



Health worker Christine Sinthia Roy is tending to dengue-affected children at Shaheed Ahsan Ullah Master General Hospital in Gazipur, Dhaka on 19 October 2023. UNICEF delivers vital medical supplies, including 126,000 testing kits, and supports the government in building healthcare staff capacities, offering technical advice, and implementing actions. © UNICEF Bangladesh/2023/Haque

Highlights

- As of 7th December 2023, **316,160 people (including 40 per cent women and 17 per cent children (0-15 years old))** had been infected with dengue, with **1,643 deaths (57 per cent female, 10 per cent children below 15 years old)** reported.¹ In Cox's Bazar, as of 2nd December 2023, a total of **17,469 persons [4,062 Bangladeshi and 13,407 (26th November) from Rohingya camps]** have tested positive for dengue. A total of **2,300 persons (2,001 Bangladeshi and 299 Rohingya refugees)** were admitted to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital and another 1,555 persons were admitted to Upazila Hospitals. **18 persons (15 from Rohingya camps, 3 from the host) died** due to Dengue-related complications.²
- The monthly recorded cases have **declined from 67,769 in October to 35,261 in November 2023 (DGHS)**.
- Out of the 632,995 kits** supplied by CDC, DGHS throughout the country, **UNICEF contributed kits for 276,395 tests. Additionally, UNICEF supplied 17,000 kits for the dengue test** to Gazipur and Narayanganj City Corporation.
- With support from UNICEF, the CDC-DGHS is continuing the capacity building of doctors and senior staff nurses in Dhaka and other parts of the country on dengue case management. **880 healthcare providers have so far been trained throughout the country.**
- The Communication Section consistently promoted awareness through impactful social media messages, **reaching a total of 90,235,561 individuals to date.**
- In partnership with the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA), **> 345,300 people (>234,800 women, >1,385 persons with disabilities) were reached with targeted dengue prevention direct messaging, events, and discussions** across 30 of the most dengue-prevalent districts through 572 Child Protection Community Hubs (CPCH).
- The total population (30,881) of Bhasan Char³, excluding 23,411 children under the age of 5, received dengue prevention messages. Among them were **12,150 females reached through various hygiene promotional activities**, such as hygiene promotion sessions, home visits, one-on-one sessions, and messaging via megaphones, etc.
- UNICEF has mobilized about **US\$ 4.1 million** towards the dengue emergency response. This aims 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. However, a funding gap of **US\$ 1.5 million** exists, hindering a comprehensive response to this outbreak.

SITUATION IN NUMBERS¹



316,160

Dengue cases (40 per cent female) recorded (Health Emergency Operation Centre and Control Room, DGHS 7th December 2023)



53,369

children (0-15 years old, 40 per cent girls) infected (Health Emergency Operation Center and Control Room, DGHS 7th December 2023)



64/64

Districts

Districts affected (Health Emergency Operation Center and Control Room, DGHS 7th December 2023)

¹ Health Emergency Operation Center and Control Room, DGHS (https://old.dghs.gov.bd/images/docs/vpr/20231207_dengue_all.pdf)

² Latest data available from Cox's Bazar Dengue Situation, 2nd December 2023, Civil surgeon Office, Cox's Bazar

³ <https://unicef.sharepoint.com/sites/icon>

Humanitarian Situation Overview

Bangladesh is experiencing a serious outbreak of dengue, 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. For example, 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



12-year-old Shourov, battling a persistent high fever, was diagnosed with dengue. Admitted to Shaheed Ahsan Ullah Master General Hospital in Tongi, Gazipur, his health improved following prompt testing and care. UNICEF aids the outbreak response, swiftly delivering testing kits through CDC under DGHS to hospitals. © UNICEF Bangladesh/2023/Haque

7th December 2023, 316,160 people (including 40 per cent women and 17 per cent children (0-15 years old) have been infected with dengue, with 1,643 deaths (57 per cent female, 10 per cent children below 15 years old) reported. Even worse, one in every five people infected is a child, and children under five are at greater risk of severe illness (5 per cent so far infected), with a case fatality rate (CFR) of 0.30 per cent.⁴ For every six deaths, one is a child. Though the majority (60 per cent) of cases are among male, 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 (0.74 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).⁵ This number represents only the diagnosed cases from different Government hospitals and some selected private hospitals. Most of the cases who are present at hospitals and are taking remedies or taking consultations from private practitioners are not reflected in national database.

As of 7th December 2023, **316,160 people (including 40 per cent women and 17 per cent children (0-15 years old))** had been infected with dengue, with **1,643 deaths (57 per cent female, 10 per cent children below 15 years old)** reported.⁶ In Cox's Bazar, as of 2nd December 2023, a total of **17,469 persons [4,062 Bangladeshi and 13,407 (26th November) from Rohingya camps] have tested positive for dengue**. A total of **2,300 persons (2,001 Bangladeshi and 299 Rohingya refugees)** were admitted to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital and another 1,555 persons were admitted to Upazila Hospitals. **18 persons (15 from Rohingya camps, 3 from the host) died** due to Dengue-related complications.² The monthly recorded cases have gradually declined from 67,769 in October to 35,261 in November 2023 (DGHS).

