

An analysis of gender mainstreaming strategies for the Rohingya Refugee Crisis in the Cox Bazar, Bangladesh

Are we taking it seriously?

Facundo M. Palermo | Risk and Safety | LTH | LUND
UNIVERSITY, SWEDEN



**Analysis of gender mainstreaming strategies for the Rohingya
Refugee Crisis in the Cox Bazar, Bangladesh**

Are we taking it seriously?

Facundo M. Palermo

Lund 2018

An analysis of gender mainstreaming strategies for the Rohingya Refugee Crisis in the Cox Bazar, Bangladesh: Are we taking it seriously?

Facundo M. Palermo

Number of pages: 57

Illustrations: 6 (4 Figures and 2 Tables)

Keywords

Rohingya, Refugee, gender, gender mainstreaming, operational response, refugee camp, stateless people.

Abstract

Since August 2017, more than 655,500 Rohingyas fled from Myanmar to Bangladesh escaping what has been categorized as an Ethnic Cleansing. Their legal status of stateless and non-recognized refugees in Bangladesh, combined with multiple violent encounters and their currently precarious living conditions in Bangladesh is what have turned the world's attention to The Cox Bazar, where arguably the most vulnerable population in the world struggles to survive. Since 67% of the Refugees are female (of which 20.8% are pregnant) and/or children (60% unaccompanied), there is a need to implement gender mainstreaming strategies in the Rohingya Refugee Camps. In consequence, this document provides an analysis on how gender issues are handled/managed, by examining gender mainstreaming strategies in the Rohingya Refugee Camps. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews conducted with practitioners from four UN Agencies, four INGOs and one National NGO, all part of the Organizational Response of the Rohingya Refugee Crisis. The results of the analysis show that even though several activities have been implemented, gender issues are far from being handled to a sufficient extent. In consequence, a new dimension of needs has arisen in the camps, characterized by a bigger population of some of the most vulnerable groups (pregnant females, new born children), which will continue growing until female Refugees feel safe enough to stop taking drastic measures.

© Copyright: Division of Risk Management and Societal Safety, Faculty of Engineering
Lund University, Lund 2018

Avdelningen för Riskhantering och samhällssäkerhet, Lunds tekniska högskola, Lunds
universitet, Lund 2018.

Riskhantering och samhällssäkerhet
Lunds tekniska högskola
Lunds universitet
Box 118
221 00 Lund

<http://www.risk.lth.se>

Telefon: 046 - 222 73 60

Division of Risk Management and Societal Safety
Faculty of Engineering
Lund University
P.O. Box 118
SE-221 00 Lund
Sweden

<http://www.risk.lth.se>

Telephone: +46 46 222 73 60

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Misse Wester, of the Division of Risk Management and Societal Safety at Lund University. Even though her input throughout the process was invaluable for the document itself, is the general encouragement to work hard and to believe that this is far more than a mere requirement for graduation, that I am truly thankful for. Hopefully, this will only be the first time that we work together.

Furthermore, I would like to express my gratitude to all the informants, as well as to the people that led me to them. They all took time to talk to me, answer some of my questions and provide me with the information that made this document possible. Knowing that leisure time in humanitarian crisis is scarce, I can't help to feel thankful. Hopefully, some information found in this document will be helpful for them and I will somehow return the favor.

I would like to thank my teachers and classmates in Lund University, as I have learned and inspired myself extensively from discussions held with both. I sincerely hope that the universe will one day bring us together in a scenario where our wonderful projects, discussions and ideas will actually help the most vulnerable and needy people to catch a break from time to time.

Finally, I would also like to express my infinite gratitude to my family. My sister, for her understanding and wise words in times of thought, and my mother, who somehow managed to work untiringly for years so I could one day have the opportunity to write a master thesis in such a prestigious institution. Therefore, I would like not only to express my gratitude to her, but to dedicate her this document, which might not be much, but it is hers.

ACRONYMS

UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
ARSA	Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army
CiC	Camp in Charge; Designed personnel to administrate the refugee camps.
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding.
GBV	Gender Based Violence.

DEFINITIONS

Burma (Burmese): Former name of the Republic of Myanmar (From Myanmar).

Convenience sample: Also known as Haphazard Sampling. It is a non-probability sampling technique where members of a target population that meet certain practical criteria, such as accessibility or availability are included in a certain study (Etikan, Abubakar, & Sunusi, 2016).

Ethnic Cleansing: Removal of people from a certain homogeneous ethnical and/or religious group from an area through making use of force, intimidation, violence or terror inspiring means (The UN Security Council, 1994).

Gender Empowerment: Promoting the participation of women in decision-making processes, giving them the power to put issues on the agenda and having their voices heard in general (Moser & Moser, 2005).

Gender Mainstreaming: “A long-term strategy or systematic institutional approach for promoting/producing gender equality as a policy outcome. It seeks to produce transformatory processes and practices that will concern, engage and benefit women and men equally by systematically integrating explicit attention to issues of sex and gender into all aspects of an organisation’s work”(Woodford-Berger, 2004, p. 66).

Majhi: Part of the governance system of the refugee camps (See Section 3.1.1.3. Majhi System).

Refugee: A person forced to leave their country because of either persecution, war or violence, and therefore has a well-founded fear of persecution if they return to their country, either because of religion, ethnicity, nationality, political opinion, or membership of a particular social group (UNHCR, 2017).

Stateless Person: An individual who is not part of any state. In practice, a stateless person has not been granted any rights in any state, and in addition its considered as an illegal person in every state (Alam, 2017).

Upazila: Bangladesh is divided into Divisions, which are composed by Zilas (or districts) and Upazilas (subdistricts).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS I

ACRONYMS II

DEFINITIONS..... III

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES..... V

1. INTRODUCTION 1

 1.1. Research Aim and Questions..... 2

 1.2. Scope and Limitations..... 3

 1.3. Organization of the Thesis 4

2. CONTEXT AND CASE 5

 2.1. Chronology of the Rohingya People 5

 2.2. The Cox Bazar District..... 6

3. LITERATURE REVIEW 8

 3.1. Women as Refugees 8

 3.2. Gender Order in Disasters..... 8

 3.3. Gender Mainstreaming..... 11

 3.4. Rohingyas in Refugee Camps 12

 3.4.1. *Medical and Health Conditions* 14

 3.4.2. *Governance Mechanisms*..... 16

 3.4.3. *Income* 16

 3.4.4. *Gender Based Violence (GBV)*..... 17

4. METHODOLOGY OF DATA COLLECTION 18

 4.1. Literature Review 18

 4.2. Semi-structured Interviews..... 18

5. INTERVIEW RESULTS..... 20

 5.1. Governance Mechanisms..... 20

 5.2. Humanitarian and Development Assistance 23

 5.2.1. *Collaboration*..... 23

 5.2.2. *Capacity Building*..... 26

 5.2.3. *Disaster Risk Management* 26

 5.2.4. *Daily Activities*..... 27

 5.3. Implementation of a Gender Sensitive Response..... 29

 5.4. Challenges..... 30

 5.4.1. *Struggles regarding Implementation*..... 30

 5.4.2. *Struggles regarding Gender* 32

6. DISCUSSIONS..... 33

 6.1. Governance mechanisms 34

 6.2. Humanitarian and Development Assistance 36

 6.3. Implementation of a Gender Sensitive Response..... 40

 6.4. Challenges..... 43

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 44

BIBLIOGRAPHY 49

APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF THE INFLUENTIAL EVENTS FOR THE ROHINGYA’S CURRENT SITUATION..... 54

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE..... 56
APPENDIX C: CODING NODES FOR THE INTERVIEW ANALYSIS..... 58

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 1. Statistical information about Teknaf and Ukhia Upazilla..... 7
Figure 2. Refugee Sites by Population and Location Type. 13

Table 1. New Arrivals, Pre-existing and total Rohingya by Location..... 14
Table 2. Main diseases reported in health facilities in the Rohingya camps..... 15
Table 3. Pseudonymous for informants..... 20
Table 4. Examples of collaboration between Organizations 24

1. INTRODUCTION

Since August 2017, more than 655,500 Rohingyas fled from Myanmar to Bangladesh (Hatia & Shahbazpur, 2017; IOM, 2018) in order to escape what several experts have categorized as an Ethnic Cleansing (Alam, 2017; Amnesty International, 2018; Chan, Chiu, & Chan, 2018; Hutchinson, 2017; Yaqub, 2017). Their legal status of stateless and non-recognized refugees in Bangladesh (Alam, 2017), the multiple violent encounters with the Burmese Military and civilian mobs (Long, 2013), and their currently precarious living conditions in Bangladesh (ACAPS, 2017b) is what have turned the world's attention to The Cox Bazar District, Bangladesh, where arguably the most vulnerable population in the world struggles to stay alive (Akhter & Kusakabe, 2014).

It is worth mentioning that this complex situation itself is in conflict with global commitments such as the Declaration of Human Rights, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction; non-binding documents that both countries, Bangladesh and Myanmar, voluntarily signed. In the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, one of the Guiding Principles is the "Protection of persons and their assets while promoting and protecting all human rights including the right to development" (UNISDR, 2015, pp. 35). Moreover, most of the Sustainable Development Goals (with the exception of Goals 12, 13, 14, 15 and 17, which are more applicable for National or Regional Levels) evidences the need to place the Rohingya Crisis as a priority on the World's Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Rohingya people's status makes them almost completely reliant on humanitarian aid to fulfil their everyday needs (Chan et al., 2018). Additionally, since the Rohingyas mobility has been restricted, they are almost confined to the Refugee Camps (Akhter & Kusakabe, 2014), where social norms emerge as a result of their own culture and customs and the rules and practices set by the camps management. This causes a constant re-adjustment of living conditions that impacts the social order (Akhter & Kusakabe, 2014; Austin, 2016), which can ultimately increase gender violence among the Rohingya Population. Moreover, it is necessary to consider that every disastrous situation affects women disproportionately in relation to men (Bhadra, 2017; Dakkak, Eklund, & Tellier, 2007; Foran, Swaine, & Burns, 2012), and that 67% of the Refugees are female (of which 20.8% are pregnant) and/or children (60%

unaccompanied) (ACAPS, 2017a; Hutchinson, 2017). Then, the need to ensure that this re-adjustment contemplates gender mainstreaming strategies as a way of handling gender issues becomes essential; a major challenge that humanitarian aid practitioners have to face in this population movement.

In consequence, this thesis will provide an analysis on how gender issues are handled/managed, by examining gender mainstreaming strategies in the Rohingya Refugee Camps. Data is collected from the perspective of humanitarian aid practitioners from four UN Agencies, four INGOs and one National NGO, all part of the Organizational Response of the Rohingya Refugee Crisis. The aforementioned analysis will be based on the information provided by semi-structured interviews conducted with these practitioners and a literature review on the subject.

Finally, since the Rohingya Population Movements has been occurring since 1978 (Akhter & Kusakabe, 2014), it is crucial to document struggles, good practices and gaps to overcome gender related issues in Refugee Camps, as future population movements in this very same context are likely to occur (ACAPS, 2017a).

1.1. Research Aim and Questions

The primary research aim of this study is to see if gender mainstreaming is being carried out in the Cox Bazar to ensure that the needs for protection of women are being met in the refugee camps installed to accommodate the Rohingya people in the Cox Bazar, Bangladesh. Furthermore, since actions taken in the camps can drastically impact the refugees' way of living, this study will also attempt to look into how gender mainstreaming strategies (training, guidelines, frameworks) are used in the Organizational Response by the practitioners of different organizations to deal with gender issues. Finally, since the Rohingyas situation could prevail in the long term, this document will look into the plans that different organizations

have in the medium term, all from the point of view of practitioners. Therefore, this thesis will seek to answer the following research questions:

Are gender mainstreaming strategies being implemented in the Rohingya Refugee Camps?

- What strategies are being implemented?
- How effective are the strategies implemented?
- To what extent are they being implemented?

Do organizations prepare their staff to work with Gender mainstreaming in the Organizational Response for the Rohingya Refugee Crisis? If so, How?

1.2. Scope and Limitations

The current study will be focused on the refugee camps for the Rohingya people, located in the Cox Bazar, Bangladesh, and it will be based on semi-structured interviews conducted with practitioners who are currently working in Cox Bazar for organizations who are actively involved in the Operational Response for the Population Movement.

The first limitation was that conducting any visits to the refugee camps was not viable; since the Population Movement is still ongoing (According to the last ACAPS (2017b) report from the 22nd of November 2017, since October the daily influx is around 3,100 arrivals a day) and therefore the access is restricted. Moreover, considering that the practitioners could be interviewed either in Dhaka or via skype and that conducting research in refugee camps requires additional ethical considerations, the researcher considered that the practitioner's point of view could be obtained without traveling to the camps.

The second limitation concerns the selection of participants. Choosing a sample containing of gender specialists from every organization was not possible due to several reasons. Firstly, not all the organizations have a gender specialist in Bangladesh. Secondly, since the massive population movement demands more resources than what organizations in Bangladesh have available, many gender specialists were too busy to be interviewed. As a consequence, a

convenience sample of practitioners who have a clear understanding of the dynamics of the camps and are currently involved in the Operational Response for the Rohingya Population Movement were selected. Even if this limitation forces the semi-structured interview to be less specific about certain topics, it provides a bigger picture of how far the mainstreaming strategy in the organization reaches.

Finally, this study corresponds to the Operational Response taking place before the rainy season, as priorities are expected to change drastically when the aforementioned season starts.

1.3. Organization of the Thesis

This thesis follows the structure described below:



Section 2 describes the context of the study, describing the Rohingya's current situation, as well as the current context in Bangladesh, as their restricted mobility implies that any geographical specific vulnerability will affect them too. Section 3 presents a literature review on gender related to disasters, with an emphasis on studies in similar situations (displaced populations, populations in refugee camps, etc.), as well as studies on the Rohingyas. Section 4 describes the methodology; starting on the literature review and following with the semi structured interviews and how were they analysed. Section 5 shows the results from the

interview process and is followed by Section 6, where these results will be discussed in the larger context of gender mainstreaming. Finally, Section 7 will contain conclusions and recommendations that could potentially minimize the gaps to address gender issues in the afore mentioned camps.

