



# Rumours and responses

Materials specifically about rumours and misinformation: <http://www.shongjog.org.bd/resources/i/?id=3de1318d-e635-49d1-9ab6-3360fd861307>

As part of rumour tracking, BBC Media Action continues to receive rumours and concerns collected from the community by seven different agencies. Some of the recent rumours show a pattern of community concerns related to movement around the camps.

People are concerned that a government lock down will mean they can't visit friends and will not be able to access aid and assistance. At the same time, they are also worried that too many people are moving around the camp which may contribute to the spread of coronavirus.

According to WHO, to avoid transmission of Covid-19, it is important to stick to physical distancing, wear a mask, maintain hand and respiratory hygiene and comply with public health measures recommended by the government. Now that a number of cases in the camps have been confirmed, this is extra important. WHO recommends that people in camps and host communities maintain physical distance and stay home where possible.

The site management sector is encouraging people to follow the health advice and restrict movements as much as possible unless they have an urgent need to move. While there is no mandatory lockdown in the camps at the moment some CiCs may decide to initiate temporary movement restrictions in particular blocks. If this happens, site managers recommend that Rohingya people contact them if they have any questions.

According to the RRRRC, the CiCs may implement restrictions in a particular area on a case by case basis, even though there is no general lockdown. For example, if this may happen in a particular area if someone is suspected of or confirmed to have Covid 19. The RRRRC is also strongly encouraging people to try to keep physical distance as much as possible.

At LPG distribution points, people are allowed to enter after hand washing and body temperature checking. People are not familiar with temperature checking and are worried it is linked to finding out whether they have coronavirus. They are worried that, if they are found to have a fever, they will be sent to an unknown place. People want to know what happens if they are found to have a temperature and then test positive, including where they will be sent to.

A temperature check is not the same as a Covid-19 test. There are various causes of fever and it is good for anyone with a fever to seek medical attention. WHO suggests that if people are found to have a temperature at a distribution point, then staff should recommend that they go to a health facility for a proper evaluation. It may mean that a test is then needed, but this will be decided at the health facility. A Covid-19 test is a quick procedure that does not cause any harm.

In camp 15, people are saying they have fewer worries about coronavirus but are concerned they are not getting enough food. People specifically mentioned that they felt they were not getting enough rice. They said they believed that WFP was going to provide wheat flour instead of rice.

Throughout June and July, WFP is providing Super Cereal to all households as part of their general food assistance, to help provide extra nutrition for everyone during the Covid-19 pandemic. Super Cereal is being provided in addition to the regular WFP food basket and people will continue to receive rice and other food items. Super Cereal is a specialised food that contains corn, flour, soya, milk powder, sugar, oil, vitamins, and minerals, to provide additional nutrients and energy that helps to keep everyone healthy.

Some Rohingya people are worried about how dead bodies will be managed and where they will be buried. Families are worried that they will need to pay for people to be buried and that they will not be able to afford this.

Humanitarian actors are working to support safe and dignified burials. The most important thing to remember is that there is no need to fear dead bodies. The risk of the virus being transmitted from a dead body is very low and people who die because of Covid-19 can be buried in the graveyards in the camp. Families should not have to pay to bury anyone. Site Management and CwC WG have developed key messages that provide greater detail on the process of safe and dignified burials.

## Loudspeakers and megaphones: key communication tools in crises

Since the first cases of Covid-19 in Bangladesh were confirmed, the Rohingya community has expressed fears about the impact of the virus in their camps. These fears have been amplified by the circulation of rumours which have gained traction in the camps. In addition, the restrictions in internet access and the reductions in the number of humanitarian staff entering the camps regularly have reduced the community's ability to access accurate and up-to-date information. This has resulted in people relying on word-of-mouth to find answers.

However, recent feedback has indicated that messages delivered via loudspeakers or "miking" are trusted by community members and can reach people all over the camps. Miking uses hand-held megaphones or speakers mounted on tom-toms or at fixed sites. Nine of the 10 residents interviewed reported having received important information this way. Miking is a key source of important information in an environment where information is scarce.

*Source:* To understand current community perspectives and experiences in the camps, particularly in relation to information needs in the context of Covid-19 and cyclone Amphan, BBC Media Action and Translators without Borders conducted 10 in-depth interviews over the phone with 5 men and 5 women from the Rohingya community. Interviews took place on 19th and 20th May, 2020.

“As the internet has been blocked in the camps, we are not getting updated news about coronavirus. NGOs working in the camps are disseminating information through miking and Rohingya volunteers to make people aware about coronavirus.”

– Man, early thirties, Rohingya community, camp 1E

“We are only receiving information about coronavirus from miking and radio. We don't have any other sources [of information].”

– Man, mid-twenties, Rohingya community, camp 1W

While Covid-19 has undoubtedly been a primary concern in the camps in recent months, the daily challenges of life in the camps have not paused. Less than one week after the first case of Covid-19 was confirmed in the camps, cyclone Amphan hit the coastal areas of eastern India and Bangladesh. The interviews took place

the day before and the morning of the cyclone, when concerns briefly shifted from Covid-19 to the cyclone. All interviewees were concerned about the approaching cyclone and most expressed serious concerns about the safety and stability of their homes and their ability to withstand a cyclone.

“I'm very afraid about cyclones because our house is not very strong and our house is at risk during a cyclone.”

