



Community volunteers, supported by UNICEF, raise awareness in the communities in the densely populated localities by distributing leaflets, conducting awareness sessions, and educating children in the schools to combat the outbreak. © UNICEF Bangladesh/2023/Mawa

Highlights

SITUATION IN NUMBERS¹

- As of 1st October 2023, 206,288 dengue cases (including 39 per cent women and 18 per cent children (0-15 yrs) had been recorded, with 1,006 deaths (57 per cent female, 11 per cent children below 15 years old).¹ In addition, a total of 14,272 persons [2,362 Bangladeshi and 11,910 Rohingya refugees] had been infected with dengue². A total of 1,327 persons (1,071 Bangladeshi and 256 Rohingya refugees) were admitted to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital and another 990 persons were admitted to Upazilla Hospitals. 14 persons (12 from Rohingya camps, 2 from the host) have died due to Dengue-related complications.³
- SBC Section-supported Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) activities reached 6.8 million people (50.63 per cent women) nationwide and engaged 185,705 people (49.46 per cent women) in awareness creation on dengue prevention across the country.
- In partnership with the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA), > 261,300 people (>178,000 women, >1,210 persons with disabilities) were reached with targeted approved dengue prevention direct messaging, events, and discussions across 30 of the most highly dengue-prevalent districts through 572 Child Protection Community Hubs (CPCH).
- With UNICEF support, 6,948 combo dengue test kits have been delivered to Communicable Disease Control (CDC)-DGHS adequate for 69,480 tests.
- In Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh Betar, a radio station, broadcast casted two radio messages on different SBC platforms (Adolescent Radio Listener Clubs (ARLCs) and Mother to Mother Support Groups (M2M SG)) with focus on adolescents' self-protection against dengue fever and participation in community clean-up activities to eliminate mosquito breeding sites at learning centers and within households.
- So far, UNICEF has made approximately US\$ 4.1 M available for an immediate response including an Emergency Programme Fund (EPF) loan to support a multi-sectoral response to the dengue outbreak and prevent more women, children, and other vulnerable members of the population from further infections. A funding gap of US\$ 1.5 M exists to allow a comprehensive response to the dengue outbreak.



206,288

Dengue cases (39 per cent female) recorded (Health Emergency Operation Center and Control Room, DGHS 1st October 2023)



37,870

children (0-15 yrs, 40 per cent girls) infected (Health Emergency Operation Center and Control Room, DGHS 1st October 2023)



64/64

Districts

Districts affected (Health Emergency Operation Center and Control Room, DGHS 1st October 2023)

¹ Health Emergency Operation Center and Control Room, DGHS (https://old.dghs.gov.bd/images/docs/vpr/20231001_dengue_all.pdf)

² The data is as of 26th September 2023.

³ Latest data available from Cox's Bazar Dengue Situation, 28th of September 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.¹ However, since the beginning of this year, the number of cases has increased significantly, exceeding cases over the same period in the previous years and the number of deaths is the highest ever recorded. As of 1st October 2023, **206,288 people (including 39 per cent women and 18 per cent children (0-15 yrs) have been infected with dengue, with 1,006 deaths (57 per cent female, 11 per cent children below 15 years old) reported.**⁴ Even worse, one in every five people infected is a child, and children under five are at greater risk of severe illness (4 per cent so far infected), with a case fatality rate (CFR) of 0.47 per cent.⁵ For every eight deaths, one is a child. Though the majority (61 per cent) of cases are among males, nearly three of every five deaths (57 per cent) are among females. The overall CFR, which is higher compared to previous years, is also higher in females than in males (0.70 per cent v 0.35 per cent) with females having four times higher CFR than males among those aged 21-40 years (0.71 per cent vs 0.18 per cent).⁶ This number represents only the diagnosed cases from different Government hospitals and some selected private hospitals. Most of the cases who do present at hospitals and are taking remedies or taking consultations from private practitioners are not reflected in national database.

