

More than 100,000 Rohingya refugee children vaccinated against COVID in Bangladesh

12 June 2020. Dhaka, Bangladesh – More than 110,000 Rohingya refugee children and adolescents living in the camps in Cox’s Bazar have received their first jab against COVID-19, as part of the National Vaccination Plan from the Government of Bangladesh with support of UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, WHO, UNICEF and other humanitarian partners.

“Bangladesh is one of the first countries worldwide to vaccinate refugee children and adolescents. This milestone is the result of an exemplary policy from the Bangladesh government to include refugees in the vaccination plans, and the highly commendable efforts of health officials, humanitarian partners and Rohingya volunteers who have made the inoculation possible and timely,” said Johannes Van Der Klaauw, UNHCR Representative in Bangladesh.

More than half of the one million Rohingya refugees living in the camps in Bangladesh are children. Including them in the national vaccination drive is key to keep everyone safe. In just a week almost 100 per cent of the targeted population between 12 and 17 years of age were vaccinated, as a result of an effective vaccination drive led by the Bangladesh’s authorities with support from UNHCR, other UN agencies and humanitarian partners, and the refugee volunteers.

“We are thankful to Bangladesh for vaccinating us. It was a little pinch, but it will mean so much for our health. We feel safer after the shot,” said Abul Jamil (15) Refugee boy living in the camps.

Overall, almost 500,000 Rohingya refugees have now received the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, reflecting 90 per cent coverage of the eligible target age groups (12-17, and 18+). Immunizations are key to reduce the incidence of serious cases of COVID infections. The second round of vaccinations for children and adolescents aged 12 years and older will take place after the Eid holidays, pending confirmation by the Government of Bangladesh.

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