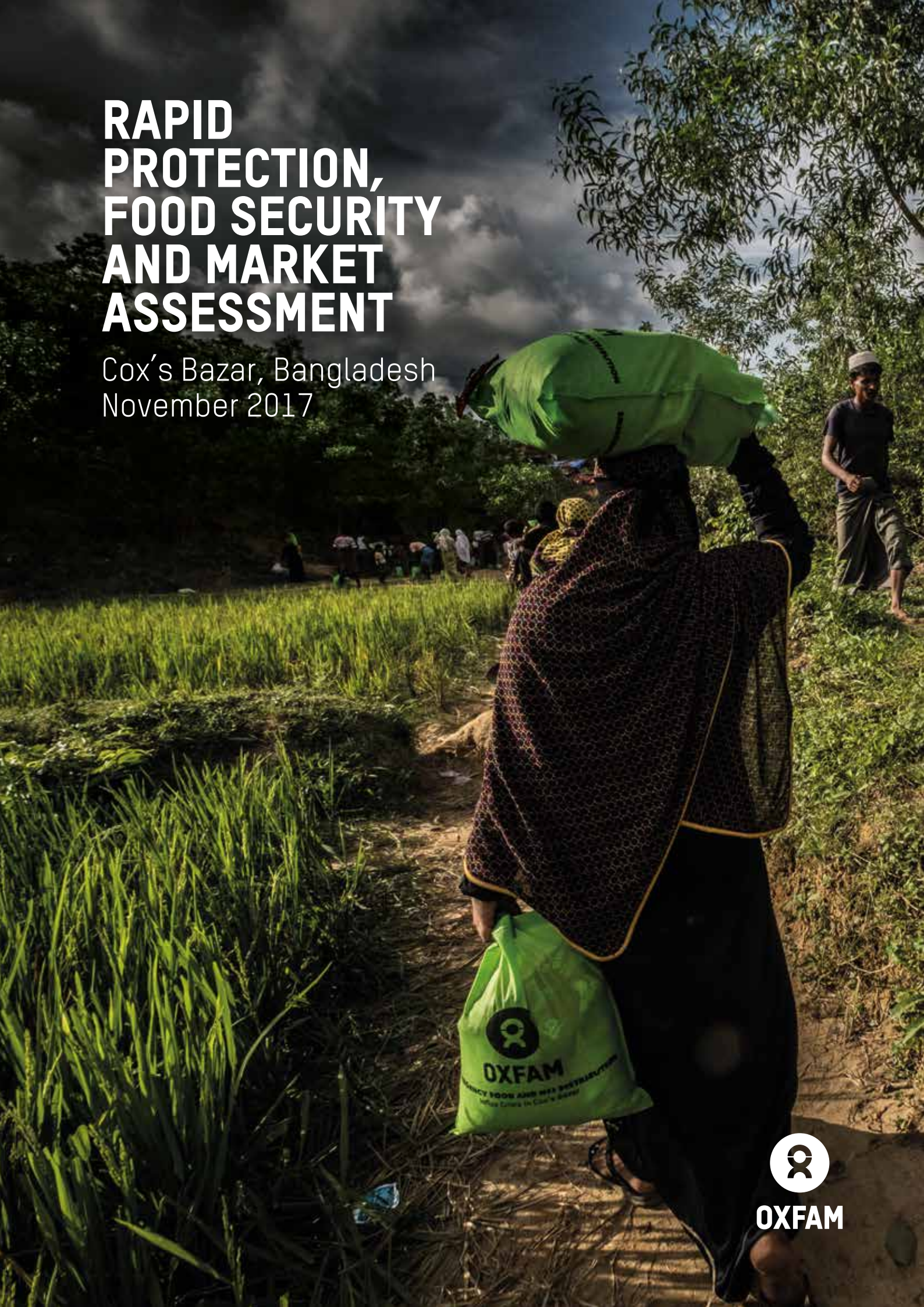


RAPID PROTECTION, FOOD SECURITY AND MARKET ASSESSMENT

Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh
November 2017



OXFAM

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GLOSSARY

BDT	Bangladeshi Taka
EFSVL	Emergency Food Security and Vulnerable Livelihoods
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GAM	Global Acute Malnutrition
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GFD	General Food Distribution
ISCG	Inter Sector Coordination Group
KII	Key Informant Interview
NFI	Non-Food Item
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PSS	Psycho-Social Support
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
MDD	Minimum Dietary Diversity
WASH	Water Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the influx of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar into Bangladesh looks set to continue, the daily environment for recent arrivals, long-term refugees and host communities is beset with risk – amongst which are specific risks in accessing food and income. Refugee populations, reliant on food aid and living in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions are increasingly putting themselves at risk in order to access food, fuel to cook food or markets. This is exacerbated by a general lack of essential services, including lighting, basic information and infrastructure. Men, women, boys and girls are facing unique and challenging threats and risks, which are not only affecting household safety, food security, health and nutrition but increasing tensions with host communities. Yet despite this, social networks, trade relationships and informal ties have the capacity to be harnessed to reduce risk and negative coping mechanisms.



A woman carries her 10 month old son through Unchiprang Camp. Photo: Tommy Trenchard/Oxfam

CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY

Since the 25th of August 2017, the Cox's Bazar and Bandarban districts in the south-east of Bangladesh have been facing a sudden, mass influx of Rohingya population fleeing violence from the Rakhine state in Myanmar. According to the official data provided by the Inter Sector Coordination Group (ISCG, the main coordination body for international and local humanitarian agencies for this emergency) on November 14th, a total 618,000 Rohingya have arrived into Cox Bazar since 25th August 2017. The new arrivals join an already existing community of approximately 200,000 to 300,000 stateless "unregistered Myanmar nationals" previously settled in Cox's Bazar. The total population of concern is a total estimated 830,312 individuals¹. The influx is expected to continue, as thousands of refugees are still reported to have reached the Myanmar-Bangladesh border. Overall, considering the affected host population in communities, a staggering 1.2 million people in the area have been affected directly within 3 months of this crisis alone.

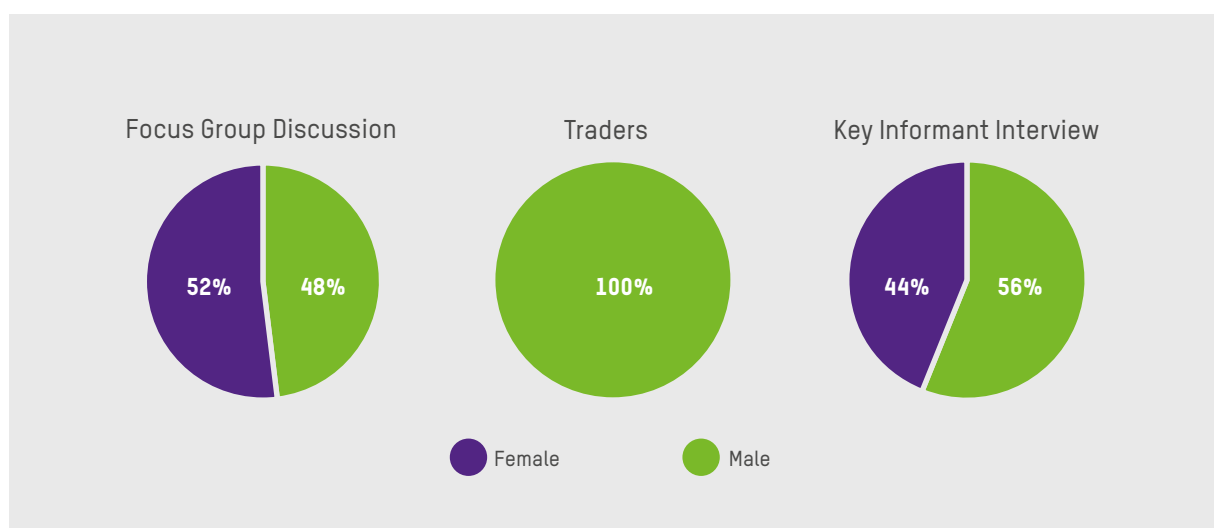
To inform programming and the wider humanitarian response Oxfam undertook a rapid food security, markets and protection assessment in November 2017². This is to complement a large-scale WASH response launched in early September 2017 at the onset of the displacement of populations from Myanmar.

The data collection took place over 7 days from the 3rd-9th of November 2017. Oxfam conducted 23 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) (11 male-only and 12 female-only), 169 trader surveys, and spoke with 66 Key Informants across Ukihya and Teknaf Upazilas. In order to have a better understanding of the different dynamics depending on location and set up, FGD and KII data was collected across two of the makeshift camps (Kutupalong North and South), two spontaneous sites (zone TT and JJ), one extension zone (zone OO) and the camp in Unchiprang. Trader surveys were collected in 14 markets of various sizes, serving populations in these locations.

