

January was marked by three fires, in Camp 20 Extension, Camp 16 and Camp 5 affecting some 400 households and damaging several community facilities including an IOM health facility. Although distressing, the fires were contained thanks to the efforts of the refugee communities themselves, including trained volunteers who act as first responders. Fires in the Rohingya refugee camps are particularly severe due to overcrowding, poor infrastructure and use of flammable materials for shelters (bamboo and tarpaulin). The dry season between October to June increases the occurrence of fires.

Following global trends there was an exponential rise in COVID-19 cases in Bangladesh, including in the camps in Cox's Bazar. Amongst the Rohingya refugee population, while most cases are mild, the cumulative number of positive cases in the second half of the month (383) was more than a 90 per cent increase compared to the start of the month. Test positivity rate increased from 0.4 per cent to 12 per cent. One COVID-related death was recorded bringing the total to 35 since March 2020. To curb the spread of the virus, Community Health Workers continue to visit households to share information on hand hygiene, mask wearing, and physical distancing. In response to the rise in cases, the Government, along with other restrictions, instructed schools across the country to temporarily close on 13 January, including learning centres in the camps.

The COVID-19 vaccination campaign continued, all refugees aged 18 and above are eligible, including pregnant women in the second trimester onwards. As of the end of January, 306,727 refugees received their first dose, and 100,610 their second dose in the camps (30 per cent of target). On Bhasan Char, over 5,765 (95 per cent of target) refugees had received both doses of the vaccine.

### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

- In response to the fire in IOM-managed Camp 16 on 9 January, UNHCR staff specializing in protection were on the ground to monitor and assess the situation, as well as to support refugees. With partners and refugee volunteers, UNHCR provided support on issues relating to child protection, gender-based violence, and the provision of psychological first aid. UNHCR re-issued refugee identity documentation destroyed in the fire.
- A fire on 18 January in UNHCR-managed Camp 5 affected 138 individuals (27 shelters damaged or destroyed). UNHCR led the response including distribution of emergency core relief items, medical and protection referrals, debris clearance, hot meals from WFP, shelter repair and re-issuance of refugee identification destroyed in the fire. More details [here](#).
- As part of efforts to enhance refugees' access to justice and legal aid, UNHCR and its partners conducted a workshop with 50 Police Officers serving areas across Cox's Bazar district. The interactive workshop encouraged discussions around challenges for refugees and to identify areas of cooperation between the police and UNHCR.
- The "Kutupalong Mega-Camp Watershed Management Plan," developed by UNHCR and its partner, was shared with relevant actors. A watershed is an area where streams and rainfall drain to a common outlet. In the camps, the management plan aims to engage refugees and host communities to rehabilitate the environment, clean up and prevent pollution of waterways, increase resilience to climate shocks by reducing disaster risks from landslides, floods, and fires with an emphasis on Nature-based Solutions such as plantation for slope stabilization, water quality management and the establishment of water reservoirs for different purposes.
- Training for education actors by UNHCR, BARD college and BRAC Institute of Education Development continued in January to enhance technical skills to deliver the Myanmar Curriculum in the camps. 30 master trainers were oriented on tools to support some 2,500 teachers, including Rohingya teachers, in the camps. 75 participants from NGO partners, who have mentorship roles, took part in a workshop to enhance skills to develop teaching materials, classroom observation and feedback skills, and effective facilitation of teacher training.
- **BHASAN CHAR:** Some 2,000 refugees were relocated to the island in two groups (on 7 and 31 January). Some 18,000 refugees are now living on Bhasan Char where the UN, led and coordinated by UNHCR, is working to complement Government and Bangladeshi NGO activities and build on the services already available on the island.



Refugees rebuild shelters in Camp 5 following the blaze on 16 January 2022. © UNHCR

<sup>1</sup> While Camp 5 is managed by UNHCR, Camp 20 Extension and Camp 16 are managed by IOM (see map on page 2).

