

# Bulletin • Rohingya and host communities

## Social cohesion

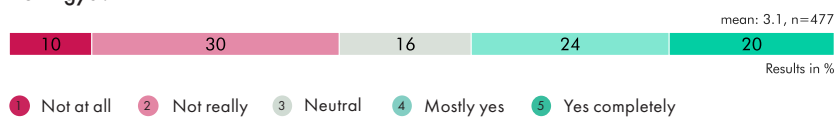


### Summary findings

Rohingya - Do you feel welcomed by the host community?



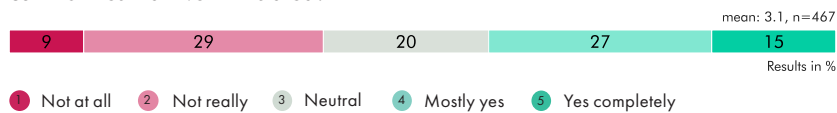
Host - Do you feel Bangladeshis who live in this area have been welcoming towards Rohingyas?



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 Rohingyas?



This thematic bulletin on social cohesion presents findings and recommendations based on Ground Truth Solutions' surveys conducted with 1,034 Rohingya and 487 Bangladeshis, living within or in close proximity to the camps, in Bangladesh. The surveys, carried out in April 2019, were administered in the Ukhaia and Teknaf subdistricts. It is the third round of data collection, with the first having taken place in [July 2018](#) and the second in [October 2018](#). The goal is to use the views of affected people and the host community to inform the humanitarian response and adjust programming accordingly.

Ground Truth Solutions has published five bulletins from the third round of data collection on the response: three addressing Rohingya perspectives on [needs and services](#), [safety and outlook](#) and [feedback and relationships](#), as well as a separate bulletin on [host community perspectives](#).

#### Changes in responses since October 2018

- ⬆ Increase in mean score of 0.5 or more **or** increase in "yes" responses by more than 10%
- ⬆ Increase in mean score of less than 0.5 **or** increase in "yes" responses by 5-10%
- = Change in mean score by less than 0.1 **or** change in "yes" responses by less than 5%
- ⬇ Decrease in mean score of less than 0.5 **or** decrease in "yes" responses by 5-10%
- ⬇ Decrease in mean score of 0.5 or more **or** decrease in "yes" responses by more than 10%

A full overview of changes over the three rounds can be found on page 5.

# Key takeaways

While in October 2018 there was a clear divide in perceptions between Rohingya and Bangladeshi communities on issues of social cohesion, with Rohingya viewing the relationship quite positively and Bangladeshis quite negatively, the divide has since lessened. Previously, 72% of Rohingya felt welcomed by the host community; now 64% feel that way. While Rohingya communities are slightly more negative, responses among Bangladeshis have become more positive. In October 2018, only 20% of those surveyed thought Bangladeshis in their area were welcoming towards Rohingya, jumping to 44% in April 2019. There is a slight geographical difference in Rohingya responses, with 72% of Rohingya surveyed in Teknaf feeling welcomed by locals, compared to 63% in Ukhia.

**Rohingya views on harmony between the two communities have become more negative while views among Bangladeshis have improved.** In October 2018, 61% of Rohingya and 30% of Bangladeshis believed there was harmony between Rohingya and Bangladeshis, while in this round 45% of Rohingya and 42% of Bangladeshis said the two communities have a harmonious relationship.

Both Rohingya and Bangladeshi respondents who do not think their communities have a harmonious relationship name **competition for employment and livelihoods as the main source of tension**. Rohingya also name restrictions on their right to work in the local economy as a source of tension, while host community respondents point to Rohingya unofficially working in the local economy as straining the relationship. Forty-seven percent of Bangladeshis who believe there is a lack of employment opportunities believe it is because Rohingya are willing to work for less money and are getting the jobs in the area (see more in the [Needs and outlook](#) bulletin). This issue was also discussed by a host community audience on the radio programme Betar Sanglap, where they explained that while local labourers demand a daily wage of BDT 400-500, Rohingya are willing to work for BDT 200-300.<sup>1</sup> Bangladeshis also report that while their income has decreased, the cost of food, medicine, transport and education has seen a sharp increase since the influx of Rohingya.<sup>2</sup> There are reports of attempts to counteract the negative effects on local markets, with Rohingyas claiming that local police have shut down small shops and markets that have sprung up around the camps to ensure that people shop at the host community leader's market.<sup>3</sup>

