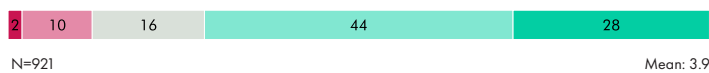


# Bulletin • Rohingya and host communities

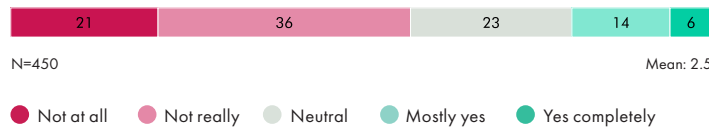
## Social cohesion

### Summary findings

Rohingya - Do you feel welcomed by the host community?



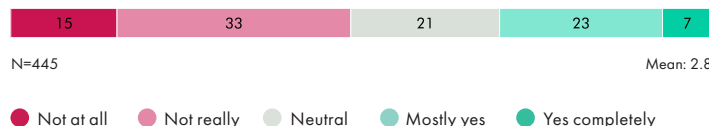
Host - Do you feel Bangladeshis who live in this area have been welcoming towards Rohingya?



Rohingya - Do you feel there is harmony between the Bangladeshi and Rohingya communities that live in this area?



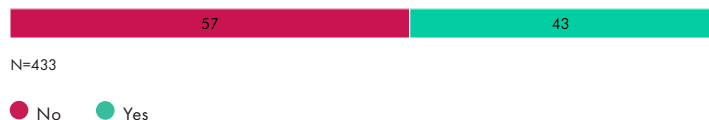
Host - Do you feel there is harmony between the Bangladeshi and Rohingya communities that live in this area?



Rohingya - Would you like the opportunity to meet with and talk to locals?



Host - Would you like the opportunity to meet with and talk to Rohingya?



Results in %

This thematic bulletin on social cohesion presents findings and recommendations based on Ground Truth Solutions' (GTS) surveys conducted with 943 Rohingya and 451 locals in Bangladesh. The survey, carried out in late 2018, was administered in the Ukhia and Teknaf subdistricts. The goal is to use the views of affected people and the host community to inform humanitarian response and adjust programming accordingly. GTS will continue to track how these perceptions evolve over time, with the next survey round scheduled for spring 2019.

GTS has published three bulletins analysing Rohingya perspectives on needs and services, safety and outlook and feedback and relationships, as well as a separate bulletin on host community perspectives, covering needs and outlook.



I want to gain more knowledge about the practice and culture of Rohingya people. Relations will also become cordial if locals are provided with opportunities and benefits like what the Rohingya people are getting - *local respondent*

^ This question was asked in July 2018 and the mean score has since increased by 0.2

# Key takeaways

**Rohingya are far more positive and more open to establishing social ties than locals.**

**Seventy-two percent of Rohingya feel welcomed by the host community**, an increase from 55% in July. In Camp 21 (Chakmarkul), 97% think locals have been welcoming, as well as 88% in Camp 23 (Shamlapur) – an increase from July when only 52% felt Bangladeshis were welcoming. Sentiments are slightly less positive in Camps 6 and 27 (Jadimura), where roughly one third do not feel locals have been welcoming.

**Only 20% of local respondents think Bangladeshis in their area have been welcoming towards Rohingya.** This is even lower in and around Camp 25 (Dokkin Alikhali) where a mere 4% of locals think Bangladeshis have been welcoming.

Among Rohingya respondents, the longer they have lived in Bangladesh, the more positive their experience is. While 55% of newly arrived Rohingya feel welcomed, for Rohingya born in Bangladesh, this increases to 89%. Conversely, the longer locals have lived in the area, the more negative their view of host community-Rohingya relations. Interestingly, in focus group discussions, host communities reported that their attitudes have shifted from the start of the crisis, where they felt much more supportive and welcoming of Rohingya but now are much less so, feeling that Rohingya have “been here too long.”

The mid-term review of the Joint Response Plan signalled a potential deterioration of relations between host and Rohingya communities,<sup>1</sup> which is evident in the negative sentiments emerging from the host community survey data. While 61% of Rohingya think there is harmony between the two communities, only 30% of locals agree. More over, **only 11% of Rohingya indicate there are tensions, compared to 48% among locals.** Tensions seem to be higher among locals living in and around Camps 8E and 9, as well as Rohingya in Camps 8W and 6.

In certain areas, there seems to be a fundamental divergence in perceptions around harmony – or lack thereof - between Rohingya and Bangladeshis. For example, in Camp 23 (Shamlapur), where 2% of Rohingya and 57% of locals report tensions between the two communities. On the whole, locals who regularly come into contact with aid providers are more positive about the relationship between Bangladeshis and Rohingya than those who do not.

Both **Rohingya and Bangladeshis who think the relationship between their communities is harmonious cite sharing the same religious affiliation as the main reason.** A third of both host community and Rohingya who report positive inter-community relations feel that humanitarian assistance has helped contribute to the situation.