In addition, 2nd December 2023, a total of 17,469 persons [4,062 Bangladeshi and 13,407 (26th November) from Rohingya camps] have been reported for dengue cases. A total of 2,300 persons (2,001 Bangladeshi and 299 Rohingya refugees) were admitted to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital and another 1,555 persons were admitted to Upazila Hospitals. 18 persons (15 from Rohingya camps, 3 from the host) died due to Dengue-related complications).² The monthly recorded cases have declined from 67,769 in October to 35,261 in November 2023 (DGHS).

UNICEF Preparedness and Response

Social and Behaviour Change (SBC)

- A Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) coordination meeting in Chattogram Division was held on 20th November 2023, organized by the Divisional Director of Health. The divisional counterparts from Health, local administration, Betar, Dept of Primary Education, Mass Communication, Information, the Islamic Foundation, City Corporation, and CSOs joined the meeting to review the existing community engagement interventions for dengue and agreed to strengthen the engagement of religious leaders to promote household level actions. Later, an orientation on Community Engagement standards and tools for dengue prevention was conducted on 23rd November 2023 with 25 participants from relevant government, NGOs, CSOs and youth organizations participating to enhance their capacity on community engagement.
- The SBC Section collaborated with the National Institute of Preventive and Social Medicine (NIPSOM) to engage communities in Mohakhali to prevent and control dengue through increased knowledge and collective actions at the community level. The Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) Mayor and the Director General of DGHS were also present in the inaugural ceremony of the event on 23rd November 2023. The SBC Section collaboration with NIPSOM also catalyzed cooperation between NIPSOM and DNCC to monitor and evaluate

⁴ Dengue Situation Analysis

⁵ [Dengue - Bangladesh \(who.int\)](https://www.who.int)

⁶ Health Emergency Operation Center and Control Room, DGHS (https://old.dghs.gov.bd/images/docs/vpr/20231207_dengue_all.pdf)

dengue prevention and control activities in Dhaka. Around 400 students participated in the community engagement interventions and cleaning activities.

- In addition to the development of the National strategy for dengue, **SBC Section is also contributing to the development of the One Health Strategy for Bangladesh to be activated from 2024.** Vector-borne diseases including dengue were identified as a trigger for collective interventions and the experiences from the current dengue outbreak response were incorporated in the agenda for an inception workshop held on 27th to 28th November 2023.

Child Protection

- In partnership with the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA), **> 345,300 people (>234,800 women, >1,385 persons with disabilities)** were reached with targeted dengue prevention direct messaging, events, and discussions across 30 of the most dengue-prevalent districts through 572 Child Protection Community Hubs (CPCH).
- In partnership with the Ministry of Youth and Sport (MoYS), **> 297,500 people (>186,750 women, >621 persons with disabilities)** were reached with targeted dengue prevention direct messaging, events, and discussions across 16 of the most dengue-affected districts through > 8,010 Sports for Development events and sessions.
- In partnership with the Ministry of Social Welfare (MoSW), **the Child Helpline (1098) received > 5,850 calls requesting for information on dengue. Social Workers followed up and reached > 10,300 people (>7,320 women, >356 persons with disabilities)** of the most vulnerable children and families in the 30 most dengue-affected districts, including those living on the streets.
- UNICEF Child Protection, in collaboration with the Social Behavior Change (SBC) Section, **distributed over 900 leaflets on Dengue prevention for children living in the streets** through 200 Department of Social Services (DSS) Social Workers and 22 Child Protection Community Hubs under the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA).



A child is being tested for dengue at the Shaheed Ahsan Ullah Master General Hospital in Gazipur, Dhaka on 19th October 2023. Since the onset of the dengue crisis, UNICEF has delivered critical medical supplies, including testing kits with over 126,000 tests, and is also supporting the Government with building capacities of healthcare staff, providing technical advice, and implementing actions.
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Health

- **Out of 632,995 kits supplied by CDC, DGHS throughout the country, among them, UNICEF contributed kits for 276,395 tests. Additionally, UNICEF supplied 17,000 kits for dengue test** to Gazipur and Narayanganj City Corporation based on the need.
- 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 on dengue case management. **880 healthcare providers have so far been trained throughout the country.**

WASH

- Key lessons learned from the Dengue campaign have been collated and will be incorporated into the national dengue strategy to ensure adequate attention is paid to prevention. This learning will also inform the design and delivery of future dengue programs. Additionally, the Ministry of Local Government will award 10 districts' Deputy Commissioners who significantly contributed during the campaign, continuing the momentum.

