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# WHO releases US$1.5 million to fight diphtheria in Coxâ??s Bazar

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**The Contingency Fund for Emergencies (CFE) allows WHO to respond rapidly to emergencies with health consequences before other donor funding can be triggered, minimizing injury, illness and the loss of life**



The World Health Organization has deployed additional staff and resources to respond to a rapidly spreading outbreak of diphtheria among Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.

WHO has released US$1.5 million from its Contingency Fund for Emergencies to help finance scaling up of health operations in Cox's Bazar over the next six months, in efforts to respond to an outbreak that has seen more than 1,500 probable cases, including 21 deaths.

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Dr Roderico Ofrin, Regional Emergency Director, WHO South-East Asia Regional Office said, "The Rohingya refugees are an extremely vulnerable population, with low routine vaccination coverage. WHO is applying a 'no regrets' policy when allocating resources to help prevent and protect communities from the spread of diphtheria and ensure that those who are sick receive critical care and treatment. The funds released will be crucial to sustaining our efforts until we receive more support from donors for this response."

Over the next 6 months, the funds will be used to support immunization activities; improve laboratory capacity, support community engagement, contact tracing and case management in health facilities through critical guidance as well as the provision of essential medicines and supplies.

For 2018, the health sector will request additional funding to help 1.2 million people living in refugee camps and temporary settlements.