

Humanitarian Response to the Fire in Rohingya Refugee Camp 16

Impact and Response Report

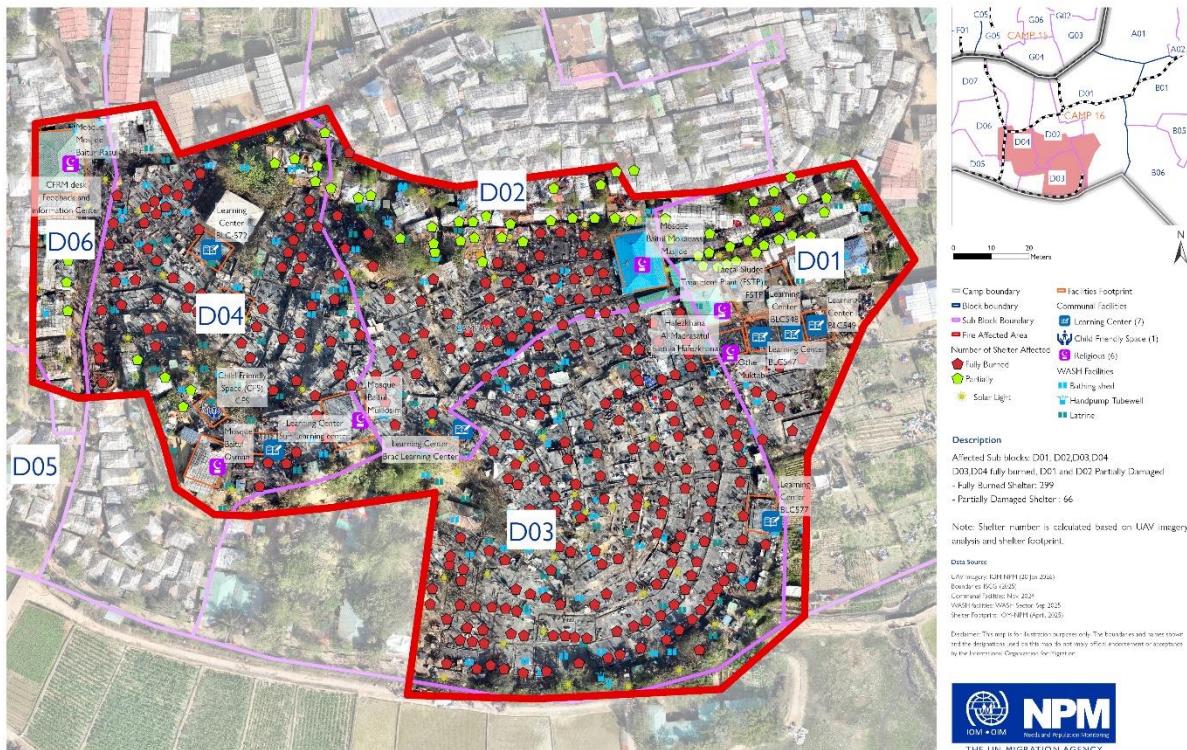
As of 21 January 2026

CAMP 16 (D BLOCK) FIRE AFFECTED SHELTER AND FACILITY MAP

UKHIYA, COX'S BAZAR, BANGLADESH

OMSI, 2026.01.21

Map Production Date: 21 January 2026



Overview

407 Total shelters damaged	22,136 Total burnt area (meter square)	2,066 Displaced Individuals	178 Total facilities damaged	00 Fatalities	05 Injuries
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Situation Update

At approximately 3:00 AM on 20 January 2026, a significant fire incident occurred in Rohingya refugee Camp 16, resulting in widespread destruction across four sub-blocks. Sub-blocks D1 and D2 were partially affected, while D3 and D4 sustained extensive damage. The fire affected an estimated area of 22,136 square meters and extended to three shelters belonging to the host community.

Emergency response actions were immediately undertaken by Rohingya refugee Safety Unit volunteers, in coordination with the Disaster Management Unit, Fire Service and Civil Defence, and the Armed Police Battalion. The IOM Site Management Unit reinforced firefighting efforts by deploying three-wheeler

Mobile Firefighting Units from surrounding camps, with additional support from eight FSCD units. The fire was fully extinguished by 5:30 AM.

Following containment of the fire, humanitarian partners, under the leadership of the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner, swiftly mobilized to conduct joint assessments and initiate a coordinated multi-sector response. Initial reports indicate that 407 shelters were fully or partially damaged or dismantled, displacing 2,066 individuals. Five injuries were recorded, and 178 facilities were affected. Displaced households temporarily sought shelter with relatives and neighbors, with no activation of emergency communal relocation centers reported.

