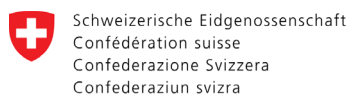




Social Norms, Economic Approaches

The potential for addressing GBV
through economic interventions in
the Rohingya refugee response

Including report annexes



Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC





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List of acronyms

ACF	Action Contre la Faim	IRC	International Rescue Committee
CaLP	Cash Learning Partnership	ISCG	Inter-Sectoral Coordination Group
CBA	Cash-Based Assistance	KAP	Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice
CBI	Cash-Based Intervention	KII	Key Informant Interview
CFW	Cash for Work	MoWCA	Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs
CBT	Cognitive Behavioural Therapy	MPG	Multi-purpose Grant
CiC	Camp-in-Charge	ODI	Overseas Development Institute
CTP	Cash Transfer Programming	RRRC	Refugee Relief & Repatriation Commissioner, Office of the
CVA	Cash and Voucher Assistance	SMEP	Site Management Engineering Programme
DfID	Department for International Development	SMS	Site Management Services
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction	SSWG	Safe Space for Women and Girls
DSS	Department of Social Services	UAM	Unaccompanied Minor
FDMN	Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals	UCG/T	Unconditional Cash Grant/ Transfer
FGD	Focus Group Discussion	UN	United Nations
GBV	Gender-based Violence	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
GBVIMS	Gender-based Violence Information Management System	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
HRW	Human Rights Watch	WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
ICLA	Information, Counselling or Legal Assistance	WE	Women's Empowerment
ID	Identity Document	WFP	World Food Programme
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation	WFS	Women Friendly Space
IOM	International Organization for Migration	WRC	Women's Refugee Commission
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence		

Glossary

Conditional Cash Transfers	Direct payments of cash on which there are no conditions placed on the beneficiary to receive it.	Intimate Partner Violence	Physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and controlling behaviours by an intimate partner.
Cash for Assets	A form of Cash for Work in which the beneficiary receives cash in return for work performed on projects relating to community assets or infrastructure.	Mahji	Rohingya community leaders appointed by both communities and local government.
Cash for Work	A form of Conditional Cash Transfer in which the beneficiary is paid for performing a specific job.	Multi-purpose Grant	Cash transfer calculated to provide the amount of money required to cover, fully or partially, a household's basic and/or recovery needs.
Cash Plus or Complementary Programming	Cash programming in which CTP is combined with other activities or modalities.	Polygyny	Polygamy in which a man has more than one wife.
Cash Transfer	Direct payments of money, physical or electronic cash, to a recipient.	Purdah	An Urdu word meaning "curtain," it is commonly used among Muslim and some Hindu communities across South Asia.
Cash Transfer Programming	All the various mechanisms of cash transfers used to implement a programme.	SCOPE	WFP's platform that manages the entire programme intervention process for voucher, cash, and in-kind transfer modalities.
Cash/Voucher for Training	Conditional form of transfer entailing payments made on condition of attending one or more training sessions.	Unconditional Cash Transfers	Direct payments of cash on which there are conditions that must be met by the beneficiary in order to receive it.
Children	Any person under the age of 18.	Upazila	An administrative region in Bangladesh that is the equivalent of a county or sub-district.
E-Transfer or Digital Payments	Disbursement mechanisms that extend to mobile money and mobile vouchers, including smart cards.	Voucher	Piece of paper, token, or electronic coupon that can be exchanged for goods or services.
Gender-based Violence	Violence perpetrated against an individual because of their gender. The term captures violence against both women and men, but women and girls constitute the majority of the victims.		

Executive summary

This report was commissioned by UNICEF to develop an evidence-base on the potential for addressing gender-based violence in the Rohingya Refugee Response through economic interventions, seeking to understand the contextual risks, drivers, challenges, and possibilities.

Why consider an economic intervention to address GBV among Rohingya in Cox's Bazar?

More than half of the Rohingya population now living in Cox's Bazar is female, many of whom experienced violence. As refugees, these same women and girls remain targets of gendered violence, which is chronically underreported and often normalised. In line with their mandate to protect children, UNICEF is responding to such human rights abuses like child marriage, domestic violence, and trafficking, and evaluating strategies to address these challenges. This report explores the possibilities of reducing or mitigating GBV through economic programming, including cash transfers, as an approach that alone, or in combination with other initiatives, can efficiently tackle the drivers of GBV through a responsible and appropriate intervention.

This report seeks to address knowledge gaps in understanding gendered violence and cash programming in humanitarian contexts through tackling two intersecting challenges:

- Identifying and understanding the root causes and drivers of **Gender-based Violence** (GBV), a complex and multifaceted phenomenon rooted in cultural, political, and societal norms, and which includes a range of violent behaviours that have different drivers and cultural significance.
- Examining the potential to address those drivers through **Cash Transfer Programming** (CTP), an umbrella term referring to programmes that provide beneficiaries with cash or vouchers. This approach offers a flexible and resource-efficient instrument to positively influence multiple sectors, yet CTP is under-researched in humanitarian contexts, particularly as related to GBV outcomes and limited in the Rohingya response by restrictions on such interventions.

The Rohingya situation is becoming a protracted crisis, and so **thinking in the long term about transformative, and sustainable programming is a priority**. This transition demands greater sensitivity to the experiences, perspectives, concerns, and aspirations of different segments of the refugee population, and will require implementers to look beyond basic needs.

What were the research objectives?

This report assesses **the appropriateness of economic interventions (including cash transfers) to address Rohingya refugee women and girls' experiences of GBV in Cox's Bazar**. This overarching aim was broken down to three key sub-objectives focusing on the refugee crisis in Cox's Bazar:

1. Understand the relationship between GBV and economic stressors.
2. Assess the relevance and feasibility of economic interventions for preventing and mitigating GBV.
3. Provide recommendations to prevent and mitigate GBV.

To achieve these objectives, Samuel Hall undertook mixed methods field research, including both qualitative and quantitative research, speaking with the Rohingya community and programming actors in Cox's Bazar, as well as thematic experts. This involved over 800 quantitative surveys and over 60 qualitative FGDs, interviews and case studies. In addition, Samuel Hall sought to analyse and contextualise findings from the field within existing literature and understandings of the context – to consider the relationship between CTP and GBV, the potential positive outcomes and negative risks, and to highlight gaps in knowledge.

How do GBV, social norms, and economic factors intersect in Cox's Bazar?

The Rohingya community continues to face economic hardship, and while programming to support them has made progress across several sectors, restrictions on work mean that many households are reliant on aid and have limited access to work or income opportunities, resulting in high levels of household need – a majority of households surveyed had no income. **The study highlights how the high incidence of GBV, with 42.5% of women in this study reporting experiencing violence in the home, is directly related to the community's conservative norms around gender and exacerbated both by stress on households linked to the economic situation and a cultural acceptance of certain forms of GBV.** Pressure to conform was felt by all – and as such, women's access to resources and information was limited by segregation, and socio-cultural gender values strongly impacted community attitudes towards women working, participating in public life, or household decision making. In particular, the boundaries understood for women in terms of work were clear – that income generation of any kind by women, if done at all, should take place in “safe,” gender-segregated spaces, and should not impact men's primacy in decision making. In this context, underlying sociocultural drivers of GBV emerged as more significant than economic factors in exacerbating violence.

The challenges posed by the market situation in the camps, and in the surrounding communities, are significant. For economic approaches to succeed, these markets are key. There are limited income opportunities, aside from Cash-for-Work programmes

and some small-scale business or income generation – 83% of respondents cited more jobs as the key opportunity needed to improve their situation. In addition, value chains are lacking or disjointed, markets are weak – in no small part due to restrictions on economic interaction between host and refugee communities – and production is difficult due to lack of space, skills, and resources. The camp context also poses a variety of other relevant challenges – common security challenges included fear of sexual harassment or assault for women leaving the home, the lack of policing or security at night, and the absence of formal justice systems in the camps. These issues are clearly linked to GBV, especially lack of legal access and lack of repercussions for perpetrators of GBV.

GBV, cash and livelihoods programmes are operational in the camps, but to varying degrees – and often small-scale – and still facing significant limitations, not least government resistance to economic interventions. Actors in the camps flagged the difficulties in engaging women and some reported backlashes against programming that targets women. **The success of female-focused programmes was rooted in gaining community buy-in, particularly from leaders and from male household members.** These findings indicate the need for programming that is underpinned by understanding of social norms, and which ultimately seeks to shift them through positive engagement at a community level, with not only female beneficiaries but male household members and community leadership.

What are the risks in using CTPs to address GBV in the Rohingya community?

This report highlighted a range of key risks associated with programming in Cox’s Bazar, including:

- **Negative programming impacts:** Creating adverse impacts on beneficiaries as a result of programming that does not adequately assess risks.
- **Low or no impact:** Failing to create impact, should the programming strategies utilised not address critical underlying factors that drive GBV.
- **Sustainability:** Creating programming that does not offer longer-term impacts, or risk return to status quo after programming, may further negatively impact resilience and wellbeing.
- **Challenging perception of male roles:** Programming seeking to address GBV must acknowledge and engage with the social norms that underpin all forms of GBV.
- **Host community flow-on impacts:** The host community already experience impacts as a result of the crisis, and failure to consider these poses harm to this community as well as to the Rohingya.

Several existing small-scale programmes in Cox’s Bazar have shown that successful GBV programming is possible, and these successes may be built on in the design of

CTP that targets GBV – these strategies include components engaging with men and boys, and with community in general, as well as GBV awareness raising, and efforts to increase female leadership in camp justice systems.

How can programming actors address GBV through CTP or livelihoods programmes?

Limited but growing evidence suggests that cash can potentially address GBV in humanitarian contexts in a range of ways, including relieving household economic tensions, reducing the need for negative coping mechanisms, such as child marriage, forced marriage, polygyny; targeting women may also increase women’s decision-making power within households, leading to greater levels of empowerment, changes in gender imbalances, and connecting women to social support networks.

Key distinctions must be drawn in considering programming that seeks to reduce or prevent GBV in comparison to that which might seek to provide support or relief to survivors of GBV. There are two major ways in which programming may seek to address GBV – by working to prevent and reduce incidence of GBV, and by providing support to survivors of GBV in order to minimise negative impacts and improve recovery. Programming that seeks to mitigate the impacts of GBV on survivors needs to consider the critical needs of those who have experienced GBV, often different to what is needed for prevention efforts. Similarly, while short-term programmes may be able to address small, immediate or one-off drivers and barriers, there is nonetheless a **clear need for long-term programmes to transform or shifting the socio-cultural norms that underpin GBV among the Rohingya.** Based on the findings outlined in Chapters 1 and 3, and the risks highlighted in Chapter 4, the report recommends the following guidelines for economic approaches to GBV in Cox’s Bazar:

- 1. Advocacy to Government Stakeholders:** Advocacy efforts are critical to create the policy environment in which economic programming is possible and can be operationalised.
- 2. A Sustainability Approach:** Develop programming with a view to creating longer-term and sustained impacts on the Rohingya women and children.
- 3. Targeting Beneficiaries for High Impact & Reduced Risk:** Consider the risk and opportunities in targeting economic interventions, given the context and the likelihood of perverse incentives.
- 4. Harnessing the Power of Economic Interventions:** Cash can be used in conjunction with other forms of economic intervention to address the variety of needs identified.
- 5. Undertaking Holistic Programming:** Cash programming or economic interventions that seek to shift social norms and/or reduce GBV can be strengthened by non-economic components.

- 6. Committing to a Gender-Transformative Approach:** This approach fundamentally acknowledges unequal power structures, and constructively challenges harmful social norms.
- 7. Adopting a Learning Approach:** Evaluate, learn from, and build on past iterations of programming.

This report recommends **careful consideration of the specific goals of the programme**. Programmes that may be effective in addressing child marriage, for example, may have little or no impact in addressing domestic abuse; in some cases, interventions that might tackle one form of GBV may create adverse outcomes for another. Addressing GBV broadly through economic approaches is far less likely to be successful than efforts that seek to tackle the particular and nuanced characteristics of different forms of GBV present in the camps. To that end, participatory, contextualised assessments that consider market characteristics on a camp level are fundamental to successful efforts to create economic programming that addresses GBV.

Overall, programming that supplements economic strategies with other elements, and which aligns economic strategies with needs and drivers specific to the forms of GBV they seek to address, are likely to be the most successful in creating sustainable impact.

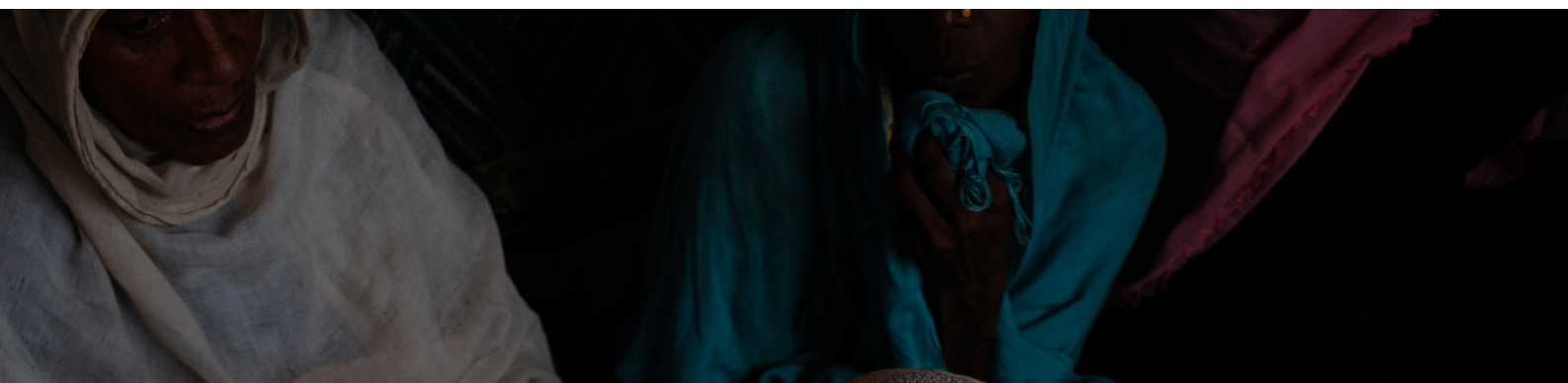




Photo 1
Camp 21, Chittagong,
Bangladesh: Rohingya
women sit outside of a an
office inside Camp 21



Photo 2 ▲

Camp 21, Chittagong, Bangladesh: A Rohingya boy carries various goods to be sold inside one of the many makeshift market inside Camp 21.

Photo 3 ▼

Camp 4, Chittagong, Bangladesh: People walk past a shop inside Camp 4.



1. Introduction

1.1. Why this research?

Over half of the Rohingya population now living in Cox’s Bazar is female. As violence against this minority escalated in Myanmar in 2017, women and girls were a target of sexual violence used as a “weapon of war.”¹ Today, two years on from the mass exodus that swelled the camps in Cox’s Bazar with over 700,000 refugees, these same women and girls remain targets of gendered violence. As all reports on the critical situation that touch on the condition of women and girls indicate, this is a silent form of violence, chronically underreported, in many instances normalised, and altogether overlooked by the leaders of this community.

UNICEF is responding to the rise in cases of domestic violence, trafficking, and child marriage, and evaluating strategies to address the experience of gender-based violence (GBV) in Cox’s Bazar, a phenomenon that significantly impacts the lives of women and girls. In light of the Rohingya’s economic vulnerability and the lack of services to support women and girls that underpin the increase in these forms of human rights abuses, economic programming, including cash transfers, represents an approach that alone, or in combination with other initiatives, will efficiently tackle key factors thought to underlie the upsurge of GBV.

1) Shayna Bauchner. “Rape Puts Myanmar Army on UN ‘List of Shame,’” Human Rights Watch, April 16, 2018.

Figure 1 ▼
Intersecting challenges

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that is rooted in cultural, political, and societal norms. The term itself captures a disparate range of violent and harmful behaviours, all of which have different drivers and cultural significance. Whatever the socio-cultural framework, conflicts and emergency situations exacerbate forms of GBV such as domestic violence, forced or early marriage, and sexual exploitation. Despite the prevalence and gravity of these practices, limited research has been conducted to better understand GBV in these contexts, let alone on identifying effective ways to prevent and address it.

Cash Transfer Programming (CTP), an umbrella term to describe economic interventions that use cash or vouchers, encompasses a diverse range of possible modalities, extending from unconditional to conditional forms, multipurpose transfers, e-vouchers, and so on. Over the past decade, a wide range of these modalities has been deployed across development contexts and with promising results. Cash- or voucher-based interventions potentially offer a flexible and resource-efficient instrument to positively influence multiple sectors at once. However, the same degree of optimism may not be warranted in emergency settings. CTP is generally under-researched in humanitarian contexts and there is little evidence yet as to its effectiveness in specific sectoral outcomes, least of all in GBV.

Despite the need for urgent action, UNICEF recognise the critical importance of intervening responsibly and appropriately in this complex humanitarian emergency. By bringing together voices from the Rohingya community and from international partners operating across the camps, this research aims to inform the intervention framework and ensure it is relevant, effective, and mitigates, if not avoids, the risk of doing harm. This report addresses two knowledge gaps, the prevention and mitigation of GBV and the effectiveness of cash interventions in emergency settings.

This is a key moment in the lives of the Rohingya in Cox’s Bazar. As the emergency transitions into protracted crisis, thinking in the long term about constructive, transformative, and sustainable programming is not just a possibility, but a priority. This shift demands greater sensitivity to the experiences, perspectives, concerns, and aspirations of different segments of the refugee population; it also opens up the landscape of potential modalities of intervention, allowing implementers to look beyond basic needs and develop holistic approaches to cross-cutting issues like gender inequality.

This research offers a timely opportunity to build on the lessons learned through ongoing programmes in the camps. It also contributes data to the global dialogue in the wake of the commitments to cash programming made by 18 donors and 16 aid organisations in the 2016 Grand Bargain.

1.2. Objectives

UNICEF has commissioned Samuel Hall to conduct research that will **“assess the appropriateness of economic interventions (including cash transfers) to address Rohingya refugee women and girls’ experiences of GBV in Cox’s Bazar.”**

The study is underpinned by three key sub-objectives focusing on the refugee crisis in Cox’s Bazar. Each thematic focus is addressed through a set of research questions:

Figure 2 ▼
Research objectives
& questions

1 Understand the relationship between GBV and economic stressors.

- 1.1 What factors – socioeconomic, demographic, etc. – can be identified as drivers of GBV in Cox’s Bazar?
- 1.2 Who are the key actors and influencers in decision-making around GBV?
- 1.3 What are the primary economic coping mechanisms in Cox’s Bazar?

2 Assess the relevance and feasibility of cash-based interventions for preventing and mitigating GBV.

- 2.1 How is income gained, used, and controlled by households in the displaced community in Cox’s Bazar?
- 2.2 What kind of access to livelihoods opportunities do women and girls specifically have?

3 Provide recommendations to prevent and mitigate GBV.

- 3.1 What interventions have succeeded in other similar contexts?
- 3.2 What are other actors in Cox’s Bazar currently implementing and planning on this topic?
- 3.3 What contextual intervention modalities are most appropriate to prevent and mitigate forms of GBV involving economic challenges, and how can these be targeted?

1.3. Political and policy contexts: displacement and life in the camps

Over two years after the exodus of the Rohingya from Myanmar into Bangladesh, the situation for the refugee population remains critical. Since 2017, Cox’s Bazar has grown into one of the world’s largest refugee settlements and is now estimated to house 911,113 Rohingya. An additional 6,790 refugees are reportedly living among the host communities in the *upazilas* of Teknaf and Ukhiya.²

The Rohingya are an ethnic minority historically based in the western state of Rakhine, Myanmar, who have long been the subject of government repression and religious persecution.³ Violence against this Muslim group escalated in 2017 to the extent that the United Nations (UN) Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar called for the Myanmar military to be prosecuted “for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.”⁴ As a result of this campaign, over 720,000 Rohingya poured over Rakhine’s north-western border into Bangladesh in August 2017, suffering further abuses and hardships along the journey and giving rise to what is currently becoming a protracted crisis concentrated in and around the Cox’s Bazar area.⁵

Despite the relative stability achieved in the camps and the progress tracked by the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) platform across several sectors, it is estimated that there are still 1.2 million people in need in Cox’s Bazar.⁶ A significant portion of the camps suffer from extreme and severe basic needs in terms of shelter, WASH facilities, health and education, as well as access to justice.⁷ The arrival of the monsoon season (June to September) and the destructive impact of the first floods has further evidenced the vulnerability of the camp’s infrastructure, and so of its inhabitants.⁸ Challenges to improving the camps’ conditions, alleviating the humanitarian situation of its residents, and developing longer term strategies to address these issues are regularly the subject of analysis and advocacy initiatives by think tanks and humanitarian actors. The latest reports on the situation indicate that the crisis response plan is underfunded, with only about a quarter of the total USD 920.5 million requested to fund the 2019 Joint Response Plan available (USD 229 million). The political and policy context presents a further obstacle in the mid- to long-term planning. The Bangladesh government remains committed to return as the only solution to the refugee crisis, complicating any conversation around durable and sustainable responses.⁹

The surge of Rohingya and the rapid rate of the camps’ expansion have increased the strain on one of the poorest areas in Bangladesh. The *upazilas* in the Cox’s Bazar district are home to communities that already experience food insecurity, high unemployment rates, and limited livelihood opportunities.¹⁰ These communities, whose numbers are significantly less than those of the displaced, have raised their concerns about the influx’s effect on the price of labour and food, and the availability of firewood and water supplies. Unsurprisingly, development partners active among the Bangladeshi

2) Cox’s Bazar population figures and demography are drawn from the recent UNHCR. Rohingya Refugee Population Factsheet, as of 30 June 2019, 2019; the number of Rohingya living in the area outside the camps is from IOM’s Needs and Population Monitoring Site Assessment (cited in ISCG. Situation Report on the Rohingya Refugee Crisis, May 2019).

3) For the historical dimension of this persecution, see Benedict Rogers, *Burma: A Nation at the Crossroads* (London: Random House, 2002).

4) UN Human Rights Council. Report of the Independent International Fact-finding Mission on Myanmar, September 2018.

5) Caitlin Wake and Brenda Yu. “The Rohingya Crisis: Making the Transition from Emergency to Longer-term Development,” Humanitarian Working Group Policy Brief 71, ODI (2018); and, “Rohingya Refugee Crisis,” UNOCHA, published 2018.

6) IOM. Monthly Situation Report, May 2019.

7) ACAPS. Rohingya Influx Overview, April 2019, 2019; on the Rohingya and host community’s recourse to the law, see the recent IRC report, Emily Krehm and Asif Shahan. “Access to Justice for Rohingya and Host Community in Cox’s Bazar,” IRC (February 2019).

8) See, for example, “Scores of Rohingya refugee shelters in Bangladesh destroyed by flooding,” UN News, 5 July 2019.

9) Caitlin Wake, Veronique Barbelet and Marcus Skinner. “Rohingya refugees’ perspectives on their displacement in Bangladesh Uncertain futures,” HPG Working Paper, ODI (2019). Wake, Barbelet and Skinner, “Uncertain Futures.”

10) WFP. Rohingya Emergency Vulnerability Assessment (REVA): Summary Report, 2017.

communities report the local population’s “almost universally negative views of the Rohingya.”¹¹ Despite the tension, these local communities share many socio-cultural, linguistic, and religious characteristics with the Rohingya – and are exposed to the same structural challenges. These commonalities and links, in addition to the geographic proximity, make the host communities a critical part of the humanitarian landscape in Cox’s Bazar and a key component of any development planning.