Although cultural differences are also cited as a source of tension, Rohingya and Bangladeshis who believe the relationship between the two communities is harmonious both point to **shared religion as the main factor facilitating good relations**. Rohingya also cite the hospitality of locals while Bangladeshi respondents consider the social bonds between the communities, including friendships and marriages, as key to facilitating a harmonious relationship.

There is still a **sense among Bangladeshi respondents that they should be receiving aid and services similar to what is provided for Rohingya communities**. When asked what they believe could improve relations with the Rohingya communities, Bangladeshi respondents called for increased support from NGOs and the government as well as for more job opportunities.

**Rohingya surveyed remain more open to establishing social ties than Bangladeshis** living in or near the camps, with 73% of Rohingya saying they would like to have the opportunity to meet with and talk to locals, compared to only 34% of Bangladeshis surveyed who would like to meet with and talk to Rohingya. While this willingness among Rohingya has remained consistent since October 2018, there has been a decline in that of Bangladeshis, where previously 43% had been open to socialising. Male Rohingya respondents are more open to the idea of meeting and talking to locals than female Rohingya respondents. Among Bangladeshis surveyed, those who regularly come into contact with humanitarian organisations are more open to socialising with Rohingya (43%) than those who have little contact with humanitarian organisations (31%).



There should be equal opportunities for both Bangladeshis and Rohingya. Services and support should be rendered equally for all, and job opportunities should be given to everyone.

– Bangladeshi respondent



We want to work outside the camps because the support from the government is not enough to fulfil our needs.

– Rohingya respondent

## Rohingya - Sources of tension n=109

Competition for employment/livelihoods	31%
Competition for firewood	29%
Restrictions on Rohingya's right to work in the local economy	28%
Cultural differences	26%

## Host - Sources of tension n=181

Competition for employment/livelihoods	42%
Rohingya unofficially working in the local economy	39%
Cultural differences	30%
Competition for firewood	22%

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



So many Rohingya came into our country. They're getting support - if we could get that support, perhaps we will be able to develop a good relationship with them. And if our children could get jobs, the relationship with the Rohingya would get better.

– Bangladeshi respondent

1 BBC Media Action, Internews, and Translators without Borders, "What Matters?" (Issue 23, April 2019)

2 Ibid.

3 BBC Media Action, "CXB Foresight Service: Livelihoods" (March 2019)

As in the previous round, both Rohingya and host community data shows a clear correlation between perceptions of harmony and willingness to interact; those who believe there are tensions between the communities are unwilling to engage with one another, while those who view the relationship as harmonious are more willing to establish social ties.

## Recommendations

- ✔ As recommended in October 2018, and as discussed in the [Needs and outlook](#) bulletin, **there is more that aid providers could do to support local communities directly**. Not only would this improve their lives, but it would also help reduce resentment at the perceived inequality of current distributions. That said, the **issues of social cohesion cannot be addressed by simply increasing service provision** among Bangladeshis, and more direct attempts to tackle the issues head-on are needed.
- ✔ Moreover, given the obvious long-term nature of the crisis, **there is an imperative to start tackling issues around social cohesion quickly**. Should relations significantly deteriorate, it would be much harder to make any progress in fostering a harmonious relationship between the two communities.
- ✔ Agencies should consider what might be the **shared social interests that could bring both communities together** in a way that could foster more positive relations. It is already clear that the shared religion is an opportunity to bring people together around a common identity, but perhaps other activities could be done too. For example, involving both Rohingya and Bangladeshis in sporting events or art and culture could reduce the perceived notion of cultural differences, which acts as a barrier to positive engagement.
- ✔ Given the shared demand for economic opportunities, consider **doing more joint programming**, which could perhaps include joint vocational classes or cash for work schemes that both groups can participate in together. This has the advantage of not only bringing the two communities together, but it does so in a way that also addresses some of their shared and pressing concerns.

