

Every Voice Matters

Every community has a story worth telling.

Across the Rohingya camps, those stories are reflected in women stepping into leadership, young people discovering their potential, persons with disabilities finding opportunities to participate, and communities supporting one another through everyday acts of solidarity.

Between January and June 2026, ActionAid Bangladesh (AAB) worked alongside refugee communities, government authorities, humanitarian partners, and donors to strengthen protection, inclusion, and community-led action. Together, these efforts helped create safer spaces, improve disaster preparedness, and support people to shape solutions for their own communities.

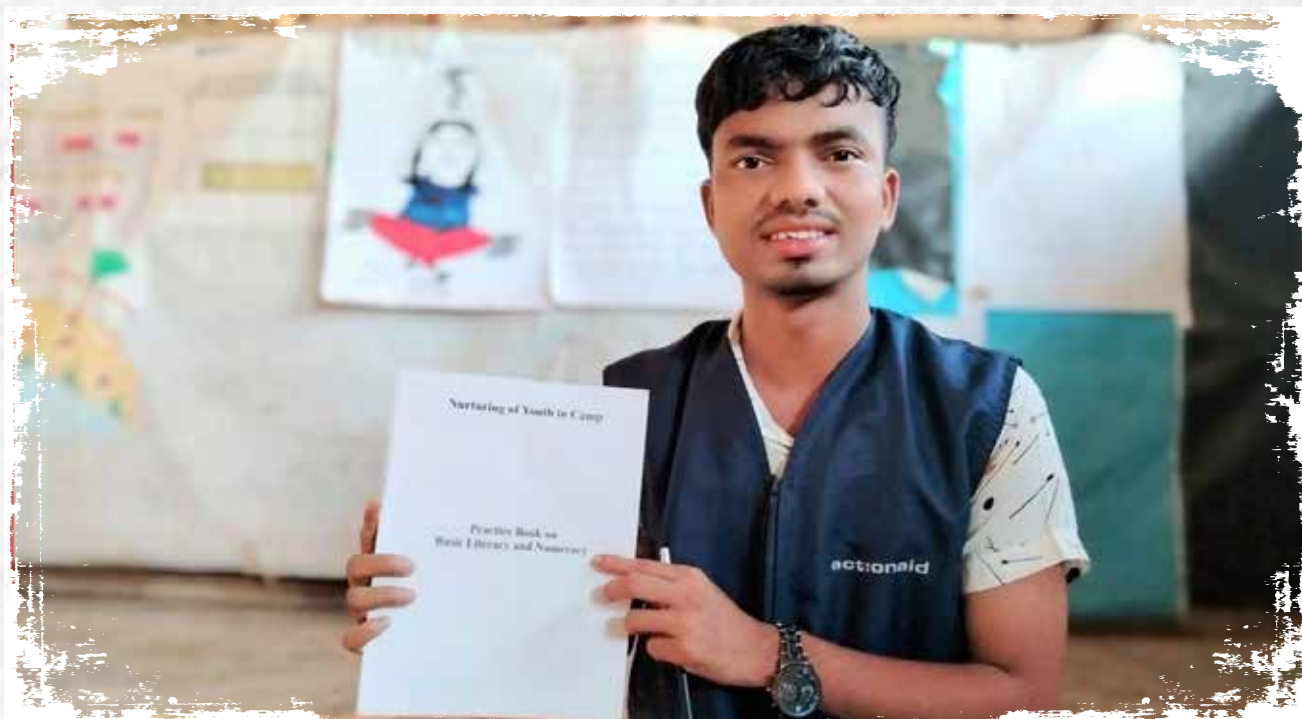
This edition shares some of the stories, partnerships, and achievements that defined the past six months. Beyond the numbers, it celebrates the resilience, leadership, and collective action that continue to build stronger and more inclusive communities.

Because every voice matters.