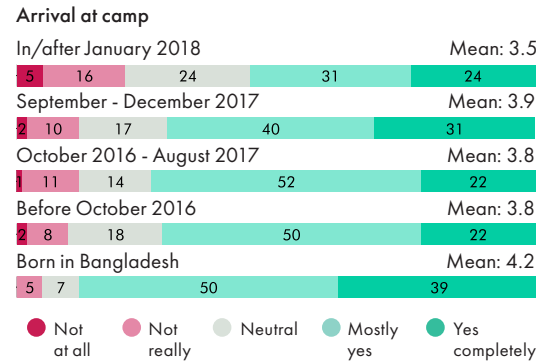
Most Rohingya who think there are tensions attribute them to **restrictions on Rohingya’s right to work** in the local economy and, as a consequence, to Rohingya *unofficially* working in the local economy. The main reasons given by locals for tensions are **cultural differences and Rohingya unofficially working in the area.** While allowing Rohingya the right to work might improve how they view inter-community relations, it is doubtful that such a move would satisfy locals, who feel Rohingya are competition for jobs and resources, as well as for services and utilities.

In a series of in-depth focus groups with both male and female representatives from the host community, they gave a multitude of reasons for feeling dissatisfied with the presence of Rohingya in the area. They feel they have lost cultivable land due to the influx of people and that there are fewer opportunities to work, coupled with a sense that prices in the area are rising. Some also cited illegal activities such as drugs or aggressive behaviour as reasons for not wanting the Rohingya nearby. According to Xchange’s survey of host community members, 85% of locals feel unsafe having Rohingya nearby (although our findings reveal positive feelings around safety – see more in the [Needs and outlook](#) bulletin) and 85% do not think Rohingya children should be allowed to attend Bangladeshi schools.<sup>2</sup>

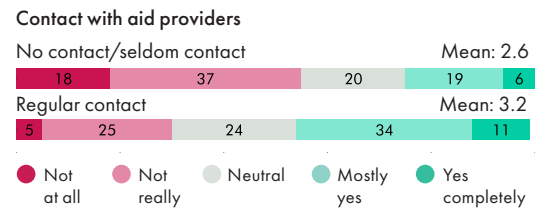


I have been here for eight years and have never been in a quarrel with locals - they have given us space to live, which helps us - *Rohingya respondent*

## Rohingya - Do you feel welcomed by the host community?



## Host - Do you feel there is harmony between the Bangladeshi and Rohingya communities that live in this area?



Rohingya - sources of tension n=101	%
Rohingya unofficially working in the local economy	45
Restrictions on Rohingyas right to work in the local economy	41
Competition for resources	36
Competition for services and utilities	34
Host - sources of tension n=215	%
Cultural differences	55
Rohingya unofficially working in the local economy	52
Competition for services and utilities	52
Unfair distribution of support/services	34

Only the top four responses are shown. Percentages do not total 100 because respondents could choose multiple options.

1 Inter Sector Coordination Group, “Joint Response Plan for Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis - Mid-term Review” (March-December 2018)

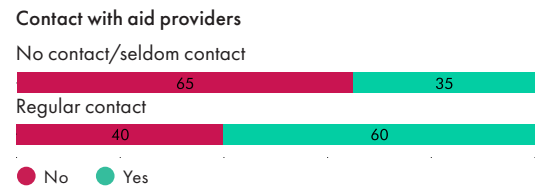
2 XChange, “The Rohingya Amongst Us: Bangladeshi Perspectives on the Rohingya Crisis Survey” (28 August, 2018)

**Rohingya are generally more open to establishing ties with locals;** 79% of Rohingya would like the opportunity to meet with and talk to Bangladeshis in the area, compared to only 43% of locals who want to connect with Rohingya. Rohingya born in Bangladesh are more willing to meet with locals than newer arrivals, while Bangladeshis living in the area all their lives are less willing to meet with Rohingya than those who moved to the area. Locals who come into regular contact with aid providers are also more likely to want to meet with and talk to Rohingya, than those who do not.

Somewhat unsurprisingly, there is a correlation between how well the communities perceive each other and their willingness to engage; Rohingya who think there are tensions are less likely to want to meet with and talk to locals, and locals who perceive tensions are less likely to want to engage with Rohingya.

Fifty-eight percent of Rohingya who want to meet with locals think agencies or the government have not created enough opportunities to do so. Among locals who want to meet with Rohingya, roughly half think there are not enough opportunities created to make this possible.