### Rohingya - Factors that facilitate a harmonious relationship n=423

Sharing the same religious affiliation	76%
Hospitality of locals in sharing resources	42%
Assistance and community projects by humanitarian organisations	42%
Positive role of local authorities, government or religious authorities	32%

### Host - Factors that facilitate a harmonious relationship n=193

Sharing the same religious affiliation	75%
Social bonds between communities including intermarriages, friendships, etc.	41%
Assistance and community projects by humanitarian organisations	37%
Positive role of local authorities, government or religious authorities	32%

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



Social bonding, maybe through cultural or religious programmes, could help us build a relationship with Rohingya.

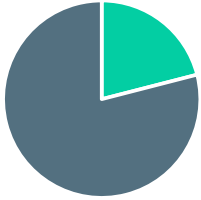
– Bangladeshi respondent

# Demographics

1,034 Rohingya respondents

## Location

Ukhia: 79% (822)  
Teknaf: 21% (212)



## Gender

Male: 59% (607)  
Female: 41% (427)



## Head of household

Solely male-headed 58% (597)  
Multiple-headed 23% (242)  
Solely female-headed 19% (195)

## Age (years)

18-28 36% (377)  
29-40 36% (374)  
41-85 27% (283)

## Camps covered

### Ukhia (23 camps)

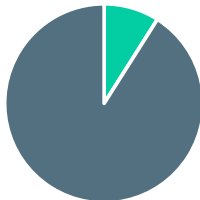
1E, 1W, 2E, 2W, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8E, 8W, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 (Hakimpara), 15 (Jamtoli), 16 (Potibonia), 17, 18, 19, 20 Ext

### Teknaf (7 camps)

21 (Chakmarkul), 22 (Unchiprang), 23 (Shamlapur), 24 (Leda), 25 (Ali Khali), 26 (Nayapara), 27 (Jadimura)

## Respondents with a disability

No: 91% (949)  
Yes: 9% (99)



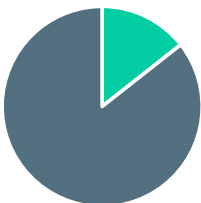
## Arrival in Bangladesh

Before October 2016 6% (63)  
October 2016 - August 2017 25% (254)  
September - December 2017 61% (621)  
After January 2018 8% (83)

487 Bangladeshi respondents

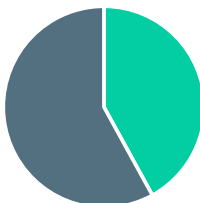
## Location

Teknaf: 86% (416)  
Ukhia: 14% (70)



## Gender

Female: 58% (282)  
Male: 42% (205)



## Head of household

Multiple-headed 46% (223)  
Solely male-headed 37% (181)  
Solely female-headed 17% (83)

## Age (years)

18-30 45% (219)  
31-39 22% (107)  
40-98 33% (161)

## Bangladeshis surveyed in or in close proximity to camps

### Ukhia

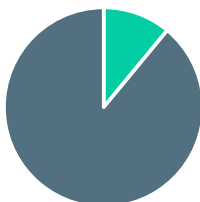
8E and 9

### Teknaf

23 (Shamlapur), 24 (Leda), 25 (Dokkhin Alikhali), 26 (Mochoni), 26 (Noor Ali Para), 27 (Jadimura British Para), 27 (Moddum Domdumia)

## Respondents with a disability

No: 89% (432)  
Yes: 11% (55)

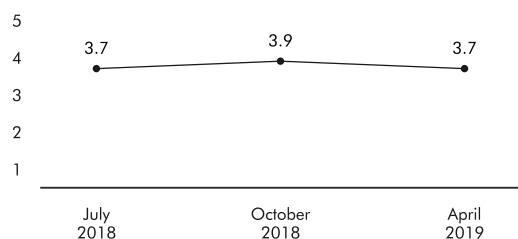


## Level of education

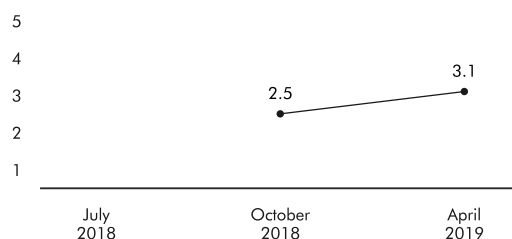
Some secondary education 17% (81)  
Completed primary education 12% (56)  
Some primary education 36% (171)  
No formal education 35% (169)

