

Cox's Bazar - Bulletin #1

Needs and services



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Summary findings

Do you feel informed about the kind of aid available to you? Mean: 3.6/n=988



Does the aid you receive currently cover your most important needs? Mean: 3.1/n=1000



Does aid go to those who need it most? Mean: 3.7/n=1003



How satisfied are you with the cash support that you receive?* Mean: 3.8/n=152



*This question was only asked to those who said they receive cash support.

Has aid provision been stable and consistent over the last 12 months? n=992



Have you been selling your aid items for cash to meet your needs? n=1001

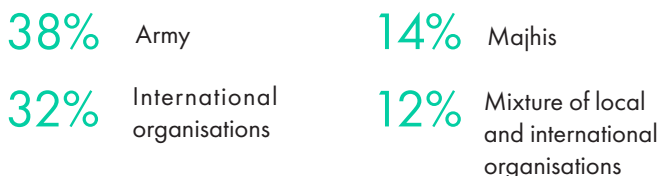


Least trusted information channels*



Radio, Listening Groups, SMS, Whatsapp, phone calls

Preferred actors to receive aid from



*Based on the answer options selected least often in a multiple choice question

Background

This thematic bulletin is the first of three to summarise the main findings from Ground Truth Solutions (GTS) surveys conducted with Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. The survey, carried out in July 2018, surveyed 1,003 displaced Rohingya in 23 collective sites in the Ukhia and Teknaf sub-districts. The goal is to use the views of affected people to inform the humanitarian response and to adjust programming to their priorities. GTS developed the survey questions and the sampling in conjunction with the Inter Sector Coordination Group (ISCG), International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Needs and Population Monitoring unit (NPM), Internews, and Translators without Borders (TWB). GTS will track how these perceptions evolve over time in two additional survey rounds over the next eight months. The majority of questions are closed and use a 1-5 Likert scale to quantify answers.

Demographics 1003 respondents

Location	Gender
Kutupalong Expansion Site* 58% (579)	Male 55% (554) Female 45% (449)
Camps 14, 15, 16 17% (167)	
Camps 21, 22, 23 10% (102)	
Camps 24, 26, 27 10% (105)	
Kutupalong & Naypara RC 5% (50)	
	Age
	18-30 years 38% (386)
	31-40 years 30% (301)
	41-85 years 32% (316)

All data were analysed according to demographic variables and disaggregated by gender, age, location, date of arrival in camps, disability, and gender of the head of household. Where considerable, these differences are mentioned in the text. The surveys were conducted by trained NPM enumerators who speak Bengali and Chittagong, and who received Rohingya language training from TWB. Data was collected using a random sampling strategy between 24 July and 6 August. The survey data was supplemented by Key Informant Interviews (KII) among humanitarian agencies and focus group discussions within camps.

Key takeaways

Most respondents feel informed about the kind of aid available to them. Awareness of available aid is particularly high in Camp 21 (Chakmarkul), with 83% feeling mostly or very informed, while respondents in Camp 22 (Unchiprang) feel less informed, with only 37% responding positively. Within the Kutupalong Expansion Sites, awareness is highest in Camp 17 and lowest in Camp 8W. People who reported having a disability (5% of sample) feel less informed about the aid that is available to them.

Those who feel uninformed want more information about their future and the issue of repatriation, as well as food and non-food item distributions. Our findings suggest that the most trusted information channels for both men and women are community members (friends and family) or representatives (Imams, Majhis) and other in-person channels (agency volunteers, camp/block and para development committees, and local administration). Only 10% of respondents trust the information they receive from information centres and even less (3%) from Listening Groups.

Although the majority of respondents feel that aid provision has been stable and consistent over the last year and that it goes to those most in need, people's needs are still not fully covered by the aid they receive, according to 77% of respondents.

Almost a third of those surveyed in Camp 22 (Unchiprang) and Camps 24 (Leda), 26 (Nayapara) and 27 (Jadimura) do not feel their most important needs are covered, while about half of those surveyed in Camp 21 (Chakamarkul) and Kutupalong refugee camp say the aid currently meets their needs. Camp 4 in the Kutupalong Expansion Site is the only camp where no respondents said their needs are met by the aid they receive.

Those with unmet needs cite cash, food, shelter and non-food items, as well as water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), including tube wells, toilets, and showers, as their most important needs. Focus group participants also mentioned a need for more medical supplies. Eighty-one percent of surveyed men list cash, including cash transfers or vouchers, as a key need, compared to 58% of women. Among women, the most commonly cited need is food security, including food assistance and training for farmers.

Respondents frequently mention wanting better shelter, better food, water, and the opportunity to work. The "What Matters?" (Issue 9) bulletin also highlights shelter as a continuous concern among Rohingya, with requests for quality shelter material rising over the past weeks.¹

Forty-three percent of respondents report selling the aid items they receive in exchange for cash in order to be able to meet their daily needs. This is more common among women – 51% of women have sold aid items, compared to 36% of men. When women are the sole head of their household, this rises to 71%. These findings are in line with a recent IOM Site Assessment that reported the sale of humanitarian assistance as the third most common source of income (preceded by not having any income source and casual day labour).²

Most respondents who reported selling aid items spent the money on food such as fish, meat, vegetables, chili, salt, as well as firewood or cooking fuel. Several camps have seen the development of thriving markets, in which traders – mostly refugees – sell items that are not attainable through humanitarian assistance.

According to the WFP Refugee influx Emergency Vulnerability Assessment, food is the main form of expenditure among refugees, who spend two-thirds of their monthly budget on food, followed by firewood.

