

COVID-19 AND MONSOON PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE IN ROHINGYA REFUGEE CAMPS AND HOST COMMUNITIES

WEEKLY UPDATE #20 | 17 to 23 July 2020

Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

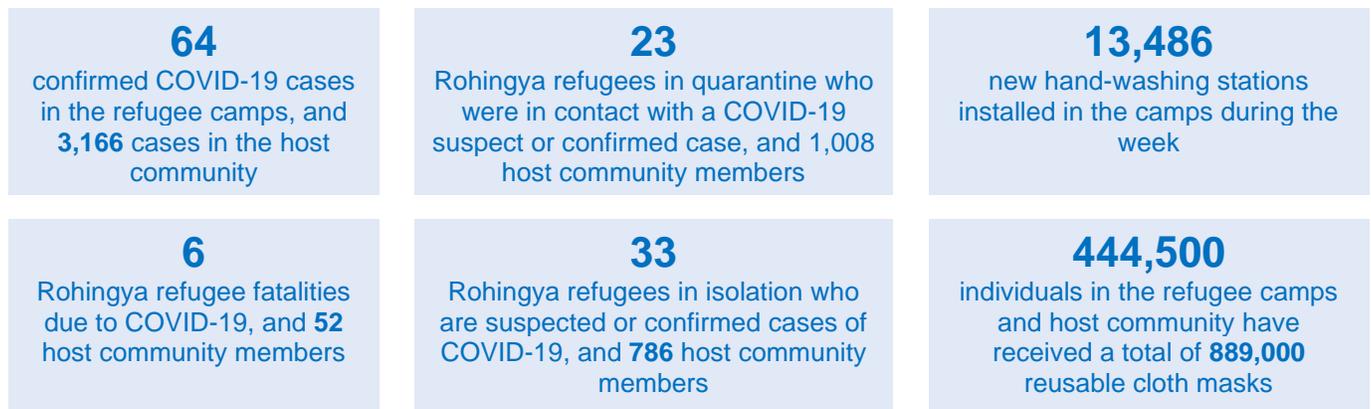
HIGHLIGHTS

“There are lot of rumours about the Isolation and Treatment Centres (ITCs) in the community. Now we have seen an ITC with our own eyes, we are able to convince the community that these rumours are not true.”

- An Imam from one of the camps following a 'Go and See' visit to an ITC. As a result of persistent rumours and fear, many refugees are hesitant to visit facilities if they have COVID-19 symptoms. To combat misinformation and mistrust, Site Management and Site Development (SMSD) partners are conducting visits for refugees and community leaders to see COVID-19 treatment and prevention facilities to mitigate these challenges. [Read more](#)



Key COVID-19 figures this week¹



Monsoon-related Incidents² reported this week



¹ Host community/Cox's Bazar District information is from WHO daily update.

² All numbers are indicative only, as reported to SMSD Sector following rapid assessments carried out on the day of the incident. The numbers are not verified.

³ Households and/or individuals directly affected by a specific incident, including people injured, relocated, displaced and with damaged shelters. These estimates do not include people who are indirectly affected ex. by not being able to access affected facilities.

⁴ SMSD Sector cannot confirm that drownings resulted from the monsoon, however, the data captures all incidents (windstorm, slope failure, lightning, flood and drowning) reported in the camps during the monsoon season.

449Rohingya refugees
affected
by 118 slope failures**1**Rohingya refugee
affected by 1
wind/storms/rain event**0**Rohingya refugees
affected
by floods**0**Rohingya refugees
affected
by lightning**COVID-19****HEALTH**

Health Sector partners worked closely with Communication with Communities (CwC) Working Group to scale up messaging on the importance of wearing masks. As of 23 July, 10 Severe Acute Respiratory Infection Isolation and Treatment Centres (SARI ITCs) are active and ready to receive patients, including the Intensive Care Unit (ICU)/High Dependency Unit (HDU) facility at Sadar Hospital with eight ICU and ten HDU beds. There are 391 and 126 active SARI ITC and isolation beds, respectively, in the camps. During the week, testing of refugees continued to increase: 434 refugees were tested, compared to 357 in the previous week. In host communities, testing dropped with 290 tests conducted compared to 379 the previous week. This is likely to be related to the recent introduction of a fee for sample collection in Government health facilities.

WATER, SANITATION and HYGIENE (WASH)

WASH Sector partners reached 256,271 individuals through a neighbourhood-based approach and 226,087 individuals through mass outreach with COVID-19 awareness messages in host and Rohingya communities. In the camps, partners provided soap to 37,990 households and family hygiene kits to 18,380 households, and installed 13,486 hand-washing stations: 18 in public places, 8 near latrine blocks, 1,508 tippy taps (a cost-effective hands-free device for handwashing) and 11,992 stools (with a bucket and tap) at household-level. Partners disinfected 59,841 WASH facilities and 3,128 public buildings. 5 new handwashing stations were installed at camp entry points, bringing the total of handwashing stations at camp entry points to 112.