# Overview of responses over time

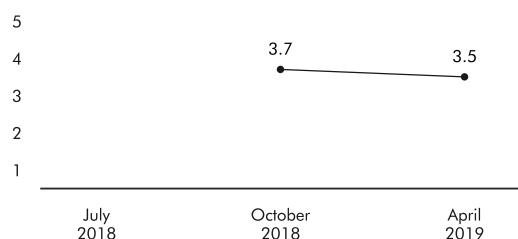
Rohingya - Do you feel welcomed by the host community?



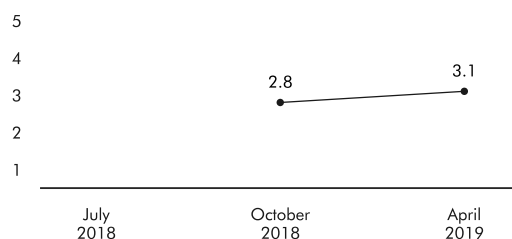
Host - Do you feel Bangladeshis who live in this area have been welcoming towards Rohingya?



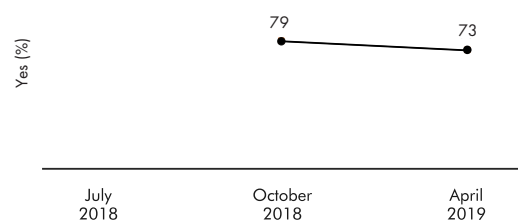
Rohingya - Do you feel there is harmony between the Bangladeshi and Rohingya communities that live in this area?



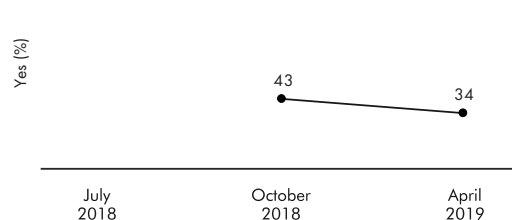
Host - Do you feel there is harmony between the Bangladeshi and Rohingya communities that live in this area?



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?



## Methodology

### Sampling methodology

The enumerators did not specifically target heads of households but rather surveyed the first person they encountered who was willing to participate, to ensure that as broad a range of experiences as possible were reported. Enumerators were instructed to try to achieve gender balance in each area covered.

**Rohingya survey.** Rohingya were surveyed in 30 camps in the Ukhia and Teknaf subdistricts. Households were selected to participate in the survey by randomly assigning shelters to approach from a sitemap of each camp. Certain small camps were over-sampled as we tried to survey at least 30 responses per camp, in order to ensure some minimum reliability on the camp level.

**Host community survey.** Bangladeshis were surveyed in nine locations within or in very close proximity to the camps in Ukhia and Teknaf. The objective was to capture the perspectives of Bangladeshis who live in close proximity to Rohingya communities and who might have some interaction with aid providers in Ukhia and Teknaf. In locations with smaller target populations, every household was sampled. In locations with larger populations, every fifth household was sampled.

### Piloting

The translations and question structure of both surveys were initially reviewed by experienced enumerators. They were then field piloted with randomly selected members of the target

Rohingya survey. The risk of oversampled groups skewing the aggregate results was evaluated by calculating weighted means based on the proportion of the total target population living in each camp. These weighted means did not differ from the raw means by more than .1, suggesting that any bias introduced by the oversampling is negligible. Because the weighted means and unweighted means are so similar, we present the unweighted information in the report, to provide readers with a direct perspective on the opinions of the sample. This methodology allowed us to maximise reliability within each camp, as well as population-level parameter estimation.

Host community survey. We could not evaluate the representativeness of the host community sample because the specificity of the target population (Bangladeshis living within or in very close proximity to the camps in Ukhia and Teknaf) meant there was no reliable sampling frame to reference.

populations and edits were made based on feedback from enumerators on comprehension and wording.