As of 26th September 2023, a total of 14,272 persons [2,362 Bangladeshi and 11,910 (24th September) from Rohingya camps] have been reported for dengue cases. A total of 1,327 persons (1,071 Bangladeshi and 256 Rohingya refugees) were admitted to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital and another 990 persons were admitted to Upazilla Hospitals. 14 persons (12 from Rohingya camps, 2 from the host) died due to Dengue-related complications.⁷

UNICEF Preparedness and Response

Social and Behaviour Change (SBC)

- SBC Section-supported RCCE activities **reached 6.8 million people (50.63 per cent women)** nationwide and engaged **185,705 people (49.46 per cent women)** in awareness creation on dengue prevention across the country.
- **Social media posts on dengue prevention, care, and treatment developed by the SBC Section reached approximately 68.67 million social media users (32 per cent women).** USAID-supported Public Service Announcements (PSA) on dengue prevention, reached more than **16.3 million people**, and this video has been viewed more than **11.12 million times**, generating 91,373 engagements on social media.
- UNICEF provided technical support as a co-lead to the Centre for Disease Control (CDC)-DGHS to convene the 2nd meeting of the RCCE platform on dengue, which was held on 21st September 2023. A total of **16 government, UN organizations, and non-governmental organizations**, including one bilateral donor partner attended the meeting to discuss the present dengue situation and discuss the way forward with regard to RCCE interventions. Several activities, including a national-level message development and a community engagement planning workshop are planned to strengthen the ongoing efforts.
- The Bangladesh Experience with the RCCE Platform for Dengue was shared in a webinar series organized by the WHO Regional Office. A total of **214 professionals** across the South Asia Region joined and listened to the presentation made by the UNICEF Bangladesh SBC Section.
- UNICEF is collaborating with the Google Regional Office to promote PSA on dengue on YouTube to increase the reach and viewership among the Bangladeshi social media users to raise awareness. UNICEF will also support the CDC-DGHS in linking dengue RCCE materials and other dengue-related information to the Google Bangladesh Homepage to enable easy access for the public on practical and useful information on dengue.



Dedicated community volunteers in the vicinity of Dhalpur Aalo Clinic are spreading life-saving prevention messages, distributing informative materials and educating students on effective prevention methods to combat the Dengue outbreak. © UNICEF Bangladesh/2023/Mawa

⁴ Health Emergency Operation Center and Control Room, DGHS (https://old.dghs.gov.bd/images/docs/vpr/20231001_dengue_all.pdf)

⁵ Dengue Situation Analysis

⁶ [Dengue - Bangladesh \(who.int\)](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/dengue)

⁷ Latest data available from Cox's Bazar Dengue Situation, 28th of September 2023, Civil surgeon Office, Cox's Bazar

Child Protection

- In partnership with the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA), **> 261,300 people (>178,000 women, >1,210 persons with disabilities)** were reached with targeted approved dengue prevention direct messaging, events, and discussions across 30 of the most highly dengue-prevalent districts through **572** Child Protection Community Hubs (CPCH).
- In partnership with the Ministry of Youth and Sport (MoYS), **>253,200 people (>156,800 women, >320 persons with disabilities)** were reached with targeted approved dengue prevention direct messaging, events, and discussions across 16 of the most dengue- affected districts through **> 6,050** Sports for Development events and sessions.
- In partnership with the Ministry of Social Welfare (MoSW), **the Child Helpline (1098) received > 3,820 calls requesting for information on dengue and Social Workers followed up and reached >7,020 people (>5,100 women, >271 persons with disabilities)** of the most vulnerable children and families in the 30 most dengue-affected districts, including those living on the streets.

Education

- UNICEF completed the orientations at the national level for policy makers and at the subnational level for the District Level Education officials on the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for emergencies, with a focus on the critical messages for the Dengue response. The SOPs cover the nine (9) nationally identified hazards. The SOP for Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response is a guideline for primary schools to follow before, during and after disasters including dengue.
- The total number of national and subnational officials reached is **225 (National is 30; subnational 195 at Mymensingh-35, Sylhet-45, Chittagong-45, Barishal –35, Khulna-35)**. The Rangpur orientation was conducted on 01 October 2023 for approximately 30 officials, chaired by Director General, DPE.