Communication

- The Communication Section consistently promoted awareness through impactful social media messages, **reaching a total of 90,235,561 individuals to date.**
- The following stories have been published on the UNICEF website highlighting dengue response and amplified through social media channels, fuelling sustained media interest:
 1. [UNICEF's response to the Dengue outbreak](#)
 2. [Community leaders come forward to protect at-risk families against dengue](#)
 3. [Roundtable Discussion on Dengue Response: Uniting efforts for a resilient future](#)
 4. [Eleven-year-old Fahim fights against deadly dengue](#)



Awareness session within the community for Dengue.
© Kamrul Islam, BRAC. C-58, Bhasan Char

Cox's Bazar Field Office

Social and Behavior Change (SBC)

- Dengue public health prevention continues in collaboration with local leaders and community members in Rohingya refugee camps and host community. During the reporting period, **43,653 individuals (52 per cent female) and adolescent boys and girls including 412 Persons with Disabilities were engaged** through interpersonal interventions with a focus on eliminating mosquito breeding sites in homes and surrounding areas.
- Through peer group sessions, **3,000 adolescents, 1,500 pregnant and lactating mothers and 1,500 males were engaged** through their respective peer groups in prevention activities. About **1,411 Religious and Community leaders actively supported community engagement** in eradicating mosquito breeding sites.
- **543 schools and learning centres with 14,430 students were reached** with prevention messages, promoting self-care and protection among students and mobilizing them to participate in cleaning the school environment and eliminate mosquito breeding sites.
- Education Sector and School Management Committee (SMC) members actively participated in the teacher orientation sessions, highlighting the importance of collaboration with community-wide efforts to eliminate breeding sites for dengue in their environment. Bangladesh Betar has produced and broadcasted two programs with content based on the community consultations to explore the health-seeking behaviour of Rohingya refugees during the dengue outbreak.

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)

Rohingya Camps in Bhasan Char

- **A total of 310 Child Leader Group sessions have been conducted** on dengue prevention messages in which **1,316 children (598 girls and 718 boys) participated** and were able to understand the harmful effects of dengue on the human body and the role of the children in dengue prevention.
- A total of 23,411 beneficiaries in (52% female) Bhasan Char received dengue prevention messages through different kinds of hygiene promotional activities such as hygiene promotion sessions, home visits, and messaging through megaphones among others. During household visits, Community Hygiene Volunteers (CHV) and Community Hygiene Promoters (CHP) disseminated dengue prevention messages such as cleaning the household surroundings especially waterlogged areas to prevent breeding of Aedes mosquitoes, and the use of mosquito nets among others.



Child Leader Group session for dengue prevention.
© Abdul Hamid, BRAC, C-75, Bhasan Char

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 in implementing the response plan. Through field offices, UNICEF is coordinating with offices of Divisional Directors of Health and City Corporations to assess the further need for test kits, 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 intervention. UNICEF Field Offices are also supporting the divisional commissioners' 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

There is a gap of **US\$1.5 million in the Case for Dengue Funding** to provide multi-sectoral support to vulnerable children and mothers for the dengue response. Critical funding gaps in the UNICEF Bangladesh Country Office HAC 2023 across all sectors have restricted UNICEF's ability to meet the priority needs of girls, women, and people with disabilities. Flexible donor funding is crucial to providing essential support to them. 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 7th December 2023

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

Human Interest Stories and External Media

- Human Interest stories: [Ramping up dengue response by expanding access to testing kits](#)
- [Link to the recent news reports on Denque situation:](#)
- The Financial Express: Dengue situation improving as only one more dies : [Finance News: Latest Financial News. Finance News today in Bangladesh \(thefinancialexpress.com.bd\)](#) : Dec 3
- The Business Standard: Dengue: Death toll rises to 1,622 with 7 more deaths reported Thursday: <https://www.tbsnews.net/bangladesh/health/dengue-death-toll-rises-1622-7-more-deaths-reported-thursday-749258> : Nov 30
- Al Jazeera: Bangladesh battles record dengue deaths as disease pattern changes: [Bangladesh battles record dengue deaths as disease pattern changes | Health News | Al Jazeera](#) : Nov 21
- 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 :
- New Age: Eight more die of dengue in Bangladesh - <https://www.newagebd.net/article/217077/eight-more-die-of-dengue-in-bangladesh> - Nov 1
- The Financial Express – 15 more die of dengue, death toll crosses 1,400 mark - Nov 5 <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/national/dengue-death-toll-crosses-1400-mark-in-bangladesh>
- The Business Standard - Dengue death toll crosses 1300-mark - October - 26 <https://publisher.tbsnews.net/bangladesh/health/dengue-death-toll-crosses-1300-mark-727286>
- Voice Of America: <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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