



What changes during Ramadan

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Rohingya people's concerns shifted over time

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WHAT MATTERS?

Humanitarian Feedback Bulletin

Issue 04 × Wednesday, May 16, 2018

BBC Media Action, Internews, and Translators without Borders are working together to collect and collate feedback from communities affected by the Rohingya crisis. This summary aims to provide a snapshot of feedback received from Rohingya and host communities, to assist sectors to better plan and implement relief activities with communities' needs and preferences in mind.

The information in this edition includes information collected through conversations with affected individuals, community focus group discussions, BRAC community volunteers, Internews community correspondents and live radio phone-in programmes on Bangladesh Betar and Radio Naf, which are supported by UNICEF.

The work is being delivered in partnership with IOM, the UN migration agency, and is funded by the UK Department for International Development.

If you have comments on the bulletin; suggestions for future issues; or would like to contribute data or insights from your own community feedback activities, please get in touch with the What Matters? team by email at info@cxbfeedback.org – we'd love to hear from you.

Increase in concerns related to robbery and theft

Key facts

- Analysis of feedback from two different datasets suggests a notable recent increase in concerns related to robbery, theft, and protecting young girls and children.
- There is a perception that incidents of murder are increasing in number across the camps.
- The Rohingya community has a lot of requests for building private and secure bathing spaces for young girls.
- Parents of school-age children are concerned about their children's lack of access to education. They are asking that more schools be built.
- Some Rohingya community members also say they don't know who to talk to about their problems, or which responsible authorities to speak to.

Sources of the feedback

This analysis has been prepared based on feedback collected on a daily basis between February 27th, 2018 and April 25th, 2018 by 800 BRAC community volunteers and 14 Internews Community Correspondents. In total, 7986 interactions have been documented. A combination of general and unique themes is presented in order to represent dominant concerns and highlight minority voices.

Internews

Total Feedback	Men	Women
260	132	128

BRAC

Total Feedback	Men	Women
7726	1755	5971

Safety and Security

Key concerns currently being expressed are those relating to security, specifically trafficking, robbery, murder and smuggling across the camps. In particular, people want to know how they can recognise smugglers and other criminals and how to avoid and prevent these problems. They have requested to increase police presence in the camps.

Trafficking

Some Rohingyas are worried about traffickers. They want information about how to recognise them so that they can protect themselves. They are also concerned about how trafficking may increase during an extreme weather event when people go to shelter centres.

“What kind of security do we have?”
- Female, 30, Kutupalong MS Extension

“How can we recognise the human traffickers?”
- Woman, 28, Kutupalong MS

“How can we stop women’s trafficking?”
- Man, 45, Kutupalong MS Extension

“Taking shelter in a single place, they may become victims of kidnapping. What will we do then? When it’s tough to live; then how we can handle our children?”
- Man, 38, Kutupalong MS Extension

In particular, they worry that in the event of a weather emergency, the confusion and need to focus on taking care of themselves and their belongings may mean less attention being paid to children. Rohingya community members worry that their children may be kidnapped, especially as some of them still expect that they will be evacuated into shelter centres. Respondents asked for strategies and ideas to protect their children from being kidnapped or trafficked under these circumstances.

Robbery and theft

Many Rohingya people feel that incidents of robbery and theft are increasing at an alarming rate. They want to know how to protect their valuables. Additionally, community members have questions about how they can reduce the rate of robbery and theft in the camps.

“At present theft and robbery are increasing at an alarming rate. How can we reduce it?”
- Man, 31, Kutupalong MS Extension

“Smuggling incidents often occur in the camp. We want [those to] end.”
- Man, 27, Kutupalong MS Extension

“In the camp, suspected intruders are increasing day by day..”
- Man, 30, Kutupalong MS Extension

“There is a possibility of losing our important documents. Then what can we do?”
- Man, 29, Kutupalong MS Extension

Incidents of Murders

There is a perception among some camp residents that incidents of murder are increasing. While some Rohingya community members **suggest that women, elderly people and children should always stay close with their families and should not go anywhere alone** to keep them safe, others are asking for increased police security across the camps to protect them. Some Rohingya people also shared that the difficult living situation in the camps makes it hard to pay close attention to their children during daytime. Therefore, they worry about the security of their children.

Privacy protected bathing space for girls

Many community members have specifically expressed their concerns about protection of their daughters. One key issue expressed is that there are no adequately protected private bathing spaces for adolescent girls and young women. As a result, they struggle to stay clean every day. Accordingly, many of the Rohingya people have specific requests for bathing spaces with fences made from corrugated tin, to protect the privacy of their daughters.

