

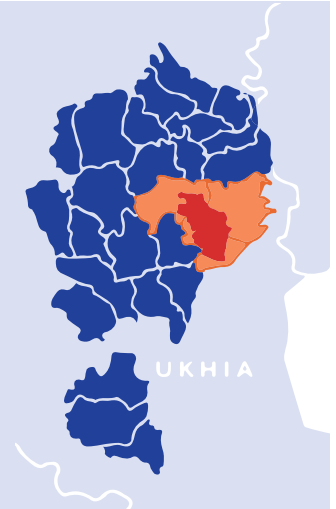
ONE WEEK LATER

SITUATION OVERVIEW

On March 22, a massive fire broke out in the Camps 8W, 9, 10 and 8E housing Rohingya refugees in the Kutupalong Balukhali Area in Cox's Bazar District, Bangladesh. All of these camps are under IOM's Site Management Area of Responsibility.

The fire consumed the shelters and personal belongings of thousands of Rohingya refugee families and essential facilities in the camps. Camp 9 is virtually destroyed and Camps, 8E, 8W, 10 and 11 heavily impacted. The fire left thousands of people temporarily displaced. Deaths have been reported. The fire gutted shelters, distribution, nutrition and learning centers, WASH infrastructure and key medical facilities.

From the onset of the incident, IOM redirected efforts to assist those affected by the fire and mitigate its spread through a rapid deployment of staff, resources and uninterrupted presence in the camps. Efforts to protect beneficiaries are ongoing and coordination with other humanitarian actors is being strengthened to ensure a coherent response.



Since the fire on 22 March, IOM teams succeeded in providing emergency shelter kits to all the affected households. @IOM/2021

Voices from the Field: Mohammad Ali, Rohingya Volunteer Firefighter

"I rushed to douse the blaze when the fire engulfed the camps," recalled Mohammad Ali, a Rohingya DMU volunteer firefighter. "As soon as we noticed black smoke in the distance, we rushed to the area. We saw there were people coming out from deep within the camps carrying all their belongings, as much as they could take as they escaped. As we were dousing it, the fire engulfed the other side of the camp. When our extinguishers ran out, we rushed home. We couldn't take any of our belongings with us. We just took our children and ran. There was no place to run or hide."

To date, a total of 1,800 Disaster Management Unit (DMU) Rohingya volunteers have been trained in Fire Safety, Search and Rescue, and Basic First Aid. When the fire started, Rohingya volunteers were the first responders.

IMMEDIATE NEEDS

As of March 28, 10,797 people still remain temporarily displaced. The dire need to scale up Shelter/NFI, WASH, Health services still remain but also the necessity to mainstream protection across the entire response as the new temporary displacement into other camps facilities or relatives, the lost of all possessions including cloths or documentation and the need for privacy pose new protection risks, especially for women, girls and extremely vulnerable individuals including persons with disabilities and the elderly people.

IOM RESPONSE



Health

Despite the IOM Primary Health Care Clinic in Camp 9 having been destroyed by the fire, IOM continued to provide essential health services to the fire-affected refugees through deployed ambulances, three Mobile Medical Teams (MMT) and reallocation of staff to the affected areas. With the support from the Health Sector, IOM Health Unit treated 119 cases referred by the community and continued providing Mental Health and Psychosocial Support, helping 1,066 persons with basic emotional support and 736 persons with Psychological First Aid.

Shelter / NFI

With the assistance from partners, Shelter/NFI technical teams continued to provide the necessary support and guidance to the fire-affected refugees on how to rebuild and improve their shelters having assisted 937 extremely vulnerable individuals. The burnt LPG cylinders remained an issue due to the related safety concerns. IOM conducted a full assessment of the LPG cylinders, collected 4,548 burnt LPG items and hopes to restart the distribution soon to address the energy needs of the affected refugees.

WASH

Together with partners, IOM distributed 8,006 hygiene kits and conducted post-distribution hygiene promotion sessions reaching 15,376 households. The hygiene kits contain five pieces of bathing soap, five pieces of laundry soap, 120 aquatabs, a jerry can and a bucket with a lid. The hygiene kits will help families maintain hygiene and prevent disease under these tough conditions, until adequate sanitation facilities are available.

Site Management & Site Development (SMSD)

The process of reconstruction has required significant resources for clearing the access areas and the removal of debris. IOM engaged 11,664 Cash-for-Work laborers to this function. Furthermore, in the last week SMSD team conducted 25 multi-sectoral assessments and co-chaired 17 Camp General Coordination meetings. SMSD mobilized 517 staff and 3,429 volunteers to support the response. IOM Site Planning Teams are already developing proposals and generating analyses for the build-back-safer strategy.

Protection

Multi-agency teams continue to work across the affected camps offering psychological first aid and psychosocial support, Protection services - with a continuing emphasis on helping unaccompanied and separated children - and assisting with family reunification and tracing. The Protection teams also disseminate crucial information on the response coordination and the available services with a focus on extremely vulnerable individuals. IOM Protection team supported 2,180 people in the affected camps with the GBV Protection services.