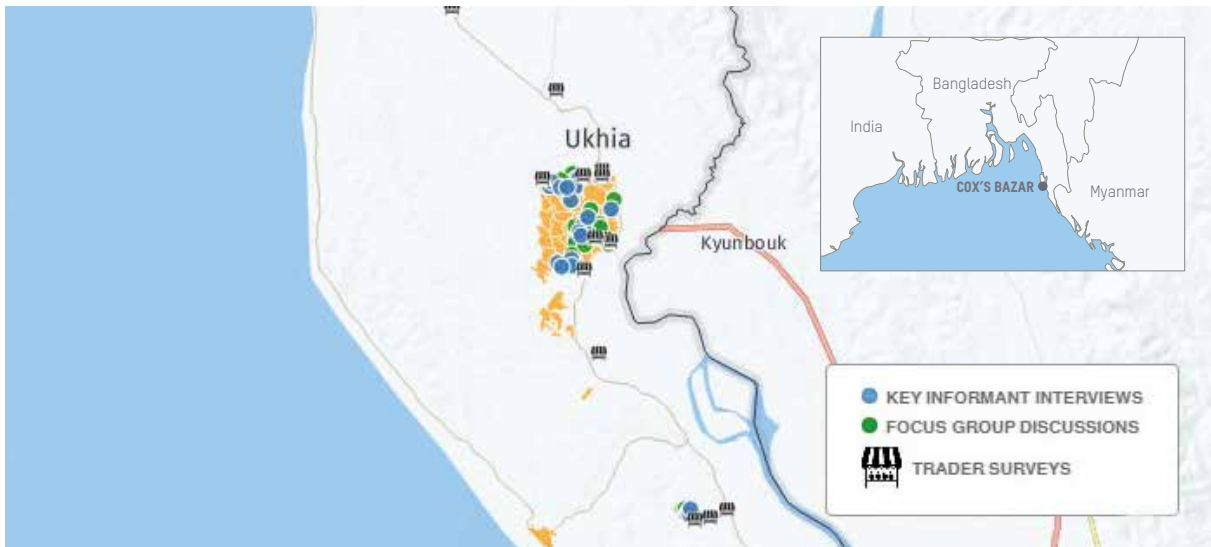
TABLE 1 TRADER SURVEY LOCATIONS

Camp Level Markets	Local Level Markets	Regional Level Markets
Stalls in the OO zone, Ghunar para market, Balukhali west, Lambashiya, Unchiprang Camp, Kutupalong Camp	Balukhali Bazar, Kutupalong Station, Roikkom, Whykong, Unchiprang Station,	Court Bazar, Ukihya

FIGURE 1 BREAKDOWN OF SOURCES BY GENDER



MAP 1 GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE OF ASSESSMENT



View of Moinnarghona Camp. Photo: Kamila Stepien/Oxfam

KEY FINDINGS

- Challenging camp geography, overcrowding and lack of space for infrastructure pose unique constraints for humanitarian actors to not only deliver life-saving assistance but to do so in a way which mainstreams safe programming.
- A prevalence of life-threatening risks in camps including sex and human trafficking, sexual harassment, assault and sexual violence.
- Populations engaging in corrosive coping mechanisms in order to combat protection risks and threats such as open defecation, survival sex and reduction of food intake, as well as the re-sale of humanitarian assistance and borrowing in order to access more diverse food and other essential items.
- High degree of market functionality and high dependency on markets by affected populations, yet access restrictions due to lack of information, fear of getting lost in camps and upholding of purdah for women.
- High demand amongst refugees for opportunities to earn income, yet restrictions for women and girls to do so in displacement.
- Importance of social networks (intra-Rohingya refugees and between refugees and host communities) for accessing food, income and safety.



A woman carries a jar of water up a muddy slope in Balukhali camp, where thousands of Rohingyas are now living. Photo: Tommy Trenchard/Oxfam

PROTECTION

Oxfam uses a risk reduction approach to protection, tackling the threats refugees face, while also aiming at reducing their vulnerability to protection threats. Oxfam's protection activities strategically combine community-based protection with advocacy and campaigning. Two months into this emergency, the Rohingya refugees interviewed³ report facing five main threats regarding their safety in the camps, and mentioned that some of their day-to-day activities to still be life-threatening in nature. There is broad acknowledgement for the work done by local authorities and local leaders to maintain security in camps.

However, the Rohingya community have developed numerous negative and positive coping mechanisms to reduce risks related to the setup of the camps, the congestion and overcrowding and to humanitarian services – practices that do not sufficiently integrate safe programming⁴ or are not yet adapted to the scale of this crisis.

OXFAM'S APPROACH TO RISK

Where there is a threat and people are vulnerable they are at risk. The more time people face the threat, the higher the risk.

Threats include:

- **Violence:** deliberate killing, wounding, torture; cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment; sexual violence including rape; the fear of any of these;
- **Coercion:** (forcing someone to do something against their will) – forced prostitution, sexual slavery, sexual exploitation, forced or compulsory labour, forced displacement or return, restriction of movement, prevention of return, forced recruitment, being forced to commit acts of violence against others;
- **Deliberate deprivation:** destruction of homes, wells and clinics; preventing access to land or markets; preventing delivery of relief supplies; deliberate discrimination in getting jobs, education, land, or services; illegal 'taxes' or tolls

THREAT + VULNERABILITY X TIME = RISK

What follows are the five threats identified in this assessment. These include, proceeding from the highest scoring for each one, a description of the corresponding risks, the coping mechanisms and the actions taken by primary protection actors.

FIGURE 2 THE FIVE MAIN THREATS IN CAMPS AND THE RISKS ENTAILED



KEY	
	Daytime
	Night-time
	Child headed household
	Female single headed household

THREAT 1 LACK OF LIGHTING

All male and female FGD participants do not feel safe at night time. Lack of lighting in shelters and camps and the related risks are one of their major safety concerns. This ranked as the number one major concern in 16 out of 23 FGDs. Observations identified only a minority of shelters equipped with solar or battery household-level lighting systems.

Risks, vulnerability and occurrence

HUMAN TRAFFICKING: the combination of makeshift shelters with most often without a door, overcrowding and the lack of lighting both in public spaces and private shelters creates a severe risk of kidnapping. Both FGD participants and key informants (including Bangladeshi military members, local leaders and religious leaders) report that the disappearance of young children and girls and that female single-headed households and households with many children, particularly girls and young children, are the most at risk.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT, ASSAULT AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE: due to overcrowding, lack of doors on shelters and total darkness, women and girls do not feel safe in shelters. Both male and female FGD participants raised concerns regarding SGBV at night. Female single-headed households and child-headed households (of which there are plenty following family separations and death during the flight from Myanmar) were identified as particularly vulnerable to SGBV. The risk and fear of SGBV for women when accessing latrines by night was also highly reported in female FGDs.



I have two young children and two girls of 10 and 12. If I sleep I may wake up and have one or all of them missing. There are people we don't know walking around at night, I can't sleep, it's too dangerous.

Male FGD respondent.



PHYSICAL HAZARDS ACCESSING WASH FACILITIES: makeshift shelters have been erected on any flat space available, leaving very little to no space for construction of other structures. As a result, in a lot of areas WASH facilities are constructed on precarious hills. Both FGD and key informants reported numerous accidents while accessing latrines and waterpoints at night, particularly involving the elderly, pregnant women and individuals with disabilities. Oxfam staff were shown such injuries by several women and children. Women in general are especially vulnerable to this risk as they are mostly accessing WASH facilities at night (see page 14).

WILDLIFE: the majority of female and male FGD participants reported the presence of snakes and/or insects at night, either in shelters or whilst accessing WASH facilities. Furthermore, following an incident in Modhurchora one of the biggest fears reported across all FGDs was elephants potentially stomping on makeshift shelters during the night.

Coping Mechanisms

Negative

- Men do not sleep at night to ensure the safety of their family. This has a direct impact on men's general mood and increases the risk of violence against women in the home, including intimate partner violence, during day and night time.
- Open defecation at night close to makeshift shelters.

Positive

- In some of the areas visited, local leaders have organized volunteer teams in charge of patrolling at night. They have identified particularly vulnerable households (female single-headed household mostly) who need more attention.

Actions undertaken by primary protection actors

The Bangladeshi army is aware of all the risks related to the lack of lighting and has been encouraging mahjis (local leader) to organise themselves and ensure patrolling by night. Army holds regular community meetings with community to discuss safety in camps and encourage Rohingya refugees to stay calm, avoid criminal behaviours and report to mahji any concerns they have.

