

Bangladesh: Protecting most vulnerable during the monsoon

Key messages / 29 May 2018

Background

Since 25 August 2017, 693,000¹ people have arrived in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, fleeing violence in Myanmar's Rakhine state and triggering one of the largest and most complex humanitarian crises in the region in decades. The IFRC continues to play a critical role supporting the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society and other Red Cross Red Crescent partners. Together, we're increasing the resilience of people living in a precarious existence with the bare minimum of humanitarian aid.

Cox's Bazar is a location known for getting heavy rain and wind during the monsoon. On 28 May, humanitarian partners received the first rain and wind alert predicting 30mm of rain would fall every six hours over the next three days. Heavy rain will impede access to and within the camps. Dirt roads will become deep mud. Low-lying areas could be inundated with water. Landslides could occur. Several weeks ago, two children were killed and six others injured in landslides following light, two-hour storms.

Key figures

254,180 people receive Red Cross Red Crescent help

108,124 patients treated in Red Cross Red Crescent health facilities

10,560,900 litres of safe water distributed

Key messages

- **Although everyone in the camps is at risk during monsoon season, the Red Cross Red Crescent has intensified a focus on helping the most vulnerable make it through.** *We're particularly concerned about the dignity and safety of pregnant women, children, older people, people with disabilities and malnourished people. Families are living in basic shelters made of plastic and bamboo, often on steep hillsides of clay that will be prone to landslides and cut off from assistance during flooding.* Some disaster risk reduction and disaster preparedness measures to keep the most vulnerable people safe include:
 - People trained to know the risks, what to do to and what support will be available
 - Children taught to remember their parents' names and where their shelters are in the camp
 - 300 Bangladesh Red Crescent volunteers trained to respond after disaster
 - 480 women and men from Rakhine and living in the camps trained to help their own community during and after weather emergencies, including cyclone and monsoon
 - First-aid backpacks ready for mobile teams to give life-saving first aid even if torrential rains block roads
 - Families have shelter upgrade kits with bamboo, tools and other supplies to improve make-shift homes before monsoon season peaks in July
 - New deep tube wells installed to deliver safe water for families who will move to safer ground ahead of the main monsoon
 - Hundreds of latrines that were full or at risk of overflowing emptied to prevent contamination of drinking water

- **Protecting everyone against floods and landslides is impossible.** *The vast majority of people will remain in dire situations throughout the monsoon season, possibly in areas cut off to aid groups when roads become impassable. We aim to reach about 15,000 people each day with emergency support after a cyclone or flooding caused by heavy rains. Contingency plans help ensure we can continue delivering humanitarian assistance speedily and in sufficient quantities during the monsoon. They include:*
 - Hospital and clinic tents and buildings strengthened to keep them safer from wind and rain so we can continue to deliver life-saving healthcare
 - Strengthened essential services like water points and latrines
 - Increased stocks of emergency supplies, such as plastic sheeting, ropes, toolkits, hygiene kits and kitchen sets to replace those destroyed or washed away
 - Increased stocks of water purification tablets, buckets and disinfecting spray to ensure safe drinking water
- **People who have survived violence in Rakhine and the journey to Bangladesh deserve our support now.** *To cover the basic needs of 200,000 people until 30 June 2019, the IFRC has an appeal of 33.5 million Swiss francs (33.5 million US dollars / 28.6 million Euros) yet we have managed to raise only 57 per cent of the amount needed. People who've fled Rakhine with little more than their lives will continue to depend on donors in the months and years to come.*

For more information

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¹ Source for all population figures in this document: ISCG's (Inter Sector Coordination Group, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh), [Situation Report, 10 May 2018](#) and [Emergency Preparedness and Response](#) report 22 May 2018.