Handwashing at Camp 22 entry point.
Photo: Oxfam

COMMUNICATION with COMMUNITIES (CwC WG)

CwC WG partners reached 191,174 people in the camps and host community with key COVID-19 messages disseminated through community engagement activities, including 42,835 neighbourhood-based sessions, 13,329 community consultation meetings, 1,363 group listening sessions, 413 video/film viewings, and an additional 9,555 sessions led by religious leaders. Partners organised 37 cascade trainings on COVID-19 with 289 staff and volunteers. Partners continued to deliver announcements on COVID-19 awareness via loudspeakers and megaphones on CNG/tom-tom/auto-rickshaws in 21 camps. For receiving community feedback and complaints, 76 information service centres in the camps, and 3 information service centres in the host community were operational. CwC WG published its [15th COVID-19 Risk Communication and Community Engagement Update](#), which includes the latest [4 audio materials on COVID-19](#).

FOOD SECURITY (FSS)

Focus group discussions were held with 500 Rohingya individuals to discuss the items to be included in the general food assistance food basket for August. Distribution of super cereal and high energy biscuits, together with food assistance to all Rohingya households, will continue in the August cycle to provide extra nutrition and minimise the humanitarian operational footprint by limiting the number of individual distributions. The Livelihoods Working Group is collaborating with CwC Working Group, Health Sector and Risk Communications and Community Engagement Technical Working Group to raise awareness on the importance of wearing masks by sharing [key messages](#) to refugees and host communities. As of 23 July, approximately 321,500 individuals in the camps and 123,000 individuals in the host community were reached with a total of 889,000 reusable cloth masks (two masks per person).

SHELTER/ NON-FOOD ITEMS (NFI)

Shelter/NFI Sector provided NFI packages, including blankets, floor mats, mosquito nets, tarpaulins, rope, and some solar lamps, to 3,090 households with older persons, and home delivered NFIs to 5 households without caretakers

(of a total of 28,325 households with older persons). Shelter/NFI Sector partners also distributed 19 NFI packages including blankets, floor mats, mosquito nets, solar lamps, and kitchen utensils to two quarantine centres in the camps.

PROTECTION, including Child Protection and Gender-Based Violence Sub-Sectors (CPSS and GBV SS)

Protection partners reached approximately 11,600 refugees through COVID-19 awareness messaging, while Community Outreach Members (COMs) conducted 372 home visits and 138 monitoring assessments reaching 1,809 refugees. 2,200 awareness sessions were also conducted by COMs, reaching 5,847 refugees (including 1,613 older persons and 117 persons with disabilities). 4,429 face masks were produced during the week by refugees trained by COMs. A virtual training on child protection risks during COVID-19 was conducted for 17 Child Protection (CP) Focal Points from 17 camps. GBV partners reached 6,322 refugees (2,603 males / 3,719 females) through awareness raising on GBV and COVID-19. A remote assessment with Teknaf and Ukhiya host communities was conducted to better understand whether communities would benefit from Virtual Safe Networks. These Networks aim to establish confidential and safe virtual spaces for discussion and awareness sessions on COVID-19 issues, as well as life skills including vocational skills training (e.g. mask making, basic computer skills). A GBV Sub-Sector partner conducted four training sessions on protection and safe referral in Ukhiya and Teknaf for 55 clinical staff (16 female and 39 male) who work in isolation and treatment centres in the camps.

SITE MANAGEMENT and SITE DEVELOPMENT (SMSD)

SMSD partners conducted 18 'Go and See' visits to SARI ITCs and ITCs for 246 people during the week. 17 orientation sessions were conducted on Safe and Dignified Burials for 248 participants from Burial Management Committees and Disaster Management Units. Mahjis, women, and youth groups also received burials orientations. Community volunteers completed a fence around the graveyard in Camp 20 with support from SMSD partners. In Camp 24, SMSD and a protection partner conducted an assessment at the ITC to ensure that people with special needs feel comfortable accessing the facility. In preparation for a safe Eid, SMSD and WASH partners began messaging on best practices and identifying safe celebratory spaces that allow for physical distancing and compliance with hygiene regulations.

NUTRITION

1,989 mothers were trained on how to measure the Mid Upper Arm Circumference of their children to identify malnutrition in order to refer children to an integrated nutrition facility. Partners also counselled 1,257 Rohingya and 3,545 Bangladeshi mothers and caregivers on infant and young child feeding practices in emergencies, including in the COVID-19 context. A total of 118 COVID-19 samples were transported for COVID-19 testing by a Nutrition Sector partner in Moheshkali. In addition, 10,356 Information Education and Communication (IEC) materials on COVID-19 were distributed in the host community.