2. CONTEXT AND CASE

2.1. Chronology of the Rohingya People

The Rohingyas are an ethnic group, composed by Muslims and, to a minor extent, Hindus (ACAPS, 2017b). They settled in the Rakhine State (Myanmar) in 1823, according to the Government of Myanmar, and since the fifteenth century, according to several historians (Milton et al., 2017). Even if this issue is still under debate, the subsequent line of events leads to the Rohingyas current situation (see Appendix A).

In 1948, the contemporary political climate caused the exclusion of Rohingyas from the independence negotiations with the British, depriving them of Burmese citizenship. In consequence, Rohingyas created an armed separatist movement, which ended up with the recognition of their culture by the Burmese Primer Ministers, even if the persecution on behalf of the military regime remained (Akhter & Kusakabe, 2014). This military persecution consisted of several efforts, such as military operations, policies and laws, which deprived Rohingyas from any rights and provoked several population movements to Bangladesh (Akhter & Kusakabe, 2014; Long, 2013; Milton et al., 2017).

After the Government of Bangladesh unrecognized the Rohingyas as refugees (1992), most of them were repatriated to the Northern Rakhine state. Settlements in Bangladesh remained, although their illegal status had a negative influence on the living conditions (ACAPS, 2017b; Akhter & Kusakabe, 2014; Long, 2013). On May 2012, a new series of attacks took place after a Buddhist woman was raped and murdered by a group of Rohingya man. These attacks were supported by the general public, resulting in the Government of Myanmar dismissing permission for the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to provide humanitarian aid to

the Rohingyas (Alam, 2017). Consequently, the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) was created (ACAPS, 2017a). Since October 2016, 33 border posts were attacked by ARSA, resulting on two population movements: one of 72,000-population movement, and one of 655,500 one year after (ACAPS, 2017b; IOM, 2018).

Based on the MoU between the two countries, repatriation should have started on January 23, 2018. Nonetheless, there has been several obstacles for this to happen (Aung & Naing, 2018). Furthermore, Amnesty International (2018) showed evidence of villages, remaining infrastructure, and even agricultural lands being bulldozed, which can be interpreted as destroying evidence of military crimes.

2.2. The Cox Bazar District

The camps are located in the Teknaf and Ukhia Upazillas, Cox Bazar District (ACAPS, 2017a). According to the World Bank (2016), out of the eight Upazillas forming the Cox Bazar district, Teknaf and Ukhia are the second and third poorest and they perform worse than the national average in all employment, services and education indicators (See Figure 1 Below).

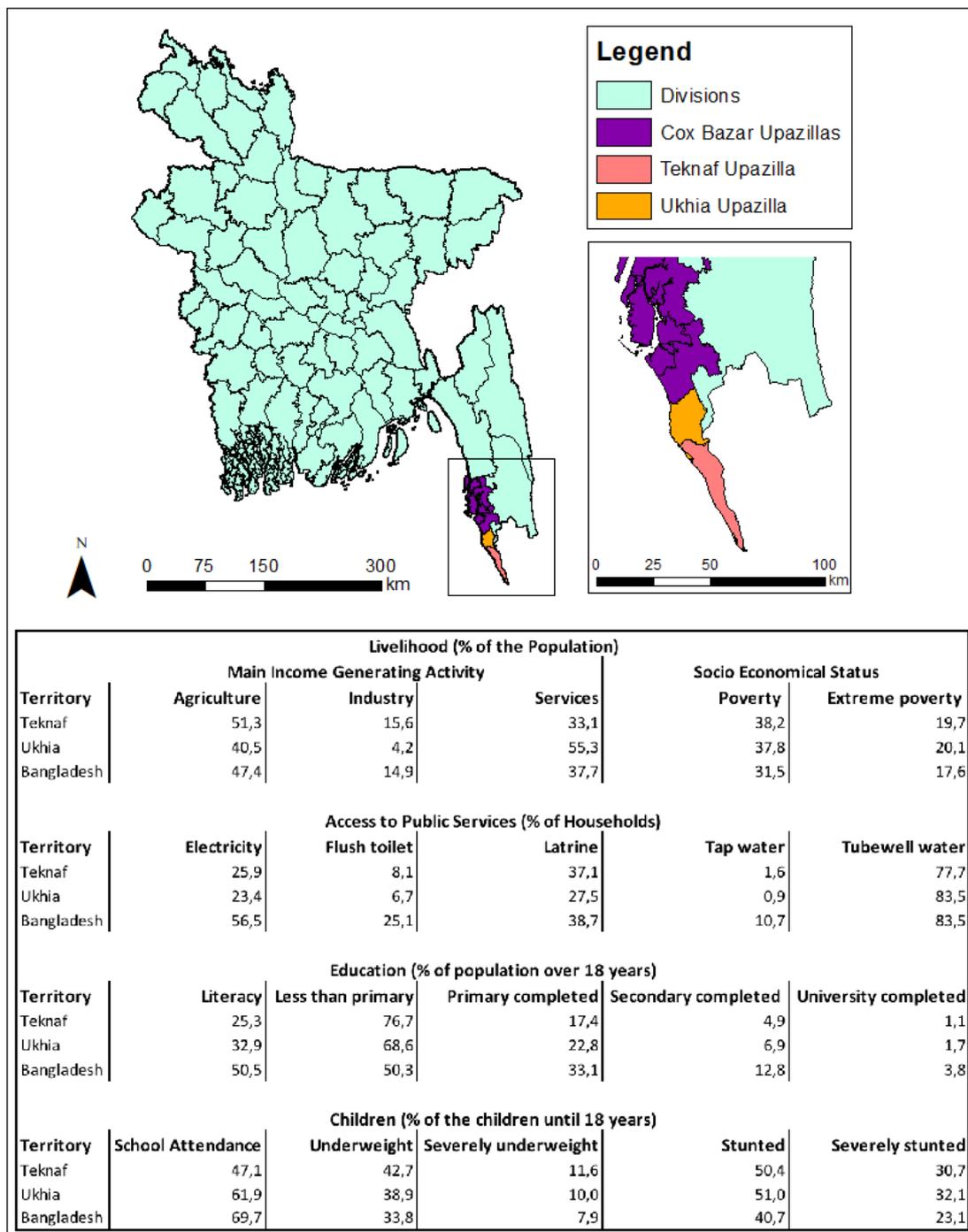


Figure 1. Statistical information about Teknaf and Ukhia Upazilla. Map of Bangladesh Divisions, enlarged in the Cox Bazar division. Data retrieved from the World Bank (The World Bank, 2011), table and map from the author.

In geophysical terms, this area of Bangladesh is composed mainly by steep hills and low-lying areas, which makes it particularly risky during the rainy season due to the probability of flash floods and landslides. Furthermore, since the influx started, several forest areas have been

cut clean, either to replace them with camps or to get firewood for the refugees. Therefore, the risk of landslides is now higher than before (Reuters, 2018).

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. Women as Refugees

On the past decades, both men and women have witnessed how their right to seek asylum has notoriously changed. Even when the 1951 Convention of the United Nations (UNHCR, 1951) mentioned several articles stating that humans should have several rights when seeking asylum (i.e. freedom of religion, right to own property, wage-earning employment, welfare, etc.), several countries have adopted restrictive policies and practices that are not congruent with the afore mentioned rights (Edwards, 2005). Furthermore, according to Edwards (2005), actions attempting to clearly distinguish who is and who is not an asylum seeker, such as visa controls and movement restrictions, have increased xenophobia and intolerance on local populations.

On the specific case of women, several authors have stated that both international and Regional law puts them at disadvantage regarding topics such as the Legal Status of asylum seek (Anker, 2000; Edwards, 2005; Oloka-Onyango, 1996). In this regard, women have a harder time gathering the necessary legal requirements to be granted the Refugee Status. As their fear of returning to their place of origin rarely takes place in the public domain, where issues are visible, their only favourable argument is the voice they raise (Oloka-Onyango, 1996). Indeed, since gender is not specific ground to seek asylum (as race, religion and nationality), it is virtually impossible for women to get it unless the group they belong to are doing the same (Anker, 2000). In other words, gender related issues such as domestic violence, genital mutilation and harassment are not enough motives to be granted asylum, at least in reality.

3.2. Gender Order in Disasters

It has been long established by experts that social profiles play a major role in vulnerability. Culture, religion, demographics, health and social equity are factors that can heavily influence the recovery of a disastrous situation (Coppola, 2011; Darychuk & Jackson, 2015). Naturally, these components are not independent; as gender is both an essential component of these social profiles, and the result of the power structures involved in most of the other

components. Therefore, when Enarson & Pease (2016) describe gender, they do so as a “constellation of institutions” (P. 6) which constitute a wide spectrum of rules, norms and practices that position men and women on an unequal relation of power. This definition is particularly relevant when analysing gender in disastrous situations, as this “constellation of institutions” tend to prevail, and heavily influences the roles that different actors will have on the aftermath of a disaster (Luft, 2016).

Indeed, when a disastrous situation materializes, several social structures are destroyed and have to be re-adjusted; therefore while affected people struggle to re state the balance of those social structures often gender roles are heavily affected (Austin, 2016). Even though women are always disproportionately affected during the breakdown of social structures (Bhadra, 2017; Dakkak et al., 2007; Foran et al., 2012), they are even more affected in societies where cultural restrictions are stronger, which results in women being more vulnerable due lack of voice, education opportunities and restricted mobility (Bhadra, 2017).

Along with the aforementioned destruction and readjustment of social structures comes a window of opportunity, which can be used to reformulate some of the rules, norms and practices that compose the “constellation of institutions” to reposition women in a more equalitarian way in relation to men (Grabska, 2011; Schwoebel & Menon, 2004). In theory, this can be achieved on every societal level (individual, local, regional, national and institutional) using gender mainstreaming strategies (Moser, 2015; Moser & Moser, 2005).

Organizations in the humanitarian and development sector have tried to integrate gender in their operational response, even when doing so defies traditional structures such as the participation of women in activities, positions and roles that are traditionally male. While this is a challenge itself, addressing gender in the operational response of any organization is key for them to fulfil their mandate (Dawson, 2011, pp. 3). Some examples of how this is done in practice are mentioned below.

Floods in Pakistan, 2010: Recovery stage (Oxfam, 2012b)

As part of the Operational Response, OXFAM, implemented the following projects:

- Continuous training for local staff and accompaniment in the field to ensure internalization of training.

- Livelihood opportunities focusing on the activities what women expressed that will be more socially acceptable (i.e. tailoring).
- Creation of female committees and gender parity in project committees.
- Inclusion of female staff to increase access to women in the community, both in senior and junior positions, as the first one provides a stronger voice to the latter.

Kakuma Refugee Camp – Kenya, 2006 (Grabska, 2011)

According to the Grabska (2011), the Kakuma Refugee Camp was one of the first ones to implement gender programming, which was done jointly by several organizations. It was done in four dimensions:

- Awareness Raising: Gender campaigns, billboards and workshops on various topics for refugees and staff.
- Empowerment: Training and income generating activities for women. Education for girls.
- Assistance: Provided by protection units of NGOs.
- Protection: Creation of Safe Havens.

Earthquake in Indonesia, 2009: Response and Reconstruction (Oxfam, 2012a)

By the time the earthquake took place, Indonesia had already implemented policies and institutions in both national and provincial level by the time the earthquake took place (Oxfam, 2012a). Nonetheless, several challenges remained; such as the need to gather disaggregated data, creating gender sensitive needs assessments, and the need for both collaboration and capacity building. In order to meet these challenges, OXFAM provide support by:

- Facilitating meetings between the Head of Statistics and the Gender Sub Cluster to discuss the need for gender disaggregated data.
- Assisting the government on how to integrate gender in the recovery and response stages.
- Conducted workshops for relevant stakeholders to foster collaboration and capacity building.
- Shared several frameworks, documents and manuals for organizations to integrate in their operations.

3.3. Gender Mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming was the main tool identified in the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the fourth conference of Women attended by more than 17,000 participants and 30,000 activists, which aimed to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women by encouraging UN Agencies, NGOs and other relevant stakeholders on the Humanitarian Aid Industry to take action (UN Women, 2018). This action was supposed to be achieved by following three courses of action:

- Adopting the terminology of gender equality and gender mainstreaming.
- Putting a gender mainstreaming policy in place.
- Implementing gender mainstreaming.

With regards to those courses of action, the first two were indeed adopted by a wide range of relevant stakeholders, as shown in a review conducted by Moser & Moser (2005) a decade later. Also, gender mainstreaming was (and still is) a powerful tool to attract funding from donors in order to incorporate gender in humanitarian operations in the third course of action (Foran et al., 2012), which is done by conducting campaigns, workshops, generation of tools and guidelines and incorporating gender experts in the operations (Fisher, 2016; Grabska, 2011).

The third course of action was already creating some scepticism back then, when research conducted on the subject showed that most of the processes were poorly integrated to the projects themselves. Furthermore, most of what was supposed to be the gender component of a project was rather a patchy effort to fulfil the requirements of the projects (Mikkelsen, Freeman, & Keller, 2002).