THREAT 2 REDUCED FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT FOR WOMEN DUE TO UPHOLDING OF PURDAH⁵

According to both male and female FGD participants and key informants, most refugee women did not carry their burka when they fled from Myanmar and, due upholding of purdah, they have very limited freedom of movement within the camps. This limitation creates risks on several levels.



Woman in Kutupalong Camp. Photo: Tommy Trenchard/Oxfam

Risks, vulnerability and occurrence

RESTRICTED ACCESS TO WASH FACILITIES BY DAY: to maintain the upholding of purdah and due to lack of gender disaggregated WASH facilities, the majority of women do not access latrines, bathing facilities and waterpoints during the day. All female and male FGDs reported that women are ashamed to be seen by men who are not their relatives and therefore wait until night-time to go out. In addition to having a direct impact on the risk of SGBV and accidents when accessing WASH facilities by night female FGD participants reported that this situation greatly impacts their hygiene, health and nutrition as women. In particular, women are restricting their daily food and water intake to avoid having to use latrines as often.

INCREASE OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE WITHIN THE HOUSEHOLD: several women in each female FGD reported that the lack of burkas is creating tension in their households. Wives either have to break purdah to fetch water to cook or respect purdah and stay in, however both choices expose them to the risk of domestic violence from their husbands. One male FGD confirmed this situation, explaining to Oxfam teams *“women cannot provide tea and men have to punish them because they do not accomplish their household chores”*.

RESTRICTED ACCESS TO HUMANITARIAN SERVICES (e.g. PSS AND MEDICAL SERVICES): Key informants report PSS (90%) and medical treatment for survivors of sexual violence (85%) as the most important needs for affected populations⁶. Those services are available in the camps however, in the FGD performed in Unchiprang camp respondents stated that women would not access those services unless it was an extreme emergency. Upholding of purdah is prioritized over accessing humanitarian services available in the camps. Oxfam teams furthermore witnessed high levels of trauma among FGD participants. Multiple female participants were visibly distressed, constantly mentioning the horrendous events they witnessed in their last days in Myanmar no matter what subject was discussed. It should be noted that both male and female FGDs stated they want one-on-one PSS, with men mentioning that they would like a male safe space where they could talk about their fear and anger.

SAFETY ACCESSING LOCAL MARKETS: this risk is specific to female single-headed households as food provision is part of the husband’s responsibility in Rohingya culture. In a camp environment women do not feel safe accessing local markets as they have to break purdah, be visible to men and therefore face greater risks of sexual harassment and assault.

Coping mechanisms

Negative

- Open defecation in shelters during the day and general poor hygiene leading to public health risks
- Reduction of food and water intake by women to reduce frequency of visits to latrines
- Female single-headed household hand over their money to male neighbours to buy products in local market at the risk of misappropriation of precious disposable income
- Female single-headed household hand over money to their children to go to local market on their behalf. In some areas of the camp this means a round trip of up to two hours on foot
- Children are sent to distributions to receive humanitarian aid, with risk of being harassed, harmed in crowds, or their food ration been taken by adults

Positive

- Women are sharing burkas with their relatives and neighbours to allow each other to move in the camp during the day

Actions undertaken by primary protection actors

In the majority of locations visited by the Oxfam team, Mahjjs and religious leaders encourage women to stay in shelters to reduce risk of any threats.

THREAT 3 COLLECTING FIREWOOD

All male and the majority of female FGD respondents indicated that fetching firewood is one of the most dangerous activities they engage in. 100% of key informants confirm that firewood is the main source of fuel for the community and 91% report that round trips to the forest require 2-3 hour's walk. Very few households can pay for firewood and Rohingya refugees have no other choice but to procure it themselves by going out of the camps. This task is primarily allocated to men and boys but female headed-household are also going on their own or sending girls.

Risks, vulnerability and occurrence

HUMAN TRAFFICKING: according to all female and male FGDs, some refugees, particularly children, have simply never returned from the forest after leaving the camp in search of firewood. All FGD groups specifically reported cases of children kidnapped in the forest, with boys being the most at risk as they are more numerous than girls in the forest. In addition, a few of the female FGD participants mentioned specific sex trafficking risks for women, girls within female single-headed households and child-headed households. Two key informants in zone JJ confirmed that they had each received up to 30 reports of disappearances since the beginning of the crisis.



We need a lot of firewood to cook rice but the forest is dangerous. Our knives are taken away and we get beaten up

Male FGD respondent



TENSION WITH THE HOST COMMUNITY: all FGDs and most of the key informants reported having heard of, or being victims of, intimidation, theft, bribes and physical assault by host communities in the forest whilst collecting firewood.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT, ASSAULT AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE: in a few of the female FGDs, participants mentioned specific risks of sexual harassment and assault for girls and women in female single-headed households and child-headed households

WILDLIFE AND PHYSICAL HAZARDS: Rohingya refugees fear elephants, snakes and insects when walking long distances in the mountains and forest. Men reported that a lot of them are injured cutting firewood or walking in the wild.

AVAILABILITY OF FIREWOOD AND ACCESS TO FOREST: key informants from the Rohingya community and the majority of male FGD groups said that the supply of firewood is dwindling, necessitating deeper treks into the forest to find it. In addition, they worry about the rainy season as most forests will not be accessible anymore and they will have no means of getting fuel.



Children and men collect firewood, Unchiprang Camp. Photo: Corrie Sissons/Oxfam

Coping mechanisms

Negative

- Children and men are going in large groups to the same area to collect firewood, sometimes cutting wood that belong to the host community and creating tension between the Rohingya refugees and host community.

Positive

- Children and men are going in large groups to reduce risks of kidnapping, intimidation, theft and physical assault.

Actions undertaken by primary protection actors

Although female FGDs openly mentioned tension with host community, participants in male FGDs were cautious, only mentioning other risks. Men feel that, as their movement is restricted to the camp, any incident with the host community in the forest is not supposed to have happened in the first place. The Mahjis are aware of incidents with the host community and have advised the refugee community to hand over their tools and wood and “turn their back while being beaten and wait for it to be done”. Although the army is aware of the refugee community accessing the forest, Mahjis and refugees themselves do not report these incidents to the army for fear of being prohibited to fetch their only source of fuel.

THREAT 4 INCREASE OF GBV AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

Risks, vulnerability and occurrence

SEX TRAFFICKING: more than half of the 23 FGDs and all the Mahjis interviewed reported girls and young women being approached by people they refer to as ‘foreigners’ and recruited for ‘jobs’ outside the camp. Some of them have left and their families lost track of them.

SURVIVAL SEX: Two out of twelve female FGDs reported instances of survival sex within the Rohingya refugee community but very little was shared by participants and further research is needed to understand the scale of this. Women feel that recent widows are most at risk, whilst some mentioned that female child-headed household and girls of female single-headed households needed to be married-off to reduce the burden on their family. Some key informants reported that the main reason for family separation since the beginning of the emergency was related to men getting a second wife. Although the Rohingya population are not culturally inclined to child marriage and polygamy, the loss of a formal Burmese justice system and the new conditions of life in the camps seem to be shifting behaviours⁷.

RISK OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT WHEN USING WASH FACILITIES: all female FGD groups reported that they don’t feel safe when using latrines due to lack of lockable doors and no specific latrines for women only. SGBV is one of the main risk and, due to lack of lighting previously mentioned, some female participants mentioned open defecation close to or in their shelters as a safer practice. Some women mentioned going to latrines during the day and having been pushed back by men wanting to use them. As for bathing facilities, most of the FGDs reported not having seen any in the camps, men stated they bathe directly at water points by day light and women stated they bathe at night in their shelters. Both male and female FGDs reported this situation is creating tension within the community. There appears to be a general confusion surrounding bathing facilities in the camps, which are sometimes used as urinating places with latrines sometimes seen as defecating places.



We all have a wife, a sister, a daughter, a relative or a neighbour that was raped. Things are different now. We will not leave them all alone.

Male FGD respondent



GENERAL INCREASE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT: Due to overcrowding and all above mentioned threats, all female FGDs and a majority of male ones mentioned the increasing risk of SGBV for women and girls in the camps, with female single-headed household being particularly vulnerable. Most male FGDs did not acknowledge that SGBV is occurring in their areas but they all knew how to handle such a situation and had witnessed Mahjis and the army dealing with survivors and perpetrators. While all female FGDs shared that they would normally feel ashamed to report a situation of SGBV to the Mahji or the army due to stigma, male FGDs stated that this situation had changed since arriving and they were ready to support women and help the army identify perpetrators. Women did mention that they prefer to speak about GBV and specifically SGBV matters to Imams.