Breaking Barriers

For 18-year-old Nobi Hossain, growing up with hearing and speech impairments meant limited opportunities to learn, connect, and participate in community life. Having never attended school, he spent much of his time at home with little chance to develop new skills. That changed when he joined the Nurturing Youth in Camp (NYC) project, implemented by ActionAid Bangladesh with support from the World Food Programme (WFP).



At the Youth Corner, Nobi found more than a place to learn. He found a welcoming space where he could build friendships, gain confidence, and participate at his own pace. Through literacy sessions, life skills training, psychosocial support, and disaster preparedness activities, he became more engaged with the people around him. One milestone stands out. For the first time in his life, Nobi learned to write his own name, a simple achievement that gave him a new sense of confidence and independence.

Today, Nobi continues to participate regularly, building skills and confidence along the way. His journey is a reminder that inclusion is not only about access, it is about creating spaces where everyone feels valued and has the opportunity to belong.



“Before joining the Youth Corner, I stayed at home most of the time. Now I enjoy coming here to learn, meet friends, and be part of the activities.”

Nobi Hossain, 18

Why This Matters

Young people with disabilities often face multiple barriers to education, participation, and social interaction. By creating inclusive learning spaces and adapting activities to different needs, the NYC project is helping ensure that every young person has the opportunity to build confidence, develop new skills, and participate in community life.

January – June 2026

Over the past six months, refugee volunteers, community groups, humanitarian partners, and government authorities worked together to strengthen protection, disaster preparedness, inclusion, and resilience across the Rohingya camps and surrounding host communities.

Community Reach

- 218,528** People reached through Community-Based Protection activities
- 140,958** Participants engaged through Community Centre services and activities
- 25,880** Sports for Protection participants
- 4,640** Persons with Specific Needs receiving tailored support

Building Community Capacity

- 501** Community volunteers trained
- 29** PSEA Trainers developed
- 312** Community members reached through PSEA awareness
- 427** Volunteers trained in first aid, fire safety, and emergency response

Community-Led Action

- 90** Community-Led Initiatives completed
- 31,926** People benefiting from CLIs
- 8,001** Households benefiting
- 72** Community cleaning campaigns conducted

Preparedness & Coordination

- 24** Camp coordination meetings facilitated
- 24** Camp profiles updated
- 24** Emergency Preparedness database updates
- 8** Disaster Management Committee meetings
- 78** High-risk households identified through joint assessments

Climate & Environmental Action

- 48** km primary and tertiary drainage cleaned
- 1,507** Refugees and host community members engaged through Cash for Work
- 29%** women participating in Cash for Work
- 292** ha plantation area under care and maintenance
- 340,093** Saplings maintained
- 4** Climate Resilient Infrastructure schemes initiated

More Than Numbers

Every figure represents people working together to make communities safer, more inclusive, and better prepared for future challenges. Behind these achievements are refugee volunteers, women leaders, young changemakers, community groups, and humanitarian partners whose collective efforts continue to strengthen resilience across the camps.

Working Together for Safer, Stronger Communities

Strong communities are built through collaboration. ActionAid Bangladesh works alongside refugee communities, government authorities, UN agencies, and humanitarian partners to strengthen protection, peacebuilding, climate resilience, and sustainable livelihoods. Together, these efforts place communities at the centre of decision-making and build safer, more resilient futures.

Integrated Protection

Communities strengthened protection through integrated UNHCR-supported Community-Based Protection (CBP) and Child Protection (CP), alongside UNFPA-supported GBV prevention and response interventions delivered through Community Centres, Women and Girls Safe Spaces (WGSS), Women Lead Community Centres (WLCCs), Multipurpose Centres (MPCs), Men Engagement Centres, integrated health facilities, and community outreach. Together, these services enhanced GBV prevention, case management, psychosocial support, referrals, and community capacity, reducing protection risks and gender-based violence while ensuring safe, dignified, and inclusive support for women, children, and other vulnerable groups.