Gender mainstreaming is also criticized for being elusive and nebulous, lacking clear goals towards gender equality, and demanding too little from the practitioners in terms of practical and analytical skills (Woodford-Berger, 2004). In this regard, Fisher (2016) has been critical about the same topics while discussing gender training for male managers in the Pacific region, as complex gender concepts have to be summarized and explained in short workshops, hoping that practitioners will then gain enough criteria to tackle gender issues in their operations. Moreover, even though most of the authors seem to focus more on whether gender mainstreaming has failed or not (Moser, 2015; Woodford-Berger, 2004), Grabska (2011)

found that, at least in the analysed context which is the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya, bad practices of gender mainstreaming can put women in an even more vulnerable situation than they were before. According to the author, this failure is mainly caused by an oversimplification of concepts, even though she, along with several other authors see a clear lack of commitment as a strong driving force (Fisher, 2016; Foran et al., 2012; Moser, 2015; Woodford-Berger, 2004).

This lack of commitment on behalf of practitioners, managers and donors, on top of an oversimplified training that is supposed to be enough for implementing activities that are not properly integrated to the projects, does not only have repercussions on the amount of wasted resources or on the lack of results achieved. One of the most significant consequences of this combination is a confused targeted population; where men are believed to be completely “pro feministic” by acknowledging that women and men are the same, and have the same rights (Grabska, 2011), instead of understanding the unequal power structures which gender order rely on.

3.4. Rohingyas in Refugee Camps

Historically, the Rohingya population have settled in five refugee camps, and four host communities, in addition to six new settlements resulting from the last population movement (See Figure 2). In these settlements, 834,797 refugees were hosted by 17th of November 2017, in comparison to 212,518 refugees before August 2017 (See Table 1).

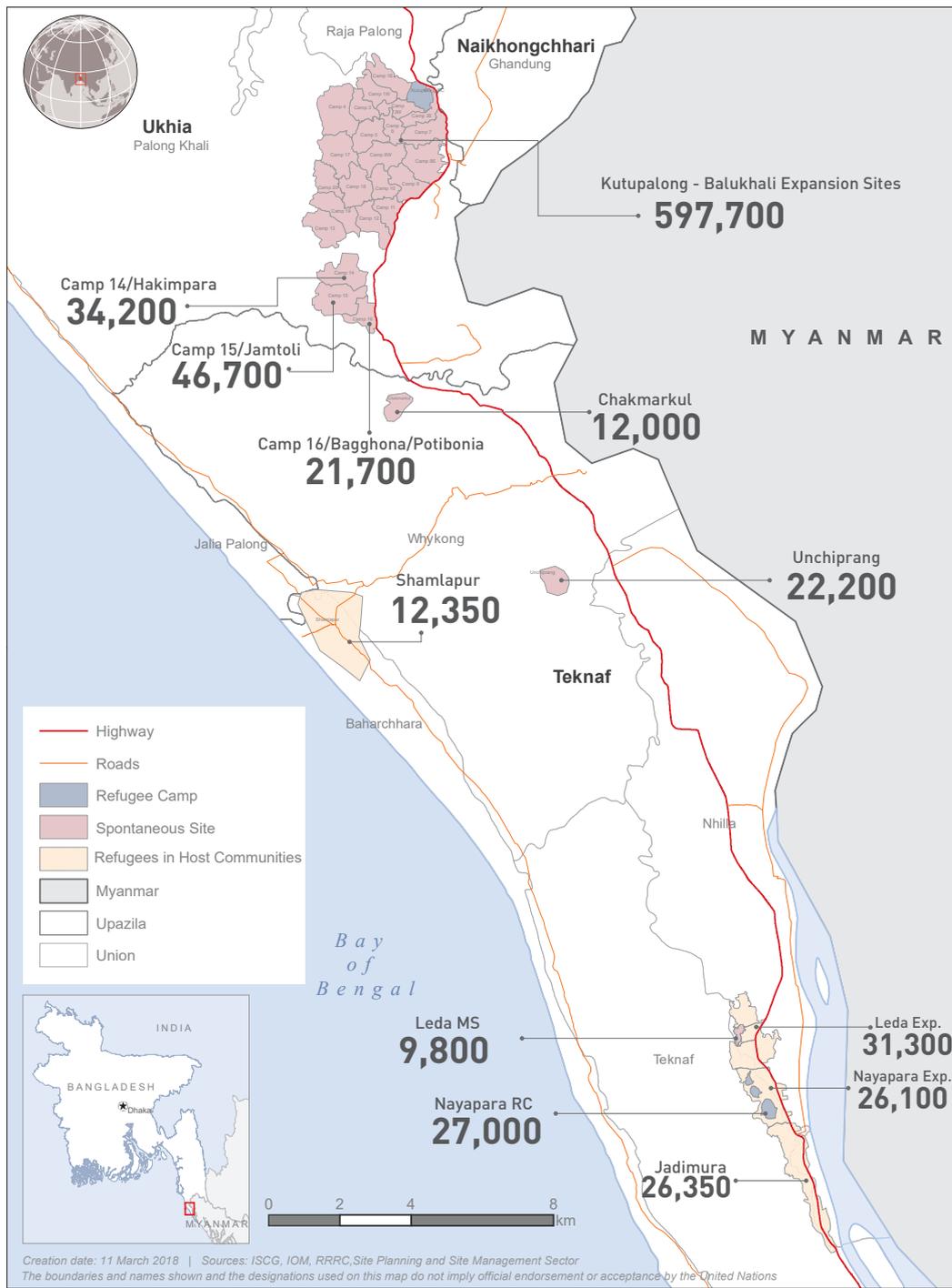


Figure 2. Refugee Sites by Population and Location Type (ISCG, 2018a, p. 1)

Table 1. New Arrivals, Pre-existing and total Rohingya by Location

Location	Population prior to Aug Influx	Total Population as of 25 Feb (combined)
Kutupalong Expansion Site ¹	99,705	588,804
Kutupalong RC	13,901	13,627
Leda MS	14,240	9,318
Nayapara RC	19,230	24,790
Camp 14 (Hakimpara)	140	33,390
Unchiprang	-	21,314
Camp 15 (Jamtoli)	72	48,691
Camp 16 (Bagghona/Putibonia)	50	21,938
Chakmarkul	-	11,690
Grand Total	147,338	773,562
Refugee in Host Communities		
Cox's Bazar Sadar	12,485	6,164
Ramu	1,600	1,623
Teknaf	42,870	99,113
Ukhia	8,125	3,323
Grand Total	65,080	110,223
TOTAL Rohingya	212,518	883,785

Source: Retrieved from (Inter Sector Coordination Group - Bangladesh, 2018, p. 2).

Since Bangladesh does not recognize the Rohingyas as refugees, only about 33,000 refugees are registered as such, and therefore are entitled to certain rights (ACAPS, 2017a). Due to heavy mobility restrictions, the refugees are confined to the camps; therefore, it is important to understand the living conditions and dynamics in them. Furthermore, several authors have found a direct correlation between gender based violence in camps and changes in living conditions that affect the traditional roles of society (Akhter & Kusakabe, 2014; Austin, 2016), which makes looking into these living conditions a priority.

3.4.1. Medical and Health Conditions

One of the most important domains in emergency settings is the health sector. The organizations working on the subject are currently working on the six following groups (Health Sector Coordination Team, 2018):

- Emergency Preparedness and Response
- Acute Watery Diarrhoea
- Vector Borne Diseases
- Community Health
- Sexual and Reproductive Health
- Mental health and Psychological Support

To cover the medical needs of the population, there are currently 10 hospitals (1 every 130,000 people), 56 health centres (1 every 24,074) and 129 health post facilities (1 every 10,077 people). Furthermore, the Chittagong District Hospital has also provided support, especially regarding access to safe blood (ISCG, 2018b). Out of these facilities, 155 of them constantly report through an Early Warning Alert, which has been raised 1127 times, and verified and assessed more than 99% of them (Health Sector Coordination Team, 2018). Unfortunately, the service provided by the organizations is limited to 12 hours a day, as organizations are supposed to leave the camps before sunset (Acaps, 2018).

Regarding Sexual and Reproductive Health, there are 100,000 expected births in 2018, from which 2.3% are expected to have obstetric complications. So far, only 22% of women are giving birth in health facilities (WHO, 2018).

Aware of the potential damage that a disease outbreak could have in the camps, the health sector has performed vaccination campaigns, conducted sanitary inspections in latrines and tube well areas, and provided lifesaving reproductive health kits (ISCG, 2018a). Naturally, the probability of outbreaks is considerably higher during the rainy season (Chan et al., 2018), especially vector borne diseases, diphtheria, Hepatitis A and E (Acaps, 2018). The main diseases that have reported from the Since August 2017 until March 31, 2018, are summarized in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Main diseases reported in health facilities in the Rohingya camps

Condition	Age under 5 years	Age over 5 years	Total
Unexplained Fever	44,402 (30%)	101,198 (70%)	145,600
Acute Respiratory Infection	74,897 (51%)	71,666 (49%)	146,563
Acute watery diarrhoea	27,632 (43%)	36,784 (57%)	64,416
Bloody diarrhoea	7954 (32%)	16,675 (68%)	24,416
Other diarrhoea	13,634 (55%)	10,984 (45%)	24,629
Suspected malaria	349 (4%)	9269 (96%)	9618
Acute jaundice syndrome	508 (32%)	1087 (68%)	1595
Suspected measles/rubella	910 (80%)	226 (20%)	1136

Mumps		1344 (34%)		2606 (66%)		3950
-------	--	------------	--	------------	--	------

Source: Data retrieved from the Health Sector Bulletin (Reformatted) (Health Sector Coordination Team, 2018, p. 5)

3.4.2. Governance Mechanisms

Governance mechanisms have a deep influence on every population living situation. In this case, the governmental body in charge of the Situation is the Rohingya Refugee Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC), whose mandate is to provide permits for site planning and development in the area, and to designate personnel to administrate the camps, called Camp in Charge (CiC). This administration is done jointly with the Bangladeshi army, which are also in charge of the biometrical registration of Rohingyas, and the provision of safety and security in the camps (ACAPS, 2017b).

Furthermore, the settlements are organized in blocks and sub blocks, represented by *Majhis*, a representative designated by the CiC to: solve small domestic disputes, be the first line of contact for the Refugees, and disseminate information. Their role is fundamental, as a Needs Assessment performed by World Vision (2017) showed that access to information is the Rohingyas main priority. Finally, religious leaders and Quran scholars happen to have some authoritarian position on the community, especially when it comes to conflict settlement, even though it is not formalized (ACAPS, 2017b).

3.4.3. Income

Even though humanitarian assistance covers several of the Rohingyas essential needs (i.e. hygiene kits, food items, etc.), an income is needed to complement the assistance and fulfil their needs. Unfortunately, reports show that activities related to income generation are the ones that expose Rohingyas to greatest violence (Akhter & Kusakabe, 2014).

In general terms, 66% of the sites have “irregular daily income” as their main source of income, due to their undocumented status (ACAPS, 2017b). When it comes to men, restriction in mobility affect the access to income generating activities; reports show that they are forced to pay fees to the Majhi and the CiC to get this access. Furthermore, due to their illegal status, their pay is between 30 and 50% lower than the one of local people, and they often get arrested by the police, as they work outdoors and therefore are easy to spot (Akhter &

Kusakabe, 2014). Consequently, women are normally the breadwinners on the camps. A study made by Akhter & Kusakabe (2014) on documented Rohingyas showed that women main occupation are: Domestic worker, hotel cook, camp volunteer, cloth seller, firewood seller, net waver, cleaner and sex worker. Unregistered Rohingya women mainly engage in firewood collection, which is also done by local women and therefore the tensions are high (ACAPS, 2017b). While doing so, women are vulnerable to trafficking and sexual abuse, often from CiC and the Police (Akhter & Kusakabe, 2014).

Several cash for work initiatives take place in the camps, but since the numbers are high, it does not reach the entire population, and since work is not always needed, it does not replace a steady income (ACAPS, 2017b).

3.4.4. Gender Based Violence (GBV)

Rohingya women have been experiencing GBV their entire life. Even though there is no certainty on how much violence these have women suffered, the home minister of Bangladesh mentioned a horrifying 90% rape rate among Rohingya women (Bdnews24.com, 2017). Even though this figure is based on pure speculation, various authors (Akhter & Kusakabe, 2014; Alam, 2017; Chan et al., 2018; Hutchinson, 2017; Long, 2013; Milton et al., 2017; Yaqub, 2017) and organizations (ACAPS, 2017a; Amnesty International, 2018; IFRC, 2016; IOM, 2018; ISCG, 2017; World Vision International, 2017) mention in their work high levels of GBV in the Rohingya community.

Within the Refugee Camps, women are often subjected to GBV; according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2018), more than 1000 GBV cases are being attended per week. Additionally, a study on GBV among Documented Rohingyas showed that out of 24 women, only four did not faced any kind of abuse from the Camp Authority (Akhter & Kusakabe, 2014). Also, at least 24 victims of trafficking have been identified and assisted (IOM, 2018).

4. METHODOLOGY OF DATA COLLECTION

4.1. Literature Review

A thorough search of relevant secondary data was performed, focusing on peer-reviewed academic journals, Operational Reports and Operational Guidelines/Frameworks from humanitarian aid organizations. Initially, the compiled information served as a theoretical basis to design the primary data collection process (i.e. Semi Structured Interviews). Later on, a snowballing process was performed, using the reference section listed in the analysed academic journals as well as additional material mentioned by the interviewees to complement the information.

4.2. Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were selected as a desired method of primary data collection, as this method allows the interviewer to have a deeper understanding of the interviewee's feelings and opinions about certain topics. Furthermore, giving the interviewee a few general questions to keep the conversation in the intended topic allows the interviewee to touch upon issues that would have not come up with a more structured data gathering method (Flowerdew & Martin, 2013, pp. 93). The interview guideline was first reviewed with a PhD student at Lund University, and it was piloted with a UNICEF practitioner who does not work in the camps but has a clear understanding of their work of their colleagues. Once their feedback was considered in the interview guide, one more pilot was done with a UNDP practitioner in similar conditions (for the final interview guide, as well as the reasoning for each one of the questions, See Annex B: Interview Guide).

