Support for Cyclone Shelters

IOM is working closely with the Government of Bangladesh to strengthen the disaster management capacities of host communities and local authorities. Since 2019, IOM has renovated 23 cyclone shelters in Ukhiya and Teknaf Upazilas, which regularly face shocks linked to various natural hazards.

The teams are now finalizing the rehabilitation of another 22 multi-purpose cyclone shelters for host communities. These structures will be upgraded to accommodate about 33,000 individuals if a cyclone hits. Improved water, sanitation and hygiene facilities, electricity, access for people with disabilities, and gender-friendly accommodation will be ensured throughout the rehabilitation process.

The schools being upgraded to cyclone shelters are also committing to strengthening their disaster risk reduction capacities. The activities will include disaster management planning, capacity building of school management committees, and simulation exercises on multi-hazard preparedness.

Read more about IOM’s cyclone shelter rehabilitation efforts here.

IOM Supports Refugee Efforts as Monsoon Rains Wreak Havoc

Heavy monsoon rains have ravaged Cox’s Bazar, including the Rohingya refugee camps. IOM is deeply saddened by the confirmed loss of six refugees following massive floods and landslides in two IOM-managed camps.

More than 64,000 refugees have been affected and over 24,000 have been temporarily displaced based on recent reports. The majority of those affected have been impacted by flooding, slope failure, and windstorms.

Several facilities have been damaged, including over 6,000 shelters, food distribution points, health facilities, latrines and water points. Access to the camps is hazardous as constant landslides block the main roads leading to the camps, and major routes used by refugees and humanitarian actors are under water.

“Over the past few months, IOM has been assessing the risk of landslides, strengthening drainage networks, installing slope protection measures and upgrading key pathways. However, despite multiple disaster risk reduction measures being implemented, the camp congestion, excessive rain and poor soil quality, make it extremely difficult to cope with the elements,” explained Manuel Marques Pereira, IOM Deputy Chief of Mission in Bangladesh.

IOM teams are assessing the damage and working closely with the different sectors to refer those affected for relevant assistance. Mobile medical teams have been deployed and the protection emergency response unit has been activated. Staff on the ground are clearing drainage pipes, repairing damage and distributing emergency shelter kits, core relief items, and aquatubs to prevent waterborne diseases.

The current flood emergency further exacerbates the massive humanitarian needs of the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. Additional support is needed to enable teams to continue to assist those affected, as well as the rest of the refugees currently residing in the camps.

Download the IOM Bangladesh 2021 Appeal here.

Read more about IOM’s monsoon response here.
In July, 1,341 shelters were completed and handed over to families in fire-affected camps. Among them, 974 shelters in Camp 9 were completed directly by IOM while 367 were completed by IOM’s Common Pipeline Partner in Camp 8E.

A total of 100 shelters were fully or partially destroyed during the fire on 20 July in Camp 9. To assist those affected, IOM distributed non-food items and supported the full shelter construction.

In Camps 8E and 9, five host community members received their second cash tranche. A total of 20 meetings were conducted with 114 host community members, with the purpose of explaining the project’s working modalities and roles of each stakeholder.

During the reporting period, 11,050 borak bamboo poles were treated at IOM’s Bamboo Treatment Facility. Treatment at the plant relies on boron, a natural substance which is filtered and recycled on site, then reused to minimize environmental impact. Additionally, a total of 2,970 nipa pallets were produced for the Rohingya Cultural Memory Centre as Cash-for-Work (CFW) activities for refugees in Camp 24 and host community members in Hnila, with a total of 30,648 nipa pallets produced so far.

During the reporting month, 563 households received Transitional Shelter Assistance 2 (TSA-2) materials in-kind and through the voucher system. Out of these, 251 households in Camps 10 and 20 Extension received the materials directly from IOM while 312 households in Camp 15 received the support from IOM’s Common Pipeline Partners.

Furthermore, five extremely vulnerable families in Camp 10 received shelter construction and porter support. A total of 330 participants (159 women; 171 men) in Camp 10 attended a shelter maintenance and improvement training.