1.4. Social and cultural contexts: GBV, historic and current vulnerabilities

Based on June 2019 figures, women and children respectively make up 55% and 52% of the refugee population living in the camps, with over half the female population under 18.¹² These demographic segments are regularly identified as the most vulnerable in crises of this nature, yet the prevalence and nature of violence against girls and women have become a growing concern. Moreover, in a context where child marriage is commonplace, it has further impact on children, particularly girls, who are likely to experience these forms of GBV – and a subsection of this population is further exposed to greater risks: children separated from parents or primary caregivers, widows, divorcees, and female-headed households.¹³ GBV is reportedly widespread across both refugee and host communities. It is present in various forms, extending to sexual exploitation, child marriage, sexual harassment, dowry and bride price abuse, domestic/ intimate partner violence (IPV), all of which predominantly affect the female demographic. These typologies align with GBV as a tool used to subordinate females to males and preserve both power and structural inequalities in the gender dynamic.¹⁴

GBV-focused studies since the onset of the Rohingya displacement have cited refugees lamenting the “litany of violations” encountered in the camps and highlighted the “particularly gendered nature” of the crisis.¹⁵ The grey literature has identified widespread issues relating to IPV, child marriage, sexual exploitation and abuse, safety and exposure to harassment in public places (principally WASH facilities, distribution points), as well as kidnapping, prostitution, and widespread neglect.¹⁶ The first 2019 quarterly factsheet published by UNFPA’s Gender Based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS) indicates that survivors are largely women (98% of cases) from the Rohingya community – a profiling of the issue that ought to be treated with caution given that it draws exclusively on reported cases of GBV and which focuses primarily on the Rohingya community living in camps. The statistics, nonetheless, display trends: just under three quarters of cases reported are IPV (74%); physical assault is the most common reported form of GBV (51%); and, these reported cases take place in a domestic setting (71%). Conversely, the data evidences the extent to which sexual abuse, neglect/denial of resources, and, most importantly, child marriage remain significantly under-reported.¹⁷ Current data on child protection and GBV show the extent to which child marriage is widely considered to represent

11) JARR. Rohingya Refugee Response Gender Analysis, 2017.

12) UNHCR. Rohingya Refugee Population Factsheet.

13) JRNA. Education & Child Protection in Emergencies Joint Rapid Needs Assessment Rohingya Refugee Response, 2017.

14) The definition of GBV, as well as discussion of its forms and social underpinnings, is adopted from UNICEF’s report, Gender Based Violence in Emergencies.

15) ISCG. Gender Profile No.2 For Rohingya Refugee Response Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh (as of February 2019), 2019.

16) JARR. Rohingya Refugee Response Gender Analysis; “Thousands at Risk of Trafficking Amid Rohingya Refugee Crisis,” IOM, published July 31, 2018; UNFPA. Using Data to Help Eliminate Gender Based Violence, 2018. See also, Michelle Farrington. “Social and Feminist Design in Emergency Contexts: The Women’s Social Architecture Project, Cox’s Bazar,” Gender & Development, 27.2 (2019): 295-315.

17) UNFPA. GBVIMS Quarterly Report 2019 (January-March), 2019.

the greatest risk for girls, along with denial of access to resources and services to women.¹⁸ According to CARE, “child marriage is common in the refugee community. Many female respondents between the ages of 13 and 20 years had children and some others are currently pregnant.”¹⁹ The IOM, as well as media reporting – including a 2018 high-profile BBC investigation – has analysed and tracked the rise of polygamy, kidnapping, child trafficking, and child prostitution.²⁰

This stark reality is set against a complex socio-cultural background for both refugees and hosts, as well as a recent history of extreme forms of GBV in Myanmar for the Rohingya. The displaced Rohingya communities and their Bangladeshi hosts are deeply religious and conservative, and rigid gender norms and views on *pardah* prevail.²¹ KIIs (Key Informant Interviews) with staff from a range of national and international organisations based in Cox’s Bazar echoed this reading of the context, underlining the fact that males see themselves as breadwinners, while women’s roles are commonly described as domestic and relating to caretaking. Prior to the 2017 mass displacement, researchers and NGOs deemed both populations to be vulnerable to forms of GBV, principally child marriage and domestic abuse – practices that are either rooted in tradition (marriage) and widely normalised (domestic violence). So, for instance, a knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) study conducted by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in September 2016 in the Rakhine State, found that:

“the most common forms of GBV are intimate partner violence, forced or child marriage, sexual abuse, including rape and sexual exploitation, other forms of physical violence and health risks – exacerbated by poor access to care – of physical and psychological injury/trauma, STIs [Sexually Transmitted Infections], unwanted pregnancy and unsafe abortions and the gendered risks of trafficking.”²²

Several reports record the abuses suffered by the Rohingya before and during their migration to Cox’s Bazar, as well as the lack of adequate GBV and Sexual and Reproductive Health services. A 2017 UN Women gender assessment discusses the high rates of GBV survivors among the Rohingya, reporting the extent to which women and girls arriving in Bangladesh were survivors of and/or witnesses to extreme forms of GBV “perpetrated by both the Myanmar army and by Rakhine locals.”²³ The assessment also notes that “the incidence of this violence has increased in frequency over the last two years,” during which sexual violence was used as a “weapon” against the Rohingya. Reports further chronicle the sexual assaults, rapes, and gang-rapes suffered by the Rohingya, as well as the stigma, shame, and health repercussions on the displaced community of survivors.²⁴

Existing literature and reports from interviews in this study suggest clearly that the situation in the camps has worsened the conditions that led to GBV, as well as intensifying its incidence. The sudden increase in population, as well as the arrival of new communities, has further restricted the mobility of women and girls in the host communities; this has also been the case for the Rohingya, whose new-found freedom to practice Islam has translated into a broader adoption of more conservative values. Moreover, social and economic stressors, not least overcrowding, lack of income and livelihood opportunities, and limited resources, are thought to contribute to an increase in IPV and have reportedly encouraged negative coping strategies, such as child marriage and forced labour.

18) See, JARR. Rohingya Refugee Response Gender Analysis; Joint Rapid Needs Assessment. Education and Child Protection in Emergencies: Rohingya Refugee Response, 2017; and, CARE. Myanmar Refugee Influx Crisis from August 2017 Rapid Gender Analysis Report, August 2017.

19) CARE. Myanmar Refugee Influx Crisis from August 2017 Rapid Gender Analysis Report, August 2017; JRNA. Education & Child Protection in Emergencies Joint Rapid Needs Assessment Rohingya Refugee Response.

20) IOM, “Thousands at Risk of Trafficking Amid Rohingya Refugee Crisis;” “The Rohingya children trafficked for sex,” BBC, 20 March 2018; “Rohingya women, girls being trafficked to Malaysia for marriage,” Al Jazeera, 8 May 2019; “Trafficking in Rohingya Camps Feared Rising,” Voice of America, 5 February 2019.

21) For Rohingya women, exercising *pardah* takes two forms: covering one’s body from the gaze of men who are not immediate family and gender segregation, often achieved by remaining inside their own homes for much of the day. When women do leave home, they cover themselves with a hijab or burka. See Kerrie Holloway and Lillian Fan. “Dignity and the displaced Rohingya in Bangladesh,” HPG Working Paper, ODI (2018).

22) CARE. Myanmar Refugee Influx Crisis from August 2017 Rapid Gender Analysis Report.

23) UN Women. Gender Brief on Rohingya Refugee Crisis Response in Bangladesh, October 2017

24) DfID. Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Assessment: Cox’s Bazar Bangladesh, November 2017; Skye Wheeler. “All of My Body Was Pain:” Sexual Violence against Rohingya Women and Girls,” Human Rights Watch, published November 16, 2017.

1.5. An unknown quantity in emergency settings: cash-based interventions and GBV

CTP and GBV: An overview

CTP encompasses all forms of assistance that distribute cash or vouchers (for goods or services) directly to programme participants. Over the years, the term has been used interchangeably with Cash-Based Interventions (CBI), Cash-Based Assistance (CBA), and, more recently, Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA).²⁵ “Cash transfers are not a sector in their own right: cash is simply an instrument that can be used – when appropriate – to meet particular objectives in particular contexts and sectors of response.”²⁶ This tool has been deployed in various modalities and can be delivered to participants in several ways. The table below summarises the most common types of cash programming:²⁷

25) See the glossary published by the Cash and Learning Partnership (CaLP).

26) Paul Harvey and Sarah Bailey. “Cash Transfer Programming in Emergencies,” Good Practice Review 11, June 2011.

27) Table draws from: CaLP Glossary and Mercy Corps. Cash Transfer Programming Toolkit.

Figure 3 ▼
Types of cash programming

Cash Transfers – Conditional (CCTs); Unconditional (UCTs)

Cash transfers are direct payments of money, physical or electronic cash, to a recipient. The cash can be paid directly to the beneficiary or through an intermediary, such as a bank. Cash transfers represent an **unrestricted modality**, insofar as they can be used in any way the beneficiary chooses. Cash transfers come in two forms:

1. **UNCONDITIONAL.** There are no conditions placed on the designated beneficiary to receive the cash.
2. **CONDITIONAL.** Conditions must be met for the recipient to receive cash and future instalments. Common conditional modalities are listed separately below.

Multipurpose Cash Transfer (MPC)

An MPC (also known as Multipurpose Cash Grants, MPG; or **Multipurpose Cash Assistance, MPCA**) is a form of cash transfer calculated to provide the amount of money required to cover, fully or partially, a household’s basic and/or recovery needs. This can take the form of a single or multiple transfers across a specific time period. The transfer addresses multiple needs and is unrestricted.

Cash for Work (CfW) – Cash for Assets

Participants are paid for undertaking specific forms of work. This involves unskilled and skilled labour performed on projects that build or repair community assets or infrastructure (known as Cash for Assets). It can include work at home or other forms of work. CfW is a type of CCT, the condition being completion of the work. Participation is usually restricted to time-bound cycles; participants are paid for the time worked or against units of production.

Cash or Voucher for Training – Cash or Voucher for Training

This is a conditional form of transfer referring to the payments made on condition of attending one or more training sessions.



Vouchers – *Cash Vouchers; Restricted Cash Vouchers; Commodity or Value Vouchers*

A voucher is a piece of paper, token, or electronic coupon that can be exchanged for goods or services. Vouchers allow programme participants to purchase commodities or services from participating vendors without the use of cash. This is a restricted form of CTP, although the extent of the restriction depends on the programme and the kind of voucher. Like cash transfers, vouchers can be conditional or unconditional.

E-Transfers – *Mobile Voucher; E-Vouchers; E-Cash*

E-transfers (also, Digital Payments) are a disbursement mechanism, rather than a separate type of CTP. E-transfers entail: accessing cash through mobile money, paying for goods/services through mobile vouchers, including via smart cards (ATM, credit or debit cards).

Cash Plus

Cash Plus (Complementary Programming) refers to programming in which CTP is combined with other activities or modalities. These can be carried out by a single agency, coordinating CTP with other initiatives, or collaboratively by two or more agencies.

Cash- and voucher-based forms of assistance are widely regarded as **flexible, effective, and dignified interventions** that can be deployed to impact various sectors, while restoring a sense of agency to the beneficiary. Its potential benefits have led donors and implementers to increase CTP in humanitarian aid, as demonstrated by the 2016 Grand Bargain. Cox’s Bazar is no exception: the latest GBVIMS report recommends the integration of income generating activities into GBV programming.

However, in emergency settings, CTP as it relates to gender and issues like GBV is “largely under-researched and not adequately understood”,²⁸ especially with regards to the effects of CTP on GBV and Protection outcomes. As one recent literature review points out, “evidence of the impact of CTP on gender relations is limited, inconclusive, and largely context- and household-specific,” the same reviewers acknowledge that humanitarian crises exacerbate forms of GBV, specifically IPV, early/forced marriage, sexual exploitation, and conclude that “the ability of CTP to address various forms of GBV has not been well researched.”²⁹ Reasons for this include the lack of CTP interventions targeting GBV; the early-stage development of planning that integrates CTP and GBV; scarce evaluations investigating CTP effects on GBV outcomes; lack of critical guidelines for this kind of intervention, with the notable exception of the Women’s Refugee Commission (WRC) toolkit.³⁰

What stakeholders do not know about CTP and GBV

In addition to the attention due to matters of context, any implementer must be aware of the embryonic stage of development of GBV-specific cash programming. While these gaps have no direct bearing on an analysis of the appropriateness of economic interventions on GBV, an understanding of this lack of knowledge frames the extent to which recommendations can be specific or practical.

- **There is not enough evidence to compare different modalities or different methods of delivery:** voucher, mobile, or physical cash. Of the many modalities,

28) Claire Simon. “Setting the Stage: What We Know (and Don’t Know) about the Effect of CBI on Gender Outcomes in Humanitarian Settings,” UN Women (September 2018).

29) Allyson Cross, Tenzin Manell and Melanie Megevand. “Humanitarian Cash Transfer Programming and Gender-Based Violence Outcomes: Evidence and Future Research Priorities,” IRC (2018).

30) WRC, Mercy Corps & IRC. Toolkit for Optimizing Cash-based Interventions for Protection from Gender-based Violence: Mainstreaming GBV Considerations in CBIs and Utilizing Cash in GBV Response, 2019. In the 2018 IRC review, none of the 28 studies focus on South East Asia.

studies single out conditionality as the most opaque: “the ability of conditionalities to strengthen CTP’s desired outcomes and or transformative impact on gender relations is complex and appears context-specific.”³¹

- The same uncertainty holds in the case of **complementarity**. There is a lack of evidence on complementary programming, namely no clear analysis on what combinations of programmes are effective together and in what sequence these should be deployed to achieve desired outcomes.
- Both general recommendations and specific observations about the influence of **duration, size, and frequency** of CTP on GBV are missing. It remains to be established how the amount of cash, the frequency of distribution, and the duration of the programme can influence GBV outcomes. Short-term and smaller cash injections can help meet basic needs and may represent less of a threat to masculinities; longer term planning may affect gender relations more substantively, looking beyond the humanitarian crisis to a development phase.³²

31) Cross, Tenzin and Megevand. “Humanitarian Cash Transfer Programming and Gender-Based Violence Outcomes.”

32) WFP. The Potential of Cash-Based Interventions to Promote Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: A Multi-Country Study. Megevand. “Humanitarian Cash Transfer Programming and Gender-Based Violence Outcomes: Evidence and Future Research Priorities,” IRC (2018).



Photo 4
Cox's Bazaar, Chittagong,
Bangladesh: A Rohingya
woman uses an umbrella
for shade on a sunny day at
Camp 21.



Photo 5 ▲
Camp 21, Chittagong,
Bangladesh: A map of Camp
21 hangs inside the office of
the CIC.

Photo 6 ▼
Camp 4, Chittagong,
Bangladesh: The view of
Camp 4.



2. Methodology

2.1. Ethical priorities: research on gender and hardship in a humanitarian crisis

Lifting the lid on gender relations, particularly in a society as conservative as the Rohingya that observes strict gender segregation, presents a complex challenge. This is a community seeking to move beyond its violent past and persecution but is still facing an uncertain future. Enquiring about their different experiences and understanding of violence, as well as how they are coping with their conditions is a sensitive undertaking. In line with Samuel Hall's ethical approach to research (see Annex 1), the research team took the following precautions related to specific research concerns:

Figure 4 ▼
Research concerns and precautions

Gender

- Sensitive or difficult issues were raised only in appropriate contexts, i.e. in case studies rather than FGDs.
- Research questions and tools were designed to avoid being prescriptive and with a view to providing the respondent with an opportunity to relate their experience in her or his own terms.
- All enumerators were trained to conduct research sensitively and were equipped to provide participants with information on support or referral information on how to access GBV services.
- Women were interviewed in Women Friendly Spaces (WFS).
- The research team collaborated exclusively with Bangladesh researchers who had experience working with the Rohingya community and were familiar with their language. This was to avoid concerns participants might have over broaching sensitive issues with members of their own community.

Working with Children

- All research team members conducting fieldwork participated in UNICEF Child Safeguarding Briefings.
- Both Samuel Hall and UNICEF's Ethical Guidelines on Research with Children were utilised to develop project specific proto
- Children were only interviewed as part of the qualitative sample in Case Studies, where a safe environment and privacy could be ensured.

Financial Incentives

- Snacks and water were provided in qualitative sessions, but no financial remuneration was given.



Data: Consent and Anonymisation

- All participants were informed of the purpose of the study and were asked to provide their consent.
- Names and other identifying details were not collected in order to protect the identity of respondents.

2.2. Research tools

Desk review

The research team carried out a desk review to develop a clearer understanding of the issues at stake, identify gaps in the existing literature, and engage with the broader dialogue on the intersection of CTP and GBV. The desk review informed the tool design and provided guidance in the analysis and report writing phase, particularly in relation to issues of CTP effectiveness when deployed in contexts similar to Cox's Bazar and with reference to GBV. Throughout the project cycle, representatives of organisations who were engaging in small scale CBI shared with Samuel Hall data and reporting that came into circulation during the fieldwork and analysis phases.

Qualitative tools

12 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with five to six participants split between Camps 4 and 11 and along gender lines. FGDs explored decision-making mechanisms around GBV and resources at both household and community level. This was also an opportunity to investigate gender power dynamics, expectations with regard to gender roles, as well as perceptions of safety and access to services.

21 Case Studies with individuals, of which most were female (including 4 adolescent girls) and 9 males. These interviews provided a safer space for individuals, particularly female participants, to share their stories and experiences, direct and indirect of GBV. The objective was to better understand GBV dynamics, gauge the potential intersection between child protection and GBV from adolescents, and incorporate a male perspective.

2 Community Observations in Camps 4 and 11 provided a more anthropological approach to understanding community-level dynamics in each location. Over two days, the lead local researcher and project team spoke with a variety of community members in order to gain key information around the main research topics in a more free-flowing fashion. They also allowed the lead researcher to map out communities and spaces within them to help understand female inclusion. These community observations were also used to assist in the planning and design of fieldwork research. Full versions can be found in Annex 3.

43 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) at local and international levels were part of a strategy to gather specific information in relation to: (i) the economic situation in Cox's Bazar; (ii) programming and resources that are accessible to the Rohingya community;

and, (iii) lessons learned from both CTP experiments and gender-related programming. Local KIIs engaged representatives of organisations active in Cox’s Bazar and who had a direct experience of programming in the camps. Through high-level interviews, the team engaged with researchers, senior employees at INGOs and UN agencies who are involved in overseeing potential programming, and experts on the Rohingya diaspora and their condition as refugees. See Annex 2 for a list of KII participants.

Quantitative tool

The household survey offers a high-level understanding of household economics and coping mechanisms, and of social and cultural norms regarding women and programming targeted at women. A KAP section of the questionnaire was designed to investigate community and individual attitudes. The survey was answered by the head of household or the head of household’s spouse. The research team interviewed both male and female respondents and collected gender-disaggregated data.

2.3. Sampling and training

Samuel Hall’s research team targeted two camps, Camp 4 and Camp 11 and interviewed a total of **870 individuals** and conducted **over 60 qualitative interviews**. These locations were chosen by UNICEF, based on their engagement via programming, particularly presence of WFSs, and the possible locations of pilot programming based on this research.³³

In the absence of household listings or ‘census’ data for the camps, the research team adopted a **basic random sampling strategy** by location within a set area each day in order to spread the sample geographically across the camps. Enumerator teams selected a different block (or two, depending on size) each day and knocked on every third building, during camp open hours roughly between 9am and 4pm. **The sample of respondents in the survey was skewed towards young females:** 611 of the 870 individuals who participated in the household survey were women; of these 360 were below the age of 34. The age profile of the 259 male respondents was significantly different, with 41% of these respondents claiming to be over the age of 45.

33) Note that short ‘Community Profiles’ of the two camps can be found in Annex 3.

Figure 5 ▼
Respondent characteristics

Gender of respondents		Age of respondents		Respondent’s role in household?	
male	29.8%	18-24	19.7%	Head of household	57.0%
female	70.2%	25-34	34.6%	Relative of head of h.	0.6%
		35-44	18.9%	Spouse of head of h.	35.1%
		45+	26.9%	Other	7.3%

Given the time of day the survey was conducted and the methodology targeting homes, the predominance of female participants is not surprising. The Rohingya in Cox's Bazar observe segregated gender norms, with women staying at home while men have the freedom to roam outside. **In addition, while we did not specifically select female profiles for the survey, some men showed little interest in participating once they understood that the aim of the exercise was focused on the female population.** See Annex 1 for a breakdown of sampling by camp, gender, and age.

2.4. Challenges and limitations

Ramadan and concerns about talking to externals: The timing of the research (during the holy month of Ramadan) posed restrictions on working hours and limited resources in the field. The shorter working day meant that the time in the camps was reduced. Extended prayer breaks and mosque visits required several breaks from work during the day, and participants were available for a restricted number of hours. This impacted FGDs and case studies, as these were not conducted at home. Participants were also tired and reluctant to talk. Additionally, a small number of participants expressed concerns about talking to the researchers for fear of reprisals. Concerns were addressed by emphasising their anonymity and confirming that official approval to conduct the research had been given by local camp authorities.

Data collection: Language and Mobile Phone Coverage. The lack of mobile coverage in camps limited the team's ability to geo-tag data and made coordination in the field difficult. The use of Bangla characters posed a challenge for the Kobo data collection systems in the field. These issues were ultimately resolved.

Note-taking and data collation: Enumerators were not as experienced in conducting non-assessment style research and had to be extensively trained on conducting qualitative research. Note-taking was not always of a high standard. Additional training was given to qualitative enumerators as a result. There were also delays in organising and translating qualitative data. This was, again, largely due to the advent of Ramadan. The system deployed to ensure the anonymity of participants and organise data relied on photographing and/or scanning outputs in the field. This resulted in some confusion, but the team was able to cross-check all material.

Cultural and linguistic sensitivities: Some men were unwilling to speak when they realised that the line of enquiry concerned women. Male participants were often less engaged than female participants, particularly in qualitative exercises. **This attitude did not reflect a resistance or opposition to the female-centred programming that might emerge from the research. Rather, it underpins the normative segregation in gender roles that made men less interested in matters they believe to concern women alone.** How the community understood topics at a conceptual and linguistic level influenced their responses. While participants, especially women, were willing to discuss relations between men and women, particularly tensions and violence in domestic and communitarian contexts, these conversations evidenced a different

understanding of what qualifies as GBV. **The team did not share its definition of GBV, nor a list of behaviours that fall under the GBV umbrella. Respondents were given the space to speak about their experiences on their terms and in their language.** In addition, discussions of safety and security were often framed comparatively. **Initial responses highlighted that participants felt safe as they were no longer in Myanmar and subject to the violence and persecution that drove them to escape.** Participants understood this line of questioning in terms past experiences, turning their attention to the present required prompting.

Anonymity and child-sensitivity: In line with the ethical principles guiding Samuel Hall's research, we interviewed a small number of children so as to minimise the risk such interactions may pose to this vulnerable population. We were also unable to revisit research participants for verification or additional research purposes due to the anonymisation of the data.





Photo 7
Camp 4, Chittagong,
Bangladesh: Two women
walk down a path that leads
into Camp 4.



Photo 8 ▲

Camp 4, Chittagong,
Bangladesh: Solar panels lay
on a roof outside of a home
in Camp 4.

Photo 9 ▼

Camp 21, Chittagong,
Bangladesh: Shoes for sale
inside a shop at Camp 21.



3. Gender-based violence, social norms, and economic factors: key findings

3.1. Understanding the situation

Characteristics of the Rohingya community and research participants

The refugee population in Cox's Bazar is distributed across 34 camps of differing sizes and with differing availability of and access to resources. Respondents shared several common traits. These are summarised below:

Figure 6 ▼
Survey respondent profile

Most declared having arrived in Bangladesh between 18 to 24 months ago, and most of these refugees claimed to have come from Myanmar.

The majority of participants lived in households that had 3 or 4 children.

Literacy levels were low overall. Just over half of respondents told us they could read (53%) in any language. However, only 2% declared being able to read on the phone and 11% acknowledged being able to write basic messages.

All but 2% of survey respondents were registered with governmental (41%), non-governmental (35%), and international organisations (41%) to receive aid.