A convenience sample was recruited, keeping as an only requisite for the interviewees to currently work in the camps and to have done it long enough to know thoroughly the role of their organization in the Operational Response, as well as the functioning of the camps they are working in. The organizations were contacted two weeks before the data gathering started, so that the interviewee could select a time that suited his/her schedule comfortably enough that they could express themselves without any time restrictions.

Five interviews were performed face-to-face, while four were held via skype. All of those interviews started with the reading of a disclaimer, which stated that the interviewee could

remain anonymous (five interviewees decided to remain anonymous), choose when to pause the interview or to finish the interview whenever he/she pleased, and decide to not be part of the study and therefore have all their data deleted at any point before the thesis is turned in. Furthermore, the disclaimer asks for permission for recording the interview and to send it to the thesis supervisor and the PhD student from Lund University for feedback and guidance (One of the interviewees chose not to be recorded but allowed me to share my notes. The rest agreed on information sharing). Subsequently, the interviews that were recorded were transcribed using an online free software (www.Otranscribe.com) and codified using NVivo Software (Version: 11.4.3 (2084)), whose license was provided by Lund University. This information was sent to the thesis supervisor for feedback and guidance.

Coding of the Interviews

For the codifying process, the information was initially coded using the following structure (Table 3). This initial hierarchy was used provisionally to do an initial categorization of the information, and it was based on some of the topics (Subnodes) that recurrently appeared during the interviewing process. These broader topics were then categorized in themes (Nodes) through two runs of coding (See Appendix C). Even though there are several other structures that could have been used for these recoding process, the author considers this one to be ideal, as it has enough categories to facilitate a thorough analysis. The information found under these themes was latter compared and contrasted with material found in the literature review.

For the present study, it was intended to get either approval or feedback from an Institutional Review Board or an Ethical Review Committee before the conducted research started. Nonetheless, from ten ethic review committees in Bangladesh, none of them focuses on studies under social science research (Sayem & Nury, 2013). In consequence, this approval could not be obtained. Nonetheless, informed consent was achieved with the aforementioned disclaimer.

The interviews lasted between 18 and 41 minutes, and took place in diverse spots, where the interviewee could meet conveniently. In each one of them, there were only two people present: the interviewer and the interviewee. As mentioned before, five out of the nine interviewees preferred to remain anonymous. In consequence, it is easier for the analysis to

keep all of the interviewees in anonymity. In Table 6, the pseudonyms corresponding to each interviewee and a quote from their interview, focusing on the role of the organization they work for, are found. The interview that could not be recorded corresponds to “Informant 1”; as the interviewer could only take notes, pieces of information are more likely to be missed or misunderstood in this interview.

Table 3. Pseudonyms for informants.

Pseudonymous	Organization	Recorded	Quote
Informant 1	1	No	The organization works in WASH and Gender.
Informant 2	2	Yes	“The organization works on Nutrition and WASH”.
Informant 3	3	Yes	“I work on Migration”.
Informant 4	4	Yes	“We are just focusing on the child situation”.
Informant 5	5	Yes	“We work across the seven sectors”.
Informant 6	6	Yes	“We implement projects for Women”.
Informant 7	7	Yes	“I work in the development sectors”.
Informant 8	8	Yes	“We are co-leading Child Protection”.
Informant 9	9	Yes	“We work in six sectors”.

5. INTERVIEW RESULTS

This section summarizes the results from the Interviews regarding the Operational Response, which, for this document, is defined as the set of activities and actions taken by stakeholders in order to provide support to people directly affected by the Rohingya Refugee Crisis. In that regard, it is important to keep in mind that in a complex situation such as the one being discussed several activities and actions might even create more harm than good on the eyes of the reader. Nonetheless, for this study, the opinion of the Informants will be the one judging if a certain action is or is not considered “support”.

5.1. Governance Mechanisms

The living conditions of the Rohingyas are heavily influenced by the governance mechanism in place, and therefore Informants referred to them often.

Government

The Government of Bangladesh has taken ownership of the Operational Response by establishing a mechanism where organizations submit ToRs to the Intersector Coordination Group for evaluation, before it decides if they can implement. This mechanism is explained in the following quote:

"We have a mechanism called Joint Responses Plan [...] is like a proposal of each NGO to the Sectors, and once the sectors approve, it will be submitted to the government [...] it will never be approved without being aligned or without having mainstreaming protection [...] If you don't get approval, you cannot implement" (Informant 9).

This mechanism also forces organizations to continuously meet the aforementioned standards: *"Strengthening our capacity as well [...] we make sure that the standards required by government and sectors are met"* (Informant 9).

Even when this mechanism shows commitment from the Government, it creates discomfort in the organizations, as it delays the operation (Informant 1,3,5,9). In theory, projects should be approved within 45 days, but it is taking 4 months (Informant 1). Some Informants referred to this issue:

"The projects are really short term [...] there is no agreement if this is a tactic to delay the response or is just like the government is so overwhelmed with the number of requests and they want to have an oversight." (Informant 5).

Another issue limiting the Operational Response is the Rohingyas legal status, as it prohibits them to access formal education or official employment (Informant 9). Regarding this issue, some Informants mentioned that it is unlikely that this situation will change; since Rohingyas do not have any access to services in Myanmar (i.e. Health Services, Education), the Government does not want organizations to provide any assistance that is beyond the strictly necessary for survival, as otherwise *"They will get comfortable and will never leave"*.

Furthermore, this legal status also affects the mechanisms for reporting cases of Gender Based Violence, which will be discussed on Section 5.3.1. Gender Issues.

Camp in Charge

Informants referred to the CiC as an influential body for the Operational Response, which is composed by males proceeding from local authorities and the Army (Informant 8,9). The CiC was mentioned when discussing the implementation of Gender related activities. Depending on the interest of the CiC, more or less emphasis will be given to certain issues:

“It depends on the CiC; how interested are they in responding to gender issues [...] in the next couple of months with the raining season coming up, now they also say “Ok, if we want to have safe heavens or places for shelter, then men can take shelter in mosques, but female can’t”” (Informant 2).

Majhi System

The CiC is also in charge of nominating the Majhis (Or block leaders) for each camp. This structure is explained in the following quote:

“The CiC will decide who will be the head of camps, the head of Majhi of the camps [...] in one camp, they have the head of Majhi, and in each camp they have block. Each block they have another Head of Majhi. Then, following that sub block, they also have the Majhi” (Informant 9).

All the Informants brought up that Majhis are male representatives hand-picked by the CiC, even though some Informants stated that the CiC is trying to implement female Majhis too (Informants 5,6). Additionally, Informant 4 mentioned that a few Majhis are from the host community. Informant 3 commented the following about the Majhi system:

“Block leaders they are not democratically selected. They are nominated. The one that comes from the village and is better connected becomes the Majhi. Sometimes these block leaders try to misuse their power; they are the one who are given the list of the distribution, so they put the name of the people who they are close with. Some people

miss things just because they don't have a good connection with the block leader"
(Informant 3).

When consulted about why traditional leaders are not selected as Majhis, Informant 3 stated:

"Normally in our society if you go to the mosque, the men are given responsibility and respect, but they don't have any power. Still they can influence [...] Bangladeshi Government is very concern about the influence of any religious organization getting into the camps" (Informant 3).

Other Governance Systems

When the Informants were consulted about female representation, some mentioned the female committees:

"We have female representatives for each block and they come together and discuss all the issues that they are facing [...] the female committees is like a neutral body next to it [The Majhi system], so they are not the decision makers, but they can show what is bothering them" (Informant 2).

However, Informant 8 clarified the following about these committees:

"There is potentially in some camps [...] a parallel structure where the leaders are nourished. This is still in transition, and they are newly in camps where the different agencies are working to provide room for female leadership as well. But it is not up and running at this point" (Informant 8).

Finally, Informant 5 was surprised when consulted about these committees as it was the first time he/she heard about it.

5.2. Humanitarian and Development Assistance

5.2.1. Collaboration

Due to the magnitude of the ongoing crisis, about 150 organizations are currently working on the field along several other stakeholders. Therefore, collaboration systems are key to achieve an effective and agile Operational Response, as well as a gender sensitive one. In this regard, collaboration coming from organizations with a mandate strongly related to gender is fundamental. As platforms for collaboration in gender issues, the following working groups were mentioned by the Informants:

- **Bangladesh Women Humanitarian Platform:** Attended by more than 30 organizations that are raising women and children issues.
- **Strategic Executive Group:** Attended by organizations co-leading the clusters.
- **Intersector Coordination Group:** Coordination group headed by IOM and UNHCR.
- **Gender and Humanitarian Action Working Group:** Focuses on ensuring that the Operational Response is gender sensitive.

In addition to the groups, the informants mentioned collaboration among different stakeholders in gender topics. Table 4 summarizes some examples of collaboration between two organizations (INGOs, NGOs, UN Agencies).

Table 4. Examples of collaboration between Organizations

Supported Org	Supporting Org	Dynamic	Result
Organization 1	Organization 6	Collaboration	Training on Gender
Organization 9	Organization 3	Support	Build temporary shelter for 8500 people
Organization 2			Scale up operations on the ground
Organization 5			
Smaller NGOs	Organization 2		Provide quality testing of water pumps

Interestingly, Informant 4, who works for the only National NGO interviewed, mentioned that besides sending their beneficiaries to get information about how to prepare for landslides, they do not collaborate with bigger organizations (i.e. INGOs and UN Agencies). The organization is being helped exclusively by the Army (Informant 4).

Moreover, collaboration between organizations and other actors (i.e. Government, service providers) was also mentioned by the informants. Some organizations (1,3,4,7) are collaborating with the Bangladeshi Government and other local service providers (i.e. Army, Public clinics, Fire Service), as described in the following quote:

“We are involving Bangladesh Army and Bangladesh Border Patrol [...] we are giving them training with our experts, so they know how the traffic can happen [...] We are also sending some of the officers to London for training on counter trafficking” (Informant 3).

When consulted specifically about collaboration between organization and the community (either the host community or the Rohingyas), the Informants exclusively mentioned either the Majhis or Religious leaders, both as part of the communication system between the organizations and the Refugees. Nonetheless, several Informants mentioned other forms of collaboration when explaining other topics. Some examples of this collaboration are mentioned below:

“The education sector is trying to put female teachers from the host community” (Informant 5)

“We are thinking on how we can use the host community to manage this crisis [...] we are planning to utilize the resources - host community women - so they can come and train Rohingya women volunteers” (Informant 6).

“We are creating a small center where they can come and interact with the old Rohingyas [From previous influxes] so it’s kind of mentee mentor relationship we are building there” (Informant 6).

5.2.2. Capacity Building

Capacity Building seems to be one of the main strategies taken by organizations to enhance the resilience of the Rohingyas. Due to the upcoming raining season, organizations give more emphasis in capacities related to preparedness and first response. In this regard, some examples mentioned by the informants are: training and equipping Rohingya volunteers in fire safety issues, training volunteers on early warning systems, sending information through girls and adolescents to their households on how to be prepared, and teaching women how to monitor and interpret weather signs from home. Furthermore, some organizations are also targeting children:

" We are preparing the children telling them: "Ok, it's going to rain[...] if you get lost you need to go to one of these centers and we are going to find your parents, so don't go with any strangers". They are empowered with information [...] at some point they could get lost and we know there are some concerns with trafficking and exploitation" (Informant 5).

5.2.3. Disaster Risk Management

As mentioned before, disastrous situations disproportionately affect women in relation to men. Furthermore, several research endeavours have evidenced an increment of Gender Based Violence in the aftermath of disasters. Consequently, all the Informants mentioned the upcoming Cyclone and Monsoon season as their organizations main priority, as the area has historically been affected by these events, even before several forestall areas were cut down for firewood and higher lands were occupied by Refugee Camps. Considering this, all the Informants were concerned about this year been even worse.

The main concern of the Informants in this regard is regarding infrastructure; while some organizations were reinforcing their infrastructure, others trust that the contingency plan elaborated by the Intersector Coordination Group is a possible solution. As part of this contingency plan, the following was mentioned:

"We are planning to do an assessment of the state of cyclone shelters in host communities which in addition of the pure engineering assessment will include if there

are for example toilets for both genders, space for breastfeeding mothers, etc.”
(Informant 7).

On the other hand, while organizations seem to believe that their infrastructure is built strongly enough to hold through the rainy season, other organizations seem more concerned:

“The services that we are giving, shelter and everything, is not sufficient to help them to get through this kind of trouble. We are planning to upgrade the shelters, but if not possible, is going to be a massacre in the month of April” (Informant 3).

Some organizations are also trying to ensure that their activities will keep on functioning during the rainy season:

“We are ensuring as much as possible that our services are either reinforced or that where we are establishing new, they are established in places where it is less affected” (Informant 8).

However, establishing infrastructure where it's less affected could be a challenge; considering that 30% of the area will potentially be flooded, the main priority, in terms of space at least, would be to relocate refugees (108,000 between refugees in flooding and landslide risk areas (Reuters, 2018)) and critical infrastructure (46% of the washrooms, 25% of the latrines, 23% of the water pumps, 32% of the clinics). Additionally, some Informants mentioned that space was already an issue even before the rainy season starts, which could become more complex in time considering that several of the tensions between the host community and the Rohingyas are regarding space.

Moreover, all of them are putting efforts in enhancing the preparedness of the Refugees, as well as to include women in volunteer groups. In this regard, Organization 7 consulted the community how to go about it, and the result was that for the community is more acceptable for women over 35 to be volunteers (Informant 7), while women under 35 could work in an internal structure (i.e. in their blocks), which is highly needed.

5.2.4. Daily Activities

As mentioned before, several researchers have shown an inverse correlation between income generation activities and gender violence. Furthermore, section 1.1.1. Dealing with Gender Issues showed how fostering female participation can challenge traditional structures, resulting in little steps towards gender equality. Therefore, it is important to analyse how Refugees are spending their time.