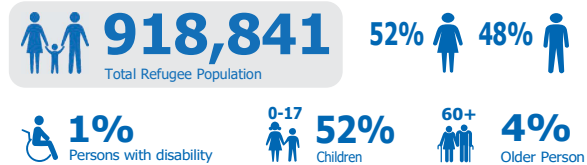
### DONORS

UNHCR in Bangladesh is grateful for the support of Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, the European Union, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jersey, Luxembourg, the Republic of Korea, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and UN CERF.

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**In case you missed:**  
UNHCR and WFP welcomed new funding of USD2 million from the Government of Japan to support refugees on Bhasan Char. Read the news release [here](#).

### POPULATION UPDATE



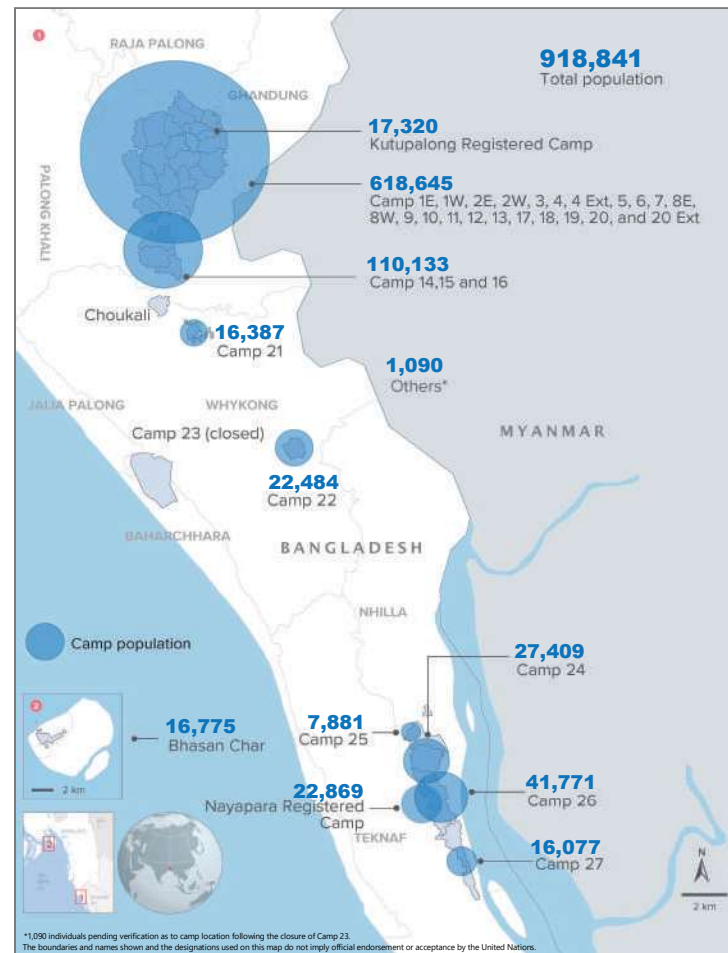
### FUNDING UPDATE

Financial requirements for Bangladesh: US\$ 285.1 million



### UNHCR PARTNERS

Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief | Action Aid Bangladesh | Action Against Hunger | Bangladesh Red Crescent Society | Bangladesh Legal Aid and | Services Trust | Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee | Caritas Bangladesh | Center for Natural Resource Studies | Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust | Community Development Centre | Danish Refugee Council | FH Association | Friendship NGO | Gonoshasthaya Kendra | Handicap International | Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation | International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources | Mukti Cox's Bazar | NGO Forum for Public Health | Oxfam GB | Relief International | Research, Training and Management International | Save the Children International | Social Assistance and Rehabilitation for the Physically Vulnerable | Technical Assistance Incorporated | Terre des Hommes | UNDP |



### CONTACTS AND LINKS

Hannah Macdonald, External Relations Officer, Cox's Bazar, [macdonah@unhcr.org](mailto:macdonah@unhcr.org)  
Romain Desclous, Senior External Relations Officer, Dhaka, [desclous@unhcr.org](mailto:desclous@unhcr.org)

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