In terms of access to technology, 83% of survey respondents declared not having a mobile phone that could be used to receive money.

The vast majority of survey respondents had registered with the local authorities. Their migration status, however, was identified as an issue by key informants in Cox's Bazar. The Bangladesh national policy designates the Rohingya who have arrived since the summer of 2017 (the majority of those living in the camps now) as Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals (FDMN). **The FDMN designation has been contested by the international community – including formally refusing this designation in the Joint Response Plan – as it imposes a set of restrictions and limitations on the local population, denies them certain refugee rights, and makes long-term programming more challenging.** The refusal to grant the Rohingya refugee status “makes them more vulnerable to denial of freedom of movement, access to public services, education, and livelihoods, as well as to arrest and exploitation.”³⁴

This was reflected in restrictions observed during fieldwork and by informants: **the community is officially prohibited from leaving camps, working in the local community, or accessing documentation such as National Identity cards. They are effectively unable to access items like SIM cards for phones, which require a national ID. They are unable to access the legal system, with ramifications for GBV.**³⁵

The FDMN status has been identified as a divisive factor among the inhabitants of Cox's Bazar by informants. They observed that pre-2017 refugees insist on being distinguished from recent arrivals; they have demanded different IDs clarifying their refugee status and separate access points to programming, likely also due to the different rights and access afforded to refugees who arrived in Bangladesh during earlier periods. Those who highlighted this point, did so as a reminder that **the population in Cox's Bazar is not a “monolithic community,” but clustered around migration status, networks formed in Myanmar, as well as around different attitudes.**

Economic situation

Income sources, levels, and perceptions

The refugee population in Cox's Bazar is largely reliant on aid, principally distribution of food and, in a more limited way, economic support (CfW, often of the Cash for Assets kind), livelihoods, trainings. **Food aid was almost universally acknowledged by participants as an essential, albeit insufficient, resource to meet basic needs.** Most noted that their household had an additional source of income beyond food distribution, earned through participation in programming or through the sale of in-kind goods.

“We receive help from the NGOs and once every 2-3 months, we do ‘cash for work’ which gives a daily income of 300BDT-350 BDT. Our families live on these incomes. There are no jobs available within the camp.” – Rohingya Male FGD Camp 4

“The money that we get every 2-3 months through ‘cash for work’ is used to buy food items like green vegetables, fish, chicken, beef, etc. We also spend some money for our children’s medical purposes.” – Rohingya Male FGD Camp 4

34) Bill Frelick. “Bangladesh Is Not My Country: The Plight of Rohingya Refugees from Myanmar,” Human Rights Watch, August 5, 2018.

35) “Rohingya in Bangladesh Are Surviving – but their long-term prospects are grim,” IFRI Blog – Issue Post, July 2, 2019.

Reported levels of income were low and only a small number of individuals stated having enough household income. In the survey, fewer individuals than those participating in the qualitative research acknowledged having any income: 56.4% of households reported having no income at all (more so in Camp 11 than Camp 4).

Participants identified only one earner per family and most of those who discussed this issue – men in particular – talked to us about their efforts of finding income generating activities for another family member or expressed the need for another family members to earn. In most households, the head of household was named as the income earner (77.6% of households). A small segment of households (16.1%) reported that another adult in the household, not the spouse of the head of the household, was earning income. A recurrent theme was the search for employment as a way to supplement in-kind aid, increase household income, and meet expenses. Both male and female participants thought it essential for men within the household to work.

“Currently, I am the only earning member in the family and I am trying to find a job for myself, which will give me more income for my family. I’m also trying to find a job for my son, who has studied till Class-8 in Myanmar. I think that if me and my son can manage to get a job, our income will help us in meeting most of our family expenses. These incomes will also help in reducing family conflicts which arise due to financial [problems].” – Rohingya Male FGD Camp 11

“My husband works as a day labourer in the camp. I go to the SSWG in order to learn sewing. After the successful completion of the training, I believe I can earn from home. My husband earns 1500 BDT per month. With this meagre amount, we have to somehow run the family. It is very difficult for me and my husband to run the family with this little amount of money.” – Rohingya Female FGD Camp 11

Figure 7 ▼
Reported income levels of survey respondents in BDT

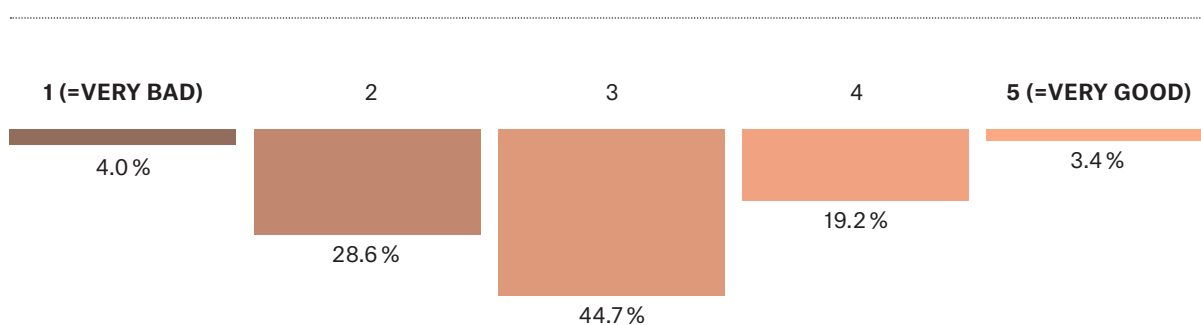
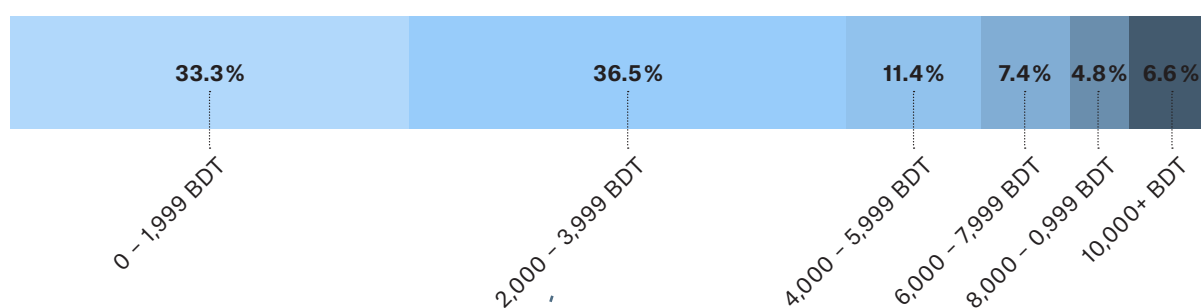


Figure 8 ▲
‘How would you rate your economic situation, if 1 is very bad, 5 is very good?’

Over a third (34.6%) were earning income through a job in the camps with an NGO or aid agency, mainly through a CfW programme (78.4%). Around 20% worked as a volunteer, for which most organisations provide remuneration. A small group reported having some kind of business in the camp (12.4%). Incomes were reported as being somewhat irregular, with just under half receiving income “a few times a month” (49.6%). Some received income daily, likely those who are business owners or day labourers – different camp programmes, KIIs confirmed, might pay on different schedules and may do so more or less frequently.

In terms of income levels, over 60% of respondents were grouped at monthly income levels between BDT 1000-3000 (approximately USD 11 to USD 35 at the time of writing). A more sophisticated proxy is needed for a more detailed analysis. However, in this instance, the majority of households were grouped together and there were few major outliers – suggesting that the data collected captures the general levels of income accurately.

Few households were receiving remittances. 96% of households said that they were not sent any money. The few who did, reported a range of amounts, mostly between 2000-5000 BDT, and these funds were received irregularly and infrequently.

Against this background of economic deprivation and lack of opportunities, respondents were downcast about their economic situation: the majority rated the situation either bad or average. Men were more pessimistic and more likely to rate their situation as bad (by 10%).

Correlation analysis: perceptions of economic stability

Those who received an income are predicted to have a 0.395-point increase in their perceived economic stability than those who do not have an income. We disaggregated data on this survey question by gender and conducted correlation and multiple regression analyses to examine female perceptions of the economic condition looking at several potential predictors including income, participation in women’s services and education programmes, and remittances. For those who admitted receiving remittances, we expect a 0.86-point increase in their perceived economic stability, holding all other variables constant. This relationship is strongly significant with a p-value of 0.00.

Household income played a role in attitudes to the economic situation: households with income were more likely to describe their situation as “good” on the above scale, while households that reported no income were more likely to describe their situation as “bad.” Correlation analyses supported this finding: **perceived household economic stability is positively and significantly correlated with receiving an income.**

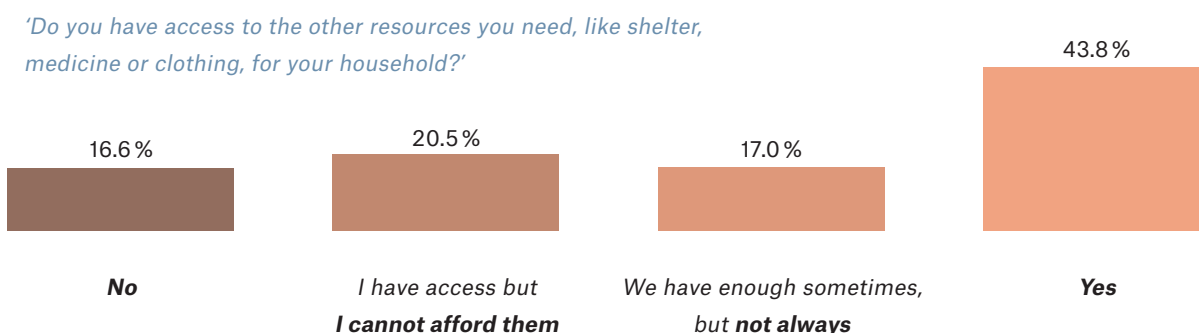
The most significant and impactful predictor on perceived household economic stability was remittances. Although only 35 families reported receiving remittances, this was the variable that had the most significant positive impact on perceived household economic stability.

Income sources, levels, and perceptions

Most respondents did not report challenges in accessing resources, aside from affordability. A significant segment of respondents claimed that they could not afford them, but an equally significant percentage indicated that they had access to such resources.

Households could not afford medicine and shelter, as well as access food types not included in food aid. Shelter emerged as a pressing concern for men, worsened by the forthcoming rainy season.

Figure 9 ▼
Most common responses to 'Do you have access to the other resources you need, like shelter, medicine or clothing, for your household?'



Control of resources

Respondents, mainly women, blamed corruption (49.1%) or insufficient programming in the camps (32%) for the lack of access to resources. The majority indicate that the *mahji* controlled money and resources for the population living in camps (89.1%).³⁶ The remaining respondents believed that NGOs and aid agencies controlled resources. Men were more likely to believe that NGOs and aid agencies exerted this control, while women were more likely to think that the *mahjis* controlled resources, as did younger respondents. These responses reflect discussions on the socio-political hierarchies in the camps in relation to influencers: power seems to lie with *mahjis* and religious figures, who are able to influence programming, participate in business and thereby appear to the rest of the community to control resources and their distribution. Men have greater degrees of access in general to *mahjis* and religious leaders.

Needs and priorities of Rohingya women

Improved access to income

Whether at household or individual level, and whether through cash or jobs that can bring financial resources into the household, the need to improve the economic situation was the priority for the majority of women interviewed. **Increasing a household's capital was seen as essential to afford enough, or diverse, food**

³⁶ The term *mahji* was adopted after the influx and refers to Rohingya community leaders that are selected by the community, but not democratically elected. *Mahjis* have a governance role in camps, overseeing the community and performing roles in mediation, resource distribution and access, and outreach.

options, health care and medicine, improvements to shelters, and items like clothing. While aid support addresses some concerns, for these women it does not address all: corroborating this are the frequent reports of refugees selling food aid and that many identified affordability of resources – not access – as an issue.

Increased movement in camps and safe spaces

Women highlighted that while they felt safer in Bangladesh than in Myanmar, their freedom of movement had been reduced. Most female participants could not move freely outside of their homes, mentioning safety and cultural concerns. Degrees of movement and feelings of safety in the camps varied, with some women feeling more comfortable collecting water or visiting latrines due to improvements to solar lighting, and others suggesting they could visit WFSs safely. Responses were not consistent. However, discussions of mobility were frequently underpinned by a desire for increased freedom of movement. **Many men and women emphasised the practical need for spaces where women could work safely and segregated from men.** In some cases, this might be at home, but given challenges in terms of affording capital and resources, and the small spaces that many households inhabited, the need for options to work outside the home in a way that was considered appropriate for the community and safe for women emerged as another clear priority.

Reduction of domestic conflict and access to legal support

Financial difficulties on households negatively impacted family life at home. Women were particularly vocal in their desire to minimise or eliminate domestic conflict. This anxiety is indicative a major challenge affecting the Rohingya in Cox's Bazar – the prevailing tension within the home and the wider community. Displacement makes women and girls more vulnerable to domestic violence, with effects on families' psychosocial wellbeing.

More frequently noted in KIIs, but in some cases by female Rohingya participants, the lack of recourse to justice for women and girls who may have experienced violence, or are continuing to experience violence, was a major concern. Without mechanisms for those who experience GBV to feel that perpetrators can be identified and sanctioned, the impetus to report GBV is further reduced.

Incidence and forms of GBV

KIIs with local programme staff, experts and practitioners emphasised the extent, grave nature, and steady rise of GBV and GBV-related issues. One actor working with a major implementing partner in the camps made this point forcefully:

“There is every kind of GBV here. There is early marriage – they are not allowed to do any marriage without permission of CiCs [Camp-in-Charge], but sometimes we are seeing it with informing the CiC. Another one is girl's harassment – sometimes some

people are in relationships with other wives, and another one is one man getting married again and leaving his first wife for a woman in another block.” – KII, ActionAid

Concerns around child marriage and IPV were widespread, with growing challenges regarding kidnapping, drug trafficking, and exploitation. The latter were tied to increases in organised crime.

“... one of the things that came up was that as far as GBV was concerned, most of the experiences were from an intimate partner, and the second was forced marriage (including young girls) and trafficking. Supporting these has challenges due to the lack of access to the legal system.” – KII, ISCG

Correlation analysis: predictors of domestic violence

The Samuel Hall research team investigated whether income level was a predictor of domestic violence through correlation and multiple regression analyses, holding constant the effect of education and gender. The question “Have you noticed women and girls experiencing violence in your community, and if so, what kinds?” is not a strong indicator of the level of violence experienced on a household level; given the sensitivity of asking a question of this nature in an open survey, the question was phrased to explore GBV at community level and not ask directly about the respondent’s personal experience with violence. Instead, the variable of “I think that a husband may treat his wife however he wants” was adopted as a proxy for household level acceptance of potential violence in the home. The likelihood to agree with the statement “I think that a husband may treat his wife however he wants” is positively but **not significantly correlated** with receiving an income.

They experience ...	male	female
violence at home from family	20.3%	42.5%
violence outside their homes	35.1%	17.2%

Figure 10 ▲
Male vs female responses on sites of violence for women & girls

Intimate Partner/Domestic Violence

IPV and domestic violence emerged as the most common form of GBV both experienced personally and observed by respondents. In the survey, when respondents were asked whether they had observed women and girls experiencing violence in their community; four options of what that violence may be or where it may have occurred were provided: inside the home, outside the home, exploitation, and child marriage. The most reported form of violence (over a third) was from inside the home. Women were more likely to report violence at home, and men more likely to say that they had observed women experiencing violence outside it.

Households with income – as opposed to those that reported no income – were just as likely to have experienced violence inside the home. This observation runs counter to the expectation that income levels equate with access to education and awareness raising programmes, entailing a better recognition of GBV and higher rates of reporting among those households reporting income. Indeed, further statistical analysis on the survey data indicated that conservative and male-centred views on gender were not significantly correlated with having an income.

Women, in case studies, reported being abused by their husbands at home. This was described in terms of beatings, “torture,” and “conflict.” Few offered more detail on their experience of IPV. Women reported that other women, or women they knew, had experienced violence of some kind.

Child/early marriage

A minimal number of respondents identified child marriage as a form of GBV, although some male participants acknowledged resorting to marrying a child as a coping mechanism, a way of relieving financial pressure. Girls were not the only victims of this practice.

“To get some money in my family, I got her elder sons and daughter married off. Currently my health condition is not good, so I cannot attend the training on tailoring jobs. I feel that if I would have been able to do tailoring jobs, I could have earned some money for my family.” – Case Study Rohingya Adult Female Camp 4

Child marriage emerged as a normalised and culturally acceptable practice, which was current before 2017. Many of the girls who participated in these research activities as adults had married and had borne children before the age of 18, when living in Myanmar. Some even saw this as advisable: 14.2% stated that marriage ensured a woman’s safety and so women should be married earlier. Perceptions of childhood play a key role in these views on child marriage, as underlined by a recent social norms assessment of the Rohingya. The study concluded that marriage for girls is considered acceptable after the first menstrual cycle, marking the transition from childhood to adulthood, and so indicates readiness for marriage. This implies that queries that are framed regarding “children” can be problematic, as girls as young as 11 or 12 who may have begun menstruating might be considered adults for the purposes of marriage.³⁷

Polygyny

While the survey was not designed to investigate polygyny, the issue was reported by programming and local camp actors as a growing concern with major economic linkages, as well as by female Rohingya participants.

“If you see the polygamy issue, that is economic. Every family is getting a food card, so if I’m in control of four or five families, then I have access to four- or five-women’s card that I can sell to make money.” – ActionAid KII

37) See for example “Gender-Based Violence, Health and the Role of the Health Sector,” World Bank, published 2009; and, “Violence Against Women,” World Health Organisation, published November 29, 2017.

“Polygamy and second marriages are happening here a lot also – There is also an issue that men tend to have problems – when they lose their jobs, they abandon their wife and move on to another where he can marry someone else and get a new job. [There have even been] cases found where the husband left the wife with 4 or 5 children – this is also an issue as the men often [effectively] control ration cards and will take them with them.” – KII SMS Camp 4

The testimony of Rohingya women helped develop the understanding of polygyny as it impacts domestic dynamics and as a form of violence, raising the concern (particularly in FGDs) that this practice was exacerbating IPV:

“From the time my husband got a second wife, our sufferings and torture have increased.” – FGD Rohingya Female Camp 4

Harassment

Reports of harassment of women while in open or public spaces in the camps was mentioned often, at collection points (firewood/water) and latrines and in relation to women who might be working or participating in women’s programming. This is likely the kind of episode respondents took into account when reporting violence “outside the home”. They referred to catcalling or minor assaults, with many using terms like “bullying” to describe what was happening to them. Harassment was also mentioned in reports of targeted verbal attacks against women who were working as volunteers in the community. These were carried out to prevent or dissuade women from engaging with work seen as inappropriate – often the reported perpetrators were groups of young men, sometimes linked to *mahjis* or religious leaders.

Understanding and perceptions of GBV among the Rohingya

About half (48%) believe that being in the camps posed specific risks to women and girls, stating that it was not safe for them to go outside (26.5% no specific risk). Marginally more women than men pointed to external risks (46% vs 41%). In the context of the discussion in the section above (‘Incidence and forms of GBV’), this response is representative of how women understand the risks they face and how they view forms of GBV. **Forms of GBV that occur within families are largely overlooked and seen as culturally acceptable practices.** With due regard to the role *purdah* and female mobility play, **the risks, according to women, come from outside the home.**

Informants reiterated the extent to which Rohingya’s understanding and perceptions of GBV, particularly IPV and child marriage, meant that the refugee community did not see these as a risk or issue to be addressed, but as part of their everyday reality. Key informants noted that while education and awareness raising was ongoing, these efforts were under-resourced and had not yet made a significant impact.

“One significant lesson from [our evaluation] FGDs was that the training package elements on GBV were very new to [Rohingya women] ...”
- KII, UNFPA

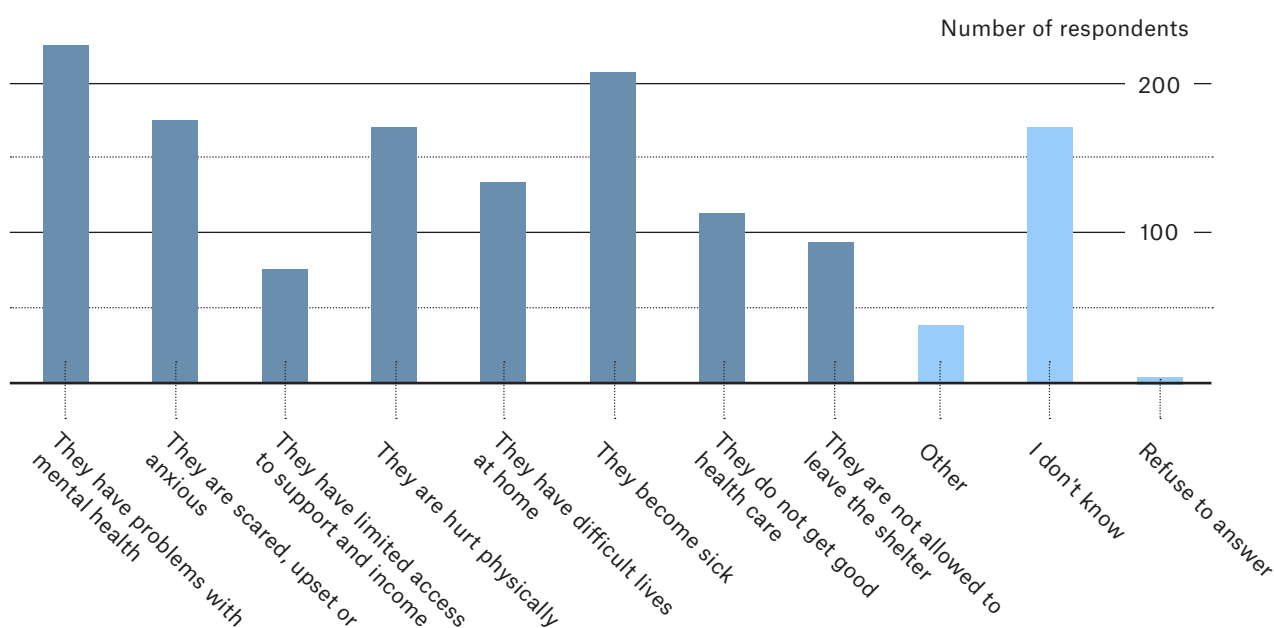
When female respondents discussed their husbands beating them, they did so not in response to questions about GBV; in other instances, women and adolescents did not identify themselves as survivors of or having experienced GBV, despite being or having been child brides. This framing of power structures that prioritises men’s rights to control female household members, wives in particular, was extremely common in case studies and FGDs. This is also borne out by the fact that most respondents, whether male or female, reported that decision making was the right of parents or husbands, and that it was a husband’s right to treat their wives however they wanted. This presents a tension, indicative of the cultural embeddedness of certain forms of GBV: **while the perception of the Rohingya refugees is largely that risk for women lies outside the home, looking into the reported experiences of GBV suggests that the domestic sphere is the locus of the most common forms of violence experienced by women and girls.**

Alongside perception of GBV, survey and research participants thought violence on women and girls had a negative impact on their lives and wellbeing. Many expressed the belief that women might experience a range of negative outcomes as a result of violence. These included girls and women suffering from mental health issues as a consequence, as well as being scared, upset or anxious, being hurt physically, or becoming sick.

The data shows a difference between female and male perspectives: women were more likely to focus on the risk of physical harm. Men were more likely to indicate that survivors of violence had a more difficult life at home. Men rarely talked about how violence affected women in any detail, if at all. They mostly dissociated themselves, their families, communities, or even their block within the camps from such occurrences of violence.

“There aren’t any women in our block who have had any bad experiences. If there is anybody like that, I think they should be given the best aid so that they forget these bad experiences.” – FGD Rohingya Male Camp 4

Figure 11 ▼
Responses to “What impact does violence have on women and girls in your community?”