Regarding men, most of the Informants believe that men spend their day looking for a job (with the exception of Informant 1 who stated that men spend their day drinking tea and texting) as shown in the following quote:

“Men are trying to get some job [...] and they buy some fish, meat, eggs, because nobody gives in donation those kind of things” (Informant 4).

In this regard, several organizations are supporting their situation by implementing Cash for Work activities, even though there are limitations, being some of them that the amount of people is too big to provide jobs for everyone, that work is not always needed, among others.

For women, even when some organizations do Cash for Work activities for women, all the Informants concurred they spend their time inside the house doing house chores, unless it is strictly necessary (i.e. Collecting things on the distribution centers). Other common activities that were mentioned are: begging (Informant 4) and gathering resources such as water and firewood (Informant 2). When Informant 7 was consulted about their Cash for Work initiative, he/she stated:

“In the case of emergency employment, we do payment per hour instead of payment per load, to make sure that women and men are paid the same, similarly putting up working hours which mean that women are able to arrive after dawn and leave before sunset, etc.” (Informant 7).

Finally, Informant 5, stated the following about children’s day to day living:

“Children who are out of the school [...] they don’t have much to do [...] teenagers get super bored; they are in the tent; the girls don’t go out. The ones that go to school [...] they

love it [...] that keeps them busy, happy, gives them a sense of normality. Other children go to child friendly spaces [...] The children that does not have access to this? [...] They carry wood for cooking; they spend various hours a day carrying bamboos” (Informant 5).

5.3. Implementation of a Gender Sensitive Response

As mentioned before, all organizations recruit female staff in order to have greater access to Rohingya women and in some cases, a team can be composed 95% by female staff (Informant 8). In some organizations this is complemented by having a gender specialist working from either the ground, which is the preferred option, from Dhaka or from Regional Offices.

In addition, all organizations have Codes of Conduct and most of them use guidelines to ensure that both their staff and their implementing partners, are at the very least, not harming. In that regard, Informant 5 brought up that even though the policy has been implemented for a few years, they are still learning how to use it, and Informant 2 stated that he/she does believe that more policies or plans are needed, and that good examples on how to implement them are lacking.

Moreover, organizations try to foster the participation of women in their activities; either through gender parity of beneficiaries (i.e. equal number of volunteers), by focusing exclusively on women, or by prioritizing them as beneficiaries:

“Women head of households are usually at the top of the list [...] Disaster Affected, Extreme Poor, Women Head of Households, Households with elderly members, households with stable members” (Informant 7).

Furthermore, most of the organizations provide training in gender topics to their staff. For example, organization 1 provides Gender Basic Training (2 hours) to all of their staff, and a 3 to 5-day training to selected staff (Informant 1). Only Organization 4 do not provide any gender training to their staff:

“We are not working on neither frameworks nor training. We are just focusing on the child situation [...] We already have some training on how to manage emergency

situations and how you can take care of the needs of kids. We also have an emergency pedagogy training” (Informant 4).

A common strategy for organizations to address gender issues is to create Safe Spaces for women. In addition to a safe space, organizations also provide services on there (i.e. medical treatment, psychological support, charging stations, etc.), and often target a specific part of the female population (i.e. children, adolescent).

5.4. Challenges

5.4.1. Struggles regarding Implementation

As mentioned in section 3.1.2. Collaboration, considerable number of organizations working on the Operational Response make Direction and Coordination an issue, especially after The Rohingya Population Movement has been declared as the highest priority by INGOs and UN Agencies (Informants 3,5). This seems to create additional struggles:

“Is quite amazing for the WASH sector that at the beginning we had 4 or 5 traditional actors and now it expanded to 50 or something. But it means that it’s also very fragmented [...] A lot of agencies come for short periods [...] They will leave again, so that leaves a vacuum of people and agencies that will stay after” (Informant 2).

Besides coordination issues among organizations, the relation between them and their donors also seems to be tricky. Even when organizations are grateful for resources received from donors, implementing activities can be challenging:

“We receive a lot of funding, but you also need to implement it, but you have only X number of contractors and it’s not enough staff to do this” (Informant 2).

Furthermore, Informant 5 commented that even though organization has freedom about how to implement certain activities, the funding is still going towards short term, rather than medium. Finally, other Informants stated that donor visits often interrupt the implementation of the activities. For instance, Informant 3 used to receive donors visits 2 or 3 times in a month, and since the influx started, they have increased to 4 times a week. Unfortunately, every

struggle indirectly affects how organizations tackle certain issues (gender among them), as they have to focus their efforts in urgent ones.

In addition to the afore mention struggles, the most important struggle for organizations is related to the conservative culture of the Rohingyas, which disproportionately affects females. According to all Informants, the fact that Rohingya women are very conservative proposes a challenge itself as they do not want to leave their tent. It is worth mentioning that informants mentioned that this is either they are afraid of harassment or because their parents are, rather than their conservative nature:

“Women, especially teenage girls are kept inside the tents, they don’t go out and they are afraid, and also the parents don’t want to put them out for the fear of harassment [...] Specially at the beginning of the response they will hold the pee because they were too embarrassed to go out, they were really afraid” (Informant 5).

According Informant 6, this issue is also affecting their health, as they cook with fire inside the tent which constantly expose them to the smoke (besides the obvious fire hazard). In consequence, organization 6 is providing them with alternative fuels. Several strategies to address these issues are discussed in Section 3.3.2.

For Disaster Risk Management specialists, the conservative stand of Rohingya women propose a major challenge, as even if they might know exactly what to do in an emergency situation, they might still decide to remain home (Informant 7). In general terms, mobility restrictions also represent a big concern as women are not allowed in most of the places, while men can go everywhere:

“Men are outside; they go to the mosque [...] to the bazaar, the market nearby. Integrating with the host community [...] men can go everywhere” (Informant 9).

Several public spaces are restricted for women, such as mosques and markets (Informant 1,2,6), which represents a problem for the organizations as these places are also used for disseminating information (Informant 3). In this regard, organization 6 is trying to establish a

mosque for females (Informant 6). In general terms, the combination of factors makes Disaster Risk Management quite complex:

“The combination with poor radio coverage, electricity among the population and the seclusion of women is creating a situation that making sure that women have equal access through the supporting of services is very challenging and also probably it will be even more challenging for women currently carrying pregnancies resulting from rapes” (Informant 7).

5.4.2. Struggles regarding Gender

All the informants acknowledged the importance of addressing gender issues on the camps. Nonetheless, refugees seem to have a hard time understanding this need:

‘In a disaster situation, everyone is in need, so everyone’s question was “why specifically we need to consider?”. But over the period, we manage to make people understand that 56% of the population are women and they are the most vulnerable people” (Informant 6).

Furthermore, Informants mentioned that most of the female refugees are heavily traumatized as a result of the violence they have suffered or witnessed, and therefore there is an increasing need for psychological support.

One of the issues that most concern the organizations are the huge number of pregnant women (80,000 according to Informant 6), most of them as a result of rape (60-70% according to Informant 6). In consequence, organizations try to recruit female staff to provide assistance to females, as they do not feel comfortable with men, which is increasingly difficult because they too feel insecure working in the camps. Regarding pregnancies, Informants mentioned that the numbers are far too high to be a result only from rapes. In this regard, Informant 1 believes it is due to a lack of family planning:

“There is a lack of family planning from the Rohingya people. On the eyes of the parents, having more kids means a bigger chance of getting income” (Informant 1).

However, other Informants have a more disturbing explanation to the phenomenon:

“You will notice that every family have 6 to 7 family members. Every year they got pregnant because if the women is pregnant, there is less likelihood that she will be raped, or assaulted” (Informant 6).

Independently of what has caused the pregnancies, the high numbers represent another dimension of needs that are not present in the camps, as pregnant women need a special kind of care that is not currently present on the camps (Informant 6). As a result, women are often forced to give birth in the open and then get rid of the child soon after they are born (Informant 1,4).

Moreover, all the Informants mentioned violence and harassment as big issues in the camps: *“Violence is very high, and every day we have people coming saying that a number of women have been raped, number of women have been assaulted, even by intimate partners”* (Informant 6). In this regard, even if organizations can only collect information and bring the affected person to the Friendly Spaces, the police can take action:

“It is recorded, but we are not sharing with anyone [...] The Myanmar side says that if there is any evidence, if we can show that these things have happen, then will be Court Martial [...] There is evidence of huge amount of exploitation of the women and rape. Children also [...] the police is supporting, so if there is any report of harassment or domestic violence immediately that will be taken very seriously” (Informant 3).

Nonetheless, it seems to remain unclear how this system works; due to the Rohingyas legal status, they cannot get any legal support, even though Informant 6 mention that they might get some support through different mechanisms in place, all of them not officially legal.

6. DISCUSSIONS

The results section above discussed several topics in four main categories: Governance Mechanisms, Human & Development Assistance, Implementation of a Gender Sensitive Response and Challenges. On the following sections, each category will be discussed from a gender point of view, in order to answer the two initial research questions:

- Are gender mainstreaming strategies being implemented in the Rohingya Refugee Crisis?
- Do organizations prepare their staff to work with gender mainstreaming in the organizational response for the Rohingya Refugee Crisis? If so, How?

6.1. Governance mechanisms

As mentioned before, the governance mechanisms have a strong influence over the life of the refugees, especially since they are confined to the camps. The main governance actor is the Government of Bangladesh, who has allowed Rohingyas to settle in Bangladeshi territory despite not recognizing them as refugees. In that regard, this posture make Bangladesh an example of a country that have installed restrictive policies and practices to guarantee that asylum seekers will eventually voluntarily return to their territory of origin (Edwards, 2005), such as: restricted mobility, prohibition to own property, access to formal education and welfare denied, prohibition to engage in income generating activities, among others (Alam, 2017; Milton et al., 2017). As mentioned by the Informants, this issue represents a dilemma; on one hand, organizations are not allowed to give Rohingyas everything they need, as otherwise *“they will get comfortable and then they will never leave”*, and on the other hand, they are denied any tool to provide for themselves. The results of this complex situation are also undesirable; Rohingyas are forced to engage in begging, sex work and illegal employment, which create an increasing tension with the host community. According to Akhter & Kusakabe (2014), women are often the breadwinners of the household, as working indoors lowers the chance of getting arrested by the police. As evidence in the results, this employment situation often involves violence and sexual harassment.

Beyond the policies implemented by the Government of Bangladesh, it seems to show commitment on the matter, evidenced by actions such as the Joint Response Plan, which intends to have a properly structured Operational Response. Furthermore, the fact that several organizations are advising the Government shows some degree of openness. However, it remains unclear on how the Government considers this advice, as key components in the Joint Response Plan are less emphasized on the actions of other relevant actors without noticeable repercussions. For instance, it is unlikely that a project would be included in the Joint Response Plan if it is not aligned with Protection components (i.e. gender). Nonetheless, CiC has only recently started contemplating gender (Informant 2),

despite evidencing the implementation of gender mainstreaming activities for more than six months. In that regard, it seems that the Bangladeshi Government has two incongruent standards on the Operational Response: one for the organizations and another for what its officials implement.

Not much was mentioned about the CiC in the interviews, with the exception that they are influential stakeholders and that they are all male government and army officials. In the literature, the CiC was mentioned by Akhter & Kusakabe (2014), who evidenced in their study that Rohingyas often had to bribe the Camp Authorities in order to go out and look for work. Furthermore, the study mentioned that out of 24 Rohingya women, 21 were victims of physical, sexual and/or verbal abuse from CiC personnel. Nonetheless, since the study was conducted four years ago, this situation might have changed. This, unfortunately, is not the case for the Majhi system.

As mentioned by Informant 3, there has been cases where Majhis abuse their power. Even when the Majhi system has proven to become easily corrupted (it was first implemented in 1991, and then abandoned, for this same reason (ACAPS, 2017b)), the large number of Refugees make more personalized methods hard to implement. According to Informant 5, the main problem with the Majhi system is that refugees don't trust the information provided by them, which was also mentioned by Acaps (2017b), who stated that 17% of the interviewees trust the information coming from the Majhis. Nonetheless, since any action taken against the Majhis could mean that the refugees can stop appearing on the lists for distributions, it seems difficult for refugees to improve this situation. Even when no incidents between Majhis and female Rohingyas were brought up, there is a well-documented antecedent, including but not limited to forcing Rohingyas to sell food rations, asking for bribes, imprisonment of male refugees, and sexual abuse (Akhter & Kusakabe, 2014). In addition, Informant 4 mentioned that some of the Majhis are from the host community, which could potentially be related to corruption, abuse, or human trafficking.

The only alternative governance mechanism mentioned were the female committees (Informant 2), which appears to be a structure potentially found in some camps (Informant 8), reason why Informant 5 has never heard about it. Independently of where it is implemented, it appears to be a neutral body next to the Majhis, which might not always be taken into

consideration. In that regard, following the example of the Female Committees in Pakistan (Oxfam, 2012b), active discussions about the need, the purpose and the benefits of having a more gender inclusive governance mechanism can be beneficial.

6.2. Humanitarian and Development Assistance

In terms of collaboration, more than 150 organizations have found a way to work together, mainly relying on working groups. Nonetheless, the service provided seems to suffer some fragmentation, as some organizations with less resources provide an inferior service compared to the ones with more (i.e. organization 2 is replacing water pumps of other organizations for ones of better quality). This issue was also mentioned in the Health Sector Bulletin (Health Sector Coordination Team, 2018). Additionally, several organizations are present on the ground during the emergency period, which will create a vacuum of needs to be filled by the organizations remaining on the ground (Informant 2). Considering these two issues (fragmentation of the services and short-term emergency assistance) duplication of efforts will be hard to avoid. Moreover, since the remaining organizations will quickly have to scale up their operation, the sense of urgency will remain in the medium term. Unfortunately, as mentioned by several informants, since gender is not considered a main priority, it might remain as a secondary issue in the medium term, unless the importance of it is ratified.