Peacebuilding & Social Cohesion

Refugee volunteers, community groups, and youth-led peacebuilding initiatives identified local priorities and implemented Community-Led Initiatives (CLIs), Peace Adda at Peace café, fostering collaboration, trust, peaceful coexistence, and community ownership while strengthening local leadership and collective action.

Climate-Resilient Camp Management

Working closely with Camp-in-Charge offices, UNHCR, humanitarian partners, and community volunteers, AAB strengthened disaster preparedness through coordinated planning, community engagement, joint risk assessments, emergency response capacity building, and timely preparedness measures for households at risk from landslides and other climate-related hazards. Community volunteers received training in emergency response, first aid, fire safety, and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), helping ensure that support is available when communities need it most.

Livelihoods, Skills Development & Market Resilience

In partnership with WFP, Nature-based Solutions (NbS) promoted environmental restoration and sustainable livelihoods through reforestation, drainage maintenance, plantation care, environmental awareness, and youth engagement. Complementing these efforts, UN Women-supported women's empowerment initiatives and UNFPA-supported life skills and economic empowerment programmes strengthened women's leadership, agency, confidence, and non-technical skills, enabling women, girls, persons with disabilities, and gender-diverse people to improve their economic resilience while contributing to the prevention of gender-based violence and harmful social norms through greater participation, decision-making, and self-reliance.



Visit Snapshot: Strengthening Partnerships

UNHCR	Senior Programme Officer visited Camp 26 to observe Community-Based Protection and Site Management Support activities.
UN Women	UN Assistant Secretary-General and UN Women Deputy Executive Director Ms. Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvada visited UN Women supported Multipurpose Women's Centre in Rohingya Refugee Camps operated by ActionAid Bangladesh accompanied by Regional Director for Asia and Pacific Ms. Christine Arab.
AA Bangladesh	Senior Leadership Team visited NYC project locations in Camps 26 and 27 and met directly with participating youth.
AA Myanmar & AA Italy	Delegation visited NYC activities, engaging with refugee volunteers and young people.
FCDO & WFP	FCDO team & WFP, visited Camp 5 to observe Green Skills Development livelihood interventions.
Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) & WFP	SDC & WFP, visited the Community Garden in Camp 27 to observe nutrition sensitive gardening activities.

Creating Spaces Where Everyone Can Participate

Communities are strongest when everyone has the opportunity to participate, contribute, and lead. Throughout the first half of 2026, ActionAid Bangladesh creating opportunities for women, adolescents, youth, and marginalised community members to build skills, strengthen confidence, and play a more active role in community life

Empowering Young People as Changemakers

Through the Nurturing Youth in Camp (NYC) project, adolescents and youth participated in learning sessions, sports activities, community engagement, and leadership opportunities that strengthened confidence, teamwork, and social connection. From football fields to Interactive Theatre performances, youth spaces became places where young people could express themselves, develop skills, and build friendships.

Celebrating Shared Values

Throughout the first half of the year, communities came together to celebrate important global days that recognized leadership, resilience, and collective action. International Women's Day highlighted the contributions of refugee women and reaffirmed the importance of safe and meaningful participation. On World Environment Day, young people joined environmental awareness activities, including a debate competition chaired by the Camp-in-Charge, where they shared ideas for protecting their environment. World Refugee Day brought together refugee communities, humanitarian partners, and government representatives in a celebration of resilience and solidarity. A Solidarity Football Match stood out as a powerful reminder that sport can bring people together across communities and institutions.

Creating Safer Spaces Through Sports

Through Sports for Protection, children and adolescents access safe spaces to play, connect, learn, and grow. Regular sports activities promote physical wellbeing, confidence, teamwork, social connection, and resilience, helping young people build healthier lives and stronger communities across the camps.

- 25880** Participants engaged through Sports for protection activities.
- 323** Adolescents and youth enrolled in regular sports activities, including **9** persons with disabilities.
- 18** Trained coaches supported youth participation across four camps.