– Woman, mid-twenties,  
Rohingya community, camp 1W

“I did not receive any training about cyclones but I received an announcement from miking [loudspeakers] in the camp.”

– Woman, late teens, Rohingya community, camp 1E

Interviewees confirmed that announcements over loudspeakers or megaphones provided important information about the approaching cyclone and how to prepare for it. It is evident that information disseminated through this communication method is reaching the community. The effectiveness of audio communication is amplified as Rohingya is primarily a verbal language. However, information not only needs to reach people; it also needs to meet their needs. In relation to Covid-19, a common complaint since the beginning of the pandemic is not that people are not receiving information. Rather, the complaint is that they keep receiving the

same (useful) information over and over again, not the additional information they want, such as regular information and updates about quarantining, isolation and healthcare processes in the current context, as well as counter-narratives or confirmation regarding rumours which are circulating. During a crisis such as the current pandemic, effective and rapid dissemination of up-to-date information is imperative. TWB's research in the Democratic Republic of Congo during the most recent Ebola outbreak found that distrust of widely circulated information grew and rumours persisted when people's questions went unanswered. The rapid

refreshing and updating of the information by tom-toms and megaphones to answer the concerns may be one strategy for addressing information challenges in the camps.

These tables outline a collection of some key English terms being used in the response in the present context, as well as their current equivalents in Rohingya language. Some of the new terms may evolve over time. More Rohingya terms relevant to the response can be found in the Translators Without Borders (TWB) glossary, or directly from TWB.

### Medical/technical words

English word/phrase used in this response	Rohingya (Latin script)	Rohingya (Bangla script)	Literal English translation of the Rohingya term in this response context	Notes and further details of how these terms are discussed/used in conversations within the Rohingya community
Protective gear	hefazot taibar samana	হেফাজত থাইবার সামানা	equipment used to stay safe	Associated with safety and cleanliness, protecting from dirt and disease.
Prevention methods	biaram rukibar torika	বিআরাম রুকিবার তরিকা	ways to control disease	Associated with hand washing, masks, keeping homes clean, avoiding public spaces and people who are unwell.
Environmental surfaces	Mainshottu dora zade chiz okkol, mesal-doroza, dorazar doroni, toros, siyar-thebil, hendhilla aro	মাইনশত্তু ধরা জাদে সিজ অক্কল, মেসাল-দরজা, দরজার ধরনি, তরস, সিয়্যার-টেবিল, হেন্ডিলা আরও	things that are touched by people like doors, door handles, floor, furniture etc.	As there is no specific term for this in the Rohingya language, giving examples of surfaces is important to ensure directions are understood.
Health norms	aramiyotor niyom	আরামিয়তর নিয়ম	rules of health	Associated with staying healthy, not getting sick.
Reusable masks	dubara estemal gori farede hendhilla maas	দুবারা এস্টেমাল গরি ফারেদে হেন্ডিলা মা'স	type of mask that can be used again	These masks can be used again after being washed. Including usage, handling and washing instructions in communication efforts may be helpful.
Oxygen	oksizen	অক্সিজেন	oxygen	Both oxygen we breathe ("from trees") and oxygen in medical context.
Oxygen tank	oksizenor thangki	অক্সিজেনর টাংকি	tank with oxygen	Most people have heard about these devices and know broadly what they are used for. Sometimes described as a gas bottle or cylinder

## Burials/funerals

English word/phrase used in this response	Rohingya (Latin script)	Rohingya (Bangla script)	Literal English translation of the Rohingya term in this response context	Notes and further details of how these terms are discussed/used in conversations within the Rohingya community
Preliminary steps to prepare the body	murudare saf gori gusol-asol gorai toyar gori don	মুরুদারে সাফ গরি গুসল-আসল গরাই তয়ার গরি দন	prepare a dead body by giving a cleansing bath	Bodies are washed with water, perfumes are applied, shrouds used. Bodies are washed by the same gender as the deceased.
Symbolic washing	Toyommum goron	তয়ম্মুম গরন	doing dry purification	Using purified sand and dust instead of actual washing or ablution This is generally done when no water is available
Not touching or kissing the deceased	murudare doitto nodon ar summa dito nodon	মুরুদারে দইত্ত ন'দন আর সুম্মা দিত ন'দন	don't allow to touch and kiss the dead body	Only the people assigned to wash the body are allowed to touch the body.
Mourners	Ha*da-rada goroiya	হাঁদ-রাদা গরইয়া	people who weep	Especially referring to those close to the deceased (family members, close friends)
Body bag	muruda bori rakede bek	মুরুদা ভরি রাকেদে বেক	a bag for putting a dead body in	Body bags are not used in Rohingya culture. It is important to distinguish between body bag and shroud/kofon.
Shroud	kofon	কফন	Shroud	This is the word for the cloth (usually white) used to wrap or cover the dead body after washing.

**Text only version:** [https://glossaries.translatorswb.org/bangladesh\\_text/](https://glossaries.translatorswb.org/bangladesh_text/)

**Full audio version:** <https://glossaries.translatorswb.org/bangladesh/>

Terminology updates are also provided regularly in this *What Matters?* bulletin.

BBC Media Action 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 work is funded by EU humanitarian aid and the UK Department for International Development.

If you have any comments, questions or suggestions regarding *What Matters?*, you are welcome to get in touch with the team by emailing [info@cxbfeedback.org](mailto:info@cxbfeedback.org)

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