



Five-year-old Sabiha has been suffering from Dengue fever for the past three days in Dhalpur, Jatrabari, Dhaka on 27 July 2023. Her mother Morium says, "Due to the influx of dengue patients in our area, the local community clinic can't serve proper treatment to all. That's why I had to go to a private hospital for the CBC test, which is expensive. Now I must borrow money from one of my relatives for the treatment."  
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## Highlights

- As of 4 September 2023, **133,134 dengue cases (including 38% women and 19% children (0-15 yrs) have been infected, with 646 deaths (58% female, 12% children below 15 years old).**<sup>1</sup> In Cox's Bazar, as of 30 August 2023, **9,670 persons (1,214 Bangladeshi and 8,456 Rohingya refugees)** had tested positive for dengue. Ten persons (eight from Rohingya camps, two from the host community) died of dengue-related complications.<sup>2</sup>
- Social media posts on dengue prevention and care developed by the SBC Section reached over **70.73 million** social media users (29 per cent women).
- Kits for **13,425** dengue tests were procured and distributed to the Communicable Disease Control - Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), against a request for 200,000 kits due to the funding limitations, with another procurement of up to 9,369 combo dengue test kits for **93,690 tests** under process by UNICEF.
- In partnership with the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA), **>142,900 people (>81,600 women, >1084 persons with disabilities)** were reached with targeted approved dengue prevention direct messaging, awareness events, and discussions across 30 of the most highly prevalent districts through 524 Child Protection Community Hubs (CPCH).
- WASH Section is collaborating with the International Centre for Disease Control, Bangladesh (ICCRD) to revise WASH training packages on dengue for the Dhaka City Corporation staff (Conservancy Inspector, field workers, city corporation councilors).
- In Cox's Bazar, Community Hygiene Promoters (CHPs) and Community Hygiene Volunteers (CHVs) disseminated messages on dengue prevention, reaching a total of 21,785 households (HHs) and 265,100 individuals (135,428 female).
- So far UNICEF has made **US\$ 2.4 M** available for immediate response including Emergency Programme Fund (EPF) loan, leaving a funding gap of **US\$ 3.1 M** to support an integrated multi-sectoral response to the dengue outbreak and prevent more women, children, and other vulnerable members of the population from further infections.

## SITUATION IN NUMBERS<sup>1</sup>



**133,134**

Dengue cases (38% female) recorded (Health Emergency Operation Centre and Control Room, DGHS 4<sup>th</sup> Sep 2023)



**25,626**

children (0-15 yrs, 39% girls) infected (Health Emergency Operation Center and Control Room, DGHS 4<sup>th</sup> Sep 2023)



**64/64**  
**Districts**

Districts affected (Health Emergency Operation Center and Control Room, DGHS 4<sup>th</sup> Sep 2023)

<sup>1</sup> Health Emergency Operation Center and Control Room, DGHS

<sup>2</sup> Latest data available from Cox's Bazar Dengue Situation, 31st of August 2023, Civil surgeon Office, Cox's Bazar

## Humanitarian Situation Overview

Bangladesh is experiencing the worst nationwide outbreak of dengue in its history, with a significant impact on the public health system in the country. Sporadic outbreaks have been occurring in Bangladesh since 1964. There was a major epidemic dengue outbreak in 2000 and since then, there have been varying intensities of dengue every year in Bangladesh. In 2019, Bangladesh experienced a major dengue epidemic, with 101,354 dengue cases recorded and 164 dengue-related deaths.<sup>1</sup> However, since the beginning of this year, the number of cases has increased significantly, exceeding cases over the same period of time in the previous years and the number of deaths is the highest ever recorded. As of 4 September 2023, 133,134 dengue cases (including 38% women and 19% children (0-15 yrs) have been infected, with 646 deaths (58% female, 12% children below 15 years old).<sup>1</sup> Even worse, one in every five people infected is a child, and children under five are at greater risk of severe illness (6% so far infected), with a case fatality rate (CFR) of 0.47%.<sup>3</sup> For every five deaths, one is a child. Though the majority (63%) of cases are among males, nearly three of every five deaths (57%) are among females. The overall CFR, which is higher compared to previous years, is also higher in females than in males (0.72% v 0.32%) with females having four times higher CFR than males among those aged 21-40 years (0.71% vs 0.18%).<sup>4</sup> As many as 63% of cases and 62% of the deaths were reported in the month of July 2023. This number represent only the diagnosed cases from different Government hospitals and some selected private hospitals. Most of the cases who don't come to hospital and taking remedies or taking consultations from private practitioners are much higher.

