

Bangladesh Country Office Humanitarian Situation Report No. 8

North-eastern Flood



Upgraded Special Care Newborn Unit and Kangaroo Mother Care services continue in Moulvibazar district hospital. ©UNICEF Bangladesh/2022/Afroza

Reporting period: 24 July to 4 August 2022

SITUATION IN NUMBERS

Highlights

- UNICEF and the Department of Social Service (DSS) reached over 40,500 people (49 per cent female) with direct Mental Health & Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) case management in the Sylhet division.
- With UNICEF support, dissemination of emergency prevention and protection messages is ongoing in Sunamganj and Sylhet, reaching 350,000 people (182,000 women).
- As of 3 August, all flood-affected families returned to their damaged homes in Sylhet and Sunamganj districts and urgently need multisectoral humanitarian assistance¹.
- As shared by the communities, primary challenges are a lack of essential Non-Food Items (NFIs), Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) services, and school cleanliness.
- As of 4 August, UNICEF and NGO Friends In Village Development Bangladesh (FIVDB) provided lifesaving support to about 36,000 affected people (20,000 female) on Health, Nutrition, WASH and C4D.
- Over 1.25 million people, of whom about 40 per cent are children, have received one or more humanitarian assistance/services supported by UNICEF.
- With only seven per cent of the funding requirement received, critical funding gaps across all sectors restricted UNICEF's ability to meet the priority needs of girls, women and people with disabilities.

7.2 million

People affected by flash flood²

3.5 million

Children affected by the flash flood

74 Deaths

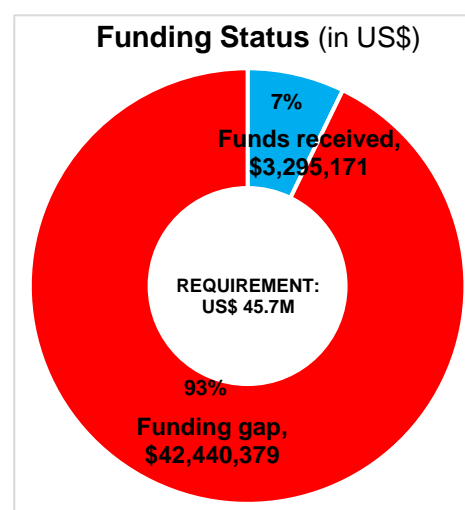
Including 33 children³

9 Districts

Sylhet, Sunamganj, Moulvibazar, Habiganj, Kishoreganj, Netrokona, Brahmanbaria, Mymensingh and Sherpur affected.

1.25 million

Reached by UNICEF and partners in the flood-affected areas.



¹ District Relief and Rehabilitation Office reports, Sylhet and Sunamganj, 3 August 2022

² North Eastern Flash Flood, May June 2022, Key Immediate Needs and Situation Analysis, Needs Assessment Working Group (NAWG), Bangladesh Date: 26th June 2022 (version 03)

³ Sylhet Divisional director health report, 29 July 2022

Situation Overview and Humanitarian Needs

Overall, an estimated 7.2 million people, including 3.5 million children, have been severely affected by the devastating flash floods that began in May 2022, with the second wave in mid-June 2022. Nine flood-affected north-eastern districts of Bangladesh are Sylhet, Sunamganj, Moulvibazar, Habiganj, Kishoreganj, Netrakona, Brahmanbaria, Mymensingh and Sherpur. Even though water is receding steadily, the humanitarian situation continues to be dire in the flood-affected areas, particularly in Sunamganj and Sylhet districts. Thousands of homes and farmlands remain inundated.



Information, education, and communication (IEC) poster distribution on Sylhet Maternal and Child Nutrition in Suprakandi Community Clinic, Zakiganj Upazila, Sylhet

As of 3 August 2022, all families have left the flood shelters in Sylhet and Sunamganj district¹. They returned home and started caring for the homesteads, which got various damages. Most of the affected families shared their immediate needs in basic household items such as cooking utensils and furniture. They also explained their struggles to access the WASH facilities and lost livelihoods. Thousands of families could not save their crops, seeds, and fodders from the sudden surge of the flood water that stayed for days. Many affected families are now in search of alternative earnings to manage their daily meals. Over the past two weeks, there has been an increase in calls to the Child Helpline 1098, with more than 85 per cent of the calls from flood-affected areas being related to violence against children and women (VACW).