Behind Every Number Is a Story

The impact of humanitarian work is not only reflected in numbers — it is seen in the confidence people gain, the connections they build, and the ways communities come together to support one another. These stories reflect the strength, resilience, and hope that continue to shape communities every day.

Climate-resilient camp management

Sometimes, meaningful change begins with a simple conversation. During a community consultation in Nayapara Registered Camp, Shamsun shared a concern familiar to many residents. The community water point offered little protection from the weather, making it difficult to collect water during heavy rain and extreme heat. Her concern was later prioritised through a Community-Led Initiative (CLI). Today, the improved water point provides a safer and more comfortable space for everyone who relies on it.



“

I never imagined that sharing my opinion could bring such a positive change. It made me feel respected and valued by my community.”

— Shamsun, Nayapara Registered Camp

Empowerment Through Skills: Hasina's Journey

Married at 18 to ease pressure on her family, Hasina Begum fled Myanmar in 2017 with her husband and children, eventually settling in Camp 27. With no stable income, daily life remained a struggle even with food assistance.

A turning point came when she joined the Upcycling component of the Green Skills Development (GSD) project, implemented by ActionAid Bangladesh with WFP. There, she learned to transform discarded Super Cereal Plus packets into laptop bags, hand fans, caps, and gardening bags — and today earns around 5,000 BDT a month.

Women's Leadership Strengthening Community Protection

Since arriving in the Rohingya camps in 2017, Sayeda Khatun has focused on one thing providing for her family. Supporting her children through domestic work and making bamboo fences left little room to imagine herself as a leader. That began to change when she joined a Women-Led Group. Encouraged by facilitators and fellow members, Sayeda gradually found the confidence to speak up.

Today, she is still at the beginning of her leadership journey, but she believes women have an important role to play in strengthening their communities and hopes to inspire others to find their own voices.



“

Working at this centre brings me joy. We all work together happily. I can now contribute to my family and buy things I need. I want to learn more skills to become even more self-reliant.”

Hasina Begum, Camp 27



“

Before joining the training, I felt hesitant and nervous to speak in front of others. Now I am learning to trust my voice little by little, and I hope this training will help me become a stronger and more confident woman in the future.

Sayeda Khatun, 44, Camp 04

Protection Through Safe Community Spaces

Sometimes, creating a safe space starts with simply listening.

During a Focus Group Discussion, girls, women, and gender-diverse community members shared their wish for a place where they could relax, connect, and feel accepted without judgement.

In response, the Community Centre team created the Hajoni Corner. Equipped with mirrors, hair accessories, and basic self-care items, it quickly became more than just a corner—it became a place where friendships grew, confidence flourished, and people felt comfortable joining other Community Centre activities on health, livelihoods, and protection.



“

The Hajoni Corner has become one of my favourite places in the Community Centre. I feel safe, respected, and comfortable here.”

— Kolima (pseudonym), 22

The impact of humanitarian work is not only reflected in numbers — it is seen in the confidence people gain, the connections they build, and the ways communities come together to support one another. These stories reflect the strength, resilience, and hope that continue to shape communities every day.

“

Before joining football activities, I spent most of my time doing very little. Now every training session gives me confidence, happiness, and something to look forward to.”

Sohidul Islam (pseudonym), 14



Creating Spaces Where Everyone Can Participate

Throughout the first half of 2026, ActionAid Bangladesh continued creating opportunities for women, adolescents, youth, and marginalised community members to strengthen their skills, build confidence, and engage more actively in community life — supporting people not only as participants, but as active contributors to their communities.

Integrated Protection in Action. How ActionAid Bangladesh is Building Safer and More Resilient Communities

As the morning sun rises over the Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, the day begins not in an office, but in the heart of the community. Refugee volunteers set out along narrow pathways, visiting families, checking on older people living alone, listening to community concerns, and identifying those who may need support. A conversation with a worried mother, a referral for a child at risk, or a home visit to a person with a disability may seem like small actions, but together they build a stronger, safer community.