In Cox's Bazar, Rohingya camps 1W, 3, 4, 9, 17 & 18 have become hotspots for dengue cases. As of 30 August 2023, a total of 9,670 persons [1214 Bangladeshi and 8,456 (27th August) from Rohingya camps] have tested positive for dengue. A total of 787 persons (584 Bangladeshi and 203 Rohingya refugees) were admitted to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital and another 574 persons were admitted to Upazila Hospitals. 10 persons (8 from Rohingya camps, 2 from the host) died due to Dengue-related complications.<sup>2</sup>

It is to be noted that, these numbers reflect only reported cases from government hospitals and some selected private hospitals that are reporting. The actual number of cases (unreported) is much higher.

## UNICEF Preparedness and Response

### Social and Behaviour Change (SBC)

- As of August 29, 2023, SBC Section-supported Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) activities that reached **3.26 million people (49.65 per cent women)** nationwide with awareness messages and engaged **88,898 people (51.44 per cent women)** through different community engagement activities to promote preventive actions and share information on treatment through field offices across the country.
- Social media posts on dengue prevention and care developed by the SBC Section reached over **70.73 million social media users (29 per cent women)**.
- A public service announcement (PSA) on dengue prevention has been released on August 27, 2023, during the Roundtable on Dengue Management. Bangladesh Betar continued airing on Radio, 2 public service announcements (PSAs) on dengue prevention and care through national and regional stations.
- The community engagement tool has been updated and revised tools will be used to engage communities.
- Together with the Health and Communication Sections, UNICEF supported CDC-DGHS to organize a roundtable discussion on Dengue management to improve the overall preparedness and response for dengue on 27 August 2023 in Dhaka. More than 20 government and non-governmental organizations joined this high-level roundtable discussion, and the relevant recommendations of the discussions will be integrated into the RCCE interventions.
- At the request of CDC-DGHS, two videos were produced with messages from the Director General of DGHS and the Minister of Health on care and prevention of dengue for public broadcasting.
- The SBC Section, in collaboration with the WHO, has continued to provide technical support to the RCCE

### Public Service Announcement on dengue prevention



### Community engagement tool for dengue prevention and



<sup>3</sup> Dengue Situation Analysis

<sup>4</sup> [Dengue - Bangladesh \(who.int\)](https://www.who.int/dengue)



platform led by CDC-DGHS. RCCE platform members include the Department of Mass Communication, Islamic Foundation, Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, IFRC, Bangladesh Scouts, Robi, Banglalink, among others.

## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

- A technical session was delivered to 14 WASH staff (Bangladesh Country Office, Field Offices and Cox's Bazar) on dengue and WASH approaches to prevention and control.
- A cross-border collaboration with India CO (Kolkata FO) has been initiated with the aim of benefitting from their learning on management of dengue prevention and control.
- Section discussed DPHE's dengue outbreak response with the Secretary Local Government Division on 24th August.
- The Section is collaborating with the International Centre for Disease Control, Bangladesh (ICCRD) to revise WASH training packages on dengue for the Dhaka City Corporation staff (Conservancy Inspector, field workers, city corporation councilors training. Also collaborating with WHO on the Vector control and Environmental risk.

## Child Protection

- In partnership with the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA), **>142,900 people (>81,600 women, >1084 persons with disabilities)** were reached with targeted approved dengue prevention direct messaging, awareness events, and discussions across 30 of the most highly prevalent districts through 524 Child Protection Community Hubs (CPCH). Community art has also been used to engage families and children on the prevention of dengue messaging.
- In partnership with the Ministry of Youth and Sport (MoYS), **150,850 (>102,050 women, >210 persons with disabilities)** were reached with targeted approved dengue prevention direct messaging, awareness creation events, and discussions across 16 of the most highly prevalent districts through >5,300 Sports for Development events and sessions.
- UNICEF, in partnership with the Ministry of Social Welfare (MoSW), supports the child helpline (number 1098) which received 2,670 calls seeking for information on dengue while Social Workers followed up on **>6,950 (>4,820 women, >153 persons with disabilities)** of the most vulnerable children and families in the 30 most highly impacted districts, including those living on the streets.