When the topic was acknowledged, men saw the effects almost exclusively in terms of mental health: as a result of violence, women were withdrawn, depressed, or affected by other mental health issues. Key to understanding both male and female views on the impact of violence is the consideration that these discussions of violence and safety in the camps were framed by experiences (direct or indirect) of trauma suffered in Myanmar. Specificity of the question to violence in the Cox's Bazar context was, by and large, lost. Experiences and perceptions of violence and safety on the part of participants were often understood against the background of respondents' experiences in Myanmar:

*“I feel here safer than being in Myanmar because I can sleep peacefully at night. I do not have to worry about being shot by people or being tortured by the Myanmar military. **In one way I feel safe in my house, as I am safe from the torture of military. But I also feel unsafe as my husband tortures me and wants to divorce me.** My mother-in-law encourages my husband to divorce me. I also know about a woman with two kids, whose husband left her and her two kids and then married another woman. I can move around in front of my house but I always wear an abaya while going out of the house. I have seen that women get tortured by their husbands in the camp while the kids have the risk of getting kidnapped or getting hurt by moving vehicles if they go outside their house. So, I feel that women and kids are not very safe in the camps.”* – Case Study Rohingya Adult Female Camp 4

Host-migrant community GBV dynamics

The impact and increase of GBV is being registered across both Rohingya and host communities in Cox's Bazar. FGDs, case studies, and interviews with informants working in GBV programming in the host community highlighted the interrelation of these communities when it came to particular forms of GBV.

They pointed out that **these communities share socio-cultural characteristics in terms of gender segregation and inequality, so that the same forms of GBV and GBV-linked issues are prevalent in both contexts:** IPV, child or forced marriage, lack of awareness:

“In host communities the most predominant form of GBV is IPV – physical and emotional abuse at home is very high. Next would be forced marriage, which is very common. Rape, we cannot say, because the reporting is very low.” – KII, PLAN International

Many women in the host community reported being left by their husbands, who married Rohingya women: the perception is that this behaviour is motivated by access to humanitarian aid, to which the Bangladeshi husband would be entitled. Across various interviews, cases of host community men moving into the camps to marry Rohingya women or girls, sometimes as young as 13 but commonly aged from 14 upwards, were reported. They would often later abandon these brides. As a consequence, many women and families in both host and refugee communities were left behind and extremely vulnerable. Men reportedly also threatened their wives that they will leave to exert their authority.

Informants reported a growing fear among the host community that they have become targets of attacks or sexual violence perpetrated by the refugees. Although these reports were unverified and possibly unfounded, they reflect the situation in terms of perceptions each community has towards the other. This attitude influences the way in which families perceive risks, causing some households to choose to have their girls stay home from school at earlier ages. Conversely, informants discussed the possibility that members of the host community were involved in the exploitation or trafficking of Rohingya girls, using the pretext of marriage or offers of employment:

“We are also hearing many refugees marrying with the host community. The host community are also exploiting women. We had some girls come to us, and they were excited that someone is coming, they are going to get us work in Cox’s Bazar – we weren’t sure if this was going to be trafficking, but it was a concern.” – KII, DCA

As to criminality, informants raised the alarm that organised crime networks operating in the camps were infiltrating refugee and host communities. These criminals were linked to drug trafficking and violence across both communities. Although the effect of these criminal networks on GBV is not yet understood, drug trafficking was linked to a rise in IPV in the host community:

“We’re seeing as a result of drug trafficking and organized crime an increase in IPV from drug abuse and an increased fear of reporting. There are now women in the community who insist on accessing their legal rights, but we’re now suggesting cases where women have husbands involved in the drug trade creating a barrier to accessing legal systems because of threats from employers, etc. we have also supported recently more cases of break-ins, and it’s not exactly clear if its GBV though the cases we have supported have been FHHs – not clear the motivation, and not consistent across cases.” – KII, DRC

3.2. Society, behaviour, perceptions

Culture and religion

Social norms and, in particular, social norms around gender roles within and outside the domestic space, are a key focus of this research. Strict gender roles, inequality, and power imbalances between genders create the space for, and acceptance of, GBV. Without this framework that determines difference in power structure, consolidates hierarchies, and normalises certain behaviours, the landscape for GBV is greatly reduced. Actors, from the WHO and the World Bank to grassroots organisations, recognised this central feature of the mechanism creating the conditions for and perpetuating GBV. Without hesitation, all informants identified the socio-cultural context as the main enabler of GBV. As one key informant noted:

“... economic empowerment will not address the problem in itself. It may minimise it and it may transform some of the dynamics and I think if both men and women are working it is likely to reduce GBV, but there remain other issues like forced marriage, and so on, and these other factors will continue to fuel [GBV].” – KII, UN Women

“We are looking at a religiously and culturally conservative community. One of the things that was important for me to say was that we didn’t have any women talk about women’s empowerment as an objective. In some communities I have seen women do this, even in conservative communities, but we didn’t see that here. I think we’re starting from a point of even – we didn’t talk about GBV with them so I’m not sure – we’re not even starting from such a point. I’ve not come across such a conservative community in that sense, of the lack of awareness of what is normal and not normal.” – KII, ODI

The Rohingya community observe conservative gender norms, as women practice *purdah* and perform domestic and caring work, while men are considered to be providers and decision-makers. This conservatism is widely acknowledged by actors and endorsed by the Rohingya interviewed. The extent to which these views are entrenched is illustrated by the pushback that certain GBV actors faced by male community members when attempting to implement gender-related programming. The Joint Agency’s gender analysis noted, for example, that only a year into the response, increases in paid work for women had resulted in increased domestic violence in the home and harassment outside it.³⁸

Understanding gender power structures and the norms that govern is critical to developing a grounded and context-sensitive understanding of how implementers can develop programming to reduce risks and address the root causes of GBV, and ultimately sensitise the Rohingya to forms of GBV prevalent in the camps.

Religion plays a central role in this segregation. In field observations and accounts of informants and participants, religious leaders – the *mahjis*, in particular – are characterised as not just authorities, but political powerbrokers in camp hierarchies and the keepers of cultural norms. They were regularly identified as the cornerstone of gender segregation, their preaching as sources of strict traditional attitudes to women. Religion was enlisted to justify the propriety of *purdah*.

The majority identified *mahjis* first as influencers of social norms; followed by religious and community leaders. Men rated mullahs and religious leaders more highly as influencers. Women were more suspicious than men of the influence of *mahjis* and imams.

The issue of female access to figures of authority contributes to the marginalisation of women in the camps. The guarded attitude expressed by women towards religious figures depends on their access to these networks of influence: according to informants, it is men who attend mosques, and these are typically male-only spaces. For similar reasons of mobility and propriety, women have limited access to secular figures of authority in the camps. At any rate, the camp’s power structures are a combination of religious and secular – so an informant noted about Camp 4:

“The major challenge for me has been the conservatism – women not being allowed to go to centres, for example, and men controlling the decision making and the women’s lives.”

- KII, Action Aid

³⁸ ARR. Rohingya Refugee Response Gender Analysis.

“In a camp situation there is a chain of command. At the bottom you have the Rohingya people, who can go to block leaders, who can go to mahjis, who can then go to SMS who can raise to CiC who can discuss with UNHCR at Cox’s level.” – KII, SMS Camp 4.

This is significant not just in terms of the cultural framework, but also in relation to women’s ability to have recourse to justice and representation of their concerns at community level (see ‘Legal access and leadership’ below).

Fieldwork evidenced the extent to which the Rohingya society in Cox’s Bazar (and the host community) is a deeply conservative community. Nonetheless, this impression was not universal. Rare voices outside the chorus in case studies and FGDs did point to a degree of difference in terms of the authority of religious figures, even in matters of gender; some informants noted limited progress in terms of female access to power: women talking to CiCs, selection of a first woman CiC, and women police officers in camps 4 and 12 (UN Women initiatives).

Several informants linked the ascendancy of religious sentiment and practice in the camps to the Rohingya’s newfound freedom to practice Islam after years of oppression in Myanmar.

“You’ll also hear a lot about the religion here because in Myanmar they couldn’t practice it at all. You weren’t allowed to practice religion, call yourself Rohingya, so they’re really proud to now be called Rohingya ...” – KII, IOM

This particular informant observed that this is a culture “trying to grow up in a really short time,” suggesting an opportunity to contribute to and influence this process of becoming in programme design through an awareness raising component.

Gender and the household

One of the ways the study sought to gauge the dynamics of gender within the home was to ask about men’s treatment of women within the household. In two separate questions, respondents were asked whether the community thought that husbands were free to treat wives as they wished, and whether they personally thought that. The questions asked them to rate their agreement with the statements “The community thinks that a husband may treat his wife however he wants” and “I think that a husband may treat his wife however he wants.” Respondents agreed with both statements, with only 10% either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with either. On the latter, women agreed with the statement more often than men.

Programming was mentioned as a way for people to change mindsets on this issue, by learning about their rights and/or the appropriate behaviour for husbands and wives. It was just as commonly echoed that men had the right to act as they pleased towards their wives and daughters.

Decision making

Participants and survey respondents identified men as decision makers and providers within the home; women were described (or acknowledged by other women) as playing a consultative or secondary role, primarily inhabiting the domestic space and fulfilling caretaking-related roles.

“Our Rohingya community thinks that a man’s main responsibility is to do work, earn money and support his family. I take the responsibility of making the decisions of my family. But, in some cases I take my wife’s advice. The men naturally take the responsibility of meeting their family’s needs. We leave some decisions for the women to make, like household work, cooking, looking after the kids, taking care of their education, we leave these for the women. But I mostly take the decisions related to finance in the family. Our Rohingya community thinks that the women should only do household work and serve their men. The religious leaders of the community also think that.” – FGD Rohingya Male Camp 4

When asked about how decisions about marriages since arrival in the camps, respondents stated that families had decided together (41.6%) or that the head of household had taken the decision (23.4%).³⁹ Qualitative research, however, emphasised that it was male heads of households who would make the decision on child marriage, in particular of daughters. Women were more likely to respond that the head of household had made the decision, while men that the family had decided together.

Figure 12 ▼
Responses to “The community thinks it is not good for women to play a role in making decisions at home”

“The community thinks it is not good for women to play a role in making decisions at home”

	male	female
Agree	32.4%	66.8%
Disagree	50.6%	66.8%

Perceptions of the community’s position on women’s decision making at home were more varied. The majority of both genders disagreed that it “is not good for women to play a role in making decisions at home” – men were more likely to agree with that view, and women more likely to disagree.

This pattern held when respondents were asked about their community thought. The question of what the community thinks was almost universally answered with the acknowledgment that this is a conservative community that believes in segregated gender roles and privileges the rights of the male.

Economic decision making

Heads of households make economic decisions (over 70%), with a smaller segment with input from other family members. **85% said that the head of household was the**

³⁹ This response had a lower sample size as it was asked only when someone in the family had got married since arriving in the camps.

economic decision-maker. Qualitative research reflected specific areas of household expenditure in which women have a greater say and influence in decision making, when and how the money is spent.

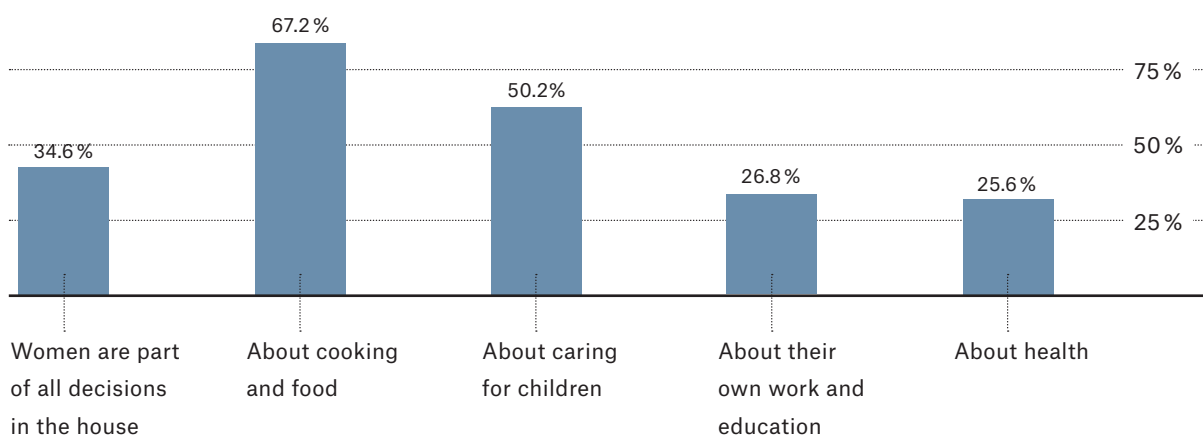
“I take my individual decisions on my own. For family matters, I often discuss with my wife and with my [adult] son. When I get some money, I use that for medical treatments, for buying clothes for my children and for buying food items like fish & meat. If I had a regular earning or some savings, I would have spent it for purchasing a solar fan to get relief from the terrible heat and I would also use that money for building a house. If I do not have any earnings, then I feel the most relevant help for me will be to get help in building a house, receive medical treatment for my wife & children and get some essential & nutritious food items for my children.” – FGD Rohingya Male Camp 11

“My father decides on our expenses regarding purchase of food items, medicines, clothes and household items. My mother decides what to buy and my father decides when to buy.” – Case Study Camp 4 Rohingya Adolescent Female

Some women shared the view that gaining income would mean they would be listened to more on how money was spent. **Women acknowledged that they would likely either be giving the funds to their husbands or that they would spend it as he decided.** Sometimes, women referred to a pool of household money over which their husbands had control, but which they might also have some say over. Perhaps the sharpest sentiments about lack of control over resources were expressed by a particular subset of the female population, divorcees and women married to men who were unable to work – women who had left or had been left by their husbands and subsequently had returned to their parent’s households, or women married to men who, for whatever reason, could not work. These individuals lamented their subordination and lack of access to household resources, situations in which they were victims of abuse and shaming and in which they had no voice at all on decisions.

“The head of the family decides what to buy and when to buy. He consults with his wife regarding purchase of household items.” – FGD Male Camp 4

Figure 13 ▼
Responses on women's decision making



The overall impression was that women played a more active part in expenditures relating to cooking, food purchases, children’s education, and health needs – these responses were not consistent across the board. When asked about the kinds of decisions women might make in the household, less than 2% of respondents claimed

that women made decisions about money, resources, or marriage. Few said that women did not make any decisions at all. In most cases, women reported being able to have at least some degree of decision-making power over discrete areas of domestic and personal life, such as cooking and food, caring for children, or their own work and education (on patterns of actual expenditure in the camps, see ‘Perceptions of existing programming & impacts’ below).

Legal access and leadership

As discussed above, limited access to figures of authority, and to the public spaces in which that authority is exercised, restricts women and girls’ ability to access justice system within the camps. Informants working in GBV across the camps described a situation in which women have little recourse to formal legal systems and a community justice apparatus. These are managed by CiCs, *mahjis*, and male community members to varying degrees. As such, they are also lacking in female representation. This poses a serious issue in terms of GBV response and mitigation, as several informants told us: survivors have nowhere to go and perpetrators go unpunished.

Small-scale efforts have successfully increased access to justice in camps 4 and 12. Female police officers and the introduction of female CiC in the camps (there was only 1 at the time of research) are reportedly encouraging more women to report abuses and are engaged in awareness raising and leadership mentoring activities. At the grassroots and community level, Rohingya community members are working on legal access and dispute resolution, including female community members.

Attitudes to women working and access to resources and opportunities

The majority – over half (65.2%) – agreed that the community does not think it is appropriate for women to work, and a near-majority (48.6% agreed, and 10.6% strongly agreed) expressed the same personal view. Women were more likely to distance themselves from the community’s opinion. When asked about their individual attitudes, the difference between genders was negligible.

This conservatism towards the role of women was seen as an obstacle to their access to work or income opportunities. Although over half of survey respondents indicated that women had access to opportunities to work or earn money, **women were 10% more likely than men to declare a lack of access to work and showed less awareness of these opportunities – an asymmetry in knowledge and services that hurts women more.** Community attitudes (41.2%) were reported as an obstacle to training opportunities for women, although the majority of respondents claimed women in their household had attended training or used services for women (85.6%).⁴⁰ Those who did mostly reported knowing of skills trainings (39.1%) or Women Friendly Spaces (23.6%) that were open to women. Only 14.5% listed “cash transfers or income support” as a form of support that women in the household had received.

“The other issue is that there are no ramifications, no vibrant and serious legal redress – there is something happening at the camp level, but people who do GBV can work around it. The power structure is fairly corrupt, and if the perpetrator can afford it or is connected, the case disappears. But as long as there is no way to enforce it, it is a major challenge.”
- KII, ISCG

40) This apparent contradiction between acknowledgment of obstacles to training and the number of women reportedly attending these trainings and used these services is due to the fact that the sample of women participants was selected from visitors to WFSs (where FGDs and Case studies were conducted). By virtue of their presence in these spaces, they were already acquainted with gender programming.

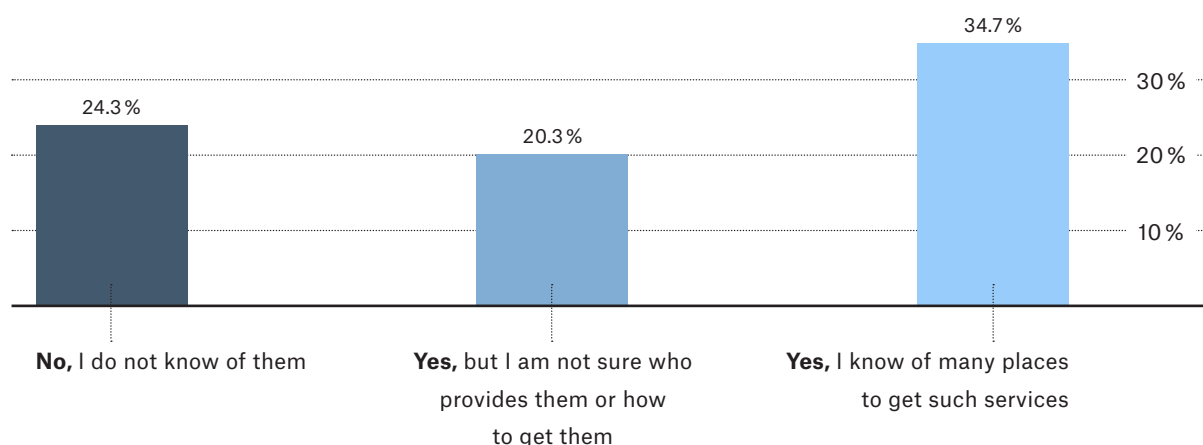


Figure 14 ▲
Most common responses on awareness of opportunities to work

Participants were asked about whether they believed the community thought it good for women to “help their families by doing some work to earn money at home,” and whether they thought it was good. In the case of their understanding of the community’s views, 67.4% agreed and 12.2% strongly agreed, and this sentiment was echoed by views gathered in FGDs and case studies. However, there were some who clearly opposed this idea, both in the survey and in FGDs, for example:

“... women making an income and getting training is not good at all. Our society is not going to accept that. Girls going outside the home is a sinful work. If there are no incomes for the men they will starve and die, but they should not allow women to go outside home for work. If women listen to us and have an income somehow, that will create a great impact for the family. But people and society will not make this thing happen. Someone might allow [this]. But I won’t allow [it]. Yes, I know it is bad for me. If women are given work then they will not give priority to their man and will make illicit relations with other men.” – FGD Rohingya Male Camp 4

Discursive research contexts evidenced less opposition to women working, but more resistance and negative attitudes in relation to how and where they might perform such work, and what this might mean at home.

“There are so many work plans for women and girls in the camp. We are optimistic about the idea of women working to earn for their families.” – FGD Rohingya Male Camp 4

Most respondents expressed the view that women should work from home or work somewhere that was considered “safe.” Men were more likely to emphasise working at home or prioritise safety, whereas women more commonly suggested that the type of job – i.e. “by doing certain jobs” – was most important. Ultimately, men and women emphasised the need for women to work at home or in safe spaces.

*“The community will not have any issues if both men and women are working. I feel that women can stay within their houses and still do some works which will increase the family income, and it is better that the men and women don’t work together at the same place. **But if the women can do some works from within their houses, that will be a good financial help for the family.**” – Case Study Rohingya Male Camp 11*

Meanwhile, some women raised concerns about working, as well as performing their care-giving and domestic roles. These women stated that they did not want to be forced to work in a way that would not allow them to look after children or their homes. Such challenges to women working were also noted by programming actors, who highlighted that bringing men into women's programming was very important in a practical sense and could have real benefits for both men and women.

3.3. A challenging market: nowhere to sell or buy, nowhere to produce

Opportunities for income: the need for value chains and market integration

There is a need for more livelihood opportunities in the camps. Many actors highlighted the need to create opportunities for income, foster value chains even on a small scale, and develop business within the camps. Currently, however, markets are restricted by the government. While there appears to be no official policy on this issue, the authorities have ultimate control over what happens in the camps and can thereby regulate the growth of markets and income opportunities. Another consideration flagged by actors working closely with the host community – and a common thread in CTP literature – is the integration of the Rohingya community into local markets, and the potential effect that any economic intervention might have on the labour force or inflation within neighbouring economies.

Markets: internal and external

Economic activity in the camps is growing. Most camps house markets and stores – some managed by Rohingya, others by host community members – where services such as mobile phone repair, as well as a variety of foods and other items, like clothing, cleaning products, and toilet/sanitary items are for sale. Recent reports, including small market assessments conducted by organisations working in the camps, highlight a variety of activities and opportunities.⁴¹ However, the nature and extent, as well as access to, these markets are not consistent across camps. Local camp governance attitudes, over and above the direction dictated by Dhaka, can influence – allowing or restricting – economic activity, and the parameters in which economic activity is possible, within that microcosm. It should be clearly noted that this programming takes place in a context where cash programming is not formally prohibited by any policy, but technically prohibited and effectively discouraged by Bangladesh

41) See, for example, Mohammad Rahman, Jahangir Kabir, Kali Chakma, and Maja Toenning. "DCA Market Assessment Report: Analysis for DCA's Cash and Livelihoods Intervention in Cox's Bazar," Danish Church Aid (2019).

government within the camps, adding additional challenges. While some camps have allowed programming, others resist even small-scale programmes to, for example, provide homestead gardens, or allow external vendors into camps on a case-by-case basis. In one instance, Site Management of one camp noted that they were trying to discourage “illegal” activities like establishing shops outside camps or large shops, which were seen to be places where people might gather or where illegal activity like drug trading may occur.

The sale of in-kind food aid is seen as a clear indication of the existence of makeshift economic exchange and of the need for cash, since camp residents are using this method in order to access cash that can be used for buying a more diverse range of food, as well as for other needs.

“To meet my family expenses, I sell some of the pulses, cooking oil [and other goods] provided to us by WFP.” – Case Study Rohingya Male Camp 4

The need to develop either small scale value chains within camps or informal market infrastructures was repeatedly emphasised by cash and livelihoods actors. Some suggested creating value chains that would link to export markets, reducing the risk of impact on the host community. The possibilities for integrating CfW or livelihoods programming with other kinds of programming, in order to assist in reaching the most vulnerable households, was also raised as an important opportunity in improving socio-economic conditions across the camps.

Moreover, sustainability was a major concern. Programming is currently limited to short-term cycles, and there is no indication of whether government restrictions will be relaxed in any way that might make more sustainable programming possible. According to informants, the concerns of the community about whether they would even be able to stay in Bangladesh, and their fears of insecurity in the meantime, as well as the lack of ability for many to engage in productive labour and support families, are all key elements of engaging in the medium- to long-term challenge of developing markets.