Collaboration between international organizations, national organizations and UN agencies seem to happen frequently. While some organizations received support to scale up their Operation, other provided services to support smaller organizations (i.e. training quality testing of pumps). Remarkably, the only National NGO that was interviewed claimed not to be currently collaborating with any organization, even when it fits the profile that organizations target for support, as they are part of the country's local capacities. However, since organization 4 does not consider needing support, they did not seek it, and big organizations did not reach to offer their support either. In that regard, probably several smaller organizations face a similar situation. However, the fact that organization 4 does not provide training in gender topics to their staff, and it was still able to implement without being aligned with the Intersector Coordination Group is noticeable. It might be that since organization 4 is a National NGO, the Government of Bangladesh is already familiar with their work, or that it was missed by the ISCG for being a small organization, since their support

consists on one Safe Space for Children. Yet, since organization 4 is working in the education sector, it should contemplate protection components, such as gender.

Collaboration between organizations and other service providers (i.e. fire department, police, etc.) was mentioned as a key topic. Since the population of the area has grown tremendously since August, and the situation is far more complex than before, there is an immediate need to develop the capacities of services providers, as well as to expand their coverage. Even when the situation is complex, there is a window of opportunity in building the capacities of services providers in gender issues. In that regard, considering the high value that some trainings provided by big organizations have, not only in practical terms but also regarding future employment opportunities, could be a good entry point to enact positive change. Also, the case of the Response and Reconstruction stages in Indonesia, after the earthquake of 2009 offers a good example to follow (Oxfam, 2012a).

Interviews evidenced that collaboration with the local community is highly valued, especially from the point of view of the Education and Protection sectors, who see potential in the host community as key stakeholders for integration (Informants 5,6). In that regard, organization 6 mentioned relying on both Bangladeshi and Rohingya women, which could be promising in terms of integration, social cohesion, and empathy with the situation that female Rohingyas are going through. Interestingly enough, that space is not provided for male Rohingyas, as confirmed by Informant 6. As mentioned by Enarson & Pease (2016) when discussing the concept of patriarchy, which entails that unequal relations of power exist between women and men, but also between men and men, when one is in disadvantage to another. Without going in too much detail, men to men patriarchy also influences the interaction between men and women, as men often try to claim their position on their community by oppressing women (Austin, 2016). Providing a similar space for Bangladeshi and Rohingya males to integrate could potentially cascade in a scenario with less gender issues, as a result of less tensions between the aforementioned groups.

Besides the efforts focused on developing the capacity of the staff of organizations and other service providers, there are considerable resources invested in developing the capacities of refugees; either focusing on income generating activities or in enhancing resilience. Regarding income generating activities, several organizations have offered training for female Rohingyas

to generate income, which Informant 6 mentioned as a critical factor in addressing gender. Due to the delicate position in which Rohingya Refugees found themselves in, it is obvious that any activity that can generate income in a dignified manner, is positive. Furthermore, the aforementioned example of the Oxfam intervention on Pakistan (Oxfam, 2012b), as well as many other studies, will argue that including women in the labor force of the household is indeed a step towards gender equality. Nonetheless, Jackson (1996) argues that the approach of investing to build the capacities of women in order to achieve development instead of building their capacities as an end itself is a way of oversimplifying gender issues. In other words, gender issues are not poverty issues, even though the correlation might exist, and therefore it is important to clarify that building capacities of women will not solve gender issues. On the other hand, capacity building strategies focusing on Disaster Risk Management seem to be purposely instrumental; since women spend most of their time indoors, they have considerably higher risk of being caught up in a fire or a natural disaster, which will be even higher when the rainy season starts. In consequence, several organizations focus on keeping gender parity on trainings as much as possible, not only all the interviewed organizations, but also organizations with a long story of working with natural disasters in the area (i.e. the IFRC). Due to the urgency that organizations face to reach more women, some of them have understood better the societal dynamics of the Rohingya (i.e. women over 35 are more socially accepted to be volunteers than women under 35). This understanding can lead to more effective strategies, not only in terms of protection, but in terms of implementing a gender sensitive response, as a lower probability of a backlash situation materializing can mark the difference between a female individual evacuating in an emergency situation or not. It is worth noticing that this kind of consultation is highly valuable to achieve a gender sensitive response; according to Enarson & Pease (2016) as incorporating the vision of men, women and children in the operational response can significantly reduce gender based violence.

It has been widely discussed in the literature how women are disproportionately affected by disasters in relation to men. With the upcoming rainy season, the relocation of more than 100,000 refugees will be needed, along with a significant percentage of critical infrastructure. In consequence, if Informants mentioned that women already had limited access to appropriate infrastructure before the rainy season started (i.e. latrines for women, health clinics, women friendly spaces, etc.), it is logical to assume that this access will be even more restricted when it starts. Furthermore, the risk of disease outbreaks will grow considerably

with the floods, which could have significant consequences, especially for vulnerable groups such as pregnant women. Remarkably, all informants seem aware that women are considerably more vulnerable in this particular situation, especially taking into account that they spend most of their time inside and that they are afraid of what might happen if they leave their tent (Informant 5), which hopefully was thoroughly considered when elaborating the contingency plan that several organizations are putting their trust on. Even when the details of the contingency plan itself were not yet revealed while the data collection process was in place, Informant 7 did mention that assessments on the cyclone shelters were being checked to see if they have adequate infrastructure for women, such as separate bathrooms and spaces for breastfeeding. Also, children are being thought how to act when the rainy season starts, in order to avoid accidents as much as possible. Moreover, the role that women under 35 can have in their blocks and households will be critical to cope with the rainy season on the next months (Informant 7), as well as the role of girls and adolescent women as information providers of their households. The latter can also have positively impact on the long term, as they will know what to do in future occasions during the rainy season. Unfortunately, as mentioned by Informant 3, a significant amount of damage is expected independently of the actions that all the relevant stakeholders might plan. This damage will again, most certainly affect women disproportionately in relation to men.

There have been significant efforts from several organizations to provide activities for the Refugees to engage during the day. These activities also target a wide range of individuals; women have several spaces meant for them to socialize in a safe environment, some capacity building activities and some income generation ones, such as cash for work. For the latter, some organizations have contemplated ways to adapt cash for work activities for women, such as paying per hour and not per load, working hours that allow women to be already at their household before dawn and sunset, among others (Informant 7). Men, on the other hand, have less activities being offer by organizations, but on the other hand they have more spaces that were they are allowed to be, such as mosques and nearby bazars (Informant 9). Children from different ages have also several spaces that they can reach to, even when some organizations have stated that adolescent girls are often prohibited to leave the tent, as their parents are afraid of them being harassed (Informant 4). Unfortunately, there are two main challenges that make everyday living for Refugees quite hard: First, the restrictive policies that the Government of Bangladesh has imposed on them deny them to have legal employment,

formal education and free mobility. Second, since the numbers are too big, even when there are several organizations providing Cash for Work initiatives for Refugees, only a small percentage of the population can access them. Nonetheless, even for the ones that can access Cash for Work activities, the general lack of constant work makes their life's unstable, as there might be work one month and then nothing for the following two (Informant 3). As discussed by several authors (Austin, 2016; Enarson & Pease, 2016), this general lack of societal structure, combined with the alteration of traditional roles, where men are not the main breadwinners of the household, can potentially have a similar effect of the aforementioned discussion about patriarchy, in terms of violence.

6.3. Implementation of a Gender Sensitive Response

There are several strategies that organizations have decided to rely on in order to achieve a gender sensitive response. Some of the principal ones would be the incorporation of female staff and gender specialists, the elaboration of documents (i.e. policies, frameworks, codes of conduct, etc.) and the impartation of gender trainings.

With the exception of Organization 4, all the interviewed organizations have a gender specialist, either in the Cox Bazar or in Dhaka, whose task is to ensure that the operational response is contemplating gender in everyday activities and are therefore aligned with policies and standards of protection that organizations have. For the organizations that do not have a gender specialist on the ground, this constant assessment can rarely be done, as the gender specialist in Dhaka is not working exclusively in the Rohingya Refugee Crisis, but in all the projects that the organizations have in Bangladesh. When considering the number of projects that organizations have in Bangladesh, the words of Informant 5 becomes evident; organizations without a gender specialist in the Cox Bazar struggle to consider gender in all of their activities (Informant 5). Furthermore, most of the organizations try to keep a high number of employed female staff, as a strategy to get closer to female refugees and provide them a safe and comfortable environment. As mentioned in the aforementioned example of Pakistan (Oxfam, 2012b), this strategy can be highly beneficial for the operational response itself, especially if females are both in the junior and senior level of the response, as the senior level can ensure that information coming from the field is in fact considered. Surprisingly, some of the gender departments in big organizations can have more than 95% females in their staff (Informant 7). Even when it is generally positive to have a high number of overall female

practitioners on the ground, as they can correlate better with the problems that women are facing, a similar number of male practitioners are needed in order to deal with gender issues. Taking into account a local context where men are generally in charge of decision making processes, it is logical to assume that they will also feel more comfortable discussing issues with male practitioners, even when the topic in the discussion is gender. Coming back to the example of Pakistan, it is important to have proper discussions about gender with the community and the relevant stakeholders, rather than lectures. For those discussions to happen, participants need to feel that they are in a safe environment where they can speak freely, which in this case is among men.

Independently of what is the specific role in a certain organization that a practitioner can have, he/she is either forced or strongly encouraged to take into account several frameworks, guidelines and manuals. In addition, organizations provide codes of conduct for their practitioners, where clauses state what is acceptable and what is not in a certain organization. As confirmed by the Informants, these documents do not only apply directly for practitioners of the organizations, but also for any implementing partner or service provider that has been hired by the organization. Taking into account that adopting this kind of policies is also a common practice for major donors, it is fair to say that most of the project proposals would somehow contemplate gender. The effectiveness of these policies and frameworks has been a debate for decades, as many experts consider gender to just be present as a requirement for getting the implementation approval, rather than being considered as a crosscutting issue (Fisher, 2016; Foran et al., 2012; Mikkelsen et al., 2002; Woodford-Berger, 2004). The opinion of the Informants in this particular topic differs widely; Informant 8 mentioned that the organization and its implementing partners sticks to the guidelines strongly, Informant 5 that the guidelines have been there for several years, but practitioners are still trying to understand how to incorporate them to their activities, and Informant 2 stated that there are too many guidelines, while examples of how to properly implement are generally missing. While there are organizations that have an overwhelming number of reference documents, there are others that do not have any and that can significantly improve their operation by at least considering one, as was evidenced in the aforementioned example of Indonesia (Oxfam, 2012a). Generally, it is difficult to contemplate such a complex issue with guidelines, as context plays a key role. Nonetheless, experts recommend having frameworks, guidelines and manuals as dynamic documents instead of treating them as “silver bullets” that would fit a

situation no matter when and where, meaning that each document should be adapted and moulded for a specific situation (Becker, 2014; Blakeman, 2011; Caroline, 1992; Charvériat, 2000).

Developing the capacities of practitioners with trainings and workshops is one of the most common strategies for organizations to prepare their staff for the field. Regarding trainings focusing on gender, only Organization 4 mentioned not to have trainings on gender for their staff, while the rest of them seem to give them a basic training on gender (between 2 and 3 hours) to all the staff, and an advanced one for selected staff (3 to 5 days training). In addition, several organizations conduct trainings and workshops on the field, which are generally open for every organization, such as the one conducted between Organization 1 and Organization 6. The latter of this two organizations also provides support for stakeholders in gender topics by providing trainings and tools, even though it does not seem to “offer” these services, which could be the reason why Organization 4 was not aware. Even when developing the capacities of the staff is necessary, especially regarding crosscutting issues, experts have been critical about the content and nature of the gender trainings (Blakeman, 2011; Fisher, 2016; Mikkelsen et al., 2002). The main issue regarding 2 or 3-hour trainings covering gender issues is that most of the concepts, which are essentially complex, are simplified in order to fit the time frame. As a result, practitioners have the feeling of understanding gender issues perfectly and furthermore, having the false idea that gender issues are indeed that simplified version they learned about in their training. Naturally, since those trainings focus on the roles of women before, during and after the disaster, as well as the needs that might arise from gender differences, practitioners would have a false idea that gender issues are in fact, easy to fix problems (Fisher, 2016). Even when longer trainings are more comprehensive when it comes to their content, some major issues remain, such as treating gender as a dichotomy between men and women instead of a continuum (depending on masculinities, contextual issues, among others), seeing gender as universal and ahistorical phenomenon, and understanding culture and religion as inviolable principles (Enarson & Pease, 2016; Fisher, 2016). Summarizing, even though developing capacities of practitioners can be widely positive, providing trainings where simplified complex issues (i.e. gender) are replaced by easy to grasp concepts will always fail to meet the needs at some point. Unfortunately, since gender dynamics change drastically depending on the context, there are only some general issues regarding gender that can be covered with a “one size fits all” kind of training. Most of the

training that field practitioners will need on a specific situation will require a previous thorough analysis of that specific situation.

6.4. Challenges

The implementation of an operational response in a crisis as big as the Rohingya Refugee Crisis is a complex task, where several challenges need to be continuously overcome. Even when the Informants mentioned several common issues (i.e. lack of staff for using all the gathered funding, donors focusing on the short rather than the medium term, high turnover levels), the main one affecting the implementation seems to be how conservative the Rohingya community is. As mentioned before, there has been some attempts to understand the local context, such as consulting the community of what is considered more acceptable in order to plan accordingly. In that regard, consulting different actors in the community, as well as other relevant stakeholders (i.e. CiC, host community, service providers) about several topics can be positive to grasp the complexity of such situation (Bergström, Uhr, & Frykmer, 2016). This mechanism of consulting different points of view on the same situation was also mentioned by Enarson & Pease (2016) as key to achieve a gender sensitive response. Moreover, in a culturally and religiously conservative environment such as the Rohingya camps, where all the people are in immediate need, it is important to have active discussions with the community to make them understand why there is a need to achieve a gender sensitive response, such as the one previously mentioned by Informant 6 (See Section 5.4.2. Issues Regarding Gender).