Coping Mechanisms

Negative

- Increase of early child marriage, polygamy and survival sex
- Open defecation, limited hygiene

Positive

- Refugees talk together and spread the word about the risk of abduction of girls and young women through schemes offering them jobs to support their family.

Actions undertaken by primary protection actors

Most male and female FGDs showed that Rohingya refugees are aware of prevalence of GBV and SGBV and reporting mechanisms are in place in the camps. The army has shared information through community meetings and all groups stated that the Mahjis should be the first informed of such an incident. Mahjis should refer a survivor to hospital for medical treatment, find the perpetrator with the help of volunteers, relatives or neighbours and bring the perpetrators to the army for investigation and punishment. The majority of key informants confirm this process and add that the army is referring survivors to hospitals. Lack of confidentiality was mentioned in all FGDs and by the majority of key informants. Female FGDS specifically reported this as a great worry and were most likely to report to their Imam to avoid shame and stigmatisation when local authorities are involved.



A young girl arrives at Balukhali Camp late at night. Photo: Tommy Trenchard/Oxfam

THREAT 5 CHALLENGE ACCESSING INFORMATION

Risks, vulnerability and occurrence⁸

VERY LIMITED ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON AVAILABLE HUMANITARIAN SERVICES: only three groups (two female and one male group in Unchiprang) out of 23 FGDs knew about the existence of women's safe spaces and PSS – some groups living less than 300 meters from such services in Kutupalong MS North and South. As for medical treatment, 10 groups out of 23 knew where medical facilities are, citing MSF eight times out of 10 (Unchiprang and zone TT). Information on medical centres and safe spaces for women is communicated through door-to-door visits and megaphone announcements, which participants in FGDs and key informants reported as good practice. The majority of FGDs and all key informants reported difficulties in getting information in the camp and women, the elderly, disabled and child-headed household being particularly vulnerable to that risk. When asked about potential solutions to support Rohingya refugees in identifying specific humanitarian services, female FGD mentioned potentially using pictures or logos of women on woman's safe spaces, doctors on medical facilities and children on child friendly spaces.

RUMOUR CONTROL AND RELIABILITY OF INFORMATION: fear of elephants stomping into settlements was mentioned by each of the FGD groups, but none of the participants knew where and when this had previously happened and therefore if this was a legitimate fear or not. Oxfam teams asked 10 of these FGD groups about rumour control and mechanisms in place to verify information, yet none of the groups knew how to verify information, since it is apparent that in large part they rely on rumours. In general, the majority of women get information from men or through speakerphones. This puts women and individuals with reduced mobility at great risk of dependence to men.

RISK OF GETTING LOST IN CAMPS: most of the female FGDs reported that even if they could uphold purdah, they would not move much in the camps as they fear getting lost and there is no information disseminated in camps to indicate locations. They would prefer to stay in their own block and they are worried about their children playing out of the shelter, since they think they might get lost or be kidnapped for sex or human trafficking. Male FGDs reported that female single-headed households tend to send their children to fetch firewood, water and to buy groceries at the markets. It is not clear if the disappearance of children is due to them losing their way and having to live elsewhere in the camps or child abduction. Women suggested that signs and colours in block streets would help their movement within the camp and reduce the risk of them getting lost.

Coping Mechanisms

Negative

- Community relies on rumours for information, sense of safety is considerably reduced.

Positive

- Male Rohingya refugees are eager to attend community meetings

Actions undertaken by primary protection actors

Male FGD and key informants stated that most of information is coming from the Mahjis and more than half of male FGDs reported that this information depends on the quality of the Mahji. They specifically mentioned that Mahjis are the ones getting information as well as tokens for most distributions and this creates a lot of tension amongst refugees. Some Mahjis were accused of withholding information and distributing tokens to their relatives or asking for bribes but these cases had been dealt with by the army and individuals removed from their posts. Men tend to consider information gathered at community meetings organized by the army as the most reliable – e.g. the army advised them to stop drinking water from shallow water points to prevent diseases. The majority of FGDs and key informants mentioned army-community meetings as important events to attend and show appreciation for this initiative.

PROSPECTS FOR RETURN TO MYANMAR

Although this rapid assessment did not cover returns intentions as a specific focus, the refugees were asked a specific question about their hopes for the future, which implicitly relates to possible returns. In focus groups discussions with men, it was apparent that they could only envisage a voluntary return to Myanmar under certain conditions and specifically guarantee to ensure their safety and dignity. The discussions with women, however were markedly different in tone and content and women quickly became extremely distressed at the prospect of return.



Even if they provide us land and property we don't want to go back.
They cut the breasts off of women and played with them.
They killed children by throwing them in fires. We prefer you to pile us up here, if we are forced to go back we will set ourselves on fire.
Female FGD respondent

We've been persecuted for many years. Whenever we go back they kill more of us, so what is our future to be? There are 136 different tribes in Myanmar and 135 are accepted with the sole exception being Rohingya. We want Myanmar citizenship as Rohingya people. Otherwise there is no going back.
Male FGD respondent



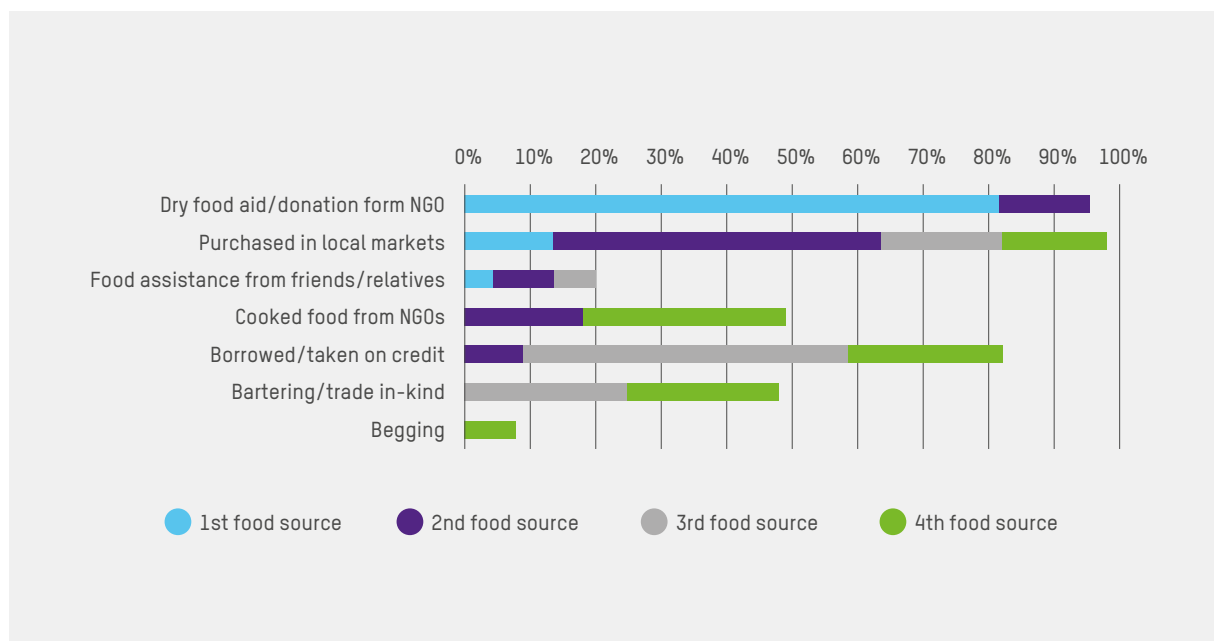
FOOD SECURITY

Food Sources

During ranking in focus groups, almost all groups (22 out of 23) cited dry food aid/donations from NGOs as either their first or second most important food source. This is in line with the WFP data which shows 150,401 households having received rations of rice, lentils, oil sugar and salt during round 4 of their General Food Distributions (GFDs) in late November⁹. However, there is confusion as to who has been providing assistance, with people citing the army, NGOs, WFP and Government. Notably the one FGD who did not cite food assistance as a main food source was in the new expansion sites visited (00).

The breakdown of current food sources cited in focus groups is presented below¹⁰.

FIGURE 3 FOOD SOURCES



Despite the large reliance on food aid, **50% of traders interviewed said they had seen humanitarian food aid being re-sold in markets.** Traders told Oxfam staff they think refugees were mostly buying fresh foods (eg. meat, fish, vegetables and eggs) as well as a small amount of shelter items, NFIs and medicine. Key informants suggested that given **stigma around selling food aid**, many people would sell this in their homes rather than on the open market to avoid being caught by the army. Though barter was not reported in FGDs, Oxfam staff in Lombashiya market repeatedly observed ice cream sellers from Ukhiya exchanging individual ice creams for cups of rice with children.

