



Rohingya Response Rumour Tracking - Issue #05 February 2019

Welcome to the fifth issue of Flying News, the rumour-tracking bulletin. Flying News explores current rumours and opinions of the Rohingya population in Bangladesh to address information gaps between humanitarian agencies and refugees. By briefing field staff and volunteers on recent rumours and providing them with relevant facts to respond, this bulletin aims to foster better understanding of the existing concerns and needs of the Rohingya and help confront rumors before they cause harm.

Issue 5 focuses on misinformation, questions and concerns about the relocation process and graveyard inside the camps. Among all the misinformation, questions and concerns, this two issues have been picked up on the basis of the community apprehension. Since the community have been informed about the relocation process, a tension increases in the camp concerning relocation. People are also in a tensed situation about the burial system inside the camp.

The rumours and issues presented in this bulletin were collected by Internews field staff and volunteers based on face-to-face conversations with 677 people between January 01, 2019 and January 31, 2019 from 9 different camps. Data was collected using the KoBo Toolbox application and the topic selection was determined by the prevalence of concerns on specific issues expressed by Rohingya respondents over the January, 2019.

Concern #1 About relocation and the reasons behind relocation

In the camp, people are getting information about relocation and it spreads tension among the community. They have been informed that relocation will take place but they are not sure why and who will be relocated. Most of the concerns are from Camp 3.

"... we have heard that the people in our block will be relocated into another block. We are panicking about this issue as we have built our houses here recently. We live here happily and we do not like that we will be shifted into a far place. We know where we will be shifted but how many people will be shifted or who will be shifted, we are not informed about that. We were informed that we will be relocated from here as an office will be built here. We have not agreed to shift from here...."

-(Male, 46, Camp 3)

Answer

The following response regarding relocation was given by UNHCR and IOM

Relocations are initiated at various locations in the camps by site management agencies. There are two main reasons for relocation. The first reason is when there is a planned construction of infrastructures such as bridges, roads and buildings on/around the locations inhabited by refugees. The second reason for relocation to be initiated is when residents face emergency situations that put them at risk of natural disasters such as floods and landslides.

Construction is done phase by phase. Whenever there are construction projects, site planners will do an assessment and determine which shelters will be affected by the project. Then the site management agency communicates directly with the families and individuals to be affected and explain in detail about the relocation. The information provided to the affected people includes:

- Reasons for relocation
- The timeline for relocation
- Whether the relocation is permanent or temporary
- Where they will be relocated to

Sometimes, a 'go and see' visit is organized to the new location and the facilities that will be availed to them. The meeting with affected individuals/families often happens multiple times to ensure that everyone understands the process and makes an informed decision. Some individuals might also not consent to be relocated on the first meeting. So the follow up visits allow those community members to process the information they were given, ask questions if they have any and make up their minds. Depending on the situation, the meeting might happen at the household level or it might also include community representatives.

In most cases relocation is permanent. But sometimes temporary relocations could also be arranged. For example, in an emergency situation like flooding, affected people might be relocated temporarily to another location.

Concern #2 Facilities after relocation

"...We do not want to go that place as it is very far. There are no facilities for mosques, madrasa; people suffer for water, purchasing curries, medication care and these have been heard from the people who already live there. A road in front of the CIC office will be built here and that is the reason behind our relocation..." -(Female, 24, Camp 3)

"We will be relocated from here as a bridge and camp for police will be built here. We are concerned that we will be relocated from here to Modhusara. We are tensed because we have to shift our houses as well and the market is far from Modhusara. People are killed there. We are also tensed about the water facilities and about our parents whether they will be stayed here..." -(Female, 27, Camp 3)

Answer

Site management agency, in coordination with partner organizations, will facilitate the setup of the necessary services before relocation is conducted. However, there are factors that determine the availability and type of services:

- The number of affected people- The type of service to be provided depends on how many people will be relocated to the area. If the numbers are significant enough, some service will be established directly for the newly relocated beneficiaries. But if their numbers are small, some service might not be established at the new location. In such cases, they are linked with services at adjacent/nearest camps that already have the services.
- Whether it is a new or previously developed location- In cases where the site is newly constructed, people may not get the same level of service as sites that have already been developed. New site development requires mobilizing resources and bringing in humanitarian partner organizations to provide the services. Sometimes relocations may have to be done before all of these are finalized. In cases where there are not adequate services, best efforts are made to facilitate provision of services.

Currently the team is in the process of identifying families that could be affected by upcoming projects to build a bridge between 2W and camp 3. There is also a planned health post construction. But this doesn't mean that we will move them to another camp. We give the affected people the opportunity to move themselves. If the area they identify is safe, then we might build them a shelter or provide materials for construction of shelter. The relocations from areas at risk of landslides have been conducted. However, another assessment is going to take place soon to see if there are places that are at risk of landslides.

Need more information?:

If people have any question, they should go to site management support office at their respective camps.

Concern #3 Payment for Burial Purpose

People from camp 2E and 1W expressed their concerns about the payment procedure due to burial purpose. According to them, they have to pay to use the graveyard inside the camp.

“...In these two graveyards, the landlords do not allow us to be buried. That is why we have to pay to the landlords for burial purpose as we do not have any other graveyard... the number of graveyards are very few comparing to the population size. Moreover, we have to pay to the landlords to use these two graveyards...” -(Male, 53, Camp 2E)

“We face a problem regarding burial after the death of anyone. We have to pay at least Tk. 2000 during the burial of one person. If we do not have money, we have to borrow it from the nearby people.” -(Male, 45, Camp 1W)

Answer

In response to the refugees' concerns over the payment system for burial purpose, Md. Fazlur Rahman, SMS Manager of Camp 2E explained the actual process of burial in the camp. According to him, there is only one graveyard in camp 2E. That graveyard is generally used by the people of this camp. There are five blocks in total now. Sometimes some people from camp 7 use this graveyard. But as far as their knowledge, there is no payment system for burial purpose. Taking money for burial issues is completely unknown to them and they do not support this. Moreover, such types of works are not even supported by the government of Bangladesh as well.

There is no specific committee for graveyard management as it is managed in a traditional approach. But taking money for burial purpose is illegal. The general process of burial is after the death of someone is to maintain the religious customs and then one can bury that person without paying to anybody. Though there is no specific management body for graveyard, DRC, the Site Management and CiC work jointly on the issue. He also said that they have several groups among the community such as groups of Imams, groups of Maji, youth groups, who support them in their efforts to improve management of the graveyards and burials. For example, a while ago some clothes and other tools needed for burial processions were provided for people in need for free. The materials have been provided by the Site Management for the community.

Need more information?:

For any kind of further information or complaints, DRC maintains a well-established Complain Mechanism. In addition, in every block of the camp 2E they have two groups of female volunteers and one male volunteer. If the community face any kind of problem regarding any issue, they can inform these volunteers or can complain through CFRM.

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