In July, 77 liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) kits comprised of cylinder, stove, regulator, hose, and accompanying training were distributed to newly registered families across 12 camps. A total of 69,954 refill were provided directly by IOM to refugees across 17 camps while 2,289 extremely vulnerable individuals, including elderly individuals, pregnant women, persons with disabilities, and COVID-19 suspected patients, received essential door-to-door porter support. To date, a total of 38,332 extremely vulnerable individuals have received this type of assistance.

To support monsoon preparedness efforts and response, IOM directly supported 220 households in Camp 20 Extension with tie-down kits (T DK), for a total of 33,844 households assisted with TDK so far. Additionally, IOM’s Common Pipeline Partners assisted another 2,099 households in Camp 19 with TDK, for a total of 32,452 households assisted with TDK so far.

A total of 478 households affected by harsh weather conditions were assisted with emergency shelter kits and 31 extremely vulnerable households across seven camps were assisted with additional porter and construction support. Furthermore, IOM’s Common Pipeline Partners distributed 382 emergency shelter kits to households affected by harsh weather and relocations across five camps.

A total of 33,660 man-days were paid under the Shelter Cash-Based Intervention, through CFW activities for the emergency response, and other types of construction, upgrades and maintenance works. Another 1,268 man-days were paid under the LPG programme, through CFW activities such as porter support for extremely vulnerable individuals.
The heavy rainfall and fire on 20 July triggered the activation of Mobile Medical Teams (MMT) with integrated Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPPS) and protection services. Despite difficult weather conditions, IOM’s health facilities continued operating, except for two facilities in Camp 13, which were inaccessible for one day due to flooding. Assessments are ongoing to determine if renovation works are needed.

Responding to the flash floods and landslides in the camps and surrounding areas in Teknaf, an IOM MMT was deployed and provided services at six evacuation sites. During this time, 795 individuals were screened, 57 patients were provided with medical support, and 32 individuals received MHPPS.

In the refugee camps, IOM’s MMT provided healthcare services to 4,205 fire-affected people and Community Health Workers (CHW) conducted 8,850 household visits. Responding to the fire on July 20, IOM’s MMT provided healthcare services to 33 families and MHPPS to 12 refugees.

**Essential Primary Health Services**

In July, IOM continued to address the essential health needs of Rohingya refugees and vulnerable host communities, by providing 62,026 consultations at 35 primary and secondary healthcare facilities. The services provided included outpatient and inpatient consultations, SRH services, 24-hour ambulances, MHPPS and GBV services, laboratory facilities, and child health services.

IOM supports sexual and reproductive health and basic and comprehensive emergency obstetric and newborn care services in health complexes in Ukhiya and Teknaf as well as in other 27 health facilities across the camps. During the reporting month, 203 facility-based deliveries, and 3,617 antenatal and 652 postnatal consultations were conducted while modern family planning methods were provided to 3,387 women.

The health packages at five IOM health facilities in Ukhiya and Teknaf include integrated palliative care as part of the services provided. During the reporting period, 201 patients were consulted, 31 people with disabilities were referred to physiotherapy and rehabilitation services, 96 home visits were conducted, 37 cancer patients benefited from follow-up visits, and 139 people were reached through community outreach activities.

As part of its prevention efforts and contact tracing activities, IOM teams conducted 120 malaria tests, 134 for dengue, 25 for chikungunya, 14 for influenza, and 12 for hepatitis E. In July, 7,058 patients were treated in the designated rooms for communicable diseases, of which 439 were referred to isolation centres as suspected COVID-19 cases for further evaluation and treatment.

IOM continues to operate Oral Rehydration Points and inpatient isolation areas for Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD) in its four PHCCs and 18 health posts, with 1,944 AWD cases treated in July alone and an upward trend of cholera cases observed across Cox’s Bazar. These facilities also conduct rapid diagnostic tests for malaria as part of its monitoring activities for vector-borne diseases.

**Infection Prevention and Control and Surveillance**

Two IOM Severe Acute Respiratory Infection Isolation and Treatment Centres (SARI ITCs) with a capacity of 200 beds and maternity wards currently provide support to suspected and confirmed COVID-19 patients. During the reporting period, 44 suspected and 299 confirmed cases received treatment in these facilities.

Last month, 2,262 samples from IOM’s nine sentinel sites for COVID-19 sample collection were collected and transported to the laboratory in Cox’s Bazar for analysis. 450 antigen tests were performed, 715 contacts were traced, and 28 contacts were quarantined at IOM’s quarantine facility in Camp 20 Extension.