Data collected suggests there is a **high degree of market dependency** and access amongst refugee populations with 82% of focus group respondents identifying market purchase as one of their top four food sources and 64% overall claiming this to be their 1st or 2nd source of food. Each focus group was further asked how much money (BDT) an average sized family would need to purchase food for a quality diet and fuel for one week. The average amount cited across the 23 discussions is around **3700 BDT for a family of 5.**

The cited amount of money an average sized family of five would need to purchase food for a quality diet and fuel for one week is

3700 BDT



Food distribution queues at Shafiullah Ghata Camp. Photo: Kamila Stepien/Oxfam

Dietary Diversity

Dietary diversity is a concern for many households, with most FGD participants saying households could access 11-12 food groups on average prior to displacement, yet only 4-5 now¹¹. Current food groups being consumed are consistent with the WFP GFD ration (cereals, lentils/pulses, oil) and some additional tea, dried fish or vegetables in small amounts if they find sufficient money. However, some FGDs, who were yet to receive food assistance (in expansion zones) reported the majority of households only eating rice and oil in the last 24 hour period, which they had borrowed in-kind from neighbours.



**We have no money to buy protein, men aren't able to go out to work.
Pregnant women, are not getting the diet they need.**

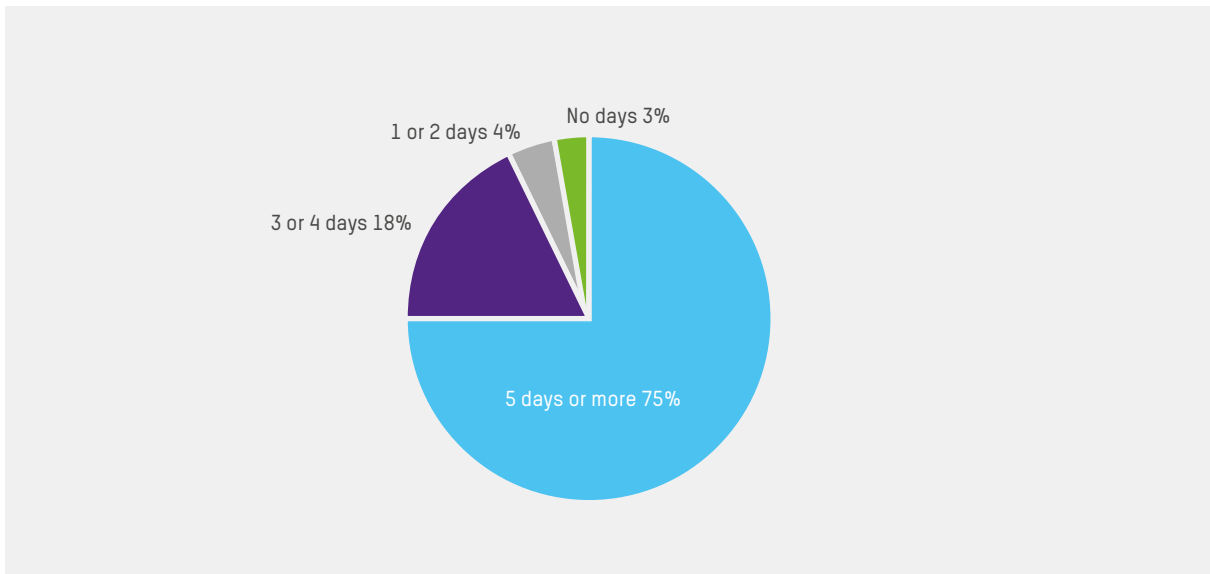
Male FGD respondent



The monotony of food assistance was mentioned almost universally by FGD participants, as well as the difficulty children were having adjusting to the diet. Anecdotal data also reflects this concern, with FGD groups reporting that three quarters of the population are coping by relying on less preferred foods for 5 or more days per week¹². This is particularly concerning in the light of the preliminary findings of a recent nutrition survey in Kutupalong refugee camp which revealed Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates have skyrocketed to 24.3%, and Minimum Dietary Diversity (MDD (minimum 4 out of 7 food groups)) for children aged 6-23 months at only 9.8%¹³.



Eighteen month old child eating rice, Shafiullah Ghata Camp. Photo: Kamila Stepien/Oxfam

FIGURE 4 RELY ON LESS PREFERRED FOODS

Borrowing and Debt

Of note, is the importance of **social networks** in providing a source of food to affected households with 18% of groups identifying food assistance from friends/relatives as a top three food source. Key Informants cited high levels of people borrowing food from friends and neighbours, especially large households whose rations were being stretched further. In addition, 59% of groups identified borrowing/taking food on credit as one of their top four food sources, with over one third of groups claiming this is their third most common option after NGO support and market purchase.

21 out of 23 FGDs said affected households in their area were currently in debt, with amounts owed ranging from 200 – 20000 BDT. People who debts are owed to include the Mahji, boat owners (who are owed a fee for transporting refugees across the border via the ocean), relatives and friends in the camp and also richer households in Myanmar. As no household surveys were undertaken it is difficult to estimate individual levels of household debt, however with borrowing levels seemingly high and debt accumulating it is reasonable to assume an exacerbation of corrosive coping strategies in order to repay this or borrow further.

INCOME AND LIVELIHOODS

It is not possible for Rohingya refugees to seek employment or generate income in the camps, so any small money that people are making is either gifted/loaned or informal and sporadic. Very few traders (11%) interviewed in markets are from the recent (August 2017) influx and these are exclusively spontaneous, unofficial stalls. **Most local businesses are being run by host communities or recognized Rohingya refugees (pre 2007).**

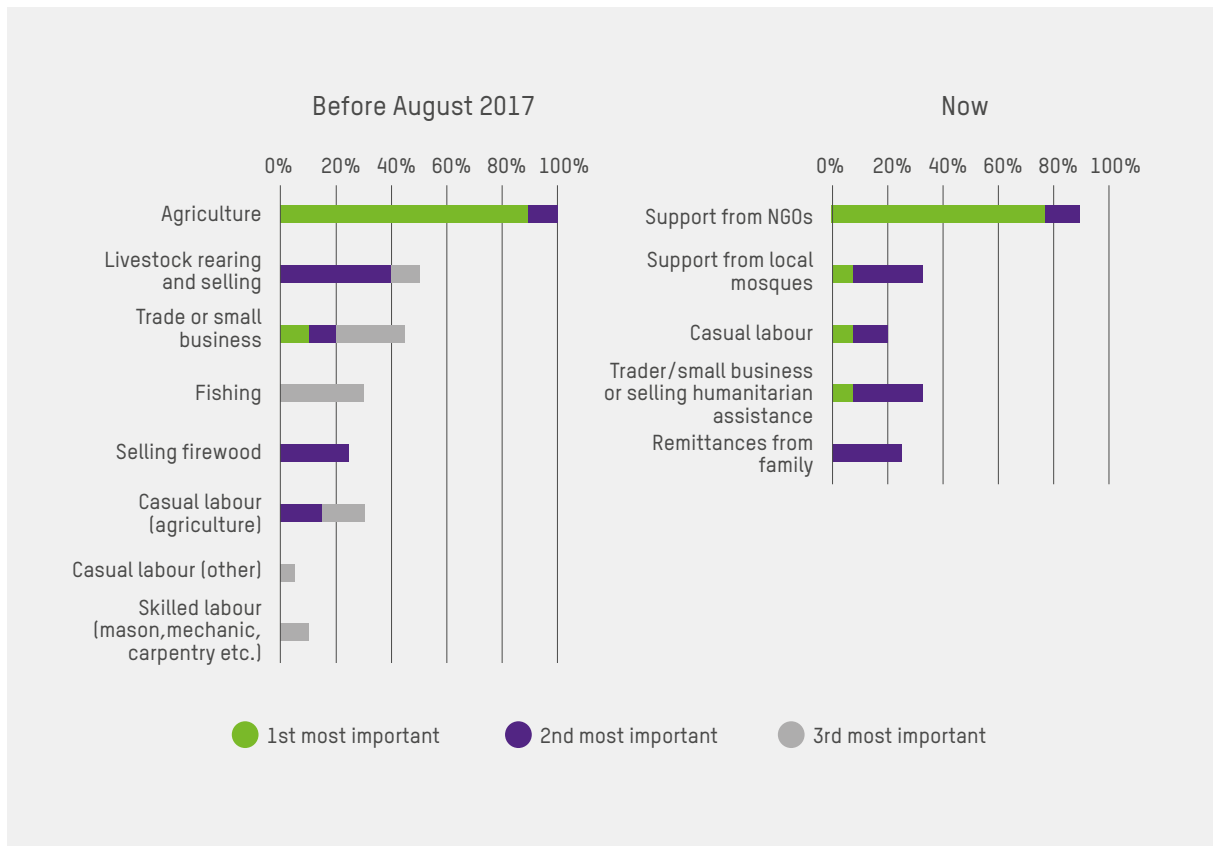


We want to be able to have freedom of movement; to move around in Myanmar and go to markets here. We hope for citizenship in Myanmar. We are educated but we can't get jobs, the people from other religions get all the jobs and here we cannot work either.