“ In the camp, the incidents of murder are increasing day by day. How can we remove [prevent] these?”

- Man, 26, Kutupalong MS Extension

“ We need enough police security so that we stay safe.”

- Woman, 34, Kutupalong MS Extension

“ Young girls are facing challenges while taking a bath. They need a privacy protected space for bathing.”

- Woman, 17, Balukhali MS

Language and cultural considerations around Ramadan



Ramadan (Romjan in Bangla / Romzan in Chittagonian and Rohingya) is the holiest month of the Islamic calendar. Significant changes to normal activities and behaviours are likely during this month. It is a month of reflection and compassion, during which Muslims and their employers traditionally give small gifts or money to each other and to those less fortunate. It can be a very emotional time.

In common with most other Muslim countries, a government moon-sighting committee is responsible for announcing the official start of the month in Bangladesh. This year, it is expected to begin on the 17th of May. Bangladeshis and Rohingya Muslims follow the tradition of families and communities coming together on the nights before the start and end of Ramadan to watch the crescent moon.

For the next 29 or 30 days (depending on the next Islamic month's moon sighting), the faithful will fulfil one of Islam's five main pillars by fasting from dawn to

sunset. While fasting, one cannot eat, drink (including water), engage in sexual activities, fight or bleed. Pre-pubescent children, elderly people, those who are ill, menstruating women, and pregnant or lactating women are not expected to fast during Ramadan, though able-bodied adults are expected to make up any missed days of fasting later in the year.

This will be a time of increased movement and activity in the camps at night. Megaphones will signal the start and end of fasting and prayer times. The camps will wake at around 3am for a pre-dawn meal (Rohingya: Fointha seri), and the fast will be broken (Rohingya: Isthari) at around 6.30pm. Traditionally, the Rohingya community eats dates, chickpeas, puffed rice, fruit, and fried food to break the fast each day.

After the early morning prayer and activities, people often go back to bed until mid-morning; consider this cultural habit when organising distributions and other activities in the community. Some observant members

of the community will also fast from medication during daylight hours; medication schedules, including the use of insulin, may shift to a night-time schedule.

In your workplace, it's important to be culturally sensitive to staff who may be fasting. Try not to organise events that involve food during fasting hours, and be discreet if you must eat food in front of colleagues. Three to four public holidays also fall near the end of the month

to commemorate Shab-e-Qadr (otherwise known as Lailat'ul Qadr) and Eid, the end of Ramadan.

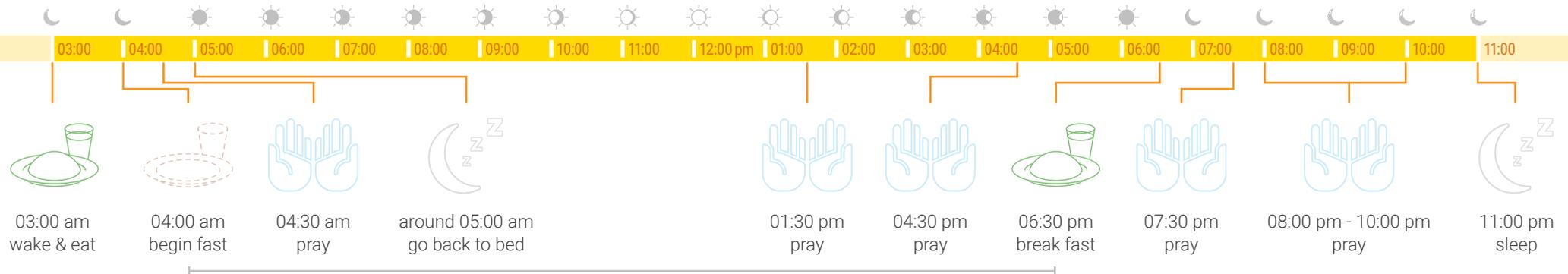
The holiest night during this time is known in Arabic as Shab-e-Qadr (Hatai Fathiya in Rohingya), or the 'Night of Power'. Men and women will usually pray through the entire night, either in the mosque (for men) or at home. People will make more visits to graveyards and pray for the deceased relatives. Muslims consider this the holiest

night of the entire year. Even people who are usually not very religious will observe this practice.

Linguistically, Chittagonians and Rohingya share many common words to describe this holy month. However, they may be quite different from terms used in Bangla or Arabic.