Community awareness session on dengue prevention

## Education

- The dengue messages prepared by the SBC Section have been shared with both the Directorates of Primary Education and discussions are ongoing on harmonizing these messages with the messages in the Education SOPs.
- The UNICEF field staff continue to support the sub-national level officials for the dengue response. Two cases were reported in Khulna.
- DPE with financial and technical support from UNICEF will roll-out the SOP orientation workshop in five divisional districts across Bangladesh of Mymensingh; Barisal; Sylhet; Rangpur; and Chittagong from 28 August 2023 to 16 September 2023. The SOPs have nine core messages including on dengue. UNICEF is using these orientations to reinforce dengue messaging and to highlight the new messages for SBC for harmonization.



Dissemination of Dengue messages at a school in Jashore, Khulna

## Health

- Kits for **13,425 dengue tests** were procured and distributed to the Communicable Disease Control - Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), against the request for 200,000 kits due to the funding limitations. Another **9,369 (out of 16,842 planned)** combo dengue test kits procurement is under process by UNICEF, adequate for up to **93,690 tests**.
- UNICEF supported the Management Information System MIS-DGHS to update the Health Emergency Operation Center Dengue Dashboard and daily press release platform so that the data presentation is practical and useful for decision making, helps identify the hotspots and helps stakeholders understand the disease burden.

- UNICEF is coordinating with the Communicable Disease Control (CDC)-DGHS and WHO to plan immediate and long-term response activities and participated in a special Health Cluster meeting and core group meeting on dengue.
- Together with the Communication and SBC section, UNICEF Health Section supported CDC-DGHS to organize a round table meeting with the Honorable Minister of Health, Director General of DGHS, high level decision makers, print and electronic media to raise awareness on dengue and preventive and control actions that need to be taken among different communities and by all stakeholders.



13,425 dengue test kits were handed over to Communicable Disease Control – Directorate General of Health Services on urgent request to continue to diagnostic tests throughout different parts of the country. © UNICEF Bangladesh/2023/Satu

### Communication

- Communication Section supported the Government to organize round table discussions among key stakeholders to take stock and agree on a way forward on dengue response coordination and management.
- Communication continues to disseminate messages on the social media platforms related to prevention, identifying symptoms, and seeking early care. So far, the messages have reached a total of **70,737,357 people (29 per cent women)** through social media.
- To further support the Government in its efforts to disseminate messages, UNICEF has featured a high-ranking government official in our social media posts talking about dengue control measures.
- Press release has been issued highlighting UNICEF setting aside USD 2.25 million to support the Government of Bangladesh in dengue prevention and control efforts.
- Ongoing activities include documenting UNICEF’s actions in the field for dengue response.

### Cox’s Bazar Field Office

#### Social and Behavior Change (SBC)

- In support of the ongoing response to the Dengue outbreak, SBC implementing partners are intensifying community-wide clean-up campaigns across Rohingya Refugee camps and host communities to eliminate mosquito breeding grounds. The seasonal monsoon rains have posed challenges to effective clean-up campaigns in the camps.
- A total of **31,498 (20,120 women)** from Rohingya refugees in 17 camps and **1,941 (1,235 women)** people in host communities were engaged in dengue prevention interventions through interpersonal communication (IPC) sessions including house-to-house visits, mother-to-mother support groups, adolescent club sessions and public awareness through street miking, mosque-based loudspeakers, and megaphones. A total of **2,420 (boys 1,220 and girls 1,200)** adolescents and **1,979 mothers** were engaged through group sessions on dengue prevention.
- SBC partners are collaborating with 256 mosques in 10 camps to amplify and reinforce dengue prevention awareness messages with emphasis on household clean up and care seeking if unwell.
- The Information and Feedback Centres (IFCs) are providing dengue prevention information to the community through those who visited the centres. From August 20 to 29<sup>th</sup> a total of **1,842 CFQs (1,192 from women)** were received of which 22 cases were related to dengue outbreak. IFCs are also monitoring rumors in the community.