Male FGD respondent



FIGURE 5 MEN AND BOYS MOST IMPORTANT SOURCES OF INCOME (BEFORE AND NOW)



Focus groups overwhelmingly identified **agriculture as the most importance income source for men** and boys prior to the crisis, yet no respondents cited current access to land of agricultural inputs to continue this activity. According to the groups, the second most important sources of income for men and boys pre-crisis were: Livestock rearing/selling (40%), selling firewood (25%), and casual labour for agriculture (15%). Key respondents repeatedly cited men and boys continuing to go to the forest to collect firewood now, but highlighted the associated risks and dangers (see page 12).



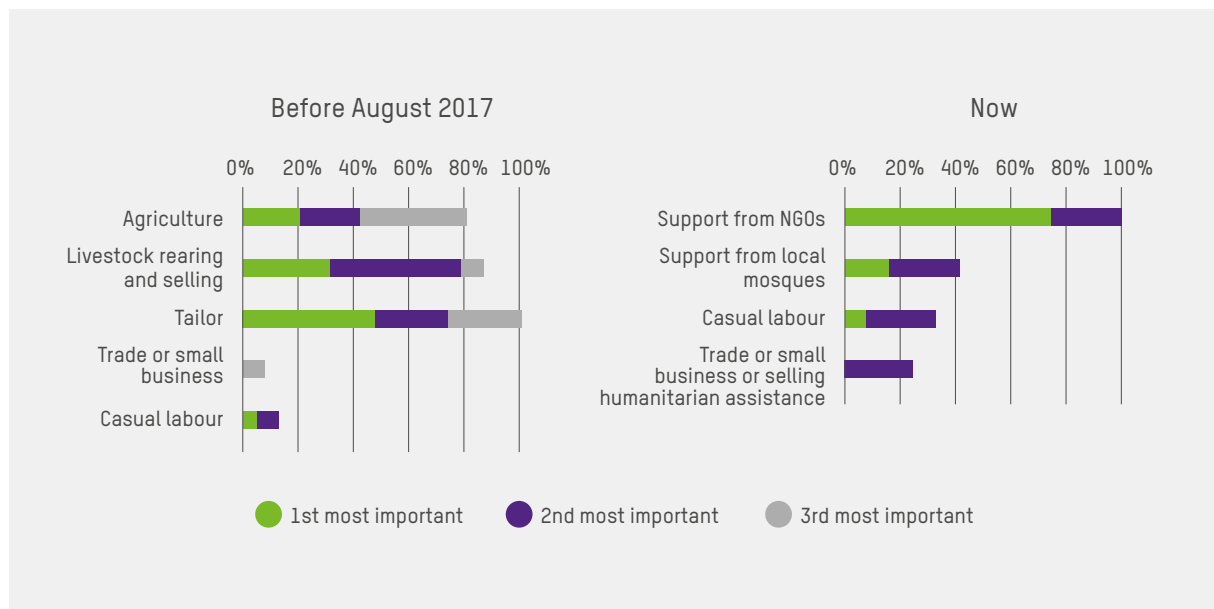
Women cannot make money. They cannot go outside even

Male FGD respondent



Discussions revealed that women and girls mostly used to engage in rearing poultry and tailoring in Myanmar, but were now almost entirely excluded from income generating activities. In fact, less than half of groups were even willing to provide answers to this question. Whereas every focus group cited tailoring as one of women and girls' top three sources of income pre-crisis, there were no reports that women are engaging in this activity now. Sewing machines, thread and needles were repeatedly cited as inputs which could help women earn income now in displacement. However, **almost all income sources cited as available to women and girls in displacement required no activity** and were essentially gifted rather than 'earned', in comparison to men who were able to engage in some petty trade and casual labour.

FIGURE 6 WOMEN AND GIRLS MOST IMPORTANT SOURCES OF INCOME (BEFORE AND NOW)



MARKETS

Oxfam spoke with 169 traders, large and small, including employers who hire casual labour across camp level, local level and regional level markets (see map on page 5) to gain a snapshot of the current situation. Questions around markets were also included in FGD and KII questionnaires. Particular attention was paid to critical markets of fresh vegetables, soap, children's clothes, credit and daily labour.

FIGURE 11 MARKET SNAPSHOT FOR CRITICAL ITEMS



Access issues

Camp markets such as Lombashiya, Ghuna Para and Bhalukhali Camp Market are on the whole physically and safely accessible for men, according to Key Informant data and FGDs. However most of FGDs said that married women do not culturally go to market, preferring their husbands to undertake this task. It is female single-headed households who feel especially unsafe and at risk of GBV including SGBV as in order to buy food they are forced to access markets alone and break purdah due to the lack of culturally appropriate clothing. Elderly women are less affected by this situation as purdah is seen as less compulsory for them but distance has an impact on their ability to access markets. Other access issues mentioned were difficulty in navigating muddy hills around the camp, lack of information about where markets were, as well as fears of people getting lost upon their return. 92% of Key Informants asked said 'lack of money' is the main constraint for populations to access markets, as opposed to movement restrictions or safety concerns. Nevertheless, people are clearly accessing and engaging with markets despite the lack of income earned and challenges associated, in particular for women.

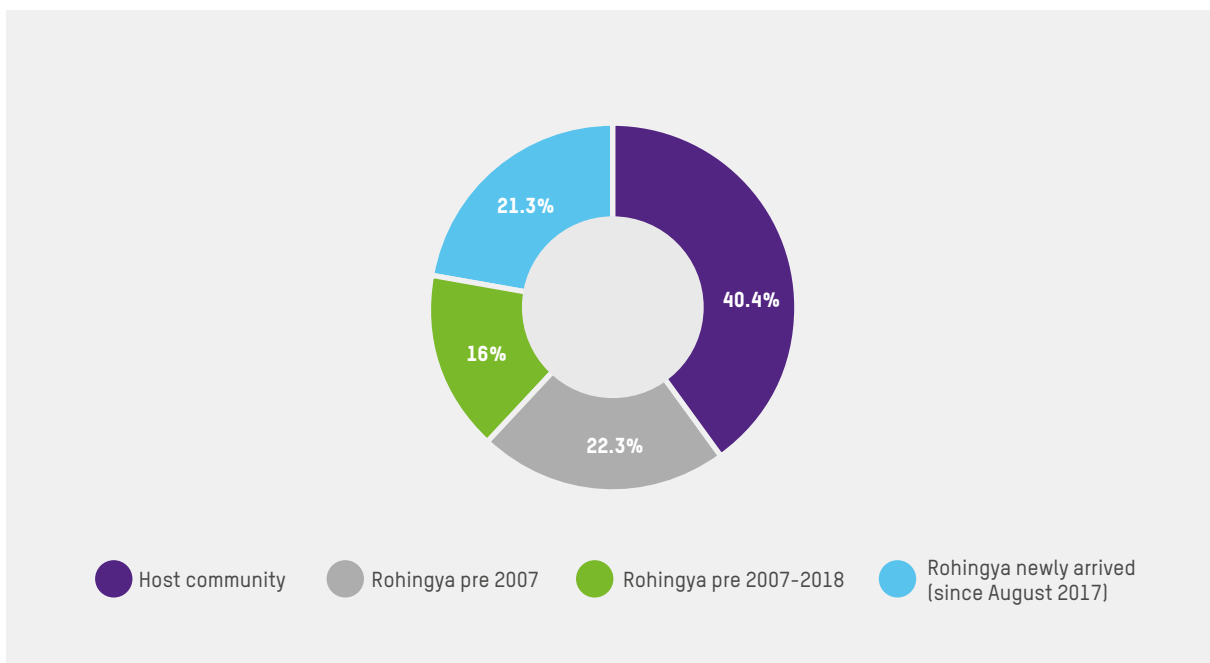


Fresh vegetables for sale, Kutupalong Station Market. Photo: Corrie Sissons/Oxfam

53% of traders who said they experienced challenges in their trade cited the main challenge as increased transport costs. Key Informants and traders mentioned that whilst the price of transport from Kutupalong to Ukhiya markets used to be 10 BDT, it has now doubled to 20 BDT as demand has increased but the number of vehicles has not. Military checkpoints set up between Kutupalong and Ukhiya markets have restricted travel for Rohingya, both to buy and sell. This means regional markets are at present only accessible for host community populations.