Production: resources, spaces, skills

Key informants underlined the government’s desire to limit economic or livelihood activities. They spoke about barriers to training due to literacy and education levels; lack of space for production – not just in terms of safe, female-only spaces but an overall lack of spaces in camps; inability to support beneficiaries beyond livelihoods through providing start-up funds, grants for capital, or other such necessities for ongoing and sustainable income generation.

Participants’ overall narrative was similar: while many were hopeful about learning new skills to earn for their families, some reported not being able to do the work they had trained for as they did not have materials or equipment (e.g. sewing machines).

“Her husband runs a small shop in the camp and earns some money. She also wants to have an income for which she has taken training from WFS on tailoring of clothes. But

“... the end result is that after someone learns, there is not independence, because they still rely on our space – you can’t say ‘now you are starting up our own shop’ because we don’t provide start-up capital, though we are trying to consider how we can do this. So, it’s more like groups working within the centres. It’s all small scale, really small scale.”
- KII, DCA

she has not been able to buy a sewing machine yet and as such can't have any income. Apart from her husband, none of her other family members have any income source.”
 – Case Study Camp 11 Rohingya Adolescent Female

These concerns reflect an important part of considerations of economic interventions, and one which qualitative research suggests may prove extremely challenging in the Cox's Bazar context.

Women and markets: barriers and bottlenecks

The community's appetite for women to be involved in income generation is greatly limited by requirements that they engage in work in particular spaces – at home, or in safe and gender-segregated spaces – and in certain kinds of work, as women are unlikely to be involved in construction or other hard forms of labour. Women face specific challenges in terms of accessing markets and being able to play a role in the economic life of the camps.

- Domestically, informants noted that spaces may not be adaptable to becoming production spaces. Gardening at home, for example, is difficult as shelters are small and typically lack space for this activity.
- Finding room for production centres, for women or men, is problematic in overcrowded camps. Camp 4 is one such example: a comparatively large but older camp that suffers from limitations on space.
- Challenges in engaging women through CfW or volunteer programmes were raised, ranging from issues of social norms through to ability to provide safe or segregated spaces, or appropriate WASH facilities.
- Many women knew about or had received skills training, predominantly sewing. These participants expressed the view that this training represented a realistic source of income, but many did not have the means to capitalise on that skill and practice the trade, being unable to afford sewing machines.

3.4. Safety

Threats to security and safety risks

Two major safety and security concerns emerged: (i) the rise of criminality in camps and the overall “lawlessness” that seems to reign; and, (ii) infrastructural issues that make the camps an unsafe environment such as dangerous roads, inadequate shelters, and other hazards.

The camps are unattended by police or military during the evenings and so there is no rule of law at night time. In addition, numerous actors reported the rise of organised crime networks that are involved in the exploitation of people, trafficking, and drug trafficking across both refugee camps and the host community. These actors relayed the occurrence of kidnapping, trafficking, drug abuse, and sexual violence. Anxiety about trafficking emerged in the survey – a threat that mostly concerned children and younger respondents.

Women reported safety concerns in the camps, in terms of harassment or fear of attack from men. They identified places that are crowded but also in poorly lit areas at night, such as WASH facilities and water and firewood collection points, as being most at risk. Bullying and harassment was an ongoing concern for Rohingya women and for programme and site management staff in camps. The latter have made efforts to restrict opportunities for large gatherings as these presented risks of harassment.

A few female FGD participants also expressed concerns over representatives of the *mahjis* perpetrating this harassment, as well as groups of young people, or religious groups, targeting the community and women in particular. Several informants corroborated this, speaking of groups – sometimes characterising them as extremists – who operated in the community and attempted to police activity that they deemed inappropriate or blasphemous according to their conservative understanding of Islam. Moreover, there are documented cases of such incidents. These groups reportedly threatened to resort to violence to enforce observance of their rules.

Several Rohingya women felt that the camps were not safe for children, not only due to criminality, but also because of their exposure to accidents linked to unsafe roads, hilly terrain, and unstable shelters, as well as accidents linked to ongoing construction work.

Perceptions of safety

A majority felt safe in the camps (61.7%), yet a significant sample (35.3%) did not share that perception – a recent camp assessment showed similar mixed perceptions of safety across age groups and genders.⁴² Men were slightly more likely to feel safe than women; camp location showed little variation on this question, nor did age or income. When asked about the specific safety of boys and girls, responses were similar, with most believing it was safe or very safe.

“There are a lot of good places for the kids, boys and girls, where they can stay safe and well. The school, CFS, the maktab, (religious school) the orphanage, etc. When the kids are there, we don’t have any worries for them. We can be stress free. When they go out of these places, we have the fear of them getting hit by cars and being kidnapped.” – FGD Rohingya Female Camp 11

It is unclear to what extent perceptions of safety are couched in the comparative experiences of repression in Myanmar, and thus perhaps underplayed. The lack of night time access and hence lack of visibility itself is a significant operational issue for agencies and organisations.

“We think that we are safe here. ... We came to Bangladesh risking our lives. We feel much better here and not scared about our lives. While in Myanmar, we always used to feel scared and were unable to even sleep at night. [But] here in the camps, we can’t go out of our homes, so we hope that the problems will soon end in our own country and we will be able to return home.”
– FGD Rohingya Female Camp 4

42) REACH & UNHCR, 2019. Multi-Sector Needs Assessment II All Camps Ukhiya/Teknaf, Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh. July 2018 and January 2019 comparison.

Tensions between host and refugee communities

In addition to the growing inter-community GBV challenges, informants working with the host community shared a sense of increasing tension between communities due to reported job losses or decreased income among the hosts, as well as fear of increased criminality associated with the arrival of the refugees. These worries and suspicions have led to the relationship between host and migrant community deteriorating.

The two communities do interact positively: some Rohingya work outside camps and host community traders and businessmen work in the camps, running businesses or providing goods and services that can be used in the camps – goods for markets, or setting up their own stalls in markets, for example. Nonetheless, the overarching sense was that of a growing climate of fear and distrust. These economic exchanges, moreover, have reportedly been the subject of government concern and, in part, driving government restrictions on refugees due to fear that their involvement in the local economy may worsen the situation for the host community.

Results of this line of enquiry are to be treated with caution. Several factors may have contributed to distorting both perceptions of safety and the openness with which respondents shared their views and experiences. These factors extend to:

- The comparative lens through which refugees understood questions on safety and security.
- The culture of silence around drug abuse and trafficking.⁴³
- Different understanding of and the normalisation of certain violent or abusive practices.
- Reluctance to discuss what were considered matters of “security” out of fear of potential repercussions from leaders in the community or those managing the existing security arrangements (including *mahjis* and government or police and military actors).

43) Chowdury, Rahman and Hossain, “Final Report on the Assessment of Child protection Vulnerability and Opportunity of [sic] 21st Century Skills for Rohingya Adolescent Girls and Boys.”

3.5. The drivers of GBV

Social and cultural conditions

As discussed above, the conservatism of the refugee community is at the heart of the segregation and power imbalance underpinning gender dynamics. Other factors are considered as drivers of GBV, as listed in this section.

Economic drivers: lack of income or opportunities to earn

Low levels of income, lack of opportunities, and the perception that needs are not being met are playing a role in the rise of domestic conflict. FGDs and case studies indicate connections between economic stress and IPV, and – less frequently – child marriage. In terms of child marriage, this was raised in the context of reducing household members in order to cope with the limited resources. Primary coping mechanisms reported did not include any forms of GBV.

Respondents outside the Rohingya community added polygyny to a potential indirect consequence of the economic predicament of both refugees and hosts. Informants mentioned this issue more frequently than child marriage and linked it to men abandoning or divorcing their wives. Motivations for taking on more wives or leaving families behind were always framed as economic: these men were reportedly incentivised to marry women in other camps or take multiple wives in order to increase their access to aid, which is often tied to female recipients in the household in Cox’s Bazar.

Lack of work for men – young men in particular – is reportedly driving safety challenges in the camps, with many attributing the presence of groups of young men who might harass women, congregate in public spaces, and hear “rumours” to which they might react violently at home, to unemployment and resulting idle time.

Legal access: no fear of repercussion

The Rohingya communities that have arrived in Cox’s Bazar over the last two years – the majority of camp inhabitants – have been designated as FDMNs. This puts them in a “legal limbo” and leaves them with little or no access to the legal system in Bangladesh. For many informants, this poses major challenges for addressing GBV and may, in fact, encourage the practice. Perpetrators are unlikely to be tried or convicted, and justice in the camps is limited to mediation often conducted by CiCs and *mahjis*. In terms of GBV, the situation is particularly challenging because *mahjis*, community leaders, and CiCs are men (with a few recent exceptions, see ‘Legal Access and Leadership’ under Section 3.2). Women are less likely to report abuses or turn this male-dominated system of justice.

3.6. Cash, GBV & other relevant programming

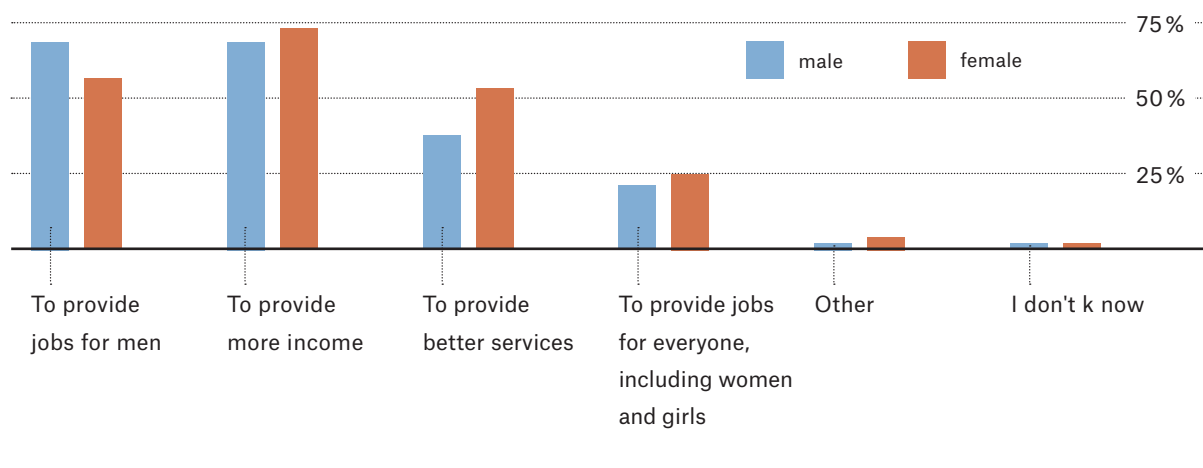
Perceptions of existing programming & impacts

How can programming relieve economic stress? A view from the Rohingya

The survey asked respondents about the best way organisations could reduce their economic stress. Most said either providing income or providing jobs for men (over 60%), though many also suggested that better services would improve their situation. Male respondents, in particular, focused on the need to provide jobs for men.

Figure 15 ▼
Responses to "What is the best way that the organisations who help you here could reduce the economic stress you feel?" by gender

"What is the best way that the organisations who help you here could reduce the economic stress you feel?"



"What kinds of opportunities do you think men need in the community to improve the economic situation?"

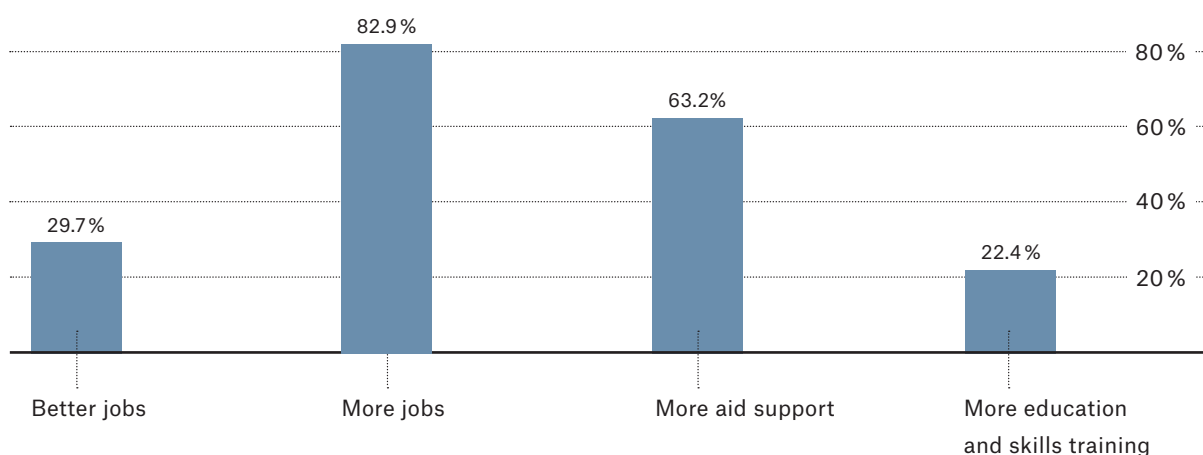


Figure 16 ▲
Most common responses to "What kinds of opportunities do you think men need in the community to improve the economic situation?"

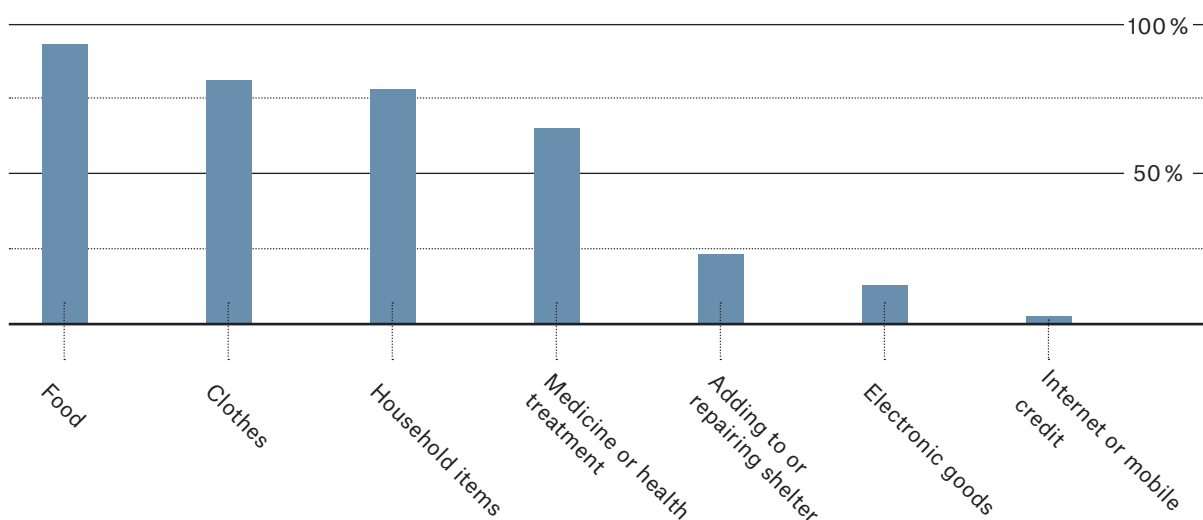
Qualitative research participants also leaned towards providing work or job opportunities for both men and women as the best way to alleviate financial issues. In qualitative discussions, participants were less likely to single out the provision of cash as a way to relieve economic stress, rather seeing income as inextricably linked to work and so affirming the need to be able to work and earn. Over 80% of respondents said that in order to improve the economic situation in the community, the primary need was “more jobs,” though some also expressed the wish for increased aid support (63.2%). Education and skills training (22.4%) and the need for better jobs (29.7%) were common responses.

Cash assistance: attitudes, impact, modalities

Participants on the whole had not been the beneficiaries of cash programming, with the exception of CfW programmes (26.5%), which was a key source of income for many households surveyed, and a small percentage claiming receipt of cash or voucher (14% each). Few reported having had problems receiving cash in such programmes, with 95% saying they had had no problems with getting cash this way. Overall, most respondents reported that the cash support had had “modestly positive” impacts on their households (59.1%), though some said it had been extremely positive (22.9%). Very few reported that it had had any negative impact, though some (16.6%) said it had had no impact at all – and this response was more common among women than men. Respondents spent the cash on food (90%), clothing (82.9%), household items (79%), and medical treatments (65%). This prioritisation varied little based on age, location, gender or income. The reported hierarchy of priorities for spending future potential cash they might receive remained the same: food, clothing, household items, medicine or health treatments, electronic goods, and adding to or repairing shelter. **When asked for the kind of assistance they would prefer to receive, if the assistance was of the same value no matter the delivery method, most chose a “mix of cash and in-kind for food” (44.4%) or “cash only” (42.2%). Women were nearly twice as likely to choose “cash only.”**⁴⁴ Few respondents suggested that control of cash or vouchers had caused conflict within their household, regardless of gender.

44) In line with an ODI paper suggesting that access to cash is a priority for the Rohingya. Wake, Barbelet and Skinner, “Uncertain Futures.”

Figure 17 ▼ Responses to “What did you use the cash you received for?” from households indicating they received cash assistance

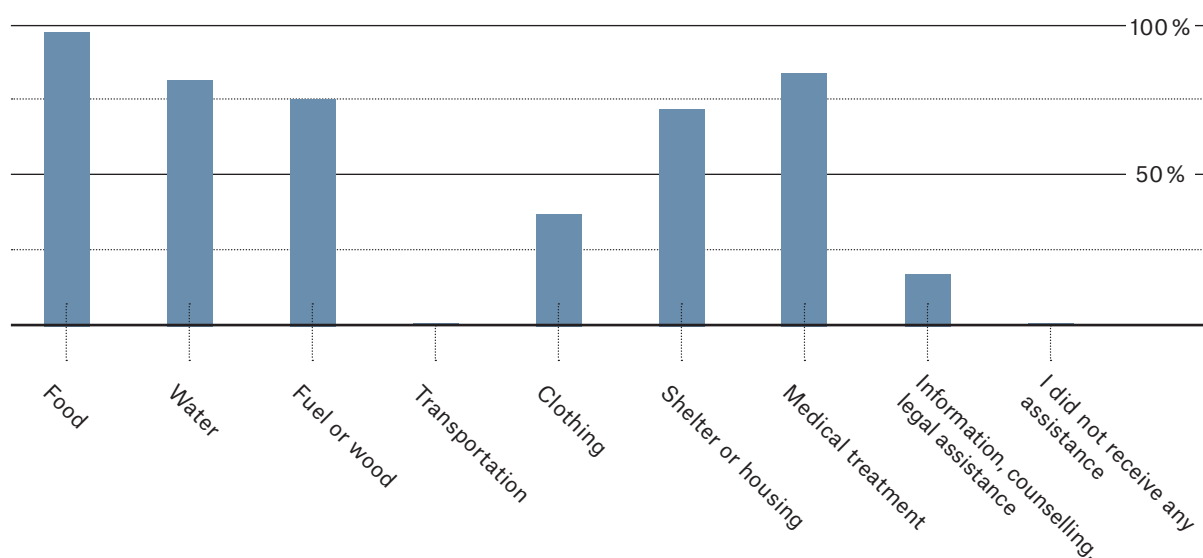


Non-cash assistance

The most commonly reported non-cash assistance received was food, with men more likely to have accessed aid in the form of shelter or housing, or information, counselling or legal assistance (ICLA).

Non-cash aid had a “modestly positive” impact (64.4%), “extremely positive” (19.5%), or no impact at all (13.7%). Women were more likely to report “no impact.” Less than 2% reported a negative impact.

Figure 18 ▼
Reported non-food assistance types



GBV and women’s empowerment programming

The GBV-focused and Women’s Empowerment (WE) programming in the camps is traditional, with WFSs/SSWGs or similar initiatives used to create support networks, awareness raising and provide access to key services. What is available depends on the service provider, but may include provision of dignity kits, training and life skills, case management, psychosocial support, and access to medical or legal services.

Informants characterised GBV programming as having improved and increased since the outset of the response, but also facing challenges in terms of funding, access, and implementation, as well as early resistance to GBV programming from the government. Some programming is focused on supporting survivors, while other initiatives are intended to work on prevention through livelihoods and other forms of education and support.

Community engagement was a significant component of many of these programmes, often through the use of Bangladeshi or Rohingya volunteers. These were also used to assist in referrals. Home visits by programme staff were key facilitators of access and service provision, given the restrictions placed on women. Awareness raising was done in a variety of ways, chief among these KIIs listed interactive shows, video content, or pictorial aids; other programmes deployed more traditional methods of engagement.

For many of these programmes, WFSs or similar safe spaces are seen as entry points. Some WFSs receive between 150-200 women a day. They are increasingly being used as spaces for skills training or production in livelihoods programming. Actors shared their frustration as to the range of obstacles they face in seeking to expand and diversify GBV responses and women empowerment projects. These programmes answer needs identified by many beneficiaries: opportunities to work, earn money, and generate income; the need for safe spaces for women, and a range of key services.

Some women’s programmes distributed in-kind support, but programmes specifically addressing GBV through cash were not identified in this research.

More common were growing attempts to integrate livelihoods into GBV or women’s programming, with a number of actors providing skills training and planning to design and build women’s markets, community kitchens, and other avenues for livelihoods and income generation geared towards women. There are some programmes that are providing cash as incentives or small start-up funds or employing women as volunteers at their WFSs.

Attitudes of Rohingya women towards these spaces were positive, emphasising the educational opportunities, but also the privacy or safety afforded by these spaces. This appeared as critical in view of the fact that homes are small and spaces outside of the domestic are either not open to women or women are forbidden to access them. Programme staff highlight the challenge of ensuring that women are able to reach these. Programmes had multiple strategies for addressing this, including providing accompaniment to women to reach centres, and conducting sensitisation training within the community, targeting men as well.

A lesson learned and shared by GBV actors was the importance of gaining the trust and buy-in of male community members. KIIs indicated that this kind of outreach had taken place, with varying degrees of success. Some staff had invited male family members or community leaders to see the centres, and using awareness raising volunteers to communicate to men about the purpose of centres. The need for these community-oriented elements was recognised by many actors, with some discussing new programmes that intended to increase engagement. Additionally, Rohingya men complained that training opportunities were uneven and not open to them – presenting this feeling of exclusion as an important challenge to overcome in terms of male engagement:

“Most of the time we talk with the women, and when they get information they start fighting with the men [...]. But men are happy to listen to our staff, or to their friends, so when we are talking with the men, they realise and slowly they change their mentality – male intervention is necessary. We are doing outreach work with men, but it’s still [overall] focused on women.” – KII, UN Women

“There are no provisions of trainings or activity plans here where we can get the opportunity to earn for our families. But women have access to this kind of training.”
– FGD Rohingya Male Camp 4

“Even now I wouldn’t say that we have reached where we want to go, because we’re still training other actors about GBV, what GBV is, where they can send women [etc.] ... There has been progress but there is still a lot that needs to be done, and we can’t say we are fully established – It took us a lot of time to raise awareness about GBV in the community – it’s not been accepted up to now, they say ‘this was happening at home, why is it a big deal now?’ Some community leaders are even accusing that it is happening because they are bringing it up. We still have a long way to go in terms of working with government, and their legal support, because no one still technically has access to the local legal system from the camps.”
– KII, DCA

Poor engagement was linked to stories of pushback from male family members and community leaders. This was mostly discussed in relation to programming for women or GBV specifically.

“There has been progress but there is still a lot that needs to be done, and we can’t say we are fully established – It took us a lot of time to raise awareness about GBV in the community – it’s not been accepted up to now, they say ‘this was happening at home, why is it a big deal now?’. We still have a long way to go.” – KII, DCA

“After 6-7 months the participation was reducing, and we asked the community why. Men were not allowing the women and girls to go there because they are thinking ‘what are they doing there?’. Men felt like women were going to these spaces to complain about them, and this may have increased abuse. When women and girls are the priority, the men feel deprived of opportunities.” – KII, PLAN International

Most programmes pointed to overall success in the face of many challenges, including increased incomes for women through livelihoods, increased engagement and knowledge of GBV, among others.