## Data collection

Data collection was conducted from 16-25 April 2019 by IOM's Needs and Population Monitoring (NPM) enumerators. Teams were split into mixed pairs, with male enumerators interviewing male respondents and female enumerators interviewing female respondents. A member of GTS staff conducted training for the data collectors on the survey instrument.

The recommendations were developed based on secondary research and feedback from humanitarian staff in Cox's Bazar.

## Data disaggregation

To identify groups of persons with disabilities within the sample, respondents were asked a condensed series of questions developed by the Washington Group.

**Rohingya survey.** Data was disaggregated by camp, subdistrict, age, gender of respondent, gender of head of household, date of arrival and disability.

**Host community survey.** Data was disaggregated by age, gender of respondent, gender of head of household, level of education and disability.

## Language of the surveys

**Rohingya survey.** All enumerators had experience in conducting surveys in spoken Rohingya. The survey was translated into Rohingya using Bangla script as well as into Bangla by Translators without Borders. This survey was conducted in Rohingya and Chittagonian – enumerators were advised to use primarily the Rohingya language survey, with the written Bangla translation to serve as a support.

**Host community survey.** The survey was translated into Bangla by Translators without Borders. All enumerators were Bangladeshis who conducted the survey in Bangla and Chittagonian.

## Challenges and limitations

**Gender split.** We aimed to reach a roughly even 50:50 gender split. However, the final gender split was 41:59 among Rohingya respondents, with more men surveyed than women and 58:42 among Bangladeshi respondents, with more women surveyed than men.

### Rohingya survey

**Sampling.** Due to time constraints, it was not possible to conduct surveys in all 34 camps. Thirty of the 34 camps were covered and as a result our sample size and catchment are sufficient to get a good estimation of general Rohingya opinions in Ukhia and Teknaf. The margin of error is .04 for 95% confidence intervals for the Likert-scale questions and .03 for the binary questions. However, there is not sufficient data to provide reliable camp-level estimates. It is important to note that while our aim was to interview at least 30 people per camp, logistical issues as well as data cleaning post-collection resulted in less than 30 respondents in the following camps: 1W (24 respondents), 3 (29 respondents), 10 (27 respondents), 19 (28 respondents), 24 (25 respondents), 25 (28 respondents), 26 (29 respondents), and 27 (26 respondents).

**Language issues.** Since there is no universally accepted written script for Rohingya, the survey was translated into Rohingya with Bangla script and Bangla. Enumerators, native Bangla and Chittagonian speakers, were expected to conduct the survey in Rohingya. In previous rounds, enumerators raised some issues with reading the Rohingya in Bangla script, which is why they were provided with the Bangla translation to use as support. As such, it is possible that enumerators less familiar with the Rohingya language relied more heavily on the Bangla translations and that not all surveys were conducted entirely in Rohingya.

### Host community survey

**Sampling.** A lack of recent population data on Bangladeshis living within or in close proximity to the camps in Ukhia and Teknaf meant that we were unable to employ the same sampling methodology used for the Rohingya survey (randomly assigning shelters to approach from a site-map). Instead, we employed a "random walk"\* approach in the selected locations.

---

\* A "random walk" approach to sampling entails selecting a random starting point for an enumerator and then instructing them to interview every xth household, where x is a function of the population density and concern about correlation between adjacent households (higher x means lower risk of autocorrelation, but comes at a cost of slower data collection, which may lead to smaller samples). Whenever a road splits or meets another road, enumerators should pick a direction at random. They will keep collecting data like this until time runs out.

## Authors

Rebecca Hetzer - Programme Officer

Kai Hopkins - Senior Programme Manager

---

Ground Truth Solutions gathers perceptual data from affected communities to assess humanitarian responses. Listening and responding to the voices of these communities is a vital first step in closing the accountability gap and empowering people to be part of the decisions that govern their lives. Nonetheless, it is evident that perceptual data alone is insufficient to evaluate the state of the humanitarian system and should therefore not be seen in isolation, but as complementary to other monitoring and data evaluation approaches.

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

## Supported by



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