Unfortunately, based on the available reports and the interviews of the Informants, even if there is an understanding of the needs, the levels of violence and harassment indicate that a significant part of the population does not seem to reflect upon the matter (or at least enough to cause a constant state of fear in more than one million refugees). As a result of that fraction of the population, which is not only composed by Refugees, a significant part of the population is heavily traumatized and lives constantly in fear of harassment, either on them or in their significant others. Unfortunately, due to the restrictive policies in place, it still remains unclear if these cases can be reported with the certainty that the cases will be taken seriously with no possible backlash to the informants or not. While some Informants have mentioned that the Police and the Army are providing services to the camps, and furthermore, that these kinds of issues are being taken seriously, others mentioned that even though they know about several

cases of violence and harassment, even though Rohingyas can get some kind of legal support, it remains unclear how is that support provided.

One of the most surprising results of the interviews was that female Rohingyas are getting pregnant on purpose, in order to avoid this kind of harassment. Remarkably, this was one of the issues where a lack of thorough understanding of local context led to contradicting verdicts from the Informants; while several Informants explained the high rate of pregnancies with this particular practice, one of them mentioned that *“on the eyes of the parents, having more kids meant a higher chance of getting income”* (Informant 1). This example clearly shows how potentially an operational response can fail to address gender issues as a result of a superficial understanding of local context, as what could seem to be a matter of family planning and greed on a first glance, turned out to be a matter of safety. Unfortunately, in addition to these periodic intentional pregnancies, according to all Informants there is also a very high rate of pregnancies resulting from rapes. Therefore, to achieve a gender sensitive response, the Rohingya Refugee Crisis will have to be scaled up to a new dimension in order to cover the special needs of pregnant women and new born children (i.e. delivering facilities, especial nutrition for both the mother and the child, quick access to emergency services, continuous psychological support, among others), which have not been met yet (Health Sector Coordination Team, 2018). In consequence, only 22% of women are giving birth in health facilities, while others either have birth on the open (Informant 1). In addition, considering that both pregnant women and new born children are very vulnerable groups that require especial treatment and attention, external issues such as disease outbreaks can have a much more devastating effect if they are not properly taken care off. Therefore, there is a need to take care of them in the short term. However, on the medium term, organizations might have to address this issue in a less symptomatic way; which means not focusing only on the pregnancies themselves, but on the source of violence and harassment that currently exists in the camps and in the host community, and that is causing female to feel to insecure, that they prefer being constantly pregnant in order to not get harassed. In that regard, it is fair to state that the situation will not change until the violence and harassment issues are dealt in the camps, at least until women feel safe enough to not engage in that practice.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the following section, conclusions are drawn for each one of the categories previously used in the Results and Discussion sections (Governance Mechanisms, Human & Development Assistance, Implementation of a Gender Sensitive Response and Challenges). Additionally, suggestions that could potentially help organizations achieve a more gender sensitive operational response for the Rohingya Refugee Crisis will be made. Finally, the two research questions will be answered:

- Are gender mainstreaming strategies being implemented in the Rohingya Refugee Crisis?
- Do organizations prepare their staff to work with gender mainstreaming in the organizational response for the Rohingya Refugee Crisis? If so, How?

Governance mechanisms are represented by the following main actors: The Government of Bangladesh, The CiC, and the Majhis. The Government of Bangladesh is, by far, the most influential actor in the camps, as the restrictive policies imposed on the Refugees heavily shapes the dynamics on them. From a gender perspective, one of the main consequences of these restrictive policies is the situation derived from the lack of formal employment where females are exposed to violence and harassment. Moreover, several female Rohingyas have engaged in prostitution and sex trade in order to cover the needs of their household. Unfortunately, there is reason to believe that both the CiC and the Majhis could be part of this system, also derived from the restrictive policies.

It is positive, however, that the Government seems to trust the Intersectoral Coordination Group up to a certain degree. In that regard, it would be positive to have the Intersectoral Coordination Group as an advisor of the Government about how certain mechanisms are implemented (i.e. the CiC). By doing so, some issues could be contemplated, such as having female representatives in the CiC, inclusion of either female Majhis or the formal recognition of Female Committees and complementary communications systems to balance the power of the Majhis.

Furthermore, collaboration and support between several stakeholders are influencing the operational response positively. It was discussed that by training service providers (i.e. fire department, police), the window of opportunity could be utilized to mainstream gender in

these institutions. The same applies to National NGOs; if bigger actors actively engage with them and offer their support. Collaboration with the local community (Bangladeshi, Old Rohingya and Refugees) could be promising in terms of integration, solidarity and understanding. Nonetheless, the same interaction that was fostered for females, should be fostered for males. The lack of this space evidences a need for a more comprehensive understanding of gender issues, which could help redirect the support on protection and gender. Another promising way to redirect efforts is by consulting different groups in the community to understand the local context better (women, men, marginalized, etc.) and adjust the activities accordingly (i.e. women under 35 working inside their blocks, and over 35 outside their blocks). Several strategies related to gender can be more successful if women feel that their actions are acceptable in their community, and therefore the chances of backlashing are lower.

Moreover, the practitioners working in the camps are key stakeholders in the implementation of a gender sensitive response, and therefore any efforts to enhance their capacities (i.e. trainings, workshops) and any documents guiding their work are just as important. Even when organizations can benefit from incorporating gender specialists and female staff, by incorporating also male gender specialists and staff in the protection groups, both males and females can be approached in a way they feel comfortable enough to discuss freely. Furthermore, having male and female practitioners in every level of the organization is ideal for findings to transcend.

It was mentioned that while some organizations have too many guidelines, policies and frameworks, others don't have any. In that regard, it is beneficial for organizations lacking these guiding documents to incorporate one in their operations, while organizations that have many could benefit more from finding successful examples of how to implement. When selecting which documents to use, it is desirable to find general documents and adapting them to the organization using them, and to the local context.

Regarding gender trainings, the oversimplification of complex aspects should be avoided, as it communicates the wrong message to the trainees and give them false ideas of being knowledgeable about a topic that they are not. Therefore, it is crucial to understand that a

gender training should take enough time for practitioners to properly understand the key concepts, which most likely will not be one 2-3-hour session.

Regarding the challenges that practitioners face during implementing, the most complex ones seems to be derived from the conservative culture of the Rohingyas. These issues can be tackled by consulting different groups of the community and see what is considered acceptable and what is not, in order to shape the operational response accordingly. Naturally, significant improvements can be achieved by having discussions with the local community explaining the reason why organizations suggest a certain activity and listening to why the community finds that odd. Finally, since violence and harassment are already creating a new growing dimension of needs in the operational response, stakeholders need to prioritize gender in their agenda, regardless of what is consider the main priority at a given time. In this document, there are several suggestions aiming for various stakeholders on some ways of doing so.

Based on the aforementioned, the answer to the question “Are gender mainstreaming strategies being implemented in the Rohingya Refugee Crisis?” would be yes, but perhaps it has not been addressed with the urgency that the situation requires by neither the organizations, the CiC, nor the Government. Unfortunately, it is clear that gender is not a priority, nor will it be in the medium term, unless drastic changes are made. Gender is a crosscutting issue that, due to gender mainstreaming strategies, is present in every project proposals in most of the organizations and UN agencies. Yet, it seems that it is addressed like a whim, rather than an essential need. Therefore, it seems hard to disregard authors being critical about the role of gender mainstreaming, as it is indeed described as a priority in manuals and proposals, but that priority seems to vanish when it needs to be implemented. Regarding the question: “Do organizations prepare their staff to work with gender mainstreaming in the organizational response for the Rohingya Refugee Crisis? If so, how?” the answer is yes, through several mechanisms that were discussed previously in this document. However, there is still a need for a proper understanding of gender dynamics and local context in order to achieve better results, as well as an improvement on the tools used by organizations, such as documents and gender trainings. Again, if gender is prioritized accordingly to the real needs, these mechanisms will necessarily have to improve, as the gap

between the capacities that practitioners need to address gender the way they are doing it now, and the capacities needed to address gender properly will become evident.

Bibliography

- Acaps. (2018). *Rohingya Crisis: Ethnic Cleansing*. Retrieved from <http://uscampaignforburma.org/learn/14-learn/132-rohingya.html>
- ACAPS. (2017a). MYANMAR AND BANGLADESH Rohingya displacement and protection crisis. *ACAPS Briefing Note*, (September), 1–5.
- ACAPS. (2017b). *Rohingya Crisis Situation Analysis*.
- Akhter, S., & Kusakabe, K. (2014). Gender-based Violence among Documented Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh. *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, 21(2), 225–246. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0971521514525088>
- Alam, J. (2017). The Rohingya of Myanmar: theoretical significance of the minority status. *Asian Ethnicity*, 19(2), 1–31. <http://doi.org/10.1080/14631369.2017.1407236>
- Amnesty International. (2018). *Remarking Rakhine State*. Retrieved from www.amnesty.org
- Anker, D. (2000). Refugee Protection , Gender-Based Violence and Trafficking in Persons. In Harvard Law School (Ed.), *In Defense of the Alien 23* (pp. 129–137).
- Aung, T. T., & Naing, S. (2018). Myanmar says it has verified fewer than 400 Rohingya for repatriation. Retrieved from <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-myanmar-rohingya-repatriation/myanmar-says-it-has-verified-fewer-than-400-rohingya-for-repatriation-idUSKCN1GQ1RX>
- Austin, D. (2016). Hyper-Masculinity and Disaster: The Reconstruction of Hegemonic Masculinity in the Wake of Calamity. In E. Enarson & B. Pease (Eds.), *Men, Masculinities and Disaster* (pp. 45–56). New York: Routledge Studies in Hazards, Disaster Risk and Climate Change.
- Bdnews24.com. (2017, September 14). Many Rohingya women are raped in Myanmar, Bangladesh Home Minister Says. *bdnews24.com*. Retrieved from <https://bdnews24.com/bangladesh/2017/09/14/many-rohingya-women-are-raped-in-myanmar-bangladesh-home-minister-says>
- Becker, P. (2014). Science and Change. *Sustainability Science*, 197–205. <http://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-444-62709-4.00008-7>
- Bergström, J., Uhr, C., & Frykmer, T. (2016). A Complexity Framework for Studying Disaster Response Management. *Journal of Contingencies & Crisis Management*, 24(3), 124–135. <http://doi.org/10.1111/1468-5973.12113>
- Bhadra, S. (2017). Women in Disasters and Conflicts in India: Interventions in View of the Millennium Development Goals. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Science*, 8(2),

- 196–207. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s13753-017-0124-y>
- Blakeman, K. (2011). JIIM training (joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational): challenges in the geographic combatant commands. *CALL Newsletter*, 11(23), 150.
Retrieved from <http://cgsc.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15040coll4/id/37>
- Caroline, N. L. (1992). Disaster Response: Principles of Preparation and Coordination. *JAMA: The Journal of the American Medical Association*, 268(16), 2306–2307.
<http://doi.org/10.1001/jama.1992.03490160176037>
- Chan, E. Y. Y., Chiu, C. P., & Chan, G. K. W. (2018). Medical and health risks associated with communicable diseases of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh 2017. *International Journal of Infectious Diseases*. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijid.2018.01.001>
- Charvériat, C. (2000). Natural Disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean: An Overview of Risk. *SSRN Electronic Journal*, (October), 104. <http://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1817233>
- Coppola, D. P. (2011). Risk and Vulnerability. In *Introduction to International Disaster Management* (pp. 139–207). <http://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-382174-4.00003-3>
- Dakkak, H., Eklund, L., & Tellier, S. (2007). Gender and reform : getting the right data right. *Forced Migration Review*, 42–44.
- Darychuk, A., & Jackson, S. (2015). Understanding Community Resilience Through the Accounts of Women Living in West Bank Refugee Camps. *Affilia*, 30(4), 447–460.
<http://doi.org/10.1177/0886109915572845>
- Dawson, E. (2011). Reflections on Building CSO Capacity to Integrate Gender and Diversity Equality. *International NGO Training and Research Centre*, (58).
- Edwards, A. (2005). Human rights, refugees, and the right “to enjoy” asylum. *International Journal of Refugee Law*, 17(2), 293–330. <http://doi.org/10.4324/9781315244969>
- Enarson, E., & Pease, B. (2016). *Men, Masculinities and Disaster*. (E. Enarson & B. Pease, Eds.). New York: Routledge Studies in Hazards, Disaster Risk and Climate Change.
<http://doi.org/10.1080/13552074.2017.1286804>
- Etikan, I., Abubakar, S., & Sunusi, R. (2016). Comparison of Convenience Sampling and Purposive Sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1.
<http://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11>
- Fisher, S. (2016). Training Pacific male managers for gender equality in disaster response and management. In E. Enarson & B. Pease (Eds.), *Men, Masculinities and Disaster* (pp. 197–209). New York: Routledge Studies in Hazards, Disaster Risk and Climate Change.
- Flowerdew, R., & Martin, D. (2013). *Methods in Human Geography: a guideline for students*

- doing a research project* (Second Edi). New York: Routledge.
- Foran, S., Swaine, A., & Burns, K. (2012). Improving the effectiveness of humanitarian action: progress in implementing the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Gender Marker. *Gender and Development, 20*(2), 233–247.
<http://doi.org/10.1080/13552074.2012.687221>
- Grabska, K. (2011). Constructing “modern gendered civilised” women and men: Gender-mainstreaming in refugee camps. *Gender and Development, 19*(1), 81–93.
<http://doi.org/10.1080/13552074.2011.554026>
- Hatia, S., & Shahbazpur, D. (2017). Bangladesh Population movement.
- Health Sector Coordination Team. (2018). *Rohingya Refugee Crisis in Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh: Health Sector Bulletin*. Retrieved from
<http://www.searo.who.int/bangladesh/healthsectorcxbbanbulletinno3.pdf>
- Hutchinson, S. (2017). Gendered insecurity in the Rohingya crisis. *Australian Journal of International Affairs, 77*18, 1–9. <http://doi.org/10.1080/10357718.2017.1402291>
- IFRC. (2016). Unseen , unheard : Gender-based violence in disasters Asia-Pacific Case Studies, 1–52.
- Inter Sector Coordination Group - Bangladesh. (2018). *Situation Update: Rohingya Refugee Crisis*. Retrieved from
https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/180107_iscg_sit_rep_one_pager.pdf
- IOM. (2018). IOM Bangladesh Rohingya Crisis Response, (January). Retrieved from
https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/situation_reports/file/Bangladesh_SR_20171018.pdf
- ISCG. (2017). *Situation Update: Rohingya Refugee Crisis*. Retrieved from
https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/171121_iscg_sit_rep_one_pager_final.pdf
- ISCG. (2018a). Cox Bazar Refugee population.
- ISCG. (2018b). Situation Report: Rohingya Refugee Crisis, (March), 21.
<http://doi.org/24SEP2017>
- Jackson, C. (1996). Rescuing Gender from the Poverty Trap. *World Development, 24*(3), 489–504. [http://doi.org/10.1016/0305-750X\(95\)00150-B](http://doi.org/10.1016/0305-750X(95)00150-B)
- Long, M. K. (2013). Dynamics of state, sangha and society in Myanmar: a closer look at the Rohingya issue. *Asian Journal of Public Affairs, 6*(1), 79–95.