During the reporting period, the Dispatch and Referral Unit transported 394 people (suspected and confirmed cases, deceased and discharged). A total of 209 ambulances were cleaned and disinfected at IOM’s three ambulance decontamination units in Uttaran and Camps 20 Extension and 24.

**Mental Health and Psychosocial Support**

In July, the team provided MHPPS services to 9,662 refugees and host community members. Despite access restrictions, MHPPS facility-based activities continued, including Psychological First Aid (PFA), individual counseling, psychoeducation, case management, psychiatrist referrals, follow-up sessions, awareness sessions, and self-care activities related to the ongoing pandemic. The team also continued assisting individuals through remote MHPPS services such as the 24/7 hotline and telecounseling.

The team successfully managed the cases of two unaccounted children in Camp 2W, by providing emotional support to the children and their caregivers and linking them with Child Protection actors. Both families felt relieved and grateful after the reunification.
General Protection

In July, IOM activated its community-based protection mechanisms by deploying protection volunteers to monitor and report on the situation in the camps.

On 20 July, there was a fire outbreak in Camp 9 which quickly spread and damaged around 100 shelters. This was the third shock witnessed in Camp 9 after the first mass fire on 22 March followed by recent monsoon rains.

These incidents coupled with the strict movement restrictions compromised the protection environment. Responding to the emergencies, IOM Protection provided refugees with PFA, on-spot referrals, fast tracking of extremely vulnerable persons and other service-related referrals, reaching 425 extremely vulnerable individuals.

Due to heavy monsoon rains, the camps witnessed flash floods and landslides which led to tertiary displacements across nine camps. IOM led the emergency response across the camps in its capacity of Protection Focal Point and Protection Emergency Response Unit (PERU) Team Leader. IOM’s General Protection team supplemented the PERU response by providing on-spot referrals to life-saving services. The rainfall continued to reach alarming levels towards the end of July, which saw a total of 468 direct referrals completed within the emergency phase of the response.

Counter-Trafficking

In July, IOM and its partners sensitized 4,844 Rohingya refugees and host community members on human trafficking issues and COVID-19. In addition, 4,844 comic pocketbooks, leaflets, posters and masks that feature the CT hotline were distributed.

IOM organized three training sessions with the Child Protection Sub-Sector on “Basic Concepts of Counter-Trafficking with Legal Framework” for 112 individuals, and three on “Human Trafficking Act 2012 and Referral Mechanisms” for 65 journalists and teachers.

Four orientation sessions on basic CT concepts and COVID-19 were organized for 59 participants, including Counter-Trafficking Committee members, standing committee members, civil society, religious leaders, local leaders and boatmen in Sabrang and Teknaf.

On 30 July, IOM celebrated World Day Against Trafficking in Persons with a creative story telling competition to encourage committees and youth groups to raise awareness about human trafficking risks in their communities.

Child Protection

Responding to the fire on July 20 and last month’s heavy rains, IOM assisted 511 refugees with PFA and psychosocial support while 928 refugees received support through IOM’s regular psychosocial activities.

To further celebrate World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, IOM shared Abdullah’s story, a Rohingya refugee’s account of trafficking and resilience. This year, IOM focused on the elimination of child labour and trafficking as a form of violence against children. Abdullah hopes that by telling his story he can encourage parents to value education.

Gender-Based Violence

The COVID-19 lockdown and restrictions impacted case management services inside the camp as well as the activities in IOM’s Women and Girls Safe Spaces. However, IOM continued to support people in need of assistance remotely and via its emergency safe shelter.

Responding to the needs of those affected by the fire on 20 July, IOM assisted 46 households. The teams also supported those affected with assessments and referrals to critical services, and as part of the PERU team. During the reporting period, IOM distributed 140 shams and baju (women’s traditional clothing) to 70 households. IOM also prepositioned dignity kits and shams to continue the support for the monsoon season.
During the reporting period, IOM rebuilt 93 cubicles of communal latrines and 22 cubicles of bathing sheds in fire-affected Camp 9. Handwashing devices are installed close to the latrine blocks to ensure access to soap and water. IOM’s partners will soon organize consultations and install gender signs on the doors.