English	Arabic	Bangla	Chittagonian	Rohingya
Month of Ramadan	Shahr Ramadan	Romjan'er Maash	Romzan'or Maash	Romzan'or Maash
Fasting	Sawm	Roja (rakha)	Ruza (rahon)	Ruza (rahon)
Midnight Meal	Suhur	Sehri	Fointha seri	Fointha seri
Breaking fast at Sunset	Ifthar	Ifthar	Istheri	Isthari / issari
Supplemental night prayers	Taraweeh	Tharabi	Tharabi	Tharabi
Night of Power	Lailat'ul Qadr	Shob-e-Kodor	Hatai Forob	Hatai Fathiya
Eid greetings	Eid Kareem or Eid Mubarak	Eid Mubarak	Eid Mubarak	Eid Mubarak

Daily activity timeline during ramadan



Listener group feedback suggests the concerns among the Rohingya community are shifting over time

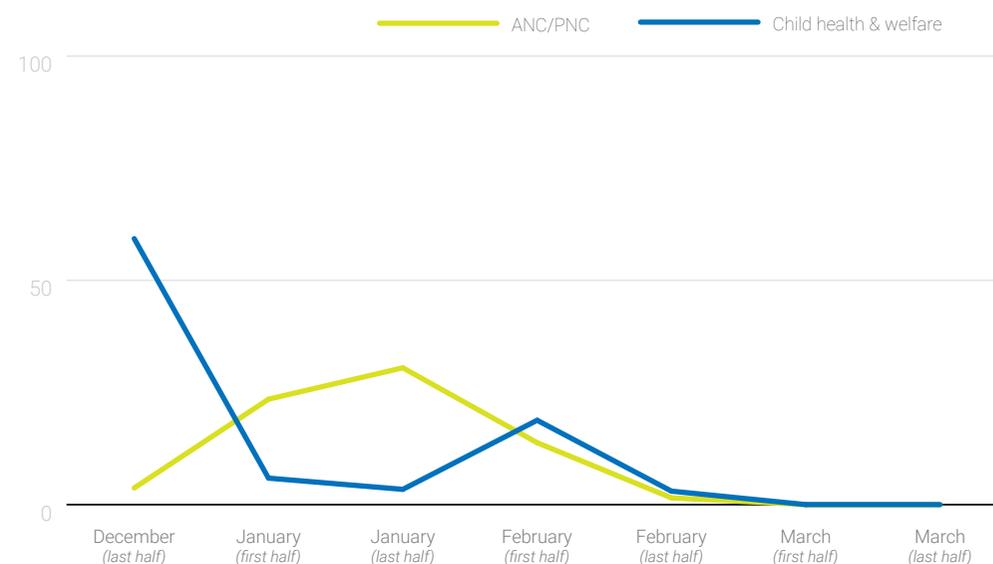
Listener group feedback shows how the concerns among the Rohingya community are shifting over time. Trends suggest that good progress has been made in some areas, with concerns such as health issues related to mothers and children reducing over time, while there are other topics – for example safety and security – that appear to be of growing concern to the community.

An analysis of feedback from radio listener groups shows how concerns amongst Rohingya people have changed over time, from mid December 2017 until the end of March 2018. Listener groups meet weekly to listen to Bangladesh Betar's Begunor Lai or Radio Naf's Shishur Hashi programmes. The group facilitators collect feedback about the listeners' current needs, priorities and concerns.

Analysis of the main concerns raised in these listener groups shows some interesting trends in how the Rohingya community's worries have shifted over time:

Health and welfare for children and mothers – levels of concern much lower

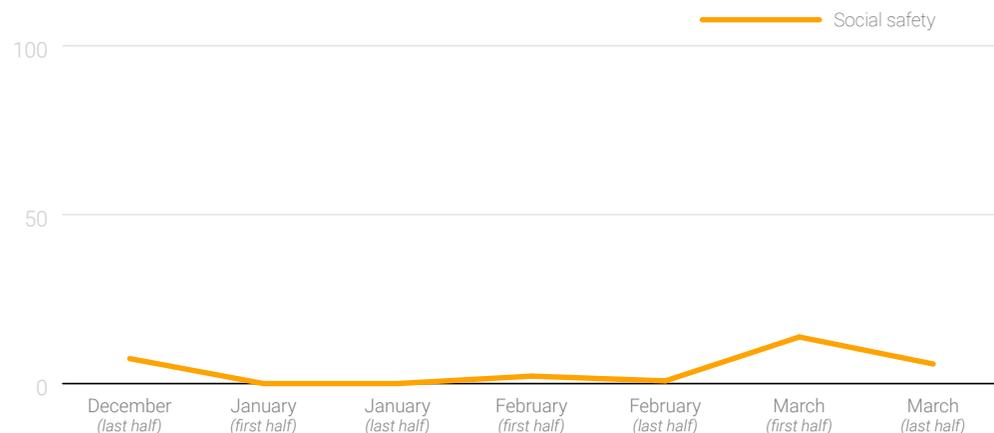
A principal topic of concern in listener groups at the end of 2017 was lack of facilities for children. Listeners reported difficulties in looking after their children due to the crowded conditions and lack of education and child friendly spaces. The health and wellbeing of children was also a primary concern, people were worried about children getting ill or going missing. Discussions in earlier months also highlighted worries about care of new-born babies, vaccinations and antenatal and postnatal care.