Of the 27% of respondents who are unsure or feel that the aid does not go to those most in need, people report that those with disabilities and people with illnesses are left out, often because they have difficulties getting to the distribution points.

When asked about preferred ways of receiving humanitarian assistance, just over a half would favour a combination of cash and goods or services, while almost a third prefer just receiving direct distributions of goods and services. Of those who already receive cash support, 60% are satisfied with it.



When we get one thing, there is always something else that we need. All of our needs are never met.



[What would make me more optimistic about my future?] The best way to live in real life, good food, access to safe water, permanent houses, and good education for children.

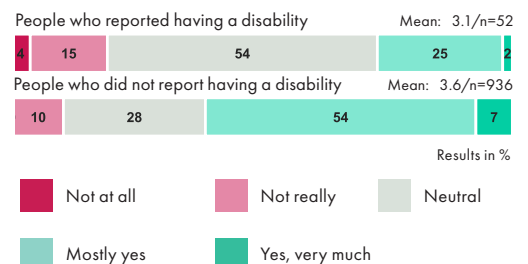


There is very little improvement in my life. It would be better if I can get a job.

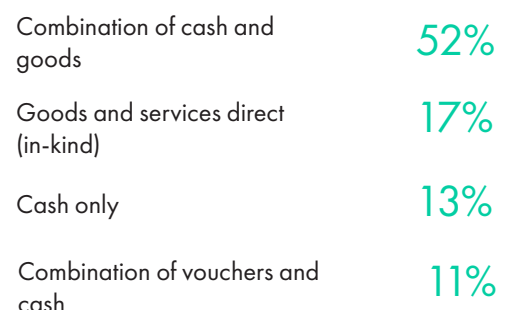


We desperately need money to buy food items other than rice-pulses.

Do you feel informed about the kind of aid available to you?



Preferred modalities of humanitarian assistance



¹ BBC Media Action, Internews, and Translators Without Borders, "What Matters?" Humanitarian Feedback Bulletin on Rohingya Response, Issue 9 (August 15, 2018).

² International Organization for Migration, "Needs and Population Monitoring Site Assessment: Round 11" (July 2018)

Recommendations

1. Humanitarian actors should consider diverting some of their current assistance from in-kind distributions to cash, where market assessments suggest allow. The survey results suggests there is a recognition that aid distributions alone cannot meet daily needs, and as a result, there is a **growing demand for cash** - and in some camps a growing marketplace to accommodate it. In camps without such markets, such as those further from the main road, consider supporting their development where feasible.
2. While cash increases would be widely regarded as positive, there are some **important considerations** – especially with regard to delivery mechanisms – as most refugees do not have bank accounts or mobile phones to receive transfers. Vouchers may be a useful alternative, provided there is sufficient access to the relevant shops. Access is a particular issue for the elderly or those with disabilities. Moreover, cash should target women and in particular female-headed households (11% of the survey sample were solely female-headed households) where women are less likely to do cash for work or leave home to collect wood from nearby forests.
3. With reference to distributions, it is also important to **consider the needs of vulnerable groups**, especially the elderly and those with disabilities. The survey data highlights not only a lack of awareness of available aid, but also issues in access to aid among these groups. Consider hiring refugees or volunteers to bring aid directly to immobile people to ensure they are not left out of distributions. Alternatively scale up direct household distributions. Since these individuals cannot engage in any cash for work programmes, ensuring their needs are met with direct distributions is key.
4. Consider **scaling up broader livelihood programming**, such as cash for work, and learning opportunities (training in life skills and handcrafts) to empower refugees, and to discourage possible negative coping strategies. For women and girls, these should happen in the relevant friendly spaces. Also consider the distribution of seeds and vertical garden kits to allow households to grow some basic produce themselves. A recent report found that the ability to earn money and be somewhat self-reliant was inextricably linked to dignity for the Rohingya people.³
5. While there may be some reluctance to pursue more durable and solid shelter options, there is clearly a need. **Improved shelter** was repeatedly mentioned as priority need, not only as protection during the monsoon, but also to improve the sense of safety in camps – especially among women (see [Bulletin #3 Safety and outlook](#)). Equally important is increasing the provision of alternative fuel sources (such as LPG and cooking stoves) to help limit deforestation and increase safety in shelters.
6. Co-ordinate across all actors to avoid duplicative distributions and **ensure consistent messaging on available aid**. This will help in avoiding rumours and disquiet, especially on what different support might be available to refugees and host communities. Consider building trust in official information channels by making them more recognisable in the camps, and ensuring that Rohingya speakers work there (both men and women). Co-ordinate with trusted and respected actors such as Ma'jis and the Army to inform about coming distributions.



Due to lack of money we cannot eat anything that we want, we don't like eating the same rice and daal every day.



My house collapsed once, and there is a possibility of it collapsing again.



It would have been better if the services were provided in accordance with the number of family members.

Those in need who do not adequately receive aid or services



People with disabilities, people with illnesses, elderly people, poor people

Ground Truth Solutions is an international non-governmental organisation that provides the humanitarian sector with tools to systematically listen, learn, and act on the views of affected people. Our goal is to make the perceptions of affected people the touchstone and driver of humanitarian effectiveness.

For more information about GTS surveys in Bangladesh, please contact Kai Hopkins (Senior Programme Manager - kai@groundtruthsolutions.org) or Rebecca Hetzer (Programme Officer - rebecca@groundtruthsolutions.org).

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BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

³ Humanitarian Policy Group and Overseas Development Institute, "Dignity and the displaced Rohingya in Bangladesh" (August 2018).