Since 26 July, heavy monsoon rain and windstorms have brought on floods, landslides, and water logging, which have affected 748 WASH facilities and fully or partially damaged 866 WASH infrastructures in IOM-managed camps.

Following the floods, partner NGOs repaired 233 WASH facilities during the first three days while other repair works are ongoing. Partners also distributed aquatabs to households in flood-affected areas and explained their use, which will be enough to purify water for 15 days.

Partners have also increased the free residual chlorine (FRC) monitoring for tap stands and households, disinfecting flood-affected hand pumps and areas around latrine pits.

During the reporting month, IOM distributed 36,451 soap kits through its partners across ten camps. Each soap kit contains eight bars of bathing soap and seven bars of laundry soap, meant to last for a month for the average refugee family in the camps. Partner organizations distributed the soap kits door to door, while maintaining physical distance.

IOM’s implementing partners continued disseminating messages on COVID-19 prevention measures, food safety, waste management, and hygienic practices.

In July, IOM’s partners conducted 133,223 household sessions, reaching 301,546 beneficiaries. Partners also conducted 6,664 awareness-raising sessions using megaphones, reaching an estimated 156,439 people.

In July, IOM WASH teams repaired five communal latrines affected by fire and floods in Camp 9. ©IOM2021
SITE MANAGEMENT AND SITE DEVELOPMENT (SMD)

During the reporting month, IOM scaled up the emergency response to address the damages caused by heavy rains. Disaster Management Unit (DMU) volunteers were activated in each camp and supported affected households with emergency soil removal and rescue, helping move people to safe communal shelters.

Site Management Support (SMS) teams conducted rapid damage assessments each day, sharing the findings with relevant sectors. The teams worked on cleaning blocked pathways and culverts, and coordinated the necessary food and NFI needs for displaced families. IOM’s Communication with Communities (CwC) team developed and disseminated flood warning messages comprised of weather forecasts and safety advice.

Site Management

In Camp 9, with the support of DMUs, IOM successfully responded to the fire that occurred on 20 July, by quickly putting it out, doing a rapid assessment, reporting it quickly, and connecting partners for services. Additionally, the team in Camp 9 is regularly following up on the families temporarily relocated in learning centres.

IOM is part of the Rapid Investigation and Response Team (RIRT) set up by the Health Sector in each camp to follow up on COVID-19 patients and conduct contact tracing as needed. During the reporting month, DMU volunteers and SMS teams supported the RIRT with contact tracing, while the SM focal point embedded in each RIRT followed up on those who opted to stay in home quarantine in the camps. Due to the strict lockdown imposed by the government, SMS teams operated with limited staff or through remote management.

In July, IOM continued the campaign “No Mask, No Entry” with all service providers to ensure physical distancing and mask wearing for both staff and refugees at service points. The team monitored the distribution points within the camps and coordinated with other agencies to keep track of the planned distributions in order to avoid overlapping and to ensure that all the agencies follow COVID-19 IPC measures during distributions.

Across all IOM-managed camps, SMS teams ensured crowd control and social distancing, keeping children away from the slaughter area during Eid-ul-Adha. Bamboos, rope and plastic sheets to build temporary sheds in pre-selected spots to sacrifice the animals were provided. In Camp 15, SMS teams supported the CiC with the meat distribution. In Camp 20, SMS teams conducted several visits to verify concerns and supported the community celebrations to ensure proper waste disposal.

Women’s Participation Project

In July, the Women’s Participation Project (WPP) focal point conducted several consultation meetings with Women Committee members. During the meeting, the members had the opportunity to voice their opinions and share their feedback about the camp situation, WASH and site improvement related activities. Following the meeting, SMS teams referred their concerns and feedback to the responsible sectors. Additionally, Women Committee members continued to conduct door-to-door visit and share awareness-raising messages on COVID-19 and cyclone preparedness. Several meetings were held with committee members regarding upcoming projects.

As part of the fire response activities for the WPP in Camp 9, IOM distributed materials for embroidery projects for 45 Women Committee members.
Disaster Risk Reduction

Following the month’s heavy rains, IOM supported the Cyclone Preparedness Program (CPP) volunteers to disseminate early warning messages on landslides and evacuation to 174,690 people (approximately 35,000 families) living in 244 vulnerable areas part of 20 unions and two municipalities of Cox’s Bazar Sadar, Teknaf, Ukhiya, and Moheshkhali Upazilas. With IOM’s support, CPP deployed 26 volunteers for the dissemination of messages and 50 volunteers to prepare the emergency shelters in Cox’s Bazar.