Adolescents participating in clean-up campaign in camp 14. Photo source: FIVDB, August 2023



Mother support group in session to discuss household clean up and care seeking for dengue patients in camp 8E. Photo source: UNICEF Communication, August 2023



## WASH

### Rohingya Camps in Cox's Bazar:

- A total of **6,525 households (HHs)** were mobilized to clean their surroundings and eliminate mosquito breeding places. The community also learned about the non-doer HHs and mobilized themselves to clean their surroundings.
  - Awareness campaigns on prevention of Dengue were organized, reaching 1,385 different community groups, **with 7,975 people (2,120 female)** participating. 56 mosques/imams were engaged to give dengue prevention information targeting about 5,973 people during the Juma prayer.
  - A total of **21,785 HHs** were visited, and messages disseminated among **265,100 individuals (135,428 female)** by Community Hygiene Promoters (CHPs) and Community Hygiene Volunteers (CHVs). In addition, awareness sessions with Community participants through 905 mini sessions reached **5,150 individuals (1700 female)** with messages on dengue.
  - Sessions with Child Leader Groups and a drawing competition for children were organized to provide them with knowledge on dengue to impart among other children. A total of 137 child-focused sessions were conducted through drawing dengue prevention-related messages, in which **959 children (274 girls)** participated and were able to understand the harmful effect of dengue on the human body.
  - 32 sessions with Learning Center (LC) teachers on dengue were conducted, reaching **5,270 students, and 320 (195 female)** teachers.
- The WASH Sector organized a webinar on dengue prevention conducted by technical professionals from MSF to create awareness and strengthen the knowledge of WASH agency staff on dengue prevention.



The campaign is leading by WASH committee through mobilizing population under E block.  
Photo credit: a community-based volunteer (CBV) Shamiullah.

### Rohingya Camps in Bhasan Char

- No case of dengue had been reported as of 30 August in Bhasan Char. However, the WASH team is conducting prevention measures since 1 August in BC. Conducted activities include street miking, back spray, fumigation, community engagement to increase awareness/knowledge and improve the practices of people (behaviour change).
- Before starting all WASH partners sat together and made an action plan with technical support from UNICEF as a collective effort to for street miking to mobilize people and promote environmental cleanliness in a continuous process under the supervision of the community-based groups and hygiene volunteers.
- In addition, WASH agencies continue undertaking back spray daily to kill mosquito larvae and fumigation twice a week in the occupied and unoccupied clusters to prevent and control the spread of dengue.

### Humanitarian Leadership and Coordination

The Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) continues to coordinate the Cluster preparedness to Cyclone Mocha. Regular interaction with Cluster Leads is maintained to ensure up to date information is shared and updated for the preparedness and response to complement Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (GoB)-led efforts to tackle the dengue outbreak. The WASH Cluster at the national level is coordinating with government line ministries to support the response.

UNICEF will continue leading the WASH Sectors/Clusters, the Child Protection Sub-sector/Cluster and co-lead the Education Sector/Cluster. In Bhasan Char, UNICEF is leading WASH and Education Sectors in coordinating the dengue response. UNICEF will prioritize Grand Bargain commitments, mainstreaming child-centred disaster risk reduction across sectors, ensuring accountability to affected populations and supporting the localisation of humanitarian assistance to strengthen national actors' capacity to lead the response. In this regard, relevant government counterparts (Upazila Nirbahi Officer, Upazila Education Officer, Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer, Sub-Assistant Engineer at Upazila DPHE office, Union Parishad Chairmen and members, Dhaka North and South City Corporations) are part of all UNICEF-supported response activities in dengue hotspots.

UNICEF staff participated in the meetings of the WASH and Education Sectors at the national level to ensure coordination of interventions.