Inter-Sector Response



Shelter-CCCM

Lead Agencies: IOM and UNHCR

Impact Summary

- The assessment confirms that 407 shelters were affected by fire, including 335 fully damaged shelters (Refugees), 69 partially damaged shelters (Refugees), and 3 partially damaged shelters from the host community, resulting in the displacement of 407 households who are currently residing with friends or relatives in the same camp and neighborhood camps.
- Significant damage occurred to WASH, site infrastructure, and community facilities, including 86 latrines, 68 bathing cubicles, 11 water points, one water network, 232 sq. meters of access pathways, 469 sq. meters of slope protection, 76 meters of drainage, 40 solar streetlights, two lightning arresters, and 55 burnt trees, increasing safety and public health risks.
- Fire-affected families lost shelter structures, household items, cooking materials, and winter protection, increasing exposure to cold weather and protection risks.
- Temporary displacement occurred within the camp and into neighbourhood camps, creating an urgent need for emergency shelter, NFIs, and coordinated reconstruction planning.

Response

- **CwC and Community Feedback:** Rapid deployment of 26 Communication with Communities (CwC) staff and volunteers supported emergency referrals via the Community Feedback Mechanism (CFM) and crowd management. Key messages on food and shelter assistance, missing/separated children, damage assessment, complaint mechanisms, document replacement, and rumour management were disseminated through loudspeakers, door-to-door outreach, and household visits. One temporary CFM desk was established, with mobile/roving teams deployed in fire-affected areas, processing 246 cases for follow-up by relevant sectors. All static CFM desks were mobilized to ensure timely responses and prioritization of support for complainants.
- **Coordination:** Two coordination meetings were held—one with all sectors focal points and another with Shelter/NFI partners—to agree on distribution plans, prevent duplication, ensure dignity in assistance, and align shelter reconstruction with the approved site plan.
- **NFI and Shelter Support (SCI):** 353 households were reached, receiving 452 clothing packages, 452 bedding packages, and 103 baby clothing packages. A total of 645 clothing and bedding

packages and 200 baby clothing packages remain at the IOM-HEKS distribution point to cover remaining households over the next 4–5 days.

- **Emergency Shelter and NFI Support (IOM/HEKS):** 351 households received Emergency Shelter Kits (ESK) and technical support, while 357 households received additional NFI assistance.

Plan for the next:

- **LPG Distribution:** IOM has scheduled LPG distribution for 25 January 2026 to ensure safe and effective assistance to fire-affected households. The brief delay was required to complete beneficiary verification, prevent duplication, and address safety considerations associated with high-value LPG items, including secure storage and adequate household space amid ongoing shelter reconstruction.
- **Second Phase Shelter Reconstruction:** Under the leadership of the CiC, IOM, HEKS, and SMSD will convene coordination meetings to share and consolidate site plans, standards, and technical guidance, and to present a harmonized approach to partners. This process aims to align shelter responses, enhance transparency, avoid duplication, and ensure safety through coherent site planning, site development works, fire-break layouts, and clear communication with affected populations.
- **Coordination and Harmonization:** IOM continues to advocate for a coordinated, integrated, and harmonized approach—under the leadership of the RRRC and CiC—to uphold standards and quality, prevent duplication in NFI distributions, and ensure effective planning, allocation, and implementation of shelter reconstruction across the fire-affected areas of Camp 16.

Challenges / Needs

- **S/NFI Distribution Challenges:** During today's HEKS S/NFI distribution, several fire-affected households were initially denied assistance as their shelters were not on the list, resulting in a surge of queries at CFM desks. IOM SMS staff were deployed to manage the situation, temporarily resolving the issue. After their departure, challenges re-emerged, prompting joint shelter damage assessment and verification with HEKS. Distribution is now expected to be completed by 22 January, with a joint monitoring visit planned on the same day to ensure all affected households have received support.
- **Coordination Concerns:** Despite agreements to enhance coordination and avoid duplication, uncoordinated and ad hoc distributions funded by private donors from agencies not regularly operating in the camps continue to occur.

Partners:

- IOM -SMSD, HEKS, CIC, SCI.



Food Security

Lead Agencies: WFP and FAO

Impact Summary

- A total of 501 households (approximately 2,500 individuals) including host and Rohingya communities, required food assistance.

Response

- In coordination with CiC, WFP and its implementing partners provided an immediate emergency response through the distribution of fortified biscuits. During onset, a total of 501 households received one carton each totaling 2.505 MT.
- As of today, a total of 6,700 hot meal packages were distributed to affected individuals, including 4,200 packages distributed today (21 January 2026). The WFP GFA team will continue supporting affected households until they are able to return to their shelters.
- To address the severe impact of the fire, FSS resilience and livelihoods partners will assess damages related to resilience activities, including homestead gardening, to determine appropriate support ahead of the upcoming season.
- Total 130 WFP NRM-DRR CFW volunteers were mobilized for garbage cleaning activities, and 20 GFA CFW volunteers were deployed as porter support at the GFA outlet in Camp 16, bringing the total to 150 CFW volunteers engaged in the response.