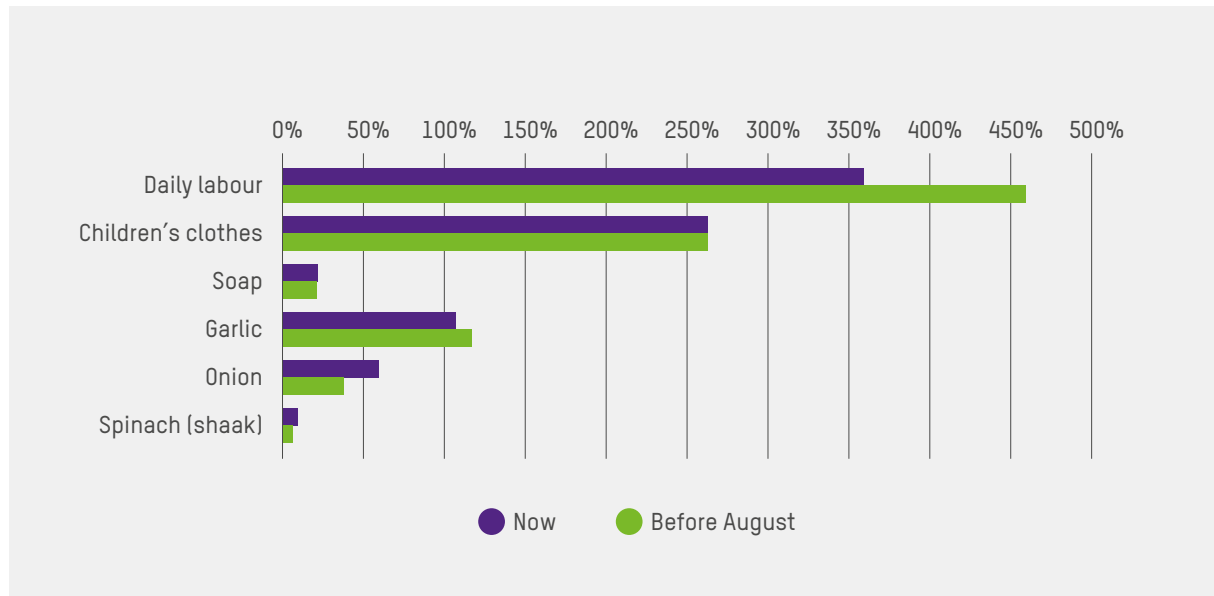
Access to the credit market depends overwhelmingly on trust. All traders interviewed cited lack of trust as a reason why they would not offer credit to households. As the graph below shows therefore, there is a degree of trust between overwhelmingly host community traders to give to Rohingya as well as to other host communities. As the lines are blurred between waves of refugees, many FGD respondents anecdotally told Oxfam teams about borrowing money from relatives who had been in Bangladesh for many years, or credit from stores run by Rohingya known to them prior to displacement. As mentioned above, the main cited modality for repayment of credit is via humanitarian assistance in-kind as opposed to cash.

FIGURE 7 BREAKDOWN OF STATUS OF HOUSEHOLDS WHO TRADERS REPORTED THEY GAVE CREDIT TO



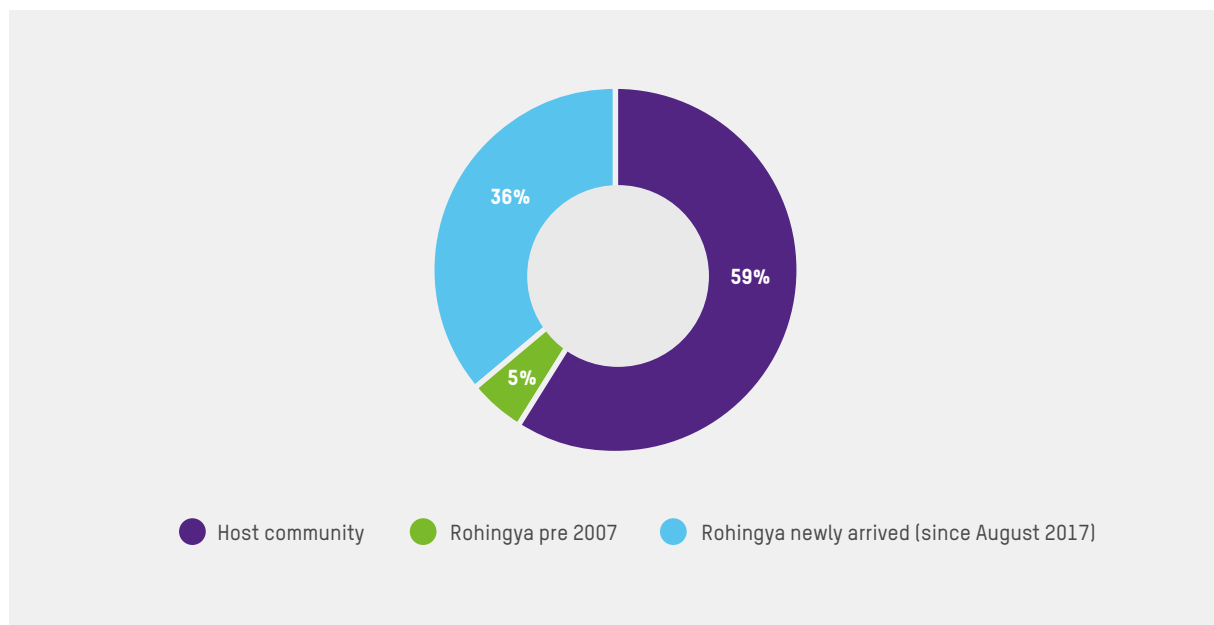
Price changes

Overall prices seem to be increasing in markets around the refugee camps. All Key Informants mentioned that prices are increasingly slowly and refugees feel they paid more in the camps than host communities in other larger markets. Notably the price of daily unskilled labour has decreased overall from average 460 to 360 BDT per labourer per day, given huge increase in supply with the refugee population in the area.

FIGURE 8 PRICE CHANGES SINCE AUGUST 2017

Supply Meeting Demand

40% of all traders interviewed had set up their shops since August 25th 2017, demonstrating the market's ability to meet the increase in demand created by the influx of refugees into the area.

FIGURE 9 SHOPS ESTABLISHED SINCE AUGUST 25 2017 : STATUS OF OWNERS

Despite the travel restriction therefore, traders from other markets seem to have been drawn to the potential for profit and set up stalls around the 'megacamp' in Kutupalong in particular. Markets in Teknaf seem to be experiencing less demand increase compared to Ukhiya however, with traders in Roikkom, Unchiprang Station and Whykong reporting majority decrease in sales due to direct re-sale/barter of humanitarian assistance between host communities and refugees.

Traders of items within the current humanitarian food basket in Whykong all anecdotally expressed concern that the re-sale value of donated rice and lentils is around one half to one quarter of the current retail price and they are losing business as a result. However, small traders of fruit and vegetables not within the food basket reported increased sales given the new Unchiprang camp market and potential customers there.

Traders in both areas had high capacity in general, with 100% of traders saying they could meet a 25% increase in demand, and 82% a 100% increase. 92% of host community traders and 75% of Rohingya traders expressing an interest to take part in a humanitarian voucher programme.

Similar expansion capacity was seen amongst those traders or employers who used daily labourers, most of whom (96%) said if more business came their way they would be willing to take on more daily labourers.