Host - **Would you like the opportunity to meet with and talk to Rohingya?**



## Recommendations

- ✔ **Consider the information needs of host communities too, especially around the ever-important issue of repatriation.** While more is being done to better communicate with Rohingya around repatriation, given the on-going tensions with the host community, it would be beneficial to keep host communities in the loop too. In the focus group discussions, the lack of clarity around what will happen in the future only added to concerns and was standing in the way of better inter-community relations.
- ✔ As mentioned in the host community [Needs and outlook](#) bulletin, more could be done to **address the major needs and concerns among the host community.** This would help improve inter-community relations by reducing resentment and assistance comparisons, which fuel the sense that Rohingya are competition.
- ✔ More specifically, **joint programming could help bring both communities together** in a positive, collaborative way. The [World Bank's programme](#) to tackle deforestation provides a good example of a project which brings Rohingya and host communities together to help on critical issues that affect both parties. Other ideas could include joint infrastructure projects, which could benefit all.
- ✔ **Both local and international NGOs could play a more active role in fostering healthy inter-community relationships.** They are in a unique position to bring both Rohingya and host communities together and, as mentioned above, many feel more could be done here. The latest issue of *What Matters?* reported that interactions between the two communities shape perceptions,<sup>3</sup> so humanitarian actors should increase the opportunities for positive meetings.
- ✔ As the two groups cite their shared religious identity as a major social tie, **religious groups and leaders should continue to encourage and support positive relations and, where possible, bring both communities together.** Highlighting that people have more things in common than not could be a useful approach, especially when combined with some of the other recommendations above.



Due to their coming, we don't have enough space for agriculture and farming. Relations can be improved if we get enough space, are given employment opportunities with better wages, and if events are organised that we can take part in with them - *local respondent*



Things were given to Rohingya people, the same was not given to us, so we don't have any value. We are poor too – relations would improve if we also get some assistance like Rohingya people and events are organised where we can participate together - *local respondent*



If people of our country are given work opportunities in NGOs it would be a great help. Prices have increased so much after the Rohingya people arrived, it would help if the prices of the products come down - *local respondent*

# Demographics

943 Rohingya respondents

## Gender

● Male: 56% (524)  
● Female: 44% (419)



## Head of household

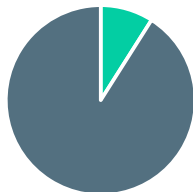
Male-headed 44% (416)  
Multiple-headed 40% (381)  
Female-headed 15% (146)

## Age (years)

18-30 45% (426)  
31-40 25% (232)  
41-85 30% (285)

## Respondents with a disability

● No: 91% (854)  
● Yes: 9% (89)



## Location

Kutupalong expansion site\* 51% (485)  
Camps 14, 15, 16 15% (144)  
Camps 21, 22, 23 13% (127)  
Camps 24, 26, 27 13% (119)  
Kutupalong & Nayapara RC 7% (68)

\*Camps 1E, 2E, 2W, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8W, 9, 12, 13, 17, 20 ext

## Authors

Rebecca Hetzer - Programme Officer  
Kai Hopkins - Senior Programme Manager

The majority of questions are closed and use a 1-5 Likert scale to quantify answers. 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 IOM Needs and Population Monitoring enumerators who speak Bengali and Chittagong, and who received Rohingya language training from Translators without Borders. Data was collected using a random sampling strategy between 24–31 October. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) have partnered with GTS to capture host communities' perceptions and to work towards strengthening local capacities. The survey data was supplemented by 12 focus group discussions with members of the host community, led by BDRCS, and key Informant interviews among humanitarian agencies led by GTS.

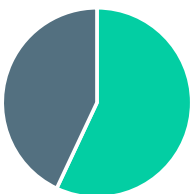
Ground Truth Solutions is an international non-governmental organisation that provides the humanitarian sector with tools to systematically listen, learn, and act on the views of affected people. Our goal is to make the perceptions of affected people the touchstone and driver of humanitarian effectiveness.

For more information about GTS surveys in Bangladesh, please contact Kai Hopkins ([kai@groundtruthsolutions.org](mailto:kai@groundtruthsolutions.org)) or Rebecca Hetzer ([rebecca@groundtruthsolutions.org](mailto:rebecca@groundtruthsolutions.org)).

451 host community respondents

## Gender

● Male: 43% (192)  
● Female: 57% (259)



## Head of household

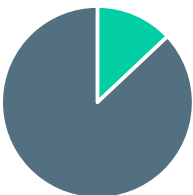
Multiple-headed 62% (278)  
Male-headed 28% (125)  
Female-headed 11% (48)

## Age (years)

18-30 41% (183)  
31-40 29% (129)  
40-95 31% (139)

## Respondents with a disability


● No: 87% (393)  
● Yes: 13% (58)



## Location

Camp 26 - Mochoni 18% (81)  
Camp 27 - Jadimura British para 16% (73)  
Camp 26 - Shal Bagan 15% (68)  
Camp 23 - Shamlapur 12% (55)  
Camp 26 - Noor Ali Para 12% (52)  
Camp 25 - Dokkin Alikhali 11% (51)  
Camp 08E and 9 10% (46)  
Camp 27 - Moddum Dondomia 6% (25)

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