*“The establishment of women’s centres have been a great success because at least **women have a safe place where they can go for their activities, where they can raise and discuss their problems.** Raising their voices, discussing their problems, these are things they can’t do in their households. [...] I think these centres can really help for instance as a place where livelihood programming can be integrated and scaling them up, I think would be very positive because they already have the services and platforms.” – KII, UNFPA*

Cash & livelihoods programming

Cash programming was limited, with notable exceptions of larger-scale cash or voucher programmes, as well as growing instances of forms of CTP (including vouchers, cash transfers or grants and cash for work). Mobile money systems are inherently limited by official restrictions on purchasing SIM cards for the Rohingya. The largest form of cash programming was WFP’s SCOPE system, also used by other partners, and CfW programming implemented by a number of actors in the camps. Other cash programmes are small-scale.

The **SCOPE** system “... can deliver all types of modalities – commodity vouchers or commodities, on value vouchers, on cash and all types of services. [Through SCOPE] you can set up your intervention, use it for targeting, set the perimeters of the project in the system. You can even pull data from your beneficiary database and add them to SCOPE. So SCOPE becomes a different voucher depending on the programme.”⁴⁵ SCOPE has provided a data-based delivery system that includes identification. The platform requires possession of a card that is used to collect anything included in the programme for which it is being used. As financial institutions are barred from working in the camps, this provides the means of managing distribution of funds, goods, or other items. It can include both value vouchers and commodity vouchers, meaning that the system can be used in a variety of ways.

45) KII – WFP Scope Programme.

CfW engages a large number of beneficiaries across the camps and is run by a variety of agencies – IOM, notably, has one such extensive programme. Much of this labour is used in minor construction, including **Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)**, and through the **Site Management Engineering Programme (SMEP)**. Many in the programme may have been referred on the basis of need by protection partners in the camps, but this kind of programme is limited by the ability and willingness of participants to work; it has a fairly low overall female engagement rate due to challenges in segregating work spaces and the types of labour involved. Some programmes have fared better than others on this front, either due to the nature of work or specific efforts to address gender concerns. The **Cash & Markets Working Group**, in collaboration with the Bangladeshi government, has finalised a standard rate for payment for CfW participants. These programmes are active across the camps and are a visible part of camp life; they also provide one of the major forms of income, as the survey highlighted. Similarly, “volunteer” programmes run by organisations working in camps to engage Rohingya as outreach workers, educators, and in a variety of other roles also exist, though these were seen as having higher barriers to entry. These programmes focus on integrating Rohingya.

There are some other cash-related programmes in the camps – for example, a programme managed by Action Contre la Faim (ACF) **distributes cash in three camps through not only CfW, but unconditional cash grants**. Beneficiaries include both host and local communities, and the programme works with a local Bangladeshi bank to distribute cash. Both elements of the programming are based on vulnerability criteria, such as pregnant women and new mothers, chronically ill, and elderly community members. Other organisations also provide cash as an element of livelihoods programming, whether as incentives or “start-up” grants that allowed beneficiaries to purchase materials or equipment, but these tend to be even smaller in scale.

Skills trainings were among the programmes that had been well-received by community members and, in particular, by Rohingya women. Providing opportunities to learn skills emerged as a common programming strategy; however, several actors pointed out that the skills being taught did not always reflect the need and desires of the beneficiaries, or the realities of the market, with many being taught similar and limited skillsets – like for example tailoring or mobile phone repair – which may lead to both limited engagement where there is a disconnect with beneficiary desires, or minimal impact where the market cannot support work in these skillsets.

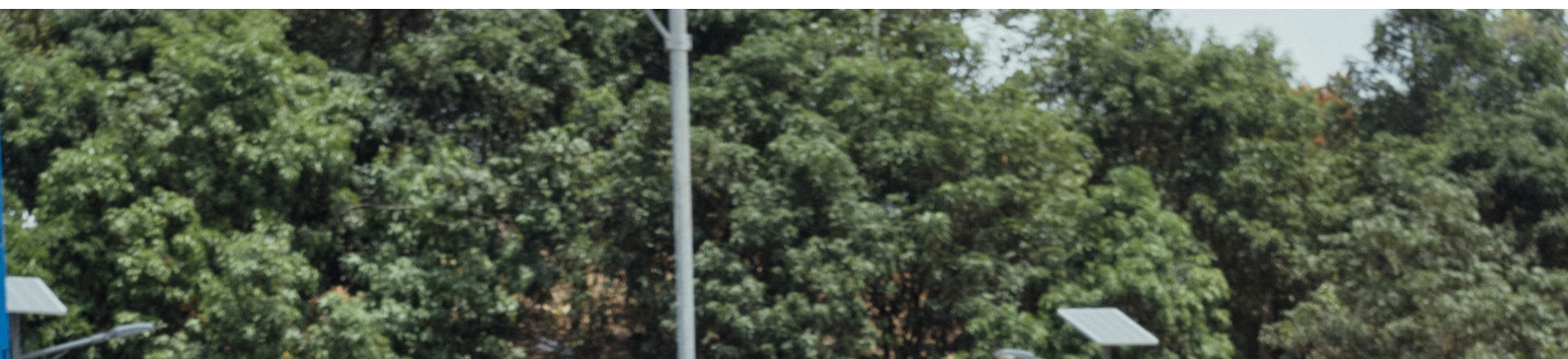




Photo 10
Camp 21, Chittagong,
Bangladesh; Rohingya
children walk near a cash for
work job site in Camp 21.



Photo 11 ▲
Camp 11, Chittagong,
Bangladesh: A girl washes
her hands after filling her
bucket at a well in Camp 11.

Photo 12 ▼
Camp 21, Chittagong,
Bangladesh: A Rohingya
woman sits inside her home
inside Camp 21.



4. Risk analysis

This section presents an analysis of the potential risks in conducting programming utilising cash-based interventions, or other economic interventions, in the context of the Rohingya community living in Cox's Bazar. This risk assessment is informed by a do no harm approach, in line with UNICEF's own approach to humanitarian programming, and is driven by the need for any programming to consider and adequately mitigate risks to beneficiaries, in particular in emergency contexts.⁴⁶

46) UNICEF. Global Norms and Standards. 2018.

UNICEF'S do-no-harm principle

"UNICEF is committed to the 'Do no harm' principle: humanitarian agencies work to ensure that humanitarian action does not inadvertently cause harm, for example, by exposing beneficiaries to violence or discrimination, or by exposing intermediaries or humanitarian implementing partners to security risks, etc."

4.1. Key risks associated with economic programming and GBV

Negative programming impacts

Increases in violence as a result of cash programming have been rare. However, other instances of targeting the female Rohingya population in Cox's Bazar have shown that this kind of intervention can provoke violent responses. There were multiple reports of backlash against women working, for example, and, in some cases, this reaction was violent.

"Last year, there was quite a serious drive to get women involved in volunteering, but there was a serious backlash, and in January – February we had to work to address the backlash issues." – KII, ISCG

There were concerns over programming that targeted vulnerability criteria. A programme for pregnant women was thought to present risks of perverse incentivisation and was therefore stopped. Similar concerns were raised about providing income that might be used to facilitate dowry payments and so open the way to a rise in early or

forced marriages. Other actors thought that such worries about income extended to other negative behaviours with consequences for GBV: drug abuse was regularly raised as an issue in this context, given the increase in known cases of addiction, and the growing problem of drug trafficking.

GBV specialists spoke of the higher risk of adverse outcomes in providing cash to women, especially in a context where women rarely have control over economic resources. Their anxiety applied equally to those girls and women who brought assets or cash into the household through earnings, aid, or economic support. Targeting women within a context in which gender roles are so clearly defined might threaten men's understanding of their own position within the household, their duties, responsibilities, and authority. This, in turn, may elicit negative reactions as a way to reassert power: physical or emotional abuse, acquiring new partners, rejection.

Additionally, cash programming is known to involve risks in terms of security of distribution, fraud, and corruption. Targeting for vulnerability can risk the safety of the beneficiaries, particularly in an environment in which cash is scarce and competition for resources high. As one key informant noted:

“With cash if you're linking it to protection, it's worth mentioning that this can mean that people know how much cash is in people's house, which is a high risk.” – KII, DCA

Beneficiary selection was also noted as a practical challenge, particularly if the process of selection is not carried out in transparent manner.

“We have had some challenges and problems – first was selecting beneficiaries, and duplication was a huge issue, as well as beneficiary migration, and everyone wanting to be a beneficiary. People aren't aware of the selection process and limitations, so we did face challenges here. After selection, migration was a challenge, or they did not want to work properly and are not good at time management.” – KII, ACF

This issue does highlight also potential challenges in reaching female beneficiaries in particular, and possible protection risks around accessing distribution points or similar cash-distribution related challenges, given low mobility of women, though cash programmes and other distributions have been possible in Cox's Bazar regardless, with few actors highlighting security issues and with WFSs representing possible entry points, as well as existing SCOPE or other programme distribution points. Moreover, in addition to these challenges, cash programming may pose a risk to donors, agencies and implementing partners, because as this report notes, it is discouraged by government actors due to its perceived encouragement of long-term residence in Bangladesh for the Rohingya community. This research's findings also suggest that Cox's Bazar is a high-risk context for GBV programming, where hostile reactions to programmes targeting women have been registered.

Low or no impact

The research evidences a need to address the economic tensions that can drive negative coping mechanisms leading to GBV, including but not limited to: early and forced marriage, polygyny, domestic violence and IPV. Reducing economic stress may alleviate stressors at home, particularly if men feel able to provide for their family or have access to economic opportunities.

Less evident is whether and how CTP (and other forms of economic intervention) will positively influence certain outcomes that might contribute to the reduction of GBV, including increased women's social capital, empowerment, or decision-making power. The Rohingya men and women interviewed did not show a strong appetite to extend women's control over resources or their influence on household decision-making, with no significant number of women expressing such an interest. This suggests that resources directed to women alone, in the absence of other programming elements, are unlikely to reliably redress domestic imbalances. In some cases, providing women with funds may consolidate or reinforce these dynamics, as women will spend the money in those areas in which men will expect them to.

Sustainability

In Cox's Bazar, sustainability faces several challenges, principally: the political and policy barriers to long-term programming, limited programmes to a six-month lifecycle; the *ad hoc* nature and restrictions around markets in the camps. There are three key risks in terms of sustainability:

- The time-bound life of the programming and of the funding.
- Negative impacts on beneficiaries.
- Inability to tackle structural inequalities and influence socio-cultural drivers of GBV.

There is a real risk that providing cash only to terminate disbursement within a short period will indirectly lead to an increase of IPV and domestic violence. While potentially improving domestic conditions for a short time, removal of that payment may then aggravate the sense of insecurity and uncertainty about household finances that are already linked by respondents to family conflict.⁴⁷ The market situation is central to determining not only what kinds of economic interventions are appropriate, but in deciding what cash modalities are viable. If opportunities to spend cash are limited due to the nature of the market, or its absence, then cash transfers may be less valuable, and moreover, may have impacts on the existing market in whatever form it currently is. The unevenness of the market suggests that better assessment, on a camp-specific level, of these features is critical.

47) KII, Amber Peterman. See also Ana Maria Buller, Amber Peterman, Meghna Ranganathan, Alexandra Bleile, Melissa Hidrobo and Lori Heise. "A Mixed-Method Review of Cash Transfers and Intimate Partner Violence in Low and Middle-Income Countries," *The World Bank Research Observer* 33.2 (2018): 218–258.

Challenging masculinity

GBV actors working in the camps discussed the extent to which the conservatively defined role of men within the household and community (as earners, as controllers of resources, figures of sole authority) has been undermined: by the conditions of the camp, by the events that led to their migration, by the experience of migration itself. These threats to entrenched notions of masculinity are, in turn, driving GBV. This study, as others, has talked to men who express feelings of powerlessness, anger, and frustration. In addition, some of them have been victims of violence in Myanmar and during the flight to Bangladesh and have carried this trauma into the camps. This represents a risk and an obstacle: (i) men may respond to perceived assaults on their authority by engaging in negative behaviours that seek to reassert it: violence and polygyny being two such risks; (ii) further interactions that are seen as excluding men or challenging their socio-cultural ideas of male identity may give rise to adverse reactions, resistance, rejection to the projects. Failing to engage with these challenges presents a major risk to the success of any gender-related programming.

Host community

Addressing GBV in the Rohingya community can positively impact the host community; if not undertaken with care, it can also risk aggravating the situation for the neighbouring Bangladeshi communities. Risks in this respect include fuelling drug trafficking via increasing income. Taking the hosts into account is key to sustainability, particularly in light of a protracted stay for the Rohingya. One example of this may be to consider parallel or mixed programming with both host and refugee beneficiaries, though the different needs of these groups may make this a challenging prospect.

4.2. Constraints and opportunities

Key constraints that apply to programming possibilities include government limitations, market challenges, conservative social norms and strict gender roles, low levels of GBV awareness coupled with low literacy, and education levels in the Rohingya community.

The programming landscape in Cox's Bazar offers positive models that can be adopted and adapted. Some of these opportunities represent important mitigation strategies for those risks outlined above. These include existing successful strategies that can be adapted and developed, in engaging with men and boys, and with community in general, in terms of GBV awareness and in bringing women into economic opportunities.

Existing platforms like SCOPE can be utilised for programming to address limitations that restrict the provision of cash or incomes, as one key informant noted:

“You could in theory give people an additional ‘wallet’ for SCOPE that was targeted for GBV or you could integrate GBV targeted items/NFI into the SCOPE programme somehow. Ideally you would integrate it so that people get another wallet and the additional infrastructure doesn’t have to be added.” – KII SDC

Programming already addresses gender-related issues and, connected to some of these, are GBV services. Such services include, but are not limited to, outreach and awareness raising, and have already established a presence in the camps and developed relationships with community and camp management.

There is an opportunity to build on this foundation, on the work and knowledge developed by these actors, as well as on past and ongoing research, to design economic interventions.

Figure 19 ▼
Constraints vs opportunities for economic interventions addressing GBV

Constraints	Opportunities
Strict social norms and gender roles	Engaging with men and boys in the Rohingya community
Rise of religious conservatism	Leveraging existing programming and platforms
Low levels of skills and education, and low levels of awareness on topics like GBV	Creating gender transformative programming
Ongoing and uncertain government limitations on cash and livelihoods programming in camps	Harnessing the power of cash/livelihoods to improve the lives of the Rohingya community, and provide sustainable impacts
Limited markets or value chains to harness for economic opportunity	Aligning awareness raising and livelihood programming with the development of Rohingya identity in this oppression-free context

4.3. Risk assessment and mitigation strategies

Figure 20 ▼
Risk assessment
for economic
interventions
addressing GBV

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Negative impacts	low	very high	Appropriate targeting, engagement with men, boys and the community, economic and holistic programming.
Low/no impact	medium	high	Engage with men and boys as well as with the broader community.
Lack of sustainability	high	high	Long-term approach, integration of supporting elements such as education or psychosocial programming.
Failure to incorporate gender transformativity	medium	high	Sustainability approach, engaging with men, boys, and both refugee and host community.
Impact of social norms, gender roles, masculinities	high	very high	Engagement with men and boys as well as community, holistic intervention strategies.
Negative impact on host community	low	low	Programme planning and monitoring, assessment of impacts, sustainability approach.
Market/value chain restrictions	high	medium	Integration with other forms of programming, economic and resilience-focused programming.
Government limits on cash/livelihoods programming	high	high	Advocacy
Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation

Programming actors and experts shared their reflections on what strategies might reduce the risks already outlined – these suggestions underpin the suggestions on risk mitigation, presented below.

Figure 21 ▼
Strategies for mitigating risk in economic interventions addressing GBV

Engagement with men and boys, and with broader community

Male resistance can be addressed through sensitisation, long-term thinking, and scaling. **Early iterations of a programme can be geared towards male engagement and education and bringing men on board as actors in reducing GBV.** Similarly, providing for men as beneficiaries is a way to reducing economic stressors and avoid side-lining male household members.

Appropriate targeting

This report has identified various risks involved in selecting and targeting beneficiaries for cash, particularly in terms of impacts on GBV and in terms of broader protection risks. Targeting strategies may also depend on the modality adopted. Considering household level targeting – and not exclusively targeting women as beneficiaries of cash – is an alternative way of reducing the risk that shifts in household power structures may have on violence and tension at home.

Sustainability mindset

Whether or not a programme is designed for the long term, long-term impacts, challenges, and needs can still be a key consideration for programming. A more modular approach – where programming may be renewed or even re-designed on the short-term, but which has longer-term plans and goals for sustained impacts – should be the foundation of planning for GBV programming.

Holistic programming

Cash programming can be strengthened by holistic, complementary or Cash Plus approaches. In view of the uneasy policy context, programmes that rely solely on cash to address GBV face the risk of restrictions on their ability to provide cash. Programming that incorporates other elements have both a means to “future-proof” their work and provide better outcomes overall by supporting elements that can provide a multiplier effect on impacts and mitigate a variety of risks.



Integrating education

Many programmes in Cox's Bazar have successfully integrated some form of skills training, literacy, or other education, as part of both GBV and livelihoods programming. These components of a Cash Plus approach can contribute to sustainability, providing recipients of cash or livelihoods trainings, for example, with improved resilience against future shocks.

Providing psychosocial support, CBT and/or counselling

Future resilience, critical to sustainability of impacts, can be greatly improved by access to programme-specific services such as CBT, counselling and psychosocial support, at a household level, or for beneficiary women and their husbands. These also provide avenues for support and ongoing monitoring; they might also help address social norms that are driving GBV.

Other forms of economic intervention

The use of the SCOPE platform can avoid certain risks associated with cash programming; as can focusing on cash as an element of livelihoods programming, supporting income generation and skills development through incentives and start-up grants. A holistic programme may incorporate multiple forms of cash: targeted grants attached to skills training, as well as access to cash vouchers for GBV-related items for women in the household through the SCOPE platform.



Photo 13
Camp 21, Chittagong,
Bangladesh: A Rohingya
woman sits inside her home
inside Camp 21.



Photo 14 ▲
 Cox's Bazaar, Chittagong,
 Bangladesh: Vendors gather
 in an outdoor market near
 a mosque on the beach in
 Cox's Bazaar.

Photo 15 ▼
 Camp 21, Chittagong,
 Bangladesh: A Rohingya man
 sits at a table inside a repair
 shop inside Camp 21.



5. Conclusion and recommendations

5.1. Research overview and conclusions

The table summarises key findings from this research in relation to the research questions posed at the outset of the study and which this report has endeavoured to answer.

Figure 22 ▼
Summary of findings
by research question

1 Understand the relationship between GBV and economic stressors.

1.1 What factors – socioeconomic, demographic, etc. – can be identified as drivers of GBV in Cox’s Bazar?

- Lack of access to income and employment opportunities for male heads of household leads to increased financial pressure.
- Lack of access to justice systems, corruption and male-dominated systems.
- Normative attitudes to gender segregation, normalisation of violence and other behaviours that curtail the freedom and rights of girls and women.

1.2 Who are the key actors and influencers in decision-making around GBV?

- Community and religious leaders, including imams and *mahjis*, are major influencers in terms of community attitudes towards GBV.
- Due to women’s comparative lack of access to information, and gender segregation, male community members have stronger influence in most cases.

1.3 What are the primary economic coping mechanisms in Cox’s Bazar?

- Coping mechanisms varied, but included marriage of children, polygyny, ex-pansion of economic roles for women, forms of trafficking for labour or marriage, and possible participation in criminality.



2 Assess the relevance and feasibility of cash-based interventions for preventing and mitigating GBV.

2.1 How is income gained, used, and controlled by households in the displaced community in Cox's Bazar?

- Most households receive income through aid or development agencies, including in particular CfW, due to limitations on working in camps.
- Men control income gained and exercise control over household resources with women sometimes advising on decision making and within circumscribed fields (e.g. food, children).
- Income generating activities and business are possible but remain very limited.
- Community leaders (including *mahjis*) and camp governance are perceived as having control over access to these forms of income.

2.2 What kind of access to livelihoods opportunities do women and girls specifically have?

- Existing small-scale programmes are functionally restricted by (i) scale; (ii) limitations on women's movement and attitudes to women working resulting from community social norms; and, (iii) government restrictions on cash and labour programming in camps.

3 Provide recommendations to prevent and mitigate GBV.

3.1 What interventions have succeeded in other similar contexts?

- Literature on cash and GBV in emergency settings is scarce. Overall, evidence emphasises the importance of sustainability, holistic programming, and post distribution monitoring (PDM) in order to support cash transfers in having sustained and positive impacts.

3.2 What are other actors in Cox's Bazar currently implementing and planning on this topic?

- Actors are implementing a range of livelihood, cash, WE and GBV pro-programmes. Cash and livelihoods programming are an area of growth but re-main small in scale, aside from notable exceptions like CfW.

3.3 What contextual intervention modalities are most appropriate to prevent and mitigate forms of GBV involving economic challenges, and how can these be targeted?

- Complementary or Cash Plus programmes, which integrate cash modalities with other programming elements such as livelihoods, WE or psychosocial, or more than one form of CBI, offer the strongest options for programmes.
- Different forms of CBI can be used to address specific forms of GBV, or efforts to support survivors versus prevention and reduction efforts.
- See Section 5.3 for further detail.

This research found a situation in which the Rohingya community in Cox's Bazar has access to low or no income and is highly dependent on aid. The community is characterised by strongly conservative social norms and low awareness of gender inequalities and forms of GBV. The refugees and actors working with them have also exhibited significant concerns around safety and security, and a prevalence of GBV – in particular, IPV/DV, child marriage, polygamy. This is coupled with limited legal access, government restrictions around economic activity, uneven markets.

The majority of research participants wanted increased access to cash, either through provision of cash or through income or work opportunities, women included. It is clear that there is a need for this based on reported income levels. If the authorities

in Bangladesh allow any form of substantial and longer-term economic interventions, the most constructive approach may be cash-based or economic interventions or programming that have a strong component of design for risk mitigation and which are built on understandings of existing drivers and potential risks. This may include Cash Plus or integrated and holistic CBI programming, which utilises programming elements from other fields including women's empowerment, livelihoods, education, and gender programming to strengthen impact and minimise risks.

5.2. Objectives of cash based initiatives (CBI) in addressing GBV

In order to consider how cash programming, in any form, might address GBV, and to measure its success and impact, it is critical to set out its objectives.

Cash could potentially address GBV in humanitarian contexts through ...

- **Relieving household (economic) tensions** caused by displacement, emergency, or other factors.
- **Reducing the need for negative coping mechanisms**, such as child marriage, forced marriage, polygamy, sex work.
- Potentially increasing women's decision-making power within households, leading to greater levels of empowerment and changes in gender imbalances, and connecting women to social networks and increasing social capital.

Key distinctions must be drawn in considering programming that seeks to reduce or prevent GBV in comparison to that which might seek to provide support or relief to survivors of GBV. There are two major ways in which programming may seek to address GBV:

- (i) by working to prevent and reduce incidence of GBV; and,
- (ii) by providing support to GBV survivors to minimise negative impacts and improve recovery.

Programming that seeks to mitigate the impacts of GBV on survivors needs to consider their needs. These may include support to leave abusive households, case management, dispute resolution, and mental and physical health treatment. Cash in this scenario may be used to support women or girls who need to become independent of an abuser or require cash for medical treatment. There are also drawbacks to this form of programming, as they can pose serious protection risks in the form of potential perverse incentives.

Additionally, there is space for both short-term and long-term programming in this space, and there are trade-offs between longer- and shorter-term approaches, in this context in particular. While short-term programmes may be able to address small,

immediate or one-off drivers and barriers, for example, providing capital for income generation, the potential of long-term programmes is also clear. These longer-term programmes are better placed to do the important and foundational work of transforming or shifting social norms that is needed to address the root causes of GBV and to prevent and reduce GBV more effectively and sustainably. Consideration of these trade-offs, and how they align with the goals of any planned programming, is critical.

5.3. Using CBI to address specific forms & drivers of GBV in Cox's Bazar

Is cash programming possible in Cox's Bazar?