The renovation of 22 Multi-Purpose Community Structures (MPCS) used as cyclone shelters in Ukhiya and Teknaf Upazilas is ongoing. As of July, the renovations works for seven cyclone shelters are almost completed, stagnating due to heavy rains and the current lockdown.

A total of 39 Cash-for-Work activities related to the cleaning and maintenance of cyclone shelters have been completed while 32 are ongoing. The activity helped community members earn an income during the lockdown while also actively participating in increasing the resilience of the structures.

Many host community members supported by IOM lost their livelihoods and assets in the floods, including livestock, vegetable gardens, fisheries, and crops, and are in need of immediate recovery support.

Immediately after the landslides and floods on July 27, IOM formed two assessment teams and conducted an emergency needs assessment in Teknaf Upazila to better understand the immediate and midterm impact of the floods on the lives and livelihoods of host communities.

The assessment highlighted the immediate need to rebuild the damaged houses, WASH facilities and roads in the affected villages, but also the need for multipurpose cash grants to recover belongings, cooking fuel, and dignity kits for women and girls.

Livelihoods

The rainfall has heavily impacted the beneficiaries’ vegetable gardens and tree plantation sites. A total of 1,343 vegetable gardens have been partially damaged while 1,039 gardens are fully damaged. Moreover, 140 trees have been wiped out which might lead to soil erosion and further landslides in the camps.

Under the SAFEPlus programme, IOM’s implementing partner BRAC distributed vegetable cultivation assets to 475 refugees. Each refugee received nine types of seeds, 15 kg of manure, one sprayer, and one watering can to help them expand their vegetable cultivation activities.

IOM’s implementing partner SHED distributed conditional cash grants to 1,038 host community members to enable them to extend their individual and collective businesses after the completion of their skill development and entrepreneurship development training.

IOM’s partner United Purpose provided skills development training to 111 host community members. A total of 41 people received training on handicraft, 10 on food processing, and 60 on livestock rearing. In addition, under SAFEPlus, 65 people received training on handicrafts.

Under SAFEPlus, IOM’s implementing partner Prottyashi distributed start-up materials to 30 people who had previously attended vocational training on electrical wiring and electronics (15) and plumbing and accessories (15) to help them kickstart their businesses.

Labour Migration

IOM recently launched the activities part of the project “Building Social Cohesion in Host Communities in Cox’s Bazar through Skills Development” funded by the IOM Development Fund (IDF). As part of its primary assessment, IOM started the data collection with the Bureau of Migration, Employment and Training in Cox’s Bazar. Once the data analysis is completed, IOM will identify the project beneficiaries.
IOM NPM continues to support the Site Management Sector with the Incident Reporting Mechanism. More information on incidents can be found in this dashboard.

During the reporting month, IOM finished the report “Shelter Standard Assessment” together with the Shelter sector, which will be published in August. NPM also prepared and submitted four camp incident reports at regular intervals.

In July, ACAPS finalized the report on “Birth Documentation in the Host Community”, which will be shared in August, as well as the internal “Impact Report of the Audio Pilot”. ACAPS continued to support the “Four-year Multi Sector Needs Assessment Comparison” and finalized the second Gender Alert on the medium and long-term impacts of the 22 March fire.

NPM supported IOM’s CwC team with the trends survey and quantitative analysis of “Rohingya Hobor – Rohingya News”.

NPM has been conducting a greenery analysis of tree and greenery coverage across the Rohingya camps, looking at data from February 2021 and detecting changes in tree coverage between 2018 and 2021. The maps developed following the analysis were shared with the Energy and Environment Technical Working Group to support future reforestation initiatives.

During the reporting month, NPM’s GIS unit prepared several maps with outputs from the greenery analysis. The team shared the products with several partners and completed the Camp 13 digitization from the facilities mapping.

IOM completed the fifth round of the perception surveys with Ground Truth Solutions and started the data collection for the IDF project for returning migrants. The objective of this project is to support returnees in Cox’s Bazar District by providing them with skill-based training to support their livelihoods.

Funding for IOM’s response is provided by