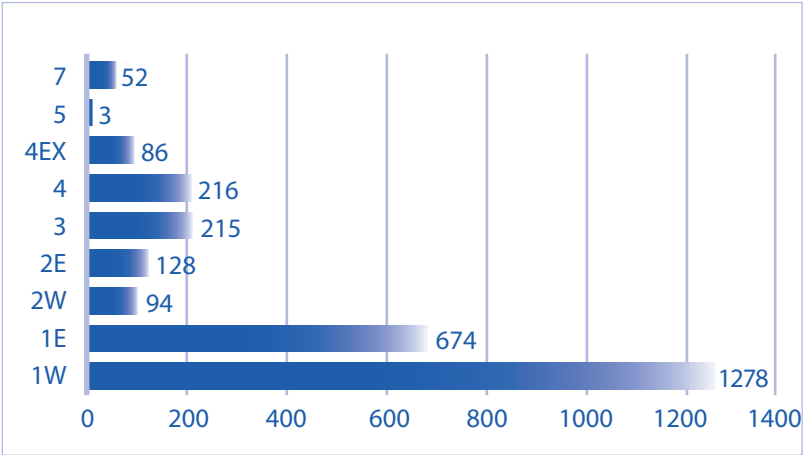
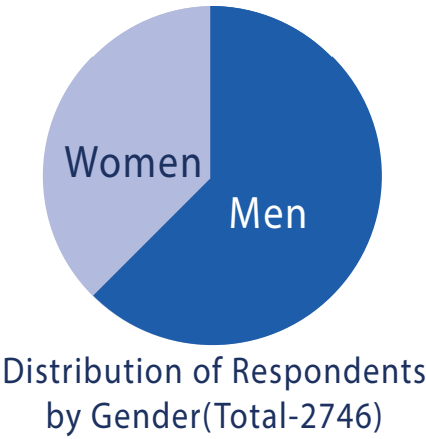


Welcome to the fourth issue of Flying News, the rumor-tracking bulletin. Flying News explores current rumors and opinions of the Rohingya population in Bangladesh to address information gaps between humanitarian agencies and refugees. By briefing field staff and volunteers on recent rumors and providing 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 4 focuses on rumors, misinformation, questions and concerns about the verification ID cards (also known as smart cards) & current perceptions of healthcare in the camps. Since the announcement of the biometric registration process, there has been tension throughout the camps over data sharing and recognition of the Rohingya identity. Recent registration efforts in several camps, have sparked a rise in concerns and rumors regarding the UNHCR smart cards. Concerns on the quality of healthcare received in the camps is also on the

The rumors and issues presented in this bulletin were collected by Internews field staff and volunteers based on face-to-face conversations with 2,746 people between August 01, 2018 and December 22, 2018 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 past four months.

The information presented here is correct at the time of issue.



Internews (August 01 to December 22, 2018)

Camp Numbers

Rumour #1 Completing the registration process and accepting smart cards will allow sensitive personal information to be shared with the Myanmar government

"We feel that by taking all the information for smart card, UNHCR is going to give the list to Burmese government". -(Male, 60, Camp 1W)

"In Kutupalong Lambashiya, people are talking that at first, UNHCR will be giving us smart card. And then, they will give the list to Burmese government. Then, Bangladesh and Burmese govt. will take 300 refugees per day. They are giving this card to us to take us back. If they can force us to take it; they can also forcefully repatriate us." -(Male, 21, Camp 1E)

Answer

According to UNHCR, the registration/verification is an exercise to update information and issue documents to ensure access to proper assistance and to make certain that the Rohingya people are safe while living in Bangladesh. The information provided during the registration process will be used to update the information collected from the individuals during the earlier MOHA biometric registration and family counting exercises. UNHCR will collect fingerprints, photographs and iris scans for the new documentation which will replace the MOHA (white) and Family Counting (yellow) cards. The new documentation will be endorsed by the Government of Bangladesh and intended for long-term use. This identity card will provide protection while staying in Bangladesh and will be used as the basis for receiving any assistance. The Government of Bangladesh may share parts of the information collected with the Government of Myanmar ONLY with consent of the card holder, to establish the identity and right to return.

Any return to Myanmar will only happen when the time and circumstances are right. Moving back to Myanmar must be based on Rohingya's voluntary choice when individuals think it is safe to return. The Government of Bangladesh agrees with this. The Government of Bangladesh and UNHCR have signed an agreement that no one will be sent to Myanmar without a proper procedure including a separate interview to confirm that the person is making an informed and voluntary decision to return to Myanmar.

Concern #1 Confusion over the difference between the Smart Card and NVC Card

"If we take smart card, we will be taken back to Myanmar. We didn't take NVC Card in Myanmar, that's why we had to suffer a lot. We don't see any difference between smart card and NVC card. If we were to take NVC card there, why would we have come here"? -(Male, 42, Camp 4)

"Till we have the answer of how smart card is different than NVC card, what is that smart card, what is the benefit of taking it, what happened if we don't take it, why they didn't mention Rohingya in that card, if we take it, can they send us to Burma, we will not take it". -(Male, 40, Camp 3)

Answer

The card that Rohingya people refer to as a "smart card," is an individual documentation or ID card. This is a unique card that contains one person's updated information. Everyone will be required to have the new smart cards. Your existing ID card is provided by the government of Bangladesh. The government of Bangladesh including different high-level staff at concerned ministries met in Dhaka to discuss demands to write the term "Rohingya" in the new ID card. The UN provide ID cards to the refugees all over the world, but they never include the name or ethnicity or the race of a community or religion in any of the ID cards. This would go against international standards for identification documents related to privacy concerns. Confidential information is not allowed to be shared on IDs and the including the ethnic identity of the cardholder (in this case Rohingya) is deemed to be sensitive information that cannot be present. There are more than 110 countries where UNHCR works with refugees and has registered them. Nowhere has UNHCR issued cards that include community or ethnic names. Bangladesh must follow international conventions related to this too.