Challenges / Needs

- Immediate restoration of shelters with cooking facilities is essential to allow affected households to prepare daily meals and return to normal living conditions.

Partners:

- WFP and its implementing partners (AAB, CARE, RIC), Mukti, CWW (SHED), HIS (Uttaran)



Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)

Lead Agency: UNICEF

Impact Summary

- The assessment confirmed extensive damage to WASH infrastructure, disrupting sanitation, hygiene, and water supply services across the affected area.
- Reported damages include 86 latrines, 68 bathing cubicles, 12 tap stands, one section of the water network, 16 shallow tube wells, one deep tube well, and two 10,000-liter water storage tanks, requiring urgent repair to mitigate public health risks.

Response

- WASH response actions included the repair of six tap stands with chlorinated water supply ensured, alongside water trucking support provided by DPHE to maintain access to safe water.
- WASH volunteers supported debris clearance, with waste safely managed and disposed of at the designated sanitary landfill in Camp 20 Extension.
- Emergency facilities were established, including 32 emergency latrines and 7 emergency bathing units, while distribution of WASH hygiene kits (NFIs) has commenced for affected households.

Challenges / Needs

- Construction of damaged WASH facilities, including water points, latrines, and bathing units, cannot commence until site planning is finalized.
- Achieving the required standard coverage of WASH facilities will require additional time.

Partners:

- DSK, DPHE, UNICEF



Protection including Child Protection and Gender-Based Violence

Lead Agency: UNHCR, Lead Agencies for Sub-Sectors: UNICEF, UNFPA

Impact Summary

Protection Sector:

- Temporary displacement due to loss of shelters has reduced the safety and security perception among affected families.
- Many individuals face delayed access to services after losing registration and service documents in the fire.
- Shelter demarcation disputes may arise during reconstruction, especially affecting female- and elderly-headed households.

GBVSS:

- Looting of essential items (e.g., solar lights, sewing machines) from Women-Friendly Spaces (WFS) has reduced service quality.
- Attendance at WFS by women and girls has declined due to fear of secondary incidents and uncertainty over shelter arrangements.

CPSS:

- Displacement and destruction, including loss of shelters and learning centres, have increased psychosocial distress among children.
- Overcrowding and disruption have heightened risks of child labor, child marriage, and GBV, particularly for adolescent girls and children with specific needs.

Response

Protection:

- PERU teams continued providing Psychological First Aid (PFA), Psychosocial Support (PSS), and referral services to affected families through household visits and group awareness sessions.
- HI supported 92 persons with disabilities among the affected population.
- NRC identified 250 individuals who lost health books and coordinated with the health sector for reissuance.

Summary of Response Activities:

- Households visited: 86
- Individuals provided with PSS: 162
- Individuals provided with PFA: 135
- Individuals referred to services: 160 (health, WASH, shelter, HLP, LPG, and food assistance)

Child Protection:

- A total of 300 children (143 girls, 157 boys), including 3 with disabilities, received recreational psychosocial support; 284 children (145 girls, 139 boys), including 4 with disabilities, received PFA.
- In total, 30 parents (19 females, 11 males) received PFA; one boy with a disability received focused PSS support.
- One mobile Child Friendly Space (CFS) was established.
- Five additional children (4 girls, 1 boy) were registered for case management, and follow-up was conducted for cases registered on 20 January.

- A total of 59 individuals (21 females, 38 males) were referred to essential services, including health, food, and NFIs.

GBV Sub-Sector:

- The GBV Sub-Sector coordinated closely with the Camp-in-Charge (CiC), Site Management, protection focal points, and GBV actors to plan and align the distribution of dignity kits for fire-affected populations.
- A GBV actors' coordination meeting was convened to agree on the dignity kit needs assessment methodology, partner contributions, available stock, and distribution arrangements. The needs assessment is scheduled for 22 January 2026 to determine requirements for fire-affected women and girls aged 10 and above, with NRC and Mukti Cox's Bazar indicating readiness to support dignity kit provision early next week.
- GBV actors delivered Psychosocial First Aid (PFA) to 392 individuals (165 males, 227 females) and Psychosocial Support (PSS) to 57 individuals (2 males, 55 females), while 143 individuals (16 males, 127 females) were referred to relevant services. Immediate protection support was also provided through the temporary sheltering of three families, comprising women and girls, within a Women-Friendly Space (WFS).

Challenges/Needs

Protection:

- Extremely Vulnerable Individuals (EVIs), including persons with disabilities and single-headed households, face barriers to accessing shelter assistance due to point-based eligibility and lack of physical/labor support for temporary shelter construction.
- Some new arrivals in Camp 16 hold Joint Assistance Card (JAC) assigned to other camps, delaying access to food assistance and increasing protection risks for vulnerable households.