EDUCATION

112,241 parents, community members and caregivers received COVID-19 awareness messages, of whom 55,033 individuals also received practical training on hand washing, physical distancing and using masks through small group sessions. 1,221 refugee volunteers, more than half of whom were female, disseminated COVID-19 awareness and home-based learning instructions to parents, community members and caregivers. In the host community, 88 teachers disseminated educational instructions and COVID-19 awareness messages to 1,548 parents and learners. 72 volunteers distributed COVID-19 awareness leaflets to 1,118 parents, learners and community members.

*Children with their workbooks to study at home.
Photo: Education Sector.*

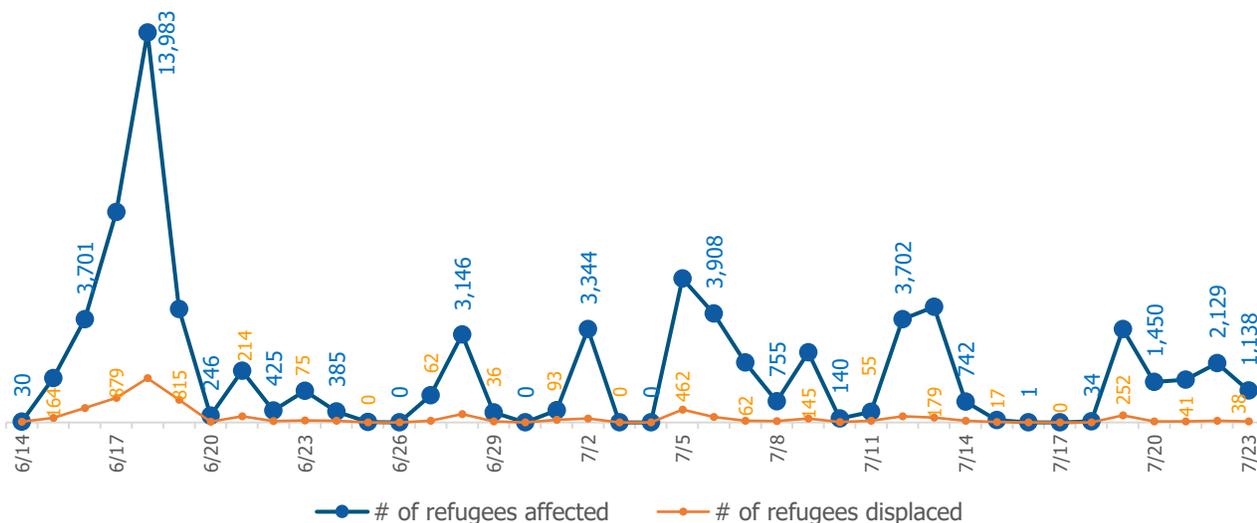
LOGISTICS

Cox's Bazar COVID Special Hub received a donation of 10,000 medical gowns from an international NGO, as well as a delivery of 85m³ of relief items consisting of sleeping mats and rope. A forklift is now available in Cox's Bazar COVID Special Hub for heavy duty cargo operations.

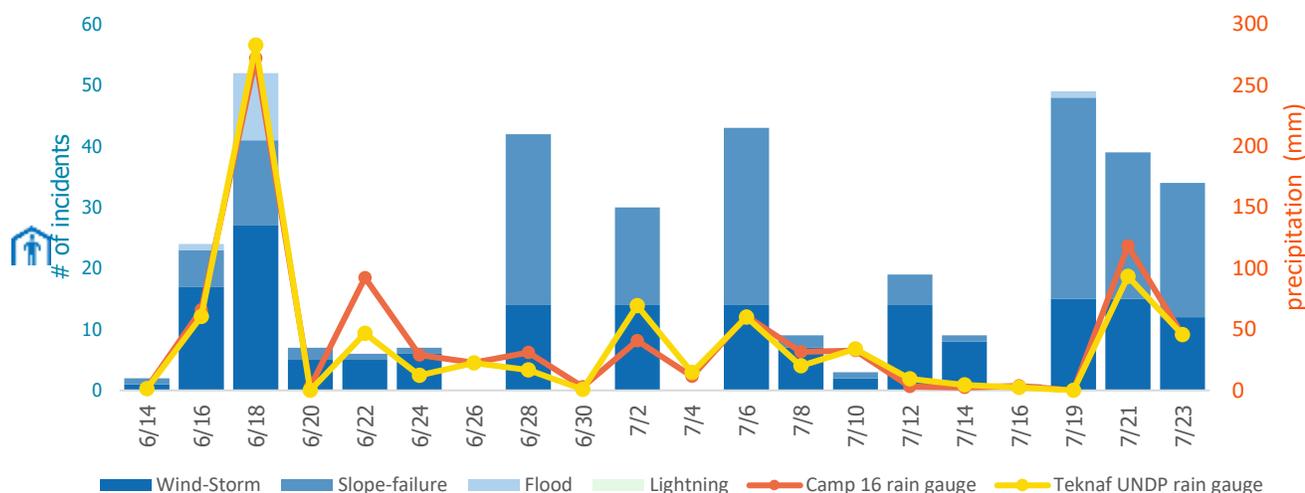
MONSOON

Cumulative incidents reported in Camps since 14 June (SMSD Sector)