Additionally, some community members have asked whether the term "refugee" can appear on the smart cards. UNHCR and the government of Bangladesh have determined that the cards will say "Person of concern to UNHCR", which means, that the individual cardholder is a person who is associated with UNHCR. UNHCR works with 5 categories of people: asylum seekers, refugees, stateless individuals, IDP and returnees. All 5 types of people are all considered individuals associated with UNHCR. The smart cards are completely different from the National Verification Cards (NVC) in Myanmar that related to legal & citizenship status in Myanmar. The Smart IDs refer to the status of the cardholder in Bangladesh and their affiliation with UNHCR.

Need more information?:

If you have more questions for UNHCR regarding the smart ID cards, you can ask them directly at their protection hotline number: +88 01703593300

Rumor #2 Ineffective and incorrect medicine is being administered in the camp healthcare facilities

"I am suffering from blood pressure for last one year. I am taking medicine given by IOM hospital, but nothing is improving. The medicine they give doesn't work".

-(Male, 70, Camp 1W)

"If we fell sick and go to hospital, they don't give us medicine of that disease. They don't even look at us properly or listen to us. We wait there for the whole day. If we are very sick, they give us some pill and tell us to get out of the hospital. We want a good hospital".

-(Female, 49, Camp 3)

"Whenever we go to hospital with any disease, they just give us paracetamol. If we ask them for good medicine, they tell us to buy from outside, they write the prescription. We don't have money; how can we buy from outside".

-(Female, 38, Camp 2W)

"If these medicines can't cure us, why they are giving these to us".

-(Female, 30, Camp 1E)

Answer

Ms. Nasima Yasmin, Director & Coordinator of Gonoshasthaya Kendro responded to concerns that ineffective medicines are being administered to patients in the camps. She stressed that doctors only provide medicine after diagnosing patients. Many of the medicines administered for common ailments will be the same or could appear to be the same for fevers, colds and coughs. For some cases the same illness will be treated with a syrup for the kids and a tablet for the adults. This is the same medicine, but just a different form. The medicine paracetamol works to reduce fevers, but also works on pain so it may be prescribed in a number of cases. When the same medicine is given to patients with different issues it doesn't mean that health centers have run out of supplies. Nasima Yasmin also noted that sometimes there are language barriers that impact interactions with the Rohingya community, which can result in misunderstandings. While diagnosing and prescribing medicine, doctors will try to explain to their patient the specifics of their health problems and explain why the medicine is being given. It is very rare to find medicine shortages, but just in case one organization runs out of medicine a patient can be referred to a different medical care center. As this issue has been raised multiple times by the Rohingya, doctors and health sector staff will work to address these concerns in CiC meetings and at other sector meetings to ensure we mitigate all the problems refugees possible, so that they can have easy access to necessary services as per their needs.

Concern #2 Mistreatment

"Why do misbehave with us??? Whenever we are in the hospital, the way everyone behaved that we some aliens"? (Female, 23, Camp 7)

Answer

In response to the refugees' concerns over the treatment received in the health centers, Ms. Nasima Yasmin described health center protocols that inform how interactions with the patients are conducted. In each facility, doctors are available to provide necessary assistance and treatment, but must adhere to guidelines for interacting with patients. Doctors provide guidance to Rohingya refugees regarding hygiene, anti-natal care, family planning and necessary vaccinations. **Some refugees think that, doctors use vaccinations to control people's ability to have children or that they work as a tracking device, but this is not true.** To mitigate these rumors doctors are engaging directly with **majhi, community leaders, imams and Rohingya community members about their activities.** In 2018, a total of 78 health volunteers, 45 psychosocial volunteers, 56 guards, security personnel and cleaners were recruited from the Rohingya community to work with Ganashasthaya Kendro. All the health centers, including **Ganashasthaya Kendro, have involved Rohingya people in their operations by providing them with necessary trainings and leading awareness sessions, so that they can disseminate messages among their own community and respond to rumors.**

Need more information?:

If you have any queries regarding health services or health-related issues, you can directly communicate with the health centers of **Ganashasthaya Kendro** in Camp 1E, Camp 1W, **Camp 2W, Camp 4 (2 centers)**, Camp 4 extension, Camp 6, Camp 2W, **Kutupalong Registered Camp**, Camp 11 (2 centers), Camp 23, 26 and **Nayapara Registered Camp. Camp 2W, Camp 4 (2 centers), Kutupalong Registered Camp, and Nayapara Registered Camp** all provide 24-hour services. **Ganashasthaya Kendro also has an active** hotline number, so you can easily contact them with your queries.

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