<http://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004>

- Luft, R. (2016). Men and Masculinities in the Social Movement for a Just Reconstruction After Hurricane Katrina. In E. Enarson & B. Pease (Eds.), *Men, Masculinities and Disaster* (pp. 34–45). New York: Routledge Studies in Hazards, Disaster Risk and Climate Change.
- Mikkelsen, B., Freeman, T., & Keller, B. (2002). *Mainstreaming Gender Equality: Sida's Support for the Promotion of Gender Equality in Partner Countries*. Sida. Stockholm.
- Milton, A. H., Rahman, M., Hussain, S., Jindal, C., Choudhury, S., Akter, S., ... Efirid, J. T. (2017). Trapped in statelessness: Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *14*(8), 1–8.
<http://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph14080942>
- Moser, C. (2015). Has gender mainstreaming failed ? Has Gender Mainstreaming Failed ?, *6742*(November), 576–590. <http://doi.org/10.1080/14616740500284573>
- Moser, C., & Moser, A. (2005). Gender mainstreaming since Beijing: A review of success and limitations in international institutions. *Gender and Development*, *13*(2), 11–22.
<http://doi.org/10.1080/13552070512331332283>
- Oloka-Onyango, J. (1996). The Plight of the Larger Half: Human Rights, Gender Violence and the Legal Status of Refugee and Internally Displaced Women in Africa. *Denver Journal of International Law and Policy*, *24*(2), 349–394. <http://doi.org/10.3366/ajicl.2011.0005>
- Oxfam. (2012a). Post Earthquake Response and Reconstruction: Gender-sensitive Advocacy in Indonesia. *Programme Insights: Gender Equality in Emergencies: Practical Lessons*, (October), 10. Retrieved from www.oxfam.org.uk/policyandpractice
- Oxfam. (2012b). Restoring Livelihoods After Floods: Gender-sensitive response and community owned recover in Pakistan, (October), 17. Retrieved from www.oxfam.org.uk/policyandpractice
- Reuters. (2018). The latest threat to the Rohingya: A Menacing monsoon. Retrieved March 14, 2018, from <http://fingfx.thomsonreuters.com/gfx/rngs/MYANMAR-ROHINGYA-MONSOON/0100615F2DC/index.html>
- Sayem, A. M., & Nury, A. T. M. S. (2013). An assessment of attitude towards equitable gender norms among Muslim women in Bangladesh. *Women's Studies International Forum*, *40*, 102–110. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2013.04.007>
- Schwoebel, M. H., & Menon, G. (2004). *Mainstreaming Gender in Disaster Management Support Project*.
- The UN Security Council. (1994). UN Commission of Experts Report. *Security*,

- 20060(December), 1–84. Retrieved from
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19666682>
- The World Bank. (2011, May 18). Indias Poor yet to Reap Full Benefits of Its Anti-poverty Programs, Says World Bank Report. *The World Bank*.
- The World Bank. (2016). Bangladesh Interactive Poverty Maps.
- UN Women. (2018). Beijing Platform for Action: Inspiration then and now.
- UNHCR. Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, International and Comparative Law Quarterly 255–264 (1951). <http://doi.org/10.1093/iclqaj/10.2.255>
- UNHCR. (2017). Refugee Facts. Retrieved March 14, 2018, from
<https://www.unrefugees.org/refugee-facts/what-is-a-refugee/>
- UNISDR. (2015). Sendai Framework. <http://doi.org/A/CONF.224/CRP.1>
- WHO. (2018). *Rohingya Crisis: Donor Alert*. Retrieved from
https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/171119_weekly_iscg_sitrep_fin_al_0.pdf
- Woodford-Berger, P. (2004). Gender mainstreaming: What is it (about) and should we continue doing it? *IDS Bulletin*, 35(4), 65–72. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1759-5436.2004.tb00157.x>
- World Vision International. (2017). Gender Sensitive Programme Accountability Assessment Report World Vision International.
- Yaqub, F. (2017). Our responsibility to protect the Rohingya. *The Lancet*, 390(10114), 2740. [http://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(17\)33356-1](http://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(17)33356-1)

Appendix A: Summary of the influential events for the Rohingya's current situation

Year	Event	Observations	Displaced Rohingyas
1400	Rohingyas settlement	Rohingyas settle in Rakhine State (According to historians)	
1823-1825	Anglo Burmese War	Influx of Indian workers fled to Burma brought by the British as skillful labor. Rohingyas settle in Rakhine State (According to Government of Myanmar)	-
1940-1947	Years Prior to Independence	Buddhist fundamentalist extremist political tendencies on the rise.	
1942-1945	Japanese Occupation of Burma	Rohingyas declared loyalty to the British and Arakanese supported the Japanese. Rohingyas persecuted by the communalist Buddhist Rakhine and the Burma Independence Army. 100,000 Rohingyas were killed.	50,000
1948	Burma's Independence	Independence negotiations with the British. Rohingyas deprived of Burmese Citizenship. Rohingyas create an armed separatist movement.	
1951	Recognition of Rohingya Culture	Burmese prime ministers recognize Rohingya Culture. Armed separatist movement comes to an end but persecution on behalf of military regime remained.	-
1978	Naga Min operation	Military Operations in the Rakhine State. Agreement facilitated by UNHCR led Rohingyas to go back.	250,000
1982	Burma Citizenship Law	135 national races are recognized but Rohingyas are excluded. Rohingyas become stateless. (Akhter & Kusakabe, 2014)	-

1988	State Law and Order Restoration Council	Military efforts in Rakhine State. Takes land away of Muslim inhabitants without compensation.	
1991	Pyi Thaya operation	Systematic abuse, forced labour, harassment, rape and executions in the Rakhine state.	250,000
1992	GoB does not recognize Rohingyas as Refugees.	Rohingyas are repatriated to the Rakhine state.	-
2012	Incident in local community	Buddhist woman raped and murdered by group of Rohingya men. 4855 structures and 348 acres of residential areas destroyed. ARSA is formed.	100,000
2016	Three border posts attacked by ARSA.	Security Operations held by the Burmese government	72,000
2017	30 police border posts attacked by ARSA	Security Operations held by the Burmese government.	655,500
2018	Repatriation	Repatriation officially should have started on January 23, 2018. Out of 8,032 refugees considered for repatriation, only 374 were confirmed, three of which were considered terrorists by the Government of Myanmar.	374 (Repatriated)
	Myanmar Military rebuilds Rakhine State	Satellite imagery shows that burnt villages, remaining infrastructure and even vegetation are being bulldozed. GoM is building military posts, roads and mines in land where Rohingya villages used to be.	-

Sources: (ACAPS, 2017a, 2017b; Akhter & Kusakabe, 2014; Amnesty International, 2018; Aung & Naing, 2018; IOM, 2018; Long, 2013; Milton et al., 2017)

Appendix B: Interview Guide

Interview Guide

- Date and Place:**
 - Name of Interviewee:**
 - Position:**
 - Organization:**
 - Time in the position:**
 - Anonymous:**
 - Recording number:**
-

Hello! First of all, I would like to thank you for taking the time and meeting with me for this interview. My name is Facundo Palermo, I am an environmental engineer and I am currently part of the DRMCCA Masters Programme in Lund University, Sweden. The interview I am about to conduct with you will provide me the data for conducting my master’s thesis, which topic is related to gender mainstreaming in the Rohingyas Refugee Crisis Response Operation from the point of view of the practitioners working in the subject. Also, I would like to point out that it is my intention to publish my thesis in an academic journal.

Now, I would like to kindly point your attention to a couple of things before we start. This will be a semi structured interview, which means that I will be providing some guiding questions, but essentially, there is no right or wrong, I only want to understand your point of view from the subject, so please feel free to elaborate on the questions as you see fit. Furthermore, if you would prefer to stay anonymous just let me know, I will not ask you why, that is your preference. Also, we can stop the interview whenever you want.

Finally, and before we start, I would like to ask you for your permission to record the interview (If at some point you want to say something without being recorded, just say “Pause Recording” and I will pause it). This recording is only for my personal use, as I can then listen to it over and over.

Before you start, do you have any questions?

Being that said, I believe we are ready to start.

Number	Primary Question	Secondary Questions	Purpose of Question
1	What is the role of your Organization in the Operational Response?		Nature of the organization.
2	Could you explain your main duties in the Organization?	How often do you work in the camps? Since When?	Role of the practitioner.

3	What can you tell me about gender issues in the camps?	Violence, dynamics, decision making, reporting issues?	Explore gender issues in the camps through the eyes of the practitioner.
4	How does your organization deal with gender in this particular operational response?	Training, frameworks, personnel, focal points?	Response mechanisms of the organization.
5	What are you/your organization main everyday struggles?	When it comes to implementation? Gender related?	Challenges that the organization experiences while implementing their activities and with gender in general.
6	What kind of activities do the refugees do in their everyday life?	Do they have any chances of working? What do men/women/children do?	Explores everyday living of refugees and allow practitioner to elaborate in the roles of the organization.
7	Is the community involved in decision making processes?	How are female Refugees represented?	Focuses on community involvement, both for refugees in general and for females.
8	What are you/your organization main concerns for the future?	Medium/long term plan? If yes, what is it? If no, where are the activities being implemented pointing at?	Focuses on the medium and long-term plans of the organization.
9	Is there anything else you would like to mention regarding gender in the refugee camps?		Invitation for closing remarks.

This is the end of the interview, I would like to thank you for your time. Your responses are of great value. Before we end up the session, do you have any questions?

THE END

Appendix C: Coding Nodes for the interview analysis

Initial coding Hierarchy for analysis of the interviews

Nodes	Subnodes	Example
Aid Provided	Collaboration	"IOM is working with the Bangladeshi Fire Service".
	Figures	"60 to 70% are pregnant".
	Struggles	"There might be changes in the law".
	Support Provided	"We are working with 12 government clinics".
Time of Response	-	" We started 1 month ago".
Disaster Risk Reduction	Monsoon and Cyclone season	"Cyclone season, raining season. Is going to take a whole different dimension".
	Tension with the host community	"For host communities is bad".
Gender Related	Gender Mainstreaming	" They are using the gender markers".
	Prioritizing Women	"It is focused on women specifically".
Of Interest	Interesting Detail	"We don't know what happens there because we have to leave the camp by 4:30 or 5:00 pm, everyone".
	Way of Working	"For some activities we have implementing partners. For some others we do directly".

Second and final coding hierarchy for analysis of the interviews.

Node	Sub Node	Sub Node	Example
Aid Provided	Collaboration	Groups, Clusters	"The organization is co cluster with WASH".
		Implementation equal partners	"We were able to quickly scale up with the support of IOM and UNHCR".
		Support to/with organizations	"Another thing is that we are working with 12 government clinics".
		Working with the Community	"Religious leaders are used for communicating to people".
	Figures	-	"60 to 70% are pregnant".
	Struggles	Burocracy	"There might be changes in the law".
		Corruption	"People miss things because they don't have a good connection with the Majhi".
		Culture	"They are very conservative".
		Implementation	"I think it still a little bit Ad Hoc".
		Others	"Miss understanding about the concept".
		Tension with host community	"For host communities is bad".
	Support Provided by ORGs	Assistance	"We give a lot of dignity kits".
		Capacity Building	"We are building their self-resilience".
		Occupation	"We employ them for cash for work".
Spaces		"CFS for kids (Child Friendly Space)".	

Disaster Risk Reduction	Adaptation of Activities	-	"We will shift to mobile modality".
	Infrastructure	-	"Our safe heaven is built very strongly".
	Monsoon and Cyclone Season	-	"Cyclone season, raining season. Is going to take a whole different dimension".
	Other	-	Deforestation is a major concern.
	Preparedness	Community Level	-
Organizational Level			"They are developing contingency plans".
Gender Related	Gender Issues	-	"They give their children away".
	Strategies for Addressing Gender	Prioritizing Women	"We make blocks for only female".
		Representation	"We have female committees".
		Spaces	"We created Safety spaces for them".
		Tools	" They are using the gender markers".
Personal Opinions	-	-	"I don't think we need more policies and plans".