Forms of economic interventions that use cash have been implemented across Cox's Bazar, despite the effective prohibition on cash and livelihoods programming. The fieldwork brought to light several such interventions involving international actors, UN agencies, and local partners (including banks). Cash programming is therefore not only possible, but already operational. The key challenge is sustainability. In principle, Bangladeshi authorities are reportedly unwilling to grant permission for forms of economic programming that might imply a longer permanence of the Rohingya in Bangladesh; they are also unwilling to grant them refugee status, limiting the options for a cash programme designer – principally, the use of phones. The reality on the ground is that camp authorities have allowed some forms of cash programming and that these are small-scale and unevenly distributed across the camps.

Intimate partner/domestic violence

As this report highlights, IPV is very common, and likely the most prevalent form of GBV experienced by Rohingya women in Cox's Bazar. It is also possible that IPV is occurring along with other forms of GBV, for example, child marriage or abuses associated with polygamy.

What are the specific social/economic drivers?

What are the underlying factors? What are the pressures from the context?

- Intimate Partner or Domestic Violence has proportionally far stronger linkages to social norms, and less economic impetus – rarely is IPV/DV a coping mechanism, but rather a form of violence visited upon women as a result of strict and unequal gender norms that reinforces the unequal power structures from which men benefit.
- To the degree that there is a clear economic driver, it is derived from the changes in power structures during emergency situations, that may see men become less able

to support families and generally feel marginalised and disempowered – a malaise which can be taken out on women at home

- There was a clear identification of this concern from Rohingya men and women, as well as programming actors in the Cox’s Bazar context

What are the risks of addressing this form of GBV via cash/economic interventions?

- Cash or economic interventions have had positive short-term effects on this form of violence in other humanitarian settings, lessening anxiety over money relieves tensions within household and reduces one of the sources of conflict. The risk is targeting women: this may undo the relief, by upsetting the domestic status quo, threatening male authority as the provider, and resulting in backlash.
- The literature suggests that targeting men or women for this purpose has little difference in impact, and this is the only CTP that has had concrete impacts across humanitarian contexts.
- There may be a higher than average possibility of no impact as a result of such programming, given the clearly communicated restrictions on women’s decision-making power and lack of appetite for change in this regard reported by both Rohingya men and women. Targeting women as recipients of cash to tackle IPV is a short-term solution that, in this context, is likely not to have any significant influence on household gender dynamics.
- Literature and expert KIIs suggest the likelihood of risk may generally be low, the potential for harm is extremely high – and in a context where backlash against women who have tried to work has been common, this risk of negative repercussions within the household for women who deliberately or inadvertently challenge the status quo (through receipt of cash, generating income or attempts to exercise economic decision-making power) seems more than averagely likely.

Given the possible risks associated with addressing this form of GBV, but also the potentially high impact of programming that could reduce IPV/DV, there is definite value in seeking to provide cash or economic programming to reduce IPV/DV.

Programming seeking to address IPV/DV should ...

- **Carefully consider targeting** – for example, targeting cash assistance at household level rather than individual beneficiaries, or both men and women in a household
- **Utilise programming that is Cash Plus** – i.e. which combines cash with other forms of programming that seek to work to transform gender roles to ensure that backlash is not felt at home
- **Involve specific and active engagement strategies for men and boys**, possibly including them as beneficiaries for CfW or cash/ vouchers as well as women

Child marriage

Programming actors highlight growing concerns on this front, as have recent media reports, and, to a lesser degree, Rohingya research participants. Child marriage appears to be a normalised practice, and prevalent not only in the Rohingya community in Myanmar prior to the migration to Bangladesh – where recent DHS figures note that 19% of women age 20-49 were married before age 18⁴⁸ – but in the local host community also.

What are the specific social/economic drivers?

What are the underlying factors? What are the pressures from the context?

- **Social norms around marriage, gender roles, and age groups that explicitly endorse marriage at an early age** for young women (often around age of menarche). Concerns regarding honour, *purdah*, and protectionism are a **key root cause** and ongoing driver of child marriage.
- The current context exacerbates this challenge through:
 - Economic pressures, as child marriage can have economic benefits, removing an additional person from the household who needs support, and bringing a dowry or additional labour to a new household.
 - Conversely, economic challenges also mean that the money for a dowry is often not currently available to families, a concern raised by some Rohingya participants.
 - Concerns around safety and harassment of girls, as both men and women indicated marriage offered a form of protection.

What are the risks of addressing this form of GBV via cash/economic interventions?

- Cash may create perverse incentives – providing necessary funds for dowry (given existing social norms that also fuel the practice).
- Transfers conditional on girls' school attendance have been shown in some (mostly development) contexts to reduce child marriage. The effectiveness of these in emergency contexts is less clear. Conditionalities are usually tied to school attendance or similar features which may not be possible in Cox's Bazar, though there are increasing education opportunities for children in the camps.

Conditionality and ability to monitor adherence to programme conditions are key, and such programming would be best supported through other programme elements targeting behavioural change, including education, awareness raising, and efforts in collaboration with camp governance.

48) Ministry of Health and Sports (MoHS) & ICF, 2017. Myanmar Demographic and Health Survey 2015-16.

Programming seeking to address child marriage should consider ...

- **Conditional transfers linked to some form of programme attendance**, as well remaining unmarried
- Making efforts to improve marriage approval or registration processes at camp level, in collaboration with government, CiC, SMS and protection actors
- Awareness raising

Polygyny

Polygyny is less well recorded in literature or reporting from Cox's Bazar but was commonly flagged by a variety of research participants as a major concern. Specifically: men marrying multiple women (sometimes abandoning previous wives), often in different camps, or between host and refugee community members, for better access to aid distribution – commonly given to women – and other such resources, possibly including collection of dowries.

What are the specific social/economic drivers?

What are the underlying factors? What are the pressures from the context?

- Social norms and religious practices – i.e. acceptance of polygyny – are a major underlying factor.
- On a secondary level, there is a clear economic driver, particularly as the practice is described by many in camp settings as being a means of accessing further or additional resources through marrying multiple women simultaneously or serially marrying and divorcing women.
- There are also important structural factors, as the practice is facilitated by lack of governance, lack of legal access, and overall corruption in camps on a variety of levels.

What are the risks of addressing this form of GBV via cash/economic interventions?

- It is not clear from research or literature whether cash programming offers a way to address polygyny, in no small part, because cash or provision of aid is, in many cases, part of the problem, creating an incentive for men to marry women.
- It may be possible to provide support to abandoned women – but this is mitigation, not prevention.
- Structural changes would be needed to adequately address this challenge, including improved governance, and changes to distribution systems (which may also have negative impacts, if for example women were no longer primary beneficiaries).

Findings on the scale of the challenge as assessed by local actors were unexpected, though it is not necessarily an uncommon occurrence in camp or emergency settings where polygyny is socially or culturally acceptable.

Recent experimental research suggests that cash transfers may have similar impacts in reducing household tensions in polygamous households, but it is unclear how this abuse of polygyny, or serial marriage, might be prevented through cash programming.⁴⁹

49) Rachel Heath, Melissa Hidrobo and Shalini Roy. "Cash transfers, polygamy, and intimate partner violence: Experimental evidence from Mali," IFPRI discussion papers 1785, IFPRI (2018).

5.4. Recommendations for addressing GBV using CBI

The following presents ‘guiding principles’ to develop Cash Based Interventions to address GBV in Cox’s Bazar.

Figure 23 ▼
Guiding principles for addressing GBV using CBI

1 ADVOCACY TO GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDERS

A key barrier to economic programming is the government of Bangladesh’s continued reticence to provide consistent approval for such endeavours. The UN is one of a few key organisations, including also the donor community, who can lead ongoing advocacy efforts to engage with the government on the value of these forms of programming. Efforts are critical to create the policy environment in which economic programming can be operationalised and is not restricted. Without these changes, basic needs will not be met for many Rohingya in Cox’s Bazar.

2 A SUSTAINABILITY APPROACH

Address shorter-term and context-specific drivers, and build resilience, shift gender norms, and create economic empowerment.

- Develop pilot and early programming with a view to building **a foundation for iterations** of a similar project.
- **Engage with communities, men and boys**, to ensure buy-in and opportunities for awareness raising.

3 TARGETING BENEFICIARIES FOR HIGH IMPACT AND REDUCED RISK

Solely targeting women may not reduce GBV. Targeting for cash programming must be carefully considered in order to avoid perverse incentives.

- **Consider household level support** through CBIs.
- **Provide gender-specific items** to female recipients (potentially as NFIs).
- **Assess protection risks** of providing physical cash to beneficiaries on a case-by-case basis for any location.
- **Include male household members as beneficiaries**, if not of CBI then of associated training and education.

4 HARNESSING THE POWER OF ECONOMIC INTERVENTIONS

Use cash in conjunction with other forms of economic intervention, integrating more than one cash modality to address a variety of needs identified.

- **Use different forms of cash to address different needs** under a holistic programme.
- **Tailor cash modalities** to the forms of GBV that are targeted in programming, if any.



5 UNDERTAKING HOLISTIC PROGRAMMING

Cash programming or economic interventions that seek to empower women, shift social norms, reduce GBV, are often strengthened by bringing in other non-economic components. Other programme elements can be brought in not only to mitigate risks but to increase impact, including support groups, psychosocial support, education and training, and access to GBV support services.

- **Integrate men and boys** as beneficiaries or actors.
- **Support the creation of social networks for women.**
- **Provide education on GBV, but also on literacy, numeracy, and life skills** in response to needs identified and desires of potential beneficiaries.
- **Provide skills training or support for income generating activities for both men and women.**
- **Include access to counselling/CBT** to support resilience

6 COMMITTING TO A GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACH

A gender transformative approach acknowledges unequal power structures, and constructively challenges harmful social norms. It engages with the community to “analyse inequalities which lie at the heart of development problems and redress discriminatory practices and unjust distributions of power that impede development progress.”⁵⁰

- Incorporate **awareness raising on GBV**, potentially through innovative strategies, into programming.
- **Engage men and boys as programme beneficiaries.**
- **Programme with a long-term lens** to address all drivers of GBV.
- **Embed a gender transformative approach** into the programme’s Theory of Change.

7 ADOPTING A LEARNING APPROACH

Any programming should be monitored for not only outcomes but impact. This is an opportunity to add to the understanding of the impacts of cash programming on GBV outcomes and a necessary step to ensure that risks are identified and mitigated appropriately. This approach allows for continuous improvement and increases likelihood of sustained positive outcomes.

- Ensure **regular monitoring** of programme activities
- Conduct **participatory assessment** during the life of the programme.
- Create **formalised processes for integration of evaluation learnings.**
- Commit to **a baseline**, as well as basic market assessment prior to finalisation of a cash programme modality on a camp-level and engage with potential beneficiaries to align needs and programming.
- Incorporate **indicators to assess social impacts**

50) “Human Rights-Based Approach to Programming,” UNICEF, last updated January 23, 2016.



Photo 16

Cox's Bazaar, Chittagong,
Bangladesh: Bangladeshis
gather on the beach in Cox's
Bazaar to watch the sunset.



Photo 17 ▲
Camp 21, Chittagong,
Bangladesh: A Rohingya
man puts out a trash fire on
the outskirts of Camp 21.

Photo 18 ▼
Camp 21, Chittagong,
Bangladesh: Rohingya men
perform manual labor a part of
a cash for work program inside
Camp 21.



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Annex 1 – Detailed methodology

Introduction

This section outlines the overall approach to the assignment, including a discussion of limitations, the challenges we faced, as well as explaining the reasons underpinning our research strategy, both in practical terms (fieldwork) and in terms of our conceptual framework. As other reports emerging from research carried out in Cox’s Bazar since the influx of the Rohingya in 2017 have shown, working in Cox’s Bazar presents a variety of practical and theoretical challenges. The following outline of the methodology contextualises the findings presented in Chapter 3, providing a clear understanding of how Samuel Hall carried out the research, which segments of the population we selected – and managed to reach – for the survey and discussions, and the rationale for these decisions. Moreover, this section is intended to contribute to ongoing research on the crisis within both refugee and host communities, and so represent a resource for future work in Cox’s Bazar, identifying key issues, how these were addressed and how these impacted the study.

Informing our Approach

Two primary factors informed our approach: how could we conduct research as effectively as possible given our research scope and resources, and how could we do so in a way that was sensitive to the crisis and the individual’s experience of it, ethical and minimised any and all possible risk or harm? In a context like Cox’s Bazar, these two concerns are interrelated; however, we address these separately below.

Doing No Harm

Given the sensitivity of the topic and the vulnerability of Rohingya research participants, among whom were children, Samuel Hall’s highest priority was to engage in fieldwork in an ethically sound manner and with a “do no harm” approach.

Ethical Research at Samuel Hall

Conducting research with vulnerable persons and in challenging contexts, particularly in regard to sensitive issues and where populations may have experienced harm or trauma prior to, during, or after their displacement, as well as at the time of research, requires a strong principle of “do no harm.” The tools described below were developed with a view to limiting impact, and to ensuring that where sensitive or difficult issues were discussed, this was done in an appropriate manner. For example, using one-on-one case studies to speak to women about GBV, rather than Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). All enumerators were trained to conduct research sensitively and were equipped to provide participants with information on support or referrals.

Conducting Ethical Research with Children

As part of this research, a small sample of children (defined here as those under 18) were interviewed in order to gather information about their protection needs and experiences in Cox’s Bazar. Samuel Hall follows the ethical principles and considerations highlighted by UNICEF in its working paper *What We Know about Ethical Research Involving Children in Humanitarian Settings: An Overview of Principles, the Literature and Case Studies* (2016). In particular, we develop our tools and approach to interviews and the data collected taking into account the seven categories identified as requiring reflection in the specific setting to the research, namely: institutional capacity to involve children in research; understanding power relations; harms and benefits; informed consent and capacities of participants; privacy and confidentiality (including ICT); payment, compensation, ancillary services and reciprocity; and, communication of results. Upon request, Samuel Hall can provide its internal Policy on Conducting Ethical Research with and on Children. In addition, for this research, all research team members conducting fieldwork in Cox’s Bazar participated in UNICEF-provided Child Safeguarding Briefings to ensure adherence to UNICEF standards.

In view of the above, Samuel Hall adopted the following measures while conducting the research:

- **Anonymisation of results:** In order to reduce fear of backlash and to protect the identity of research participants, names and other identifying details were not collected at any stage of the research.
- **Provision of referral information:** Referral information on how to access GBV services in each camp were provided to enumerators conducting research, so that this information could be provided to participants where requested or where enumerators saw any need.
- **Minimal sampling of children:** Working with children has its own set of risks in terms of the potential for harm to participants. As such, children were only interviewed as part of the qualitative sample in case studies, where a safe environment and privacy could be ensured.
- **Informed consent:** All participants were informed of the purpose and content of the study and asked to provide their consent.
- **Working with out-group enumerators:** Due to the sensitivity of the topic and in consideration of the fact that participants may have concerns as to raising issues with members of their own community, local Bangladeshi researchers with experience working with the Rohingya community and familiarity with the Rohingya language were used to conduct research.
- **Working through Women Friendly Spaces (WFS) and with local partners:** For all female qualitative research, work was conducted in WFSs in conjunction with UNICEF and their implementing partners in the camps. This meant not only ensuring a safe environment, but also providing access for women who are visiting these spaces to further support, if needed.
- **Not providing financial incentives for research participation:** Providing financial incentives in the camps is prohibited, and as a matter of security for researchers and participants this could not be violated. Snacks and water were provided in qualitative sessions, but no financial remuneration was given.

Practically, this impacted the research methodology in a number of ways, principally: it limited the inclusion of young people under the age of 18; and, restricted Samuel Hall's ability to revisit research participants for verification or additional research purposes.

Doing Research Effectively in The Field

Conducting research in Cox's Bazar's camps presented a number of challenges in terms of how to conduct research not only ethically but effectively. Language was a key factor, particularly given our use of local enumerators. We worked closely with our enumerators to develop and refine the language used in our tools. This was done in order to ensure that both research participants and our enumerators had a clear and firm comprehension of the purpose and meaning of the questions, as well as of the terminology we adopted.

Access to camps was enabled by UNICEF, and Community Observations were used to facilitate buy-in from local communities by making the research and its purpose known to members of the community. However, reaching camps due to the distance from Cox's Bazar limited working hours, as did the advent of Ramadan. This shortened working hours significantly, not only due to a shorter working day for the camps during which we were allowed access, but as many respondents were tired and reluctant to talk, and substantial breaks for prayers further reduced hours that participants were available – both for men and women, and even more so for FGDs and case studies which were not conducted in homes. Sampling could not be done using household listings, so Samuel Hall randomly sampled by location within a set area each day. Additionally, key to the success of our fieldwork was the training for enumerators. Samuel Hall ensured that they understood the purpose of the study and our approach in terms of sampling, language, ethics and other key factors.

Research Methods

For this project, Samuel Hall adopted a mixed-methods approach, utilising both qualitative and quantitative research tools in order to gather different kinds of information and from a representative sample of the population in a sensitive and effective manner.

Research Tools

The research incorporated both qualitative and quantitative tools, including a household survey, case studies, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), and community observations. It also integrated visual methods to support the capture of contextual information and provide critical detail to the final analysis and reporting. The following table indicates the overall purpose of each tool in relation to the research questions. This matrix informed the development of the research tools, allowing us to shape them into relevant, appropriately long, and targeted instruments able to collect the specific data that would help us formulate a response to UNICEF's brief.

Research Question	Sub-question	Desk	HH		Case		Local	High
		Review	Survey	FGD	Study	COs	KIIs	level KIIs
1. How is GBV related to economic stressors among the Rohingya refugee community in Cox's Bazar?	1.1. What factors can be identified as drivers of GBV in Cox's Bazar?	X	X	X	X		X	X
	1.2. Who are the key actors and influencers in decision-making in the community and households, and as relates to GBV in terms of both potential drivers and access to support?			X	X	X	X	
	1.3. What are the primary economic coping mechanisms in Cox's Bazar?	X	X	X		X	X	
2. How relevant and feasible are cash-based interventions to prevent and mitigate GBV?	2.1. How is income used and controlled in Cox's Bazar?		X	X	X	X	X	X
	2.2. What kind of access to livelihoods opportunities do women and girls specifically have?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
3. What other recommendations can be given to successfully prevent and mitigate GBV?	3.1. What interventions have succeeded in other, similar contexts?	X	X					X
	3.2. What are other actors in Cox's Bazar currently implementing and planning on this topic?	X	X				X	X
	3.3. What intervention modalities are most appropriate to prevent and mitigate forms of GBV involving economic challenges, and how can these be targeted?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

The following section outlines each of these tools, their target population, purpose, and overall approach in greater detail. Full versions of the tools were reviewed and approved by UNICEF prior to fieldwork and were piloted and amended following the piloting of research tools at the start of the project's Fieldwork Phase..

Desk Review

Samuel Hall carried out a comprehensive desk review of the relevant literature in order to develop a deeper understanding of the issues at stake in this project, identify gaps and existing analyses on which to build our research, and ultimately to assist in the development of research tools. We continued to review academic and grey literature (as well as media reporting and other relevant sources) beyond the submission of the Inception Report, expanding our bibliography through our own research and through our KIIs, especially as representatives of organisations who were engaging in small scale CBI made us aware of data and reporting that came into circulation during our fieldwork and analysis phases. As a living document, the Desk Review has played a key role in informing analysis and report writing in the final stages of the research.

Our review was especially focused on key thematic areas where primary and secondary data was available so that we could avoid revisiting particular issues in the field; the desk-based work also ensured that we carefully established the foundations on which to develop our tools and ground our analysis of the findings.

This tool was of critical importance to the identification of relevant issues and discussions. Among these, we explored the existing literature on CTP linked to GBV (limited though it is); modalities of cash transfers and its effects in the growing number of contexts in which it is deployed; the migration dynamics in Cox’s Bazar; and, the cultural inflections, forms and history of GBV among the Rohingya. Of great value to the development of this tool were preliminary KIIs with a range of actors, primarily those working in Cox’s Bazar who could share their knowledge and experiences with regards to our research topics – these included UNICEF staff, academics working on research in this field, and programming actors working in Cox’s Bazar. These interviews helped to validate early research assumptions to be tested through fieldwork.

Household Survey

The Household Survey was designed to gain a high-level understanding of household economics and coping mechanisms in particular, as well as social and cultural norms regarding women and programming targeted at women. This was done at the household level and answered primarily by the head of household or the spouse of the head of household; it was not limited by gender in terms of target respondent (though gender disaggregated data was collected). Both male and female enumerators were employed to conduct field research so that interviews could be carried out in an appropriate manner by a member of the same gender, as the respondent saw fit. Key areas addressed included:

- Basic livelihood information
- Economic stressors
- Economic coping mechanisms
- Participation in local programming and/or receipt of humanitarian support
- Attitudes to women – safety, economic and domestic roles, etc. – and to some forms of GBV
- Decision making around household resources, including gender dynamics
- Experience of some forms of GBV by women in the household
- Participation in women’s empowerment/economic programming or access to GBV support services

Focus Group Discussions

The research team conducted a series of 12 of FGDs with 5-6 respondents. These were designed to explore decision-making mechanisms around GBV, as well as around household income. They specifically explored gender power dynamics and sought to provide information that would help to assess potential intervention types. In each of the two research locations, Camp 4 and Camp 11, 6 FGDs were conducted, split evenly between both male and female members of the community, keeping discussions separated by gender to facilitate a participatory and culturally appropriate approach.

These FGDs helped us evaluate whether a CBI – and what form of CBI – would be most appropriate, given the context, gauge what impact they might have on potential beneficiaries, and whether this kind of economic intervention represents a sustainable solution. FGDs also offered a forum to develop an understanding of how forms of economic intervention that already exist in practice could be improved – a key question in a context where funding is reported to be increasingly limited, with the current Response Plan underfunded and financial support decreasing, according to actors interviewed. Additionally, the FGDs allowed for the triangulation of information received through quantitative interviews, provide a degree of data validation, and nuance our understanding of the key issues derived from the quantitative fieldwork and community observations.

Case studies

To allow for a more insightful, context-sensitive, and rounded understanding of individual experiences and opinions, qualitative case studies were conducted with men, women and girls in each location, with varying purposes:

- Adult female respondents, as a key target group for understanding GBV dynamics
- Adolescent girl respondents (aged 15-17), in order to better understand the potential intersection of child protection and GBV concerns in this context.
- Male respondents, in order to better understand the perspectives of the men who may be impacted by programming and what kind of role they might play in making such programming successful or harmful.

Community Observations

Community Observations were conducted in the two research locations (see below) and took a more anthropological approach to understanding community-level dynamics in each location.

While conducted over short periods of time (approximately 1-2 days), they allowed the lead local researcher and Project team to speak with a variety of community members and gain key information around the main research topics in a more free-flowing fashion. They also allowed the lead researcher to map out communities and spaces within them to help understand female inclusion, as well as provide critical context for the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data collected through the use of other tools. These Community Observations were primarily used to assist in the planning and design of fieldwork research, and to contextualise the voices and testimonies of the individuals to whom Samuel Hall spoke. Full versions can be found in Annex 3.

Key Informant Interviews

The research team conducted a range of interviews with key informants (described below) in order to gather specific information in relation to the economic situation in Cox's Bazar, available programming and resources to the Rohingya community, and the possibilities for intervention and likely impacts. These were conducted both in the field in Cox's Bazar and internationally (via phone or Skype) with relevant experts and practitioners.

Local: Local KIIs engaged representatives of organisations that were active in Cox's Bazar and had a direct experience of programming in the camps. The overall aim was to develop further insights into the situation on the ground, in terms of the economic conditions of the camp population, economic drivers of GBV, and existing and past programming in Cox's Bazar that involved these elements; we also sought to understand through these conversations who the key actors in the camps are.