This is what integrated protection looks like at ActionAid Bangladesh (AAB).

For AAB, protection is not a standalone service. It is a community-led approach that brings together Community-Based Protection, Gender-Based Violence (GBV), and Child Protection into one coordinated system. Rather than responding only after harm occurs, the programme works with communities to identify risks early, strengthen local support networks, and ensure women, children, older persons, and persons with disabilities can live with greater safety, dignity, and inclusion.

Across the camps, Community Centres, Women and Girls Safe Spaces, Men Engagement Centres, Child Protection Centres, and integrated outreach teams function as one connected protection network. A woman seeking psychosocial support, a child requiring protection services, or an older person needing assistance can all be referred through coordinated pathways, ensuring no one is left behind.

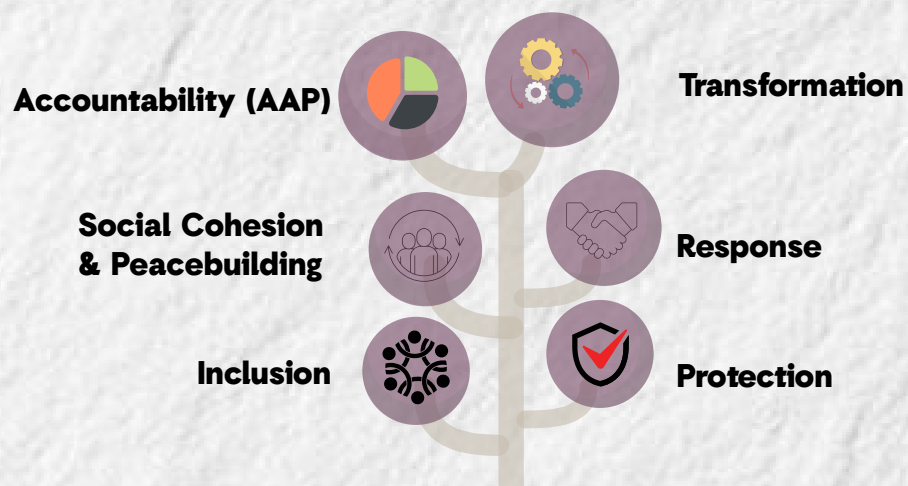
Young people are among the strongest champions of this work. Through initiatives such as Girl Shine, Male Role Models, and Sports for Protection, adolescent girls and boys develop leadership skills, build confidence, and challenge harmful social norms. Sports create safe spaces that promote inclusion, strengthen psychosocial well-being, encourage peaceful conflict resolution, and build friendships.

Refugees are not only participating in these efforts—they are leading them. Through Community-Led Initiatives, refugee groups identify protection challenges and develop practical solutions, including safer community spaces, environmental conservation, literacy activities, awareness campaigns, and neighbourhood support networks. Their leadership strengthens community ownership, resilience, and self-reliance.

Listening to communities remains central to AAB's approach. Through Complaint and Feedback Mechanisms, community consultations, and regular dialogue with refugee volunteers and community representatives, people can safely raise concerns, share ideas, and influence programme decisions, ensuring services remain accountable, inclusive, and responsive.

Integrated protection also extends beyond dedicated protection services. Protection principles are embedded across livelihoods, environmental action, and community resilience initiatives, helping people access opportunities safely while reducing protection risks.

For ActionAid Bangladesh, integrated protection is more than coordinating services. It empowers communities to recognize risks, protect one another, resolve challenges collectively, and lead their own solutions. As humanitarian needs evolve, this community-led approach is building stronger, safer, and more resilient communities where protection is everyone's responsibility.



(Note: In our next newsletter, we'll explore how youth leadership is driving positive change across the Rohingya refugee camps, helping communities become safer, stronger, and more inclusive.)