Health

- **A total number of 6,948 combo dengue test kits** were delivered to CDC-DGHS with which, **enabling 69,480 tests to be by the last week of September 2023. UNICEF plans to procure kits for upto 290,000 tests.** As the number of cases are increasing with an average of 3,000 cases being reported daily, CDC-DGHS has requested for more dengue combo rapid test kits from UNICEF.
- UNICEF is supporting CDC-DGHS in conducting dengue death surveillance and response in Mughda Medical College and Hospital and at a Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) dengue-dedicated hospital. A total of 60 deaths will be reviewed through facility based review of death cases and verbal autopsy from community. Students from IEDCR, medical colleges and Jahangirnagar University will be involved in conducting the social autopsy.
- UNICEF is coordinating with WHO and the Communicable Disease Control CDC-DGHS to finalize the national dengue response plan.
- With support from UNICEF, the CDC-DGHS is continuing the capacity development of doctors and senior staff nurses in Dhaka and other parts of the country. A total number of **1458 doctors and nurses** will be trained up in 37 batches on dengue case management and review.
- UNICEF will provide support for the ToT to conduct a national level ToT training on dengue clinical management to create a resource pool that can train up doctors and nurses at divisional and district level.. this training will extend to training of Medical Officers, General Practitioners and Doctors from Dhaka North and South City corporations, Chattogram City Corporation, Gazipur City Corporation and Barishal City Corporations.

Communication

- The Communication Section continued the social media messaging on awareness raising and prevention, reaching a **total of 81,941,068 people with impactful messages on Dengue symptoms and preventive measures. The messaging** featured a high-ranking government official in our communication.
- A new web story on a roundtable discussion organized on dengue management has been published on the UNICEF website.

WASH

- The Nationwide Clean Up campaign will be launched by the Honourable Minister for Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives on the 19th of October 2023.

Cox's Bazar Field Office

Social and Behavior Change (SBC)

During the reporting period, SBC implementing partners continues to reinforce dengue prevention interventions encouraging families to maintain cleanness. Bangladesh Betar, Cox's Bazar narrow casted two radio magazines at different community platforms- Adolescent Radio Listener Clubs and Mother to Mother Support Groups with focus

on adolescents' self-protection against dengue and promoting participation in community clean-up activities to eliminate mosquito breeding sites at learning centers and within households.

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)

- WASH section partners have completed a round of training on dengue prevention for staff and volunteers. A total of 828 people including partners' staff (113 male and 128 female) and WASH Volunteers and Community WASH Committees (345 female and 242 male) have participated in the training.
- Overall dengue situation is improving according to the sector reports. Community mobilization is ongoing in 8 camps. Participatory monitoring is ongoing by the community WASH committees.

Rohingya Camps in Bhasan Char



Continued Back spray by trained community volunteer
photo credit Rubel Mia, C71, Bhasan char



Family members cleaning surrounding their
houses. Photo credit-Mr Shafiq-C76-Bhasan char

- Child Leaders are engaged in the process of dengue prevention with a **total of 120 children** participating in the drawing events on dengue and **480 children (192 girls) participating** in the dengue prevention monitoring process.
- **15 cleaning campaigns** were conducted during the reporting period. **A total of 7,391 HHs were visited, and messages were disseminated among 29,458 individuals (15,154 female)**. During the reporting period, a total of **7,391 households (HHs)** participated in a cleaning event.
- Continued back spray continued, targeting surface drainages, underneath the houses, cluster level inside and outside houses, marketplaces, and waste dumping sites by the local community to destroy aedes mosquito breeding sites.