Child Protection:

- Affected children and caregivers require ongoing psychosocial first aid, access to safe and child-friendly spaces, and referrals to life-saving services due to heightened emotional distress from sudden displacement.
- Early child protection monitoring and outreach are critical as many families with children are temporarily staying with relatives or friends.

GBV Sub-Sector:

- Fire-affected individuals, particularly women and girls, are difficult to locate, requiring extensive block-to-block outreach to provide support.
- Displacement to relatives' homes, neighbors, or other camps creates geographical barriers, with beneficiaries needing to travel long distances to access essential services.
- The situation has heightened WASH-related challenges, especially for women, girls, children, older persons, and persons with disabilities.

Partners:

Protection: NRC, HI, CODEC, IRC, BRAC

GBVSS: UNFPA, CARE Bangladesh, Mukti, BNPS, IRC

CPSS: DSS, CODEC, World Vision, DSK

Health

Lead Agency: WHO

Impact Summary

- No fatalities or major injuries were reported; five minor injuries were managed since Day 1, with no additional health incidents recorded on Day 2.
- Health service delivery in Camp 16 remains fully functional, with two Primary Health Care Centres (PHCs) and three Health Posts (HPs) operational and accessible to the affected population.
- Displacement-related stress and loss of shelters were identified as potential MHPSS concerns; however, no acute mental health emergencies have been reported.

Response

- The Day 2 assessment confirmed that no additional Mobile Medical Team (MMT) deployment is required, as the existing two PHCs and three HPs are adequately addressing the health needs of the affected population.
- Ongoing health coordination is being maintained with CiC, Site Management, Camp Disaster Focal Point, and health facility focal persons to closely monitor caseload trends.
- EPR oversight continues, including follow-up on Joint Needs Assessment (JNA) findings, integration of MHPSS services through static health facilities, and maintenance of Dispatch & Referral Unit (DRU) ambulance standby for emergency referrals.

Challenges / Needs

- There is a risk of delayed presentation of injuries and stress-related conditions, particularly among displaced households residing with relatives.
- Continued MHPSS screening and provision of psychosocial first aid through PHCs and HPs are required as the recovery phase advances.
- Close monitoring of secondary public health risks, including WASH-related illnesses and overcrowding, remains essential during ongoing rehabilitation activities.

Partners:

- WHO, IOM, PHD, AWARD, AMAN

Nutrition

Lead Agency: UNICEF

Impact Summary

- A total of 154 beneficiaries affected across programs such as, Outpatient Therapeutic Program (OTP) - 3, Targeted Supplementary Feeding Program (TSFP) - 11, Blanket Supplementary Feeding Program (BSFP) - 75, and Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women (PBW) - 65.

Response

- An initial rapid assessment was conducted in D2, D3, and D4 to identify damages to shelters, WASH, and site infrastructure, while food distribution continues for present beneficiaries.
- Damage information has been shared with relevant stakeholders to support coordinated response planning.

Challenges/Needs

- Urgent repair and rehabilitation of WASH facilities is required to mitigate sanitation and disease risks.

Partners:

- SHED



Education

Lead Agencies: UNICEF and Save the Children

Impact Summary

- In addition to the previously reported 19 learning facilities (LFs), 11 more LFs were partially damaged.
- Classes have been suspended due to damage to learning facilities.
- Parents and families of affected children are in need of humanitarian assistance.

Response

- Ten learning centres (LCs) are being used as temporary shelters for 16 affected families, while two additional temporary centres are constructed with tarpaulin and bamboo support learners and parents under trained MHPSS professionals.
- Psychosocial support is ongoing, including a PFA orientation session facilitated by the MHPSS Coordinator for 27 participants (19 learners: 12 girls, 7 boys; 8 parents: 5 men, 3 women). PFA activities, approved by the Camp-in-Charge, include basic needs assessment, empathetic listening, emotional validation, relaxation exercises, referrals, and follow-up.
- Non-food items (NFIs), including clothing packages, winter clothing, baby clothing, and bedding, were provided to 380 families in Camp 16.
- Learners from affected LFs are being relocated to nearby learning facilities, with classes scheduled to resume from Sunday at the new locations.

Challenges / Needs

- With 30 learning facilities affected (19 fully and 11 partially damaged), the available adjacent LFs may be insufficient to safely accommodate all learners.
- Learning materials and educational supplies were damaged or destroyed in the fire, further disrupting educational activities.

Partners:

- UNICEF (BRAC), SCI (FIVDB, JCF), BRAC (SKUS)



Livelihoods and Skill Development

Lead Agency: UNHCR

- No new updates are available at this time.