High-level: High-level KIIs brought in authoritative voices on the thematic areas of our research, extending to GBV, the Rohingya crisis, migration contexts, and CTP, at an international level. Across the various phases of our work, we spoke to, among others, researchers who are engaged in studying and writing about the crisis, senior employees at INGOs and UN agencies who are involved in overseeing potential programming, and experts on the Rohingya diaspora and their condition as refugees.

A list of KII participants by agency and expertise can be found in Annex 2.

Research Sampling

The research was conducted in Camps 4 and 11. Data collection involved over 800 quantitative surveys and approximately 60 qualitative pieces including case studies, interviews, and FGDs.

Quantitative research sampling was done using a basic random sampling strategy in order to spread the sample geographically and working in a new block of camps each day, dependent on the comparable size and layout of the geographic area sampled. For qualitative research, the research team used community spaces, including Women Friendly Spaces in the camps for work with female qualitative research participants – chosen by UNICEF to allow us to work with implementing partners. For the purposes of quantitative sampling, surveys were conducted via the random door-knock method outlined above.

Quantitative Sampling	Camp 4	Camp 11	TOTAL
Household Survey	447	423	870

Qualitative research sampling was more complex due to the larger number of different research tools to be used, as follows:

Qualitative Sampling	Camp 4	Camp 11	General	TOTAL
FGDs	6	6	-	12
Case Studies	8	13	-	21
Community Obs.	1	1	-	2
Local KIIs	5	5	2	12
High-level KIIs	-	-	31	31

The sampling for qualitative research was specifically targeted to highlight particular relevant demographic profiles. These profiles were elaborated and selected on the basis of the kind of questions and research objectives for which the tool was developed. The team also took into account our evolving understanding of the context, based on the early stages of our research (desk review, preliminary observations)

and inputs from actors in the field, including UNICEF. The FGDs and Case studies were also split by gender, with the following sample size:

FGD Sampling by Gender	male	female	TOTAL
FGDs per location	3	3	6
FGDs total	6	6	12

Case Study Sampling

by Gender	Adult Male	Adult Female	Adolescent Female	TOTAL
Camp 4	3	4	1	8
Camp 11	6	4	3	13
Case Studies total	9	8	4	21

In FGDs, this split allowed us to hold more productive sessions during which all participants' voices are given the cultural and social space to be heard. It is especially important to create a safe space for women to discuss sensitive issues. This was borne out in what emerged from these sessions, where we registered some significant differences between responses along gender lines.

For case studies, we included both male and female perspectives. This reflects the fact that women and men have a role to play in GBV, although our focus, as reflected in the research objectives outlined in Chapter 2, is on the violence that impacts women and girls. Moreover, the literature on GBV programming, particularly in conservative contexts such as the Rohingya community where gender roles are segregated, and our KIIs insisted on the importance of integrating the male perspective into any conversation on this issue. Understanding the concerns and social norms that may drive men to violence or which may lead to imbalances and problems in the domestic sphere as well as the community is critical.

Fieldwork Challenges & Research Limitations

For the purposes of future research, it is important to highlight the challenges faced in conducting this study. A major challenge was the research timing. As noted above, Ramadan posed restrictions on working hours and limited resources in the field in numerous ways, such as requiring gaps in work during extended prayer breaks or mosque visits and reduced open hours for accessing the camps. We also faced concerns from participants about talking to our researchers: several voiced their unwillingness to talk to external parties, in some cases for fear of reprisals. In most cases, we were able to allay their fears and address their concerns by emphasising their anonymity and that we had approval to work. The lack of mobile coverage in camps also limited the team's ability to geo-tag findings and made coordination in the field difficult. Furthermore, the use of Bangla characters posed a problem for using industry-standard Kobo data collection systems in the field, though these issues were ultimately resolved. A key factor also, and one highlighted by enumerator teams, was the unwillingness of men to speak to us when they realised that our line of enquiry included, if not prioritised, women. Male participants were often less engaged than female participants, particularly important for our qualitative research.

The limited capacity of the enumerators also posed a significant challenge. While we devoted significant time to training, we found that enumerators were not necessarily as experienced in conducting non-assessment style research and had to be extensively trained on conducting qualitative research. In some cases, note-taking was not of a high standard. Additional training was given to qualitative enumerators to help us tackle this issue.

Research also experienced some delays in organising and translating qualitative data, due in large part to the advent of Ramadan at the end of research. Anonymisation of participants and the data organisation system used, relying on photographing and/or scanning in the field also resulted in some confusion in outputs, however all qualitative work was checked and confirmed before consideration. Overall, this did result in some delays in moving into the analysis and reporting phase.

Finally, how the community understood the key topics of the study, on a conceptual and not linguistic level, impacted their responses. Discussing GBV, both when this kind of violence was raised directly or the issue was broached indirectly, was often difficult and far from straightforward. While participants, women in particular, were largely willing to discuss the topic, their understanding of what qualified as 'gender-based violence' was weak in many cases.

Furthermore, discussions of safety and security were often framed comparatively, with initial responses highlighting that they felt safe because respondents were no longer in Myanmar and subject to the violence and persecution that pushed them to escape. Participants largely understood this line of questioning in terms of the horrors of their past experience, rather than considering current situations – to turn their attention to the present condition often required additional prompting.

Annex 2 – Key informant interview list

Preliminary Key Informant Interviews

1	Community Partners In-ternational	Programme Manager	Protection	High Level
2	UNICEF	Gender Specialist	GBV	High Level
3	IFRPI	Research Fellow	Protection/Food Security	High Level
4	UNICEF	Child Protection Officer	Protection	High Level
5	UNICEF	Child Protection Officer	Protection	High Level
6	UNICEF	Child Protection Officer	Protection	High Level
8	UNFPA	GBV Subcluster Co-ordinator, Cox's Bazar & GBV Subcluster Information Management Officer	GBV	High Level
9	Independent University of Bangladesh; Nirapad	Assistant Professor; Research Consultant	Protection/research	High Level
10	UNFPA	GBV Subcluster coordinator	GBV	High Level

Fieldwork & Reporting Phase Interviews

11	Action Aid	SMS Volunteers (Host Community Members)	Protection & monitoring	Local: Camp 11
12	Action Aid	Senior Response Officer	GBV	Local: Camp 11 (WFS)
13	ACF	Senior Project Officer, FSL & DRR	CTP	Local: Camp 11
14	Save the Children	Social Case Worker, Child Protection	Protection	Local: Camp 11
15	Action Aid	Team Leader, Site Management Project	Coordination	Local: Camp 11
16	UNWOMEN	Programme Manager	GBV	Local: Camp 4
17	ACTED	Senior Site Officer & Camp Manager	Management	Local: Camp 4
18	Action Aid	Protection Coordinator	Protection	Local: Camp 4
19	Rohingya Youth Legal Action Net-work	Members	Legal	Local: Camp 4
20	BRAC	Women & Girls Safe Space; WGSS beneficiaries	GBV	Local: Camp 4
21	Action Aid	Head of Humanitarian Response, Bangladesh	Management	Local
22	DCA	GBV Programme Manager & WGSS Team Leader	GBV	Local
23	The Transfer Project	Researcher	GBV	High Level
24	ODI	Senior Research Fellow	GBV	High Level
25	MoWCA	Clinical Psychologist & Regional Coordinator	GBV	High Level

26	UNICEF	Cash Transfer Specialist	CTP	High Level
27	UNFPA	GBVIMS Specialist	GBV	High Level
28	UNFPA	Coordinator, WFP UNFPA Joint Project on Women-led Community Centres	GBV	High Level
29	UNFPA	GBV Programme Analyst	GBV	High Level
30	DRC	Protection Manager	GBV	High Level
31	NCA	GBV Coordinator	GBV	High Level
32	UNWOMEN	Gender and Humanitarian Action Programme Specialist	GBV	High Level
33	CPI	GBV Programme Manager	GBV	High Level
34	CARE	GBV Specialist	GBV	High Level
35	DCA	Head of Programmes, Bangladesh	CTP	High Level
36	UNHCR	Protection Officer SGBV	GBV	High Level
37	Plan International	GBV Programme Manager	GBV	High Level
38	ISCG	Senior Gender Capacity Advisor to the Response	GBV	High Level
39	WFP	SCOPE Project Manager	CTP	High Level
40	UNICEF	Child Protection Officer	Protection	High Level
41	ISCG	National Coordination Officer (Cash) & Field Coordination Officer	CTP	High Level
42	IOM	Programme Manager, Protection	Protection	High Level
43	SDC	Head of WASH, Technical Resource Unit	WASH	High Level

Annex 3 – Community profiles

Camp 4 community profile

1. Community Demographics

Question	Answer	Source?
1. How many people live in this camp/block?	32,000 people in 780 HH (Approx.)	This is an informed estimate
2. What languages are spoken here? Which is the most common?	Rohingya Language	
3. Roughly what portion of your population fit in each of the below age categories: Children under 18; Youth (18 – 24); Adults (25-60); Elderly	Children under 18:20% ; Youth (18 – 24); 20%; Adults (25-60):50%; Elderly:10 % The number of female and children is higher in camp 04	This is an informed estimate
4. What do most people in this community do for work? What did they do before they came here?	Most Adult male do not have any permanent work. However, in the camp they are involved in some part time work offered by the NGOs/INGOs. Works includes road and house construction, services for the NGOs/INGOs etc. Before they come here some were involved in jobs and agricultural works, small business etc.	This is an informed estimate
5. What are the major health problems common to your community?	Health problems includes fever, diar-rhoea, menstrual problems, water borne diseases, skin diseases.	This is an informed estimate
6. How long have most of the people been here – are they newer arrivals, or older? Is the population changing a lot?	Most people have been living here since 2017. There are only a few new arrivals but that has been stopped recently. The population is not chang-ing much but there have been a lot of new born babies in the last one year.	This is an informed estimate

2. Community history

How old is this community/camp now?	A little more than 02 years.
What have been the major changes you have seen here, and how did they impact people here?	I have seen lot of positive changes after arrival. Changes happened mostly in our living condition such as housing, electricity, sanitation. The improvements in our road communications. We feel safer these days. We are also getting regu-lar food from the NGOs. Some are taking care of our children. We are much better here. “We did not get such thing back in Myanmar.” “I am so grateful to Bangladesh, without their support you would find us dead here.”
What is the security situation like here? Please explain.	The security used to be bad. We are worried about the safety of our women. But we feel safer now as there are night volunteers.

Note: Other sources expressed their concern about the security at night. Some mentioned they don't know who is responsible but they have seen people get murdered at night. One mentioned that there are some underground gangs, armed forces involved in the camp who regularly visits from Myanmar to the camps.

What do you see as the main challenges in your community? I.e. eco-nomic challenges, security issues, migration, etc.

Our main challenge is we have no work hence no income and money. We want to work and have an income for our family. The food support is good but not enough. One mentioned- "My family and I are tired of eating the same food, sometimes I so wish to buy some fish, meat, vegetables from the local market." All men are sitting idle in the camp all day. Sometimes some *Mahjis* give support to those who are very close to him. We came here to escape from the tor-ture by the Myanmar military. We are alive here at least. But it's too hot in here we need to get a fan and other facilities.

What do you think are the strengths of this community?

One mentioned we help each other if someone is in danger.

3. Community Geography/Mapping

Areas of the community

- Different groups or sections: It has 08 blocks.
- Areas with business activity or NGO/aid activity vs. residential areas: In Block G there is a local bazar and a hospital.

Key landmarks & infrastructure

- Mosque: There are few mosques in the camp 4 located in different blocks. In Block G, there is one. Mosques are built by the community where some mosques are built from the support of outside donors and individuals.
- School: No formal schooling. However, there are some centres for the Kids for basic learning and playing some games.
- Market/bazar: In block G, there is a local market where various shops are selling goods such as vegetables and other household utensils.
- NGO or aid services: Many NGOs and aid services are present in camp 4. Each camp is led by CIC Camp-in-Charge). CIC is the government appointee. The role of CIC is to ensure overall security of the camp and coordinate the works of many INGOs and service providers.

4. Community Assets and Services

Which of the following services do residents of this community have access to?

1. Water	yes
2. Electricity	yes
3. Outdoor lighting	yes
4. Sanitation facilities	yes

Are these services reliable or unreliable?

1. Water	Unreliable as the water level for most tube wells went very low.
2. Electricity	Reliable
3. Outdoor lighting	Sometimes unreliable
4. Sanitation facilities	Reliable

Which of the following are present in this community? Please describe and point out on map/provide location.

1. Schools	No formal school Present
2. Mosques	Present
3. Aid and development agencies	Huge presence
4. Markets or bazaars	Limited presence

5. Economic Assessment

What would you say is the primary industry here – what em-plies the most people?	There is no primary industry as such. Part-time work offered to the adult males by the NGOs/INGOs for the infrastructural develop-ment of the camp.
What would you say is the secondary industry here/is there a secondary industry here?	No Secondary Industry. But only a few have shops in the local market Bazar inside the camp.
Are there businesses here which employ more than ten peo-ple? Please give examples.	No business as such but part time work occa-sionally involved more than 10 people.
Do most people have full time work or is it more common to have part-time work, or not to have work at all?	More common is not to have work at all. Some male get work occasionally offered by the NGOs/INGOs. No one has full time jobs only those who work as volunteer, teacher (including females) etc with some NGOs/INGOs have a full-time job.
Do most people have only ONE job, or is it more common to have multiple jobs/incomes?	Most people have NO job. But those who are involved in small entrepreneurship such as shops in the local market have one job. Some are also mobile vendors selling good such as vegetable, watches, ornaments etc inside the camp. They might be involved in multiple jobs.
Does the kind of work that people do here change over the course of the year? (i.e. is it seasonal?)	The kind of work males do in the camp is not very frequent. At the beginning they had no work they got work only after the NGOs start-ed their operations.
Is it common for people to undertake some kind of activity at home to make money – i.e. raising chickens or growing food, tailoring or craft work at home, etc. If so, who primarily does these kinds of activities?	Yes, some mostly females are doing home-stead gardening. Some women are also rising chicken, tailoring or doing craft work at home. But growing vegetables is a challenge as the space is very tiny.
What kinds of activities do people do at home to make money?	Raising chicken, making handicraft etc some men are venturing some toys, watches etc.

6. General Information:

Geographic area:	Camp 4
Estimated catchment population (in thousands):	32000
Organization:	ACTED / Save the Children has presence in camp 4 and works in child protection including GBV.
Did you provide services before the crisis?	No
What types of services do you provide?	Site Management

7. Photographic evidence & general observations

What types of houses/shelters have you seen here?	Shelters vary but are small, some built with thatched roofs, often only using tarpaulin – some mix of bamboo and tarps is most common.
What does a typical dwelling look like/what is the most common kind of housing?	Most common is structures built with bamboo and cov-ered with tarpaulin.

What types of building (non-residential) have you seen here?	Some permanent spaces like centres, markets are built using above, but those built by NGOs are more likely to be bamboo and more solid with better airflow.
What is the key/largest/central buildings in this town?	In all camps, the CiC office, as well as food distribution points, information points, and mosques are key, as well as various NGO centres/offices across camps (often centrally located, near CiC office at camp entrance).
What energy or water infrastructure have you seen here?	There is mostly solar power and lighting. Water infrastructure is mainly pumped water (available at pump points, not to houses) and there is some drainage due to DRR programmes.
How much of the community does infrastructure appear to reach?	Energy is limited, though some houses may have solar power or lamps, as well as gas fuel (through WFP or other distribution). Water is at points across camps, though access is dependent on household location. Camp 4 is one of the older camps, so it has better services to some degree, but a much larger population straining resources and space.
Is this area flat, hilly or mountainous? Please describe the terrain.	The area is hilly, verging on mountainous, with significant inclines in some areas. Deforestation is a growing problem being addressed by DRR. The tropical location means that it is humid and green, where green areas have not been removed for shelter. Bodies of water in low-lying areas are common but not potable – circumvented by building of bridges, etc.
Is this camp close to a water source (i.e. river, lake) or far? Please identify key water sources, if any, and their distance from the town, and if they are accessible to camp populations.	Primary water sources are pumped water.
Is this camp/block densely populated or are houses/buildings spread out over a large area? If this is different in different areas, please try to note what areas are densely populated and which are not. Annotate map if possible.	Densely populated, though less so than some camps. Central areas near CiC are less dense, but shelters/"residential areas" are densely populated.

Camp 11 community profile

1. Community Demographics

Question	Answer	Source?
1. How many people live in this camp/block?	Total: 1800 HH / This Block: 180 HH (Approx.)	This is an informed estimate
2. What languages are spoken here? Which is the most common?	Rohingya Language	
3. Roughly what portion of your population fit in each of the below age categories: Children under 18; Youth (18 – 24); Adults (25-60); Elderly	Children under 18:25% ; Youth (18 – 24); 20%; Adults (25-60):50%; Elderly: 5% The number of male and children under 7 is higher in camp 11.	This is an informed estimate
4. What do most people in this community do for work? What did they do before they came here?	Most Adult male do not have any permanent work. However, in the camp they are involved in some part time work offered by the NGOs/INGOs.	This is an informed estimate

	Works includes road and house construction, services for the NGOs/INGOs etc.	
	Before they come here some were involved in jobs and agricultural works, small business etc. However, not well educated Rohingya are working in the camp.	
5. What are the major health problems common to your community?	Health problems includes fever, diar-rhoea, menstrual problems, water borne diseases, skin diseases.	This is an informed estimate
6. How long have most of the people been here – are they newer arrivals, or older? Is the population changing a lot?	Most people have been living here since 2017. There are only a few new arrivals but that has been stopped recently. The population is not changing much but there have been a lot of new born babies in the last one year.	This is an informed estimate

2. Community history

How old is this community/camp now?	A little more than 02 years.
What have been the major changes you have seen here, and how did they impact people here?	I have seen some positive changes in the community. Changes are made in the condition of roads and our houses and new mosques were built. As a <i>mahji</i> , I attended meeting led by CIC and Bangladesh Military. My job is to give them who needs and gets what support from the GO and NGO services. We feel safer these days. We are also getting regular food from the NGOs. Some NGOs are taking care of our children. There are adolescent club for the females.
What is the security situation like here? Please explain.	The security used to be bad. We are worried about the safety of our women. But we feel safer now as there are night volunteers. In the past, there was an incident where a Rohingya woman meet a Bengali guy on the phone and left camp for marriage and after few days it turns out the guy was a bad person and wanted to sell her off for bad work.
What do you see as the main challenges in your community? I.e. eco-nomic challenges, security issues, migration, etc.	Our main challenge is we have no work hence no income and money. We want to work and have an income for our family. The food sup-port is good but not enough. All men are sitting idle in the camp. Sometimes we get into fight with the host community although not very frequent. One Host community member men-tioned that all support is for Rohingya. We don't get any. Due to them and the prices of many goods went high which is not good for us.
What do you think are the strengths of this community?	We want to work and are eager to change our situation.

3. Community Geography/Mapping

Key landmarks & infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mosque: There are few mosques in the camp 11 located in different blocks. Mosques are built by the community members and some mosques are built from the support of outside donors and individuals. • School: No formal schooling. However, there are some centres for the Kids for basic learning, playing games and adolescent clubs for females. • Market/bazar: There is a local market where various shops are selling goods such as vegetables and other goods.
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- NGO or aid services: Many NGOs and aid services are present in camp 11. Each camp is led by CIC Camp-in-Charge). CIC is the government appointee. The role of CIC is to ensure overall security of the camp and coordinate the works of many INGOs and service providers.
- Business or business areas: There are one bazar in camp 11 where community can buy and sell goods such as vegetables and other everyday essentials.

4. Community Assets and Services

Which of the following services do residents of this community have access to?	1. Water	yes
	2. Electricity	yes
	3. Outdoor lighting	yes
	4. Sanitation facilities	yes
Are these services reliable or unreliable?	1. Water	Reliable
	2. Electricity	Reliable
	3. Outdoor lighting	Sometimes unreliable
	4. Sanitation facilities	Reliable
Which of the following are present in this community? Please describe and point out on map/provide location.	1. Schools	No formal school Present
	2. Mosques	Present
	3. Aid and development agencies	Huge presence
	4. Markets or bazaars	One big local bazar

5. Economic Assessment

What would you say is the primary industry here – what em-ploys the most people?	There is no primary industry as such. Part-time work offered to the adult males by the NGOs/ INGOs for the infrastructural devel-opment of the camp.
What would you say is the secondary industry here/is there a secondary industry here?	No Secondary Industry. But only a few have shops in the local market/ Bazar inside the camp.
Are there businesses here which employ more than ten peo-ple? Please give examples.	No business as such but part time work oc-casionally involved more than 10 people.
Do most people have full time work or is it more common to have part-time work, or not to have work at all?	More common is not to have work at all. Some male get work occasionally by the NGOs/ INGOs. No one has full time jobs only those who work as volunteer, teacher (in-cluding females) etc with some development NGOs/INGOs have some full-time job.
Do most people have only ONE job, or is it more common to have multiple jobs/incomes?	Most people have NO job. But those who are involved in small entrepreneurship such as the owner of shops in the local market have one job. Some are also mobile vendors selling good such as vegetable, watches, ornaments etc inside the camp. They might be involved in multiple jobs.
Does the kind of work that people do here change over the course of the year? (i.e. is it seasonal?)	The kind of work males do in the camp is not very frequent. At the beginning they had no work they got work only after the NGOs started their operations.

Is it common for people to undertake some kind of activity at home to make money – i.e. raising chickens or growing food, tailoring or craft work at home, etc. If so, who primarily does these kinds of activities?

Yes, some mostly females are doing home-stead gardening. Some women are also raising chicken, tailoring or doing craft work at home. But it is hard to grow vegetable in this tiny space.

What kinds of activities do people do at home to make money?

Raising chicken, making handicraft etc some men are venturing some toys, watches etc. Some also escape camp to make income.

6. General Information:

Geographic area: Camp 11

Estimated catchment population (in thousands): 1800 HH

7. Photographic evidence & general observations

What types of houses/shelters have you seen here?

Shelters vary but are small, some built with thatched roofs, often only using tarpaulin – some mix of bamboo and tarps is most common.

What does a typical dwelling look like/what is the most common kind of housing?

Most common is structures built with bamboo and covered with tarpaulin.

What types of building (non-residential) have you seen here?

Some permanent spaces like centres, markets are built using above, but those built by NGOs are more likely to be bamboo and more solid with better airflow.

What is the key/largest/central buildings in this town?

In all camps, the CiC office, as well as food distribution points, information points, and mosques are key, as well as various NGO centres/offices across camps (often centrally located, near CiC office at camp entrance).

What energy or water infrastructure have you seen here?

There is mostly solar power and lighting. Water infrastructure is mainly pumped water (available at pump points, not to houses) and there is some drainage due to DRR programmes.

How much of the community does infrastructure appear to reach?

Energy is limited, though some houses may have solar power or lamps, as well as gas fuel (through WFP or other distribution). Water is at points across camps, though access is dependent on household location.

Is this area flat, hilly or mountainous? Please describe the terrain.

The area is quite hilly, though flatter than some camps. Deforestation is a growing problem being addressed by DRR. The tropical location means that it is humid and green, where green areas have not been removed for shelter. Bodies of water in low-lying areas are common but not potable – circumvented by building of bridges, etc.

Is this camp close to a water source (i.e. river, lake) or far?

Primary water sources are pumped water.

Is this camp/block densely populated or are houses/buildings spread out over a large area?

Densely populated, though less so than some camps. Central areas near CiC are less dense, but shelters/“residential areas” are densely populated.



Samuel Hall is a social enterprise that conducts research in countries affected by issues of migration and displacement. We specialise in socio-economic surveys, private and public sector studies, and impact assessments for a range of humanitarian and development actors. With a rigorous approach and the inclusion of academic experts, field practitioners, and a vast network of national researchers, we access complex settings and gather accurate data. We bring innovative insights and practical solutions to addressing the most pressing social, economic, and political issues of our time.

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