Humanitarian Leadership and Coordination

UNICEF is maintaining close contact with the Communicable Disease Control (CDC) of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) to support the dengue outbreak response. Coordination is ongoing with CDC and WHO to finalize the dengue immediate response plan. Through field offices, UNICEF is coordinating with offices of Divisional Directors of Health and City Corporations to assess the need for test kits, need for training for doctors and nurses and to implement the RCCE interventions. In addition, the SBC section of UNICEF is providing technical support to the CDC-DGHS to facilitate the Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) platform to mobilise wider stakeholder participation for a coordinated RCCE interventions. UNICEF Field Offices are also supporting the divisional commissioner offices to coordinate the dengue response. UNICEF is working closely with other Government of Bangladesh (GoB) partners, for example, the Department of Mass Communication, the Islamic Foundation, and Bangladesh Betar, to strengthen community engagement activities at the national and sub-national level. UNICEF is also participating in the coordination meetings organised by the WHO on the overall dengue response, including the Health Cluster Meetings on Dengue. The WASH Section of UNICEF is collaborating with the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives together with BDRCS and the Scouts Movement to promote cleanliness campaigns nationwide.

Funding situation

UNICEF has mobilised about US\$210,000 in addition to US\$231,000 from internal resources, US\$500,000 from HQ UNICEF, US\$ 250,000 from USAID, and US\$505,000 from the Danish Government, to support immediate response to the dengue outbreak and meet the priority needs of girls, women and people with disabilities. A further US\$900,000 will be allocated from SIDA/Norway through Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC). UNICEF Bangladesh has received \$1.5 million in loans from UNICEF HQ to ensure the continuity of the Dengue response while fundraising efforts continue. Through in-country fundraising⁸, UNICEF has mobilised approximately US\$ 8,062.

⁸ As of 20 Sep 2023

The table below shows the funding availability, needs and gaps 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) \$199,000 (Global Thematic Fund)	(\$415,500)
Humanitarian Coordination		\$50,000 (EPF loan)	(\$50,000)
Additional funding from Denmark (to be allocated across Sections)		\$505,000	(\$505,000)
Additional funding from SIDA/Norway (to be allocated across Sections)		\$900,000	(\$900,000)
Operational costs (7%)	\$367,189	\$40,000 (Global Thematic Fund) \$11,782 (Global Thematic Fund)	\$315,407
Total	\$5,612,747	\$4,096,782	\$1,515,965

As of 2nd October 2023

*\$ 8,062 (in-country fundraising is not reflected in the table above)

Human Interest Stories and External Media

- [A new web story has been published on UNICEF website highlighting the compelling efforts of community leaders in spreading life-saving messages to combat Dengue.](#)
- [Link to the recent news reports on Dengue situation:](#)
 - Anadolu Ajansi: Bangladesh sees single-day high with 21 new deaths in dengue fever: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/bangladesh-sees-single-day-high-with-21-new-deaths-in-dengue-fever/2981937> : Sep 3 VoA: WHO: Bangladesh Hit by Worst Dengue Outbreak on Record : <https://www.voanews.com/a/who-bangladesh-hit-by-worst-dengue-outbreak-on-record-/7256884.html> : Sep 6
 - The Daily Star : Botched dengue response: Where does the fault lie? <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/botched-dengue-response-where-does-the-fault-lie-3408046> : Sep 1
 - The Daily Star : 'Nobody performs duty properly' : <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/nobody-performs-duty-properly-3417536> : Sep 12
 - New Age: Artificial crisis causes saline import : <https://www.newagebd.net/article/211852/artificial-crisis-causes-saline-import> : Sep 10
 - Financial Express : Children account for 20pc of dengue-related death: UNICEF : <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/health/children-account-for-20pc-of-dengue-related-death-unicef-report> : Sep 7
 - The Business Standard : Hospitalisation of dengue patients highest in 10 districts : <https://www.tbsnews.net/bangladesh/health/hospitalisation-dengue-patients-highest-10-districts-698838> : Sep 12
 - The Business Standard : Dengue outbreak to continue throughout September: Experts : <https://www.tbsnews.net/bangladesh/health/dengue-outbreak-continue-throughout-september-experts-697678> ; Sep 9
 - Dhaka Tribune : Dengue toll climbs to 752 with 11 more deaths : <https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/325107/dengue-toll-climbs-to-752-with-11-more-deaths> : Sep 12

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