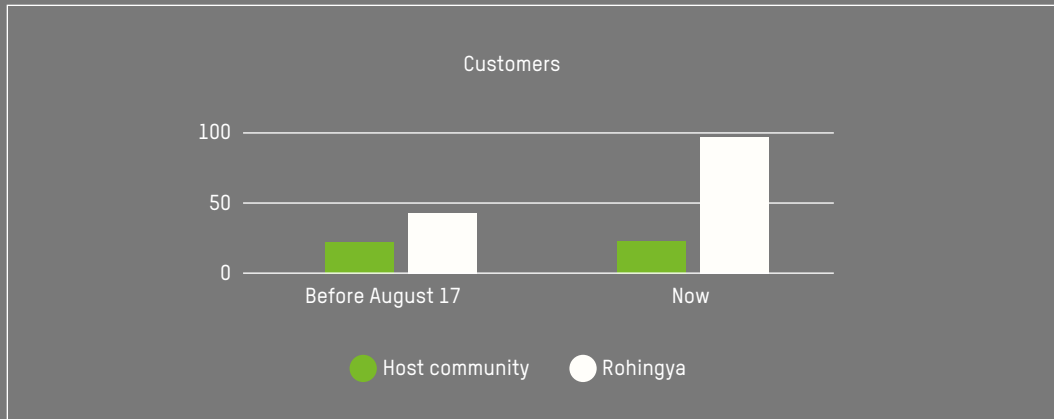


Unchiprang Camp Market. Photo: Corrie Sissons/Oxfam

Market Integration and Trader Status

The epicentre of trade for the ‘mega-camp’ around the established Kutupalong refugee camp is Kutupalong Market, as well as smaller markets along the Cox’s Bazar-Teknaf highway. These are fed by regional markets to the north in Court Bazar and Ukhiya which are mostly supplied by Chittagong and the international port. Thirty three traders out of total 169 were Rohingya – exclusively spread across the markets internal to the camps. The regional markets of Court Bazar and Ukhiya are at present majority host community traders due to the travel restrictions and military checkpoints, no Rohingya traders could be found to interview in either of these markets at the time of data collection. Prices for wholesale and retail seemed to be in-line, suggesting well integrated markets both before August 2017 and now. However, travel restrictions for Rohingya outside of the camps means that they are paying more given access constraints for local and regional markets.

FOCUS ON: KUTUPALONG STATION MARKET

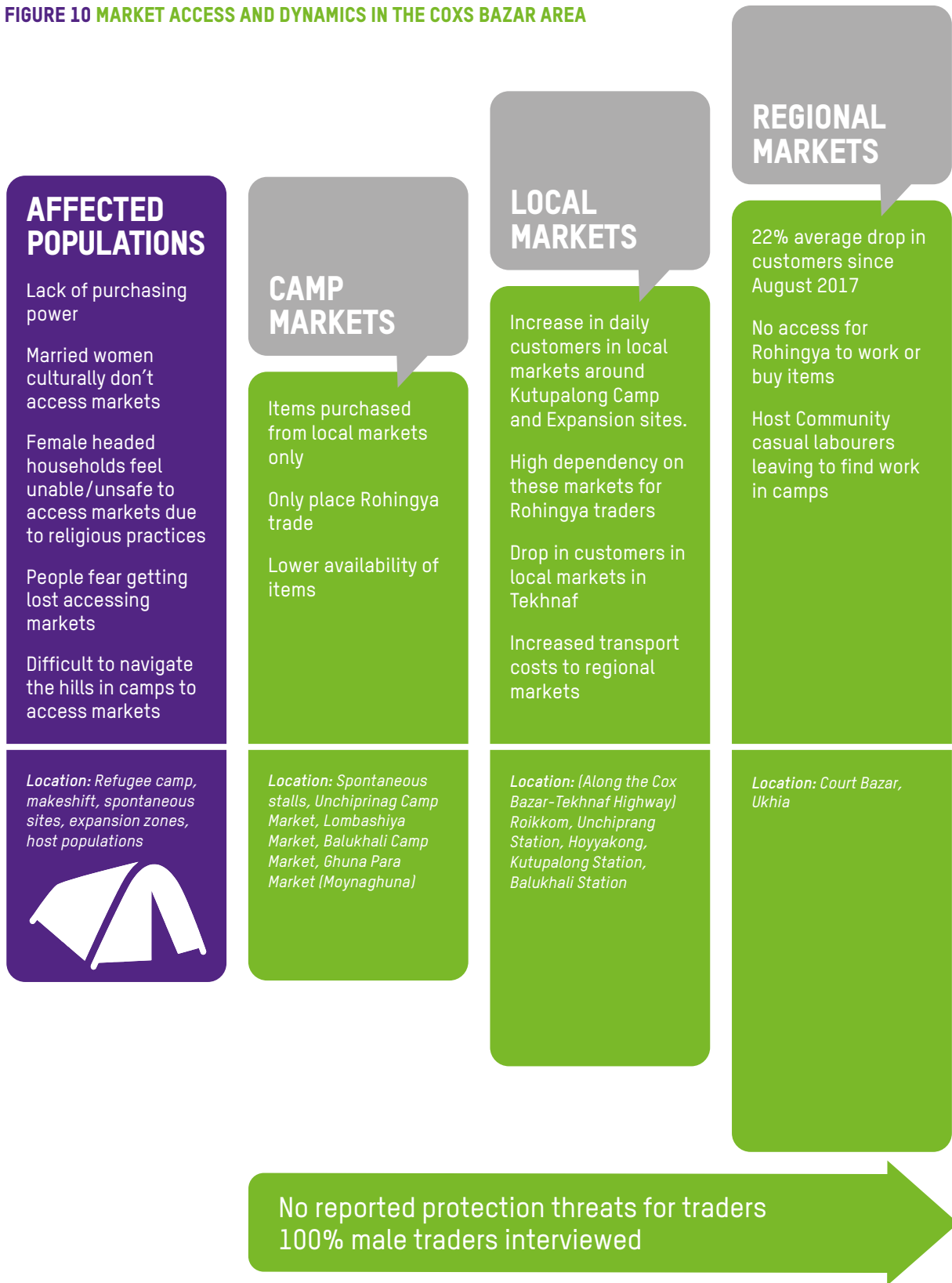


- 90% of traders interviewed were host community, 10% Rohingya refugees who arrived prior to 2007
- All traders interviewed said there had been an increase in trade, amounting to approximately 188% increase in customers based on estimated daily customers prior to August 25th, 2017 and now.
- The vast bulk of these new customers are Rohingya refugees.
- All traders interviewed reported that they could respond to a 25% or 100% increase in demand
- Owners of businesses employing daily labour paid approximately 400 BDT per day, employing men and boys only
- 50% of traders offered credit in small amounts to customers (both Rohingya and Host Community) – ranging from 200 to 7500 BDT
- Offering credit entirely based on trust and not formal agreements
- Transport costs to access regional markets frequently cited as challenge



Thengkhali Camp. Photo: Tommy Trenchard/Oxfam

FIGURE 10 MARKET ACCESS AND DYNAMICS IN THE COXS BAZAR AREA



NOTES

- ¹ Situation Update: Rohingya Refugee Crisis, ISCG, 14th November 2017
- ² Oxfam recognises that rapid assessments in nature are not statistically representative of the overall situation but can nevertheless provide a 'good enough' insight into the situation in emergency contexts
- ³ A rapid assessment in the challenging conditions of this response can only present a partial 'snapshot' at best. It is also important to emphasise an additional limitation: the Rohingya refugees were reluctant and uncomfortable in raising any issues about the level of crime or their feeling of safety and insecurity in the camp. Given the conditions they have lived under for many years in Myanmar, and the constant insecurity they feel in relation to authorities and those outside their own community, they are very cautious about doing or saying anything that may adversely affect their situation and this will undoubtedly have had an impact on the findings of this rapid assessment.
- ⁴ Safe Programming encompasses actions to avoid inadvertent harm, ensure conflict sensitivity, reduce risks of GBV and adhere to humanitarian principles and is the responsibility of all humanitarian staff
- ⁵ Purdah is the practiced of preventing women from being seen by men other than their husbands outside of the home.
- ⁶ Data which is corroborated by a recent report Human Rights Watch, "All of My Body Was Pain" Sexual Violence against Rohingya Women and Girls in Burma', November 2017
- ⁷ Social Science in Humanitarian Action , 'Social and cultural factors shaping health and nutrition, wellbeing and protection of Rohingya people within a humanitarian context', October 2017
- ⁸ Oxfam findings around challenges accessing information are corroborated by preliminary findings of a recent report - Internews, Cox's Bazar Information Ecosystem Assessment, November 2017.
- ⁸ http://fscluster.org/Rohingya_crisis
- ⁹ Participants were asked to collectively agree which were there top 4 sources of food and rank them from 1 (most important) to 4 (least important)
- ¹⁰ Oxfam did not have sufficient time to do household level surveys including HDDS or CSI, so collected indicative HDDS and CSI data based on consensus amongst FGD participants of what strategies most households in the discussion had engaged in as well as what had been eaten during a typical 24hr period prior to displacement, and food groups eaten in the last 24hours in households in the given location.
- ¹¹ See above.
- ¹² Emergency Health and Nutrition Assessment, Preliminary Findings, Kutuplaong Refugee Camp, UNICEF, Action Contre la Faim, Save the Children, UNHCR and WFP. October 2017

For more information on this assessment or Oxfam's work in Bangladesh, email the authors of this report
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Front cover photo: A woman carries an Oxfam food parcel home in Unchiprang Camp. Photo: Tommy Trenchard/Oxfam



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