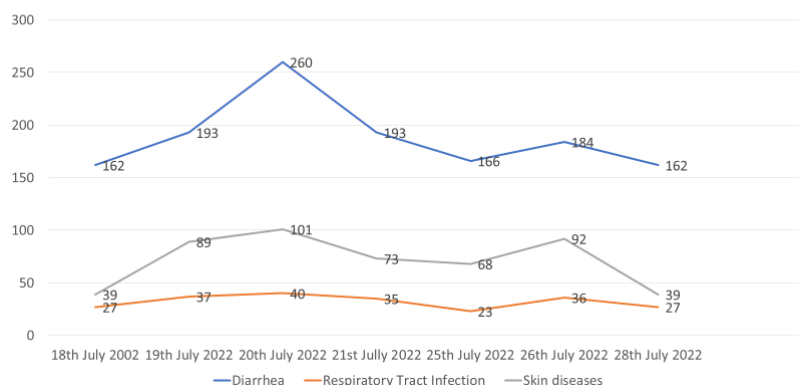
Challenges still remain, although basic services have been gradually improving. As of 29 July, 19,918 cases of waterborne diseases and other ailments have been reported, and 74 people died, including 33 children in Sylhet division³. The risk of Acute Watery Diarrhoea outbreaks and skin and respiratory diseases continues to be high. In Sylhet and Sunamganj districts, 349 community clinics out of 505 have been affected by flash flood⁴. Sunamganj, one of the most flood-affected areas, is also one of the districts lagging in education parameters. The high dropout rate in primary education and many out-of-school children pose the biggest challenge. More than 3,000 primary and secondary schools in Sylhet and Sunamganj districts have been affected and remained closed for about a month, resulting in colossal learning loss for over 1.5 million learners⁵. Schools urgently require extensive cleaning and repair work.

Immediate needs and UNICEF support

Health

UNICEF reached a total of 1,188 children (699 girls) for immunisation through Friends In Village Development Bangladesh (FIVDB) in ten routine immunisation sessions in shelters and 38 additional immunisation sessions in communities by 4 August 2022⁶. Consultation and essential medicines were provided to 6,626 patients (3,143 adult females) through 14 mobile medical camps. Eleven high-risk pregnant mothers have received referral support for safe delivery in health facilities.

Cases of flood related Diarrhea, Respiratory Tract Infections and Skin diseases in Sylhet division from July 18th-28th



⁴ Facility Registry, Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

⁵ District primary education office Sylhet reports

⁶ Contingency PD weekly reports (21 July)

Out of 30 affected Upazilas in the Sylhet division, in addition to the emergency health supplies, UNICEF health response has been provided in eight Upazilas and one city corporation. Since the number of cases has not abated, additional resources are highly required to reach more people with quality health services.

Nutrition

Nutrition services have still been disrupted. In Sylhet and Sunamganj districts, 349 out of 505 community clinics have been affected by the flash flood⁴. All the anthropometric tools such as weight scale, height length board and MUAC tape have been destroyed, and emergency items' needs remain. UNICEF also provided technical support to the government to strengthen SAM admission and ensure appropriate treatment and utilisation of SAM supplies at the sub-national level.

In partnership with FIVDB, UNICEF supported the capacity development of local partners on the identification of SAM cases and referral to SAM facilities. To date, in Sylhet and Sunamganj, 2,205 children (1,101 girls) have been screened and among them, five children (two girls) are now getting treatment in the Upazila health complex. In total, 589 pregnant mothers and adolescents received counselling on the importance of breastfeeding, infant and young child feeding (IYCF) and the Breastmilk substitute Act 2013⁷.



SAM child got admitted at Kanaighat Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet

WASH

UNICEF through FIVDB reached 10,963 people (5,990 female) with the provision of safe drinking water through water trucking in ten locations of Sylhet and Sunamganj districts⁶. As of now, a total of 62 water points and tube wells, and 9 toilets have been renovated and 75 tube wells have been chlorinated at community and household level and 8,591 people (2,738 children) can access safe drinking water.

To date, 14,345 people (7,029 female) have benefitted from the 3,336 UNICEF hygiene kits provided through the Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE). Geophysical landscape, hydro-geological ground water and presence of arsenic are the main challenges at the moment. Due to floods, sanitation and hygiene are among the critical needs. Funding is urgently required as discussed by the DPHE national and sub-national teams and cluster members at the review of the response currently being provided.

Education

Due to floods in May and June 2022, 14 learning centres (LCs) were completely destroyed, and 206 LCs were partially damaged out of all 285 UNICEF-supported LCs⁸. All LCs remained closed for nearly 15 days from 18 June 2022 and started to reopen in phases from the beginning of July 2022. As of 3 August, all 285 learning centres have been restored although about 235 centres



Out-of-school children are learning in alternative places. LCs are being held in the community.

⁷ [Breast-Milk Substitutes \(BMS\) Act 2013](#)

have been held in alternative places in the communities⁸. According to the UNICEF partner, Jagorani Chakra Foundation, a sharp decline (23 per cent) in learners' attendance with 68 per cent attendance of children with a disability has been observed between the pre-flood and post-flood times⁸.