### Funding situation

UNICEF has mobilised US\$ 231,000 from internal resources, additional to \$500,000 USD from HQ UNICEF, and \$250,000 from USAID, to support immediate response to the dengue outbreak and meet the priority needs of girls, women and people with disabilities. UNICEF Bangladesh has received \$1.5 million loans from UNICEF HQ to ensure the continuity of the response while fund raising efforts continue. Through in-country fundraising, UNICEF has mobilised the following:

- DBL Group (Dengue Outbreak)- US\$ 3,000
- Hafiz Sikder/Axiom Health Strategies (Dengue Outbreak)- US\$ 1,578
- 1,000 kits have been committed to BCO from local donors

The table below shows the funding needs per Sector to mitigate the impact of dengue on vulnerable populations including women and children:

SECTOR	Funding Requirement (USD) *Updated	Received (USD) Available/ Received / Pipeline	Funding gap
Health	\$422,000	\$138,000 (Global Thematic Fund) \$125,000 (USAID) \$10,000 (Reprogrammed) \$412,000 (EPF loan)	(\$263,000)
WASH	\$2,907,500	\$230,000 (Global Thematic Fund) \$150,000 (Reprogramme) \$500,000 (EPF loan)	\$2,027,500
Education	\$1,650,558	\$344,000 (EPF loan)	\$1,306,558
SBC	\$265,500	\$92,000 (Global Thematic Fund) \$125,000 (USAID) \$21,000 (Reprogramme) \$50,000 (Reprogramme) \$194,000 (EPF loan)	(\$216,500)
Humanitarian Coordination		\$50,000 (EPF loan)	(\$50,000)
Operational costs (7%)	\$367,189	\$40,000 (Global Thematic Fund)	\$327,189
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,612,747</b>	<b>\$2,481,000</b>	<b>\$3,131,747</b>

As of 4 September 2023

\*Emergency Programme Fund (EPF) is to be reimbursed.

## Human Interest Stories and External Media

Link to press release issued on UNICEF dengue response: <https://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/en/press-releases/unicef-delivers-critical-medical-supplies-and-support-dengue-outbreak-escalates>

Link to the media reports on roundtable discussion supported by UNICEF:

- [thedailystar: Dengue Outbreak: Unicef delivers medical support as cases surge in Bangladesh | The Daily Star](#)
- [thedailystar: Dengue Outbreak: Tk 50,000 spent per patient | The Daily Star](#)
- [prothomalo: ঢাকার বাইরে এড ডেঙ্গু রোগী কেন, জানে না কেউ | প্রথম আলো \(prothomalo.com\)](#)
- [tbsnews: Unicef delivers critical medical supplies for dengue in Bangladesh | The Business Standard \(tbsnews.net\)](#)
- [tbsnews: Govt spends Tk400cr on dengue treatment this year: Health minister | The Business Standard \(tbsnews.net\)](#)
- [dhakatribune: Dengue: Unicef delivers medical supplies for children as cases surge \(dhakatribune.com\)](#)
- [prothomalo: Dengue Cases in Bangladesh: Why They Keep Climbing | Prothom Alo](#)
- [dhakatribune: Dengue Outbreak: Unicef delivers medical supplies, support in Bangladesh \(dhakatribune.com\)](#)
- [ATN Bangla: UNICEF delivers critical medical supplies and support as dengue outbreak escalates among children in Bangladesh - eMediaDesk](#)
- [DBC News: UNICEF delivers critical medical supplies and support as dengue outbreak escalates among children in Bangladesh - eMediaDesk](#)
- [Channel I: https://vimeo.com/858435703](#)
- The Daily Star report on Dengue 2023: <https://www.thedailystar.net/health/disease/news/deadlier-ever-3375121>
- The Business Standard report on Dengue situation in coming months of 2023: <https://www.tbsnews.net/bangladesh/health/dengue-situation-may-worsen-august-september-experts-say-667894>
- The Dhaka Tribune report on Dengue outbreak: Tragic deaths of children raise concern <https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/2023/07/10/dengue-outbreak-tragic-deaths-of-children-raise-concern>
- The Business Standard report on Dengue: 5 kids among 12 dies in Chattogram in last 20 days <https://www.tbsnews.net/bangladesh/health/dengue-5-kids-among-12-die-ctg-last-20-days-669218>

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