 men and boys in Q1, tracked as a prevention investment against child marriage and domestic violence.

Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)

The Subsector's AAP workplan includes establishing a dedicated community feedback mechanism and systematic inclusion of community representatives in working group processes. UNHCR community perception surveys (February 2026) found 61% of surveyed community members could identify at least one CP service in their camp, up from 47% in 2025, reflecting the impact of CBCPC outreach and improved signage at MPCs.

SECTION 8

Challenges & Constraints

- ▶ **Community-Based Protection Funding Gap:** The shift toward supporting Rohingya-led Community-Based Protection Mechanisms requires significant investment in capacity building and monitoring. Current funding will not adequately cover all capacity building and monitoring needs.
- ▶ **Funding Shortfall:** Six partner organisations reduced case management staff due to pipeline gaps in Q4 2025. The aggregate impact on protection outcomes is acute at the individual case level. The USD 13M gap directly threatens service continuity heading into the monsoon period.
- ▶ **Staff Turnover:** Annual frontline CP staff turnover estimated at 28%, eroding case management continuity and community relationships. National NGO partners are disproportionately affected by competition from the INGO's. A sector-wide retention framework is being explored.

PARTNER HIGHLIGHTS

CODEC-EPRC & UNHCR - International Women's Day 2026



Celebrations across 6 refugee camps and 2 host communities through 10 MPCs engaged 500 participants on women's rights, justice, advocacy, and referral pathways under the theme "Rights. Justice. Action. For ALL Women and Girls." Activities included the "Decision-Making Compass" game, open dialogues, henna art, and breathing exercises promoting gender equality and positive action.

Save the Children (SCI-CP) - Social Cohesion Event, Kutupalong Bazar



There have been a series of road accidents affecting children. A joint Social Cohesion event brought together community leaders, parents, caregivers, adolescents, local government representatives, and school management committee members. SCI-CP facilitated child road safety awareness sessions highlighting key child protection risks and preventive measures. Safety vests were distributed to traffic volunteers and road dividers installed at strategic locations to enhance child safety.

Multi-Sector CP/GBV Advocacy Dialogue - Camp 18, 2 March 2026



An Advocacy Campaign and Community Dialogue at the Camp in Charge (CiC) office in Camp 18 brought together Protection, GBV, WASH, Site Management, and CP focal points alongside CBCPC members, community leaders, imams, and majhis. The session strengthened inter-sector collaboration and shared understanding of CP/GBV interventions, referral mechanisms, and child safeguarding standards across agencies.

Contact us.

For more information on CPSS Coordination, visit the Rohingya Response: [Child Protection Subsector](#)