As of the end of March, however, the data suggests that worries and concerns about these issues have been substantially reduced. There have been no reports of feedback on health or welfare issues for children or mothers during March, which may suggest an improvement in provision of services and information in these areas.

Worries about safety emerging

Data from March suggests that the Rohingya community are starting to become more concerned about their safety. While the topic was barely mentioned in feedback during January and February, listeners started to raise the issue in March. Specific feedback has included requests for torch lights and solar lanterns to help with movement at night and comments that walkways in the camps are not currently properly lit. This increase has also been seen in other feedback sources in the past month (see the article on page 1 on robbery, theft and protecting children, for details).



“ We need solar light at night. We do not feel safe at night due to lack of solar light. It also hampers our movement at night.”

- Female, Thengkhali Jamtoli Camp, Block: G-3

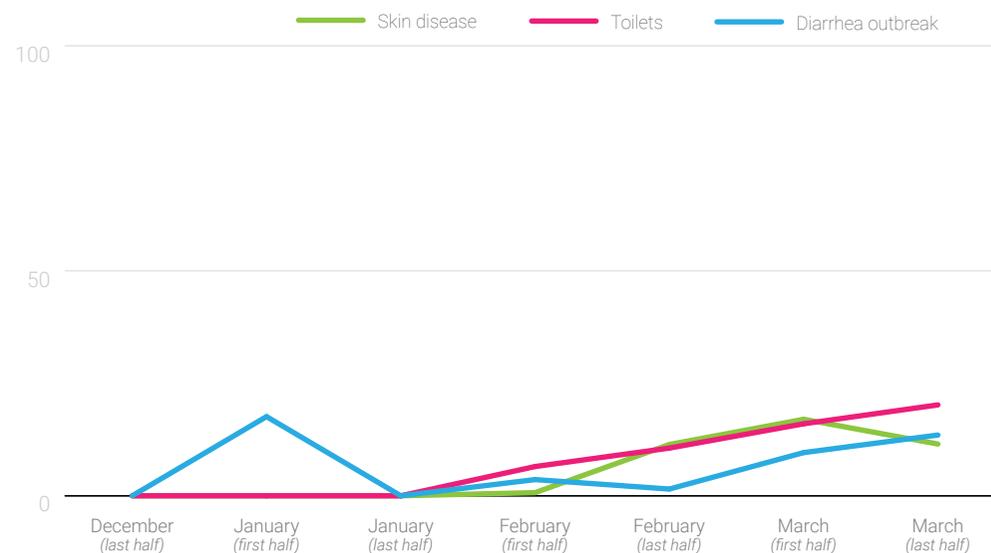
“ Pregnant women are suffering from water blisters and children are having seasonal fevers and cold in this summer season. So, we need electric fan or hand fan (Bangla: Hatpakha; Rohingya: Bisoin) to get rid of excess heat.”

- Female, Balukhali Camp, Block: B-52

Hygiene – previous problems now returning, exacerbated by heat

Concerns around diarrhoea appear to be resurfacing – the issue had not featured highly in feedback since early January, but now appears to be of increasing concern again amongst the Rohingya community. This increase coincides with concerns being raised, for the first time, specifically about toilets. Feedback in March included complaints about not having an adequate number of toilets and toilets not being cleaned on a regular basis. Comments expressed worries about pregnant women facing difficulties in using toilets.

Increasing worries about hygiene have also coincided with increasing numbers of comments about skin diseases – this is another issue which has not been highlighted by communities before, but now is causing increasing levels of concern. Communities are reporting suffering from contagious skin diseases due to summer heat. Heat, and a perceived lack of safe drinking water within the camps, are also associated with the increased community concerns about diarrhoea. Specific requests are commonly made for solar powered or hand-held fans, particularly for pregnant women and children.



Source: percentages refer to the relative number of complaints/comments reported by listener group facilitators in the specified period. The base comprises the total number of radio listener groups who sent reporting data in that period – and ranges from 28 groups in late December to 257 groups in late March 2018.