CUMULATIVE CASUALTIES: Since 14 June, 4 fatalities have been reported in the camps as a result of monsoon-related events. Some 14 refugees have been injured. The peak was recorded on 18 June, when over 13,900 refugees were affected by wind and slope-failure on one day.



Cumulative precipitation compared to number and type of incidents reported by rain gauge (Geological Survey of Bangladesh /UNDP)



WATER, SANITATION and HYGIENE (WASH)

Several facilities were affected during the week due to monsoon rains. In camps in Ukhiya, 171 toilets, 3 tube wells and 32 bathing cubicles were affected, and in camps in Teknaf, 103 toilets, 1 fecal sludge management (FSM) site, 8 tube wells, 18 solid waste management pits and 6 bathing cubicles were affected. Partners working in camps in Ukhiya and Teknaf have already deployed staff and refugee volunteers to initiate the repair work of the affected toilets, fecal sludge management sites and bathing cubicles and the other repairs will be addressed as soon as possible.

COMMUNICATION with COMMUNITIES (CwC WG)

CWC partners continued to engage with refugees and host communities to promote monsoon awareness. 14,516 individuals were reached through different community engagement activities including 69 community awareness sessions, 2,632 neighbourhood-based inter-personal communication sessions, 36 radio listeners group sessions, and 96 video/film shows.

In addition to the 79 information service centres in the camps and host communities, refugees accessed 10 help desks in the camps for support or issues related to monsoon rains.

FOOD SECURITY (FSS)

Partners provided high energy biscuits to six households in four camps as rapid food assistance in response to displacements caused by floods and landslides.

SHELTER/ NON-FOOD ITEMS (NFI)

443 Rohingya refugee households were partially moderately damaged	190 Rohingya refugee households were partially severely damaged	118 Rohingya refugee households were fully damaged	1 Rohingya refugee household was completely destroyed
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Shelter/NFI Sector partners continued providing emergency support to vulnerable Rohingya households affected by monsoon rains. Partners verified shelter damage for 752 households and provided each household with emergency shelter assistance. Partners provided household deliveries of emergency shelter materials and repaired shelters for 10 households with older persons without caretakers.

PROTECTION, including Child Protection (CPSS) and Gender-Based Violence Sector (GBV SS)

This week, 2,535 refugees were reached with monsoon awareness messages. Due to heavy rains, access to some service centres has become difficult. Refugees are increasingly concerned about soil erosion and mud on walkways created by heavy waterflows. Latrines in some camps have been damaged, creating risks for refugees who have to walk to other latrines, particularly of concern for women at night,

Refugee volunteers continued to raise awareness on child protection risks (through home visits and distribution of leaflets and stickers), including risks of playing near ponds and creeks and prevention of separation from families.

SITE MANAGEMENT and SITE DEVELOPMENT (SMSD)

Following heavy rains this week, SMSD partners in 17 camps repaired three bamboo bridges, desilted 1,300 metres of drainage, completed emergency mitigation works on 15 landslide areas, and completed 11 soil retention projects. In four camps, SMSD partners began safety audits covering all aspects of service delivery in camps. Partners conducted 20 focus group discussions and an observational study with 200 refugees to better understand monsoon, cyclone, and access risks in four camps. Community members identified a total of 1,121 risks across just these four camps; 88% of identified risks require immediate attention and will be addressed as soon as possible.



Desilting drains following heavy rainfall. Photo: SMSD Sector

EDUCATION

During the week, 23 new learning facilities sustained damage due to heavy rains. Repair work was started on a total of 37 learning facilities (some of which had been previously damaged), repair work was finished for 13 learning facilities and an additional 4 learning facilities had ongoing repair work.

LOGISTICS

Partners prepositioned key monsoon preparedness items including Mobile Storage Units, generators, tarpaulins, sandbags and car kits across the three logistics hubs in Madhuchara, Balukhali and Teknaf. Heavy machinery equipment (a crane and a large truck) was hired to assist with monsoon preparedness activities.

For more information: Inter Sector Coordination Group (ISCG)

E-mail: iscg@iscgxcb.org. Website: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/bangladesh> Social media:

