

Bulletin • Rohingya

# Feedback and relationships

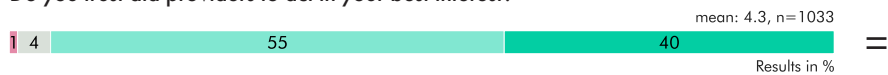


## Summary findings

Do aid providers treat you with respect?



Do you trust aid providers to act in your best interest?



Do you feel aid providers take your opinion into account when providing aid/services?



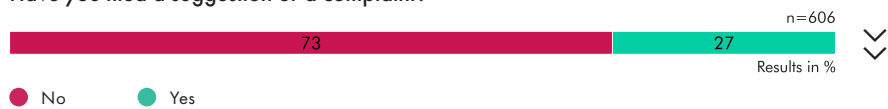
Do you think Majhis represent the views of all their community members equally?



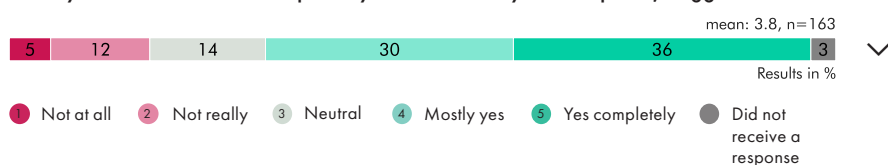
Do you know how to make suggestions or complaints about the aid/services you receive?



Have you filed a suggestion or a complaint?



Were you satisfied with the response you received to your complaint/suggestion?



This thematic bulletin presents findings and recommendations based on Ground Truth Solutions' surveys conducted with 1,034 Rohingya in Bangladesh in April 2019. The survey was administered in 30 camps in the Ukhiya 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 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: two more addressing Rohingya perspectives on [needs and services](#) and [safety and outlook](#); and one on [social cohesion](#), which includes the views of both Rohingya and host communities living within or in close proximity to the camps. Separately, there is dedicated reporting on the [perceptions of the same host communities](#).

### 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%
- ★ This question was added since the previous round

A full overview of changes over the three rounds can be found on page 4.

# Key takeaways

Rohingya surveyed view the relationship between their communities and aid providers positively. Notably, **95% feel treated with respect by humanitarian staff and trust them to act in their best interests.** These sentiments have remained consistently positive since October 2018. In line with these findings, Xchange reported that 95% of Rohingya feel either very comfortable or comfortable enough talking about their problems with NGO workers.<sup>1</sup>

**Seventy-eight percent of Rohingya surveyed feel that humanitarian organisations take their opinions into account when providing aid and services,** up from 68% in the previous round in October 2018. Among those who do not feel their opinions are taken into account, there is a sense that aid providers still only talk to Majhis or other people in leadership positions.

When asked who Rohingya would prefer to receive aid from, the two most common answers given were that they do not have a preference and that they do not know the difference between the various actors providing aid and services. This shows an increasing ambivalence to different aid providers compared to previous rounds. The remaining preferences follow the same order as in the previous round: international organisations are named by 15% of Rohingya surveyed, down from 24% previously, then the army, and then a combination of local and international organisations.

Fifty-nine percent of **Rohingya surveyed know how to make suggestions or complaints about the aid they receive.** Male respondents are more informed about feedback mechanisms, with 63% saying that they know how to make suggestions or complaints, compared to 54% among female respondents. Moreover, fewer people living in female-headed households are aware of how to make suggestions or complaints compared to those living in male-headed households. Only 49% of Rohingya who have lived in Bangladesh since before October 2016 are aware of suggestions and complaints mechanisms, compared to 72% among those who arrived after January 2018. Somewhat unsurprisingly, Rohingya who know how to make suggestions or complaints about the aid they receive are more likely to feel their opinions are taken into account by humanitarian organisations.

Of those who know how to file a suggestion or a complaint, only 27% have actually done so. This compares to 46% in October 2018. Most were satisfied with the response to their suggestions or complaints, with 66% responding positively, although this has decreased from 77% since October 2018.

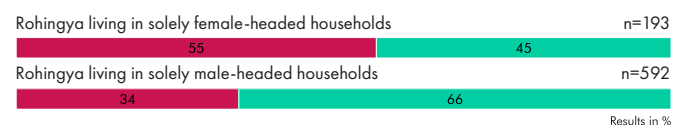
Seventy-eight percent of Rohingya surveyed believe that Majhis represent the views of all their community members equally. Even though Majhis are generally viewed positively by Rohingya surveyed, many respondents still raise issues of partial treatment for relatives and friends, who are allegedly given benefits and opportunities that are denied to those without connections to Majhis. More troublingly, some respondents say Majhis have acted violently and demanded parts of people's food assistance. The Xchange survey also found that while the majority of Rohingya surveyed would go to their Majhi if they needed help to solve an everyday problem, nearly one in three Rohingya have little to no trust in Majhis.<sup>2</sup>

In order to gauge survey fatigue, Rohingya surveyed were asked whether they would be willing to take part in a similar survey in the future, to which 99.7% said yes. While one can assume that a certain amount of courtesy bias influenced the responses to the question, respondents did say that they are accustomed to agencies speaking to Majhis or other leaders and that "ordinary" Rohingya men and women are seldom asked for their opinions.

## Who would you prefer to receive aid from? n=1,031

I don't have a preference	29%
I don't know the difference	22%
From international organisations	15%
From the army	14%
From local and international organisations	11%
From Majhis	6%
From local organisations	2%
From the government	1%

## Do you know how to make suggestions or complaints about the aid/services you receive?



**We are normal Rohingya, who will take our opinion?**

<sup>1</sup> Xchange, "The Rohingya Survey 2019" (April 2019)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

# Recommendations

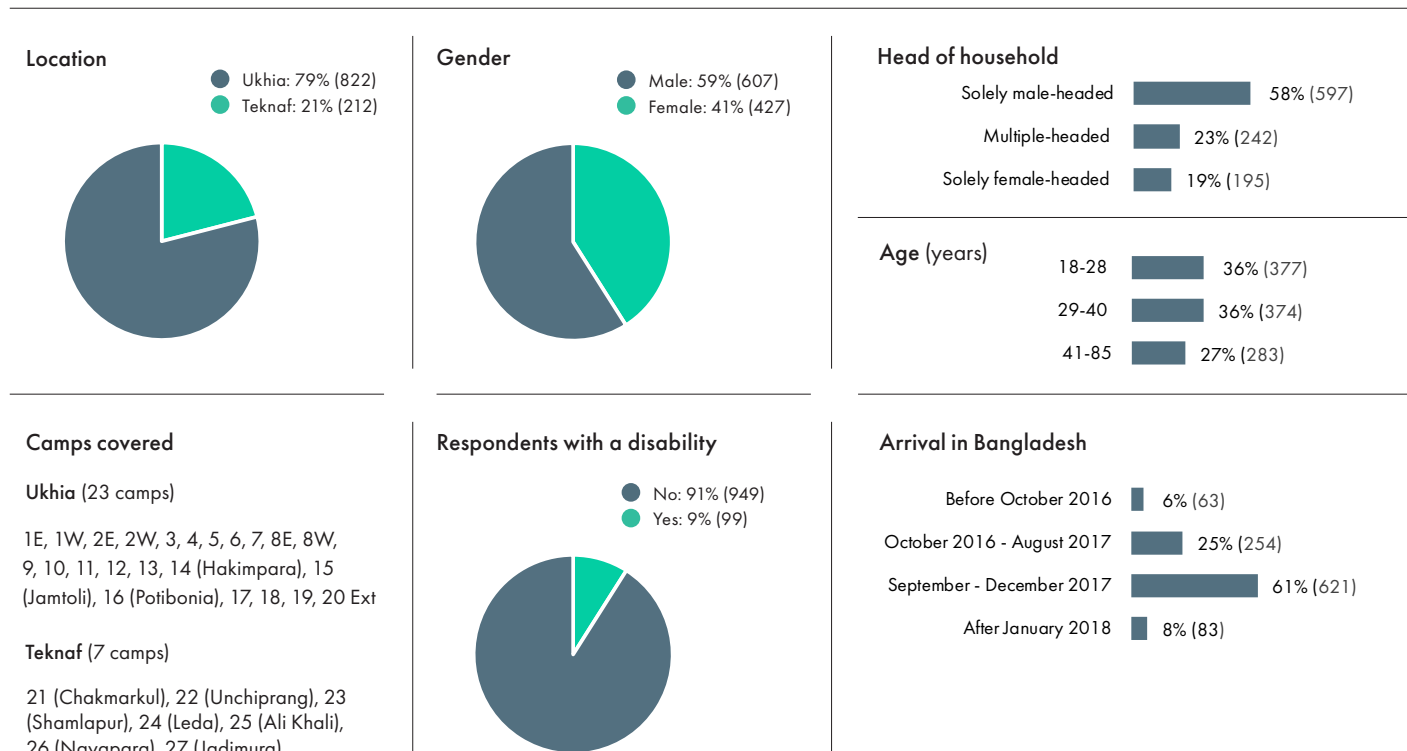
- Given Rohingya's preference for communicating with NGOs face-to-face, **more could be done to systematically document any ad hoc feedback and complaints received on a daily basis.** These are often valuable sources of information, but can be hard to record and follow-up on. That said, Rohingya can sometimes prefer this approach to interaction rather than the more formal systems, especially women it seems.
- Regardless of how information is collected, **more could be done to "close the loop."** This involves reporting back to communities on findings, and what agencies are planning to do with their feedback. A commitment to doing this better was included in The Accountability to Affected Populations Manifesto.<sup>3</sup> It might be worth using social media or community groups to help in the process.
- While Majhis continue to play an important role in terms of engaging with Rohingya, and there are efforts to make them more representative, **there is value in diversifying communication channels.** This could involve using other groups who could play a similar role – such as community groups, other elected officials from communities, and well-respected community members – or even holding monthly town hall meetings. Majhis are going to continue to play a role, but there are also other people and groups who can be leveraged alongside them.
- It is positive to see reports of good relationships between Rohingya and the NGO community. This is largely a result of continued hard work and while it is worth noting, **it should not result in complacency.** These efforts must continue, especially when dealing with sensitive issues, such as relocation or repatriation, which can cause anxiety within the camps.



Those who help us do not want to take any advice or opinions from the Rohingya. They only listen to the opinions of the Majhis.

# Demographics

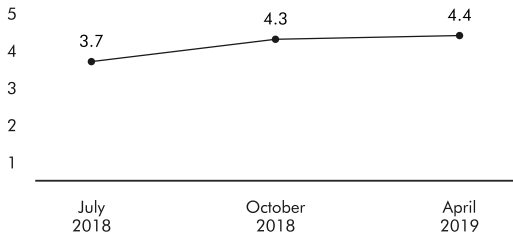
1,034 Rohingya respondents



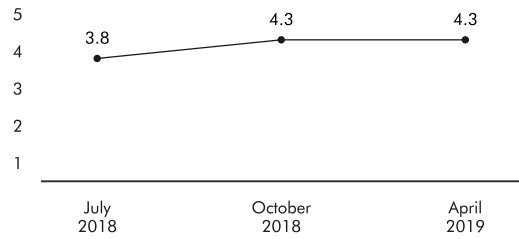
<sup>3</sup> Communication with Communities Working Group, "The Accountability to Affected Populations Manifesto – Strengthening Accountability through Communication and Community Engagement" (January 2019)

# Overview of responses over time

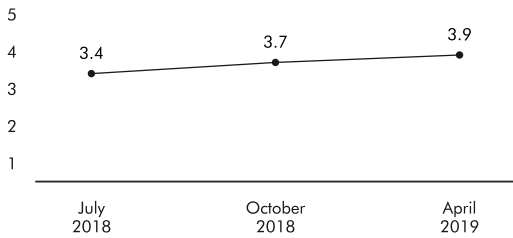
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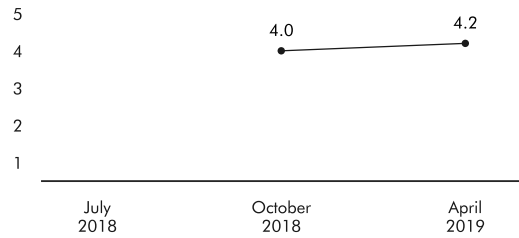
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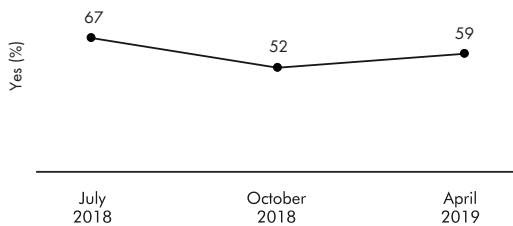
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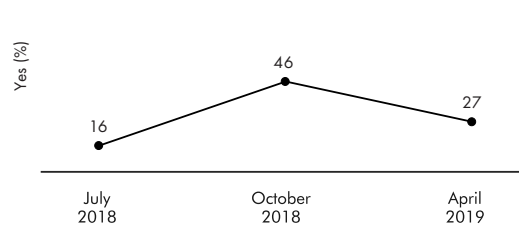
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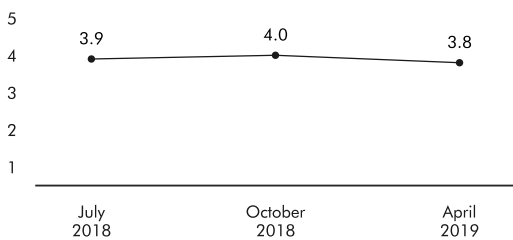
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\* This question was added in October 2018.

# Methodology

## Sampling methodology

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 site-map of each camp. 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 for 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.

## Piloting

The survey translations and question structure were initially reviewed by experienced enumerators. It was then field piloted with randomly selected members of the target population 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

Data was disaggregated by location, age, gender of respondent, gender of head of household, date of arrival and disability. To identify groups of persons with disabilities within the sample, respondents were asked a condensed series of questions developed by the Washington Group.

## Language of the surveys

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.

## Challenges and limitations

**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).

**Gender split.** We aimed to reach a roughly even 50:50 gender split. However, since there were more male enumerators than female enumerators, the final gender split was 41:59, with more men surveyed than women.

**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.

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.

## Authors

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Ground Truth Solutions gathers perceptual data from affected people to assess humanitarian responses. Listening and responding to the voices of affected populations is a vital first step in closing the accountability gap, empowering affected populations to be part of the decisions that govern their lives, building relationships with communities and localising knowledge. 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)).

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