All government primary and secondary schools are now officially open. However, a large number of them lack proper cleaning and renovation to fully restore teaching-learning activities. UNICEF and partners have supported over 5,500 students with individual learning materials and 33 formal primary schools, which did not receive support from the government, with renovation.

Child Protection

In collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs, UNICEF organised training on child-friendly policing for 72 police officers in flood-affected districts, including Sylhet, Moulvibazar and Sunamganj. This training strengthened the capacity of police officers to work with children in contact with the law (CICWL).

UNICEF and the Department of Social Service (DSS) continued to engage and prioritise Child Protection in the Sylhet division, including Sylhet city corporation. More than 40,500 people (49 per cent female) reached with direct Mental Health & Psychosocial Support case management.

UNICEF has continued awareness sessions to prevent family separation, child labour, trafficking, and drowning and encourage family support. More than 140,400 people (59 per cent female) were reached through community engagement and awareness sessions. This includes more than 3,500 children (56 per cent female), including adolescents, reached through one-to-one sessions. From this, those children have engaged with more than 32,500 (66 per cent female) other community members, raising awareness of preventive protection measures, including preventing violence against children and women (VACW).

Social and Behavioural Change (SBC)

To date with UNICEF support, 476,526 people (247,121 women) have been reached through awareness-raising interventions on emergency protection and lifesaving sectoral messages. This was achieved through 251 courtyard sessions, one-to-one counselling sessions and community dialogue by the Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) Consortium and partners in Sylhet.

At the UNICEF-supported workshop, 106 local religious leaders from different religions received orientation to motivate communities on the importance of receiving the booster dose. As a result, through mosque-based dissemination, religious workshop, miking, and courtyard meeting, campaigns were done covering the significance of COVID-19 vaccination. Through 930 direct participants in two mosques of Sylhet and Moulvibazar, 41,020 population coverage was reached in Jumma Prayer Khutbah disseminated through miking in 3rd week of July. UNICEF partners disseminated 6,000 flyers, which the leaders and union Parishad members explained in the local dialect.



Workshop with Religious Leader, Sylhet Sadar, Sylhet

With UNICEF support, emergency message dissemination is ongoing through the District Information Offices in Sunamganj and Sylhet, reaching 350,000 people (182,000 women). UNICEF partner, Bangladesh Betar Sylhet Regional Radio Station is also continuously broadcasting emergency flood protection and lifesaving messages, reaching an average of 500,000 people throughout the Division. Due to constrained road communication, remoteness and other challenges, there are still places where lifesaving messages could not reach the most affected people.

⁸ LC damage report, Jagorani Chakra Foundation

Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy

UNICEF will reach the most vulnerable children and women with lifesaving services in the areas of WASH, health, nutrition, child protection, education, and community engagement. Given the increase in climate-related hazards, such as floods, landslides and cyclones, UNICEF will focus on preparedness, resilience building and strengthening linkages between humanitarian action and development programmes.

UNICEF will continue leading the nutrition and WASH sectors/clusters, child protection sub-sector/cluster and co-leading the education sector/cluster. UNICEF will also co-lead the Risk Communication and Community Engagement Pillar to support the Government's efforts

to combat COVID-19. UNICEF will continue monitoring the situation of flood-affected children and families and provide lifesaving support in line with the interagency Humanitarian Response Plan. As part of the continued coordination mechanism in flood-affected areas, UNICEF provided the latest information to the Information Management Working Group under the Humanitarian Coordination Task Team and conducted monthly coordination call with all UN agencies (WHO, IOM, UNDP, FAO and UNFPA) to discuss the support being provided in flood affected areas and expand the scope of collaboration.

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 & Family Planning Officer, Sub-Assistant Engineer at Upazila DPHE office, Union Parishad Chairmen and members) are part of all UNICEF-supported response activities in flood affected areas.

Funding situation

With only seven per cent of funding requirements received, critical funding gaps across all sectors restricted UNICEF's ability to meet the priority needs of girls, women and people with disabilities. Flexible donor funding is crucial to provide essential support to flood-affected communities in the northeast of Bangladesh. UNICEF urgently requires US\$15 million to address immediate needs and US\$27 million to cover medium-term interventions.



Union Parishad members manage the supply distribution in Gowainghat Upazila, Sylhet

Sector	Requirements	Funds available	Funding gap	
			\$	%
Health	3,000,000	254,228	2,745,772	92%
Nutrition	2,700,000	84,987	2,615,013	97%
Child Protection	8,335,550	502,929	7,832,621	94%
Education	7,200,000	142,614	7,057,386	98%
WASH	22,500,000	2,198,947	20,301,053	90%
C4D and cross-sectoral	1,000,000	6,466	993,534	99%
Humanitarian coordination	1,000,000	105,000	895,000	90%
Total	45,735,550	3,295,171	42,440,379	93%

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