



Joint Education Needs Assessment: Rohingya Refugee in Cox's Bazar

June 2018



Contents

Acronyms	3
Acknowledgements.....	3
1.1 Executive Summary.....	4
1.2 Key Findings and Recommendations	4
1.3 Key Recommendations	7
To Education Sector and Partners.....	7
To Government of Bangladesh	8
2.1 Introduction, Context and Background.....	8
2.2 Assessment Objectives.....	9
3.1 Methodology.....	10
3.2 Secondary Data Review.....	10
3.3 Sampling strategy.....	11
3.4 Data collection, entry and analysis methodologies.....	12
3.5 Limitations and assumptions	14
4.1 Findings.....	15
4.2 Access and learning environment.....	15
4.3 Teaching and learning.....	26
4.4 Teachers and Other Education Personnel.....	34
4.5 Coordination/Community Participation.....	38
5.1 Summary of recommendations	41
5.2 To Education Sector and Partners.....	41
5.3 To Government of Bangladesh	42
Annexes	43
Bibliography	47

Acronyms

BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CGD	Community Group Discussion
CODEC	Community Development Centre
DAM	Dhaka Ahsania Mission
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
FCN	Family Counting Data
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
JENA	Joint Education Needs Assessment
MUKTI	MUKTI
NPM	Needs and Population Monitoring
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OBAT Helpers	OBAT Helpers
PLAN	Plan International
SCI	Save the Children International
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

Acknowledgements

The Education Sector would like to thank the following organisations who contributed their time and resources into making this assessment possible;

Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee	OBAT Helpers
Community Development Centre	Plan International
Dhaka Ahsania Mission	Save the Children International
MUKTI	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
Norwegian Refugee Council	United Nations Children's Fund

1.1 Executive Summary

1.2 Synthesis

The largest influx of Rohingya refugees into Bangladesh began on August 25th 2017. Nearly 1 million now reside in Cox Bazar district. Over 500,000 children in the district are in need of EiE assistance. Approximately 375,000 of them are Rohingya and remain almost solely reliant on international and national NGOs as providers of non-formal education. This assessment was initiated in February 2018 by the Education Sector based in Cox Bazar. It was to be the first in-depth assessment to focus wholly on EiE in during the current influx. It aimed enable better decision making and to from an initial baseline of key indicators including; attendance, enrolment and key barriers. The assessment methodology was chosen to ensure that the results are adequately representative at the Household level so that it could provide a reliable statistical basis. Data was collected through a structured Household Surveys with parents of school aged children and semi-structured Community Group Discussions with adolescents and teachers. Data was collected from the 12th to 28th February 2018. This was combined with and extensive Secondary Data Review to produce a combined cross-source analysis of all primary and publically available EiE data.

1.3 Key Findings and Recommendations

Attendance and Enrolment

- For primary aged children (aged 6-14), 57% of girls and 60% of boys of have attended learning centres since arriving in Bangladesh. Attendance is weaker at ECCD level (aged 3-5) - only 43% of both boys and girls with reported attendance. Only 4% of adolescent (aged 15-18) girls attending compared to 14% of adolescent boys. Given the lack of services on secondary level and vocational training, the assessment was unable to establish what type of education these adolescents were accessing, but it is possible that these are secondary aged children attending primary learning facilities.
- Prior to displacement, 50% of girls and 58% of boys aged eight and above reported graduating from at least Grade 1 in Myanmar's school system and those who had access to education, on average have completed three grades of schooling with 31% of boys and 25% of girls reported having completed Grade 3.
- Only 57% of children who attended school in Myanmar have attended a learning centre since arriving.
- 51% of children who have never previously attended school have started attending a learning facility since arrival.
- While many children do not attend a learning facility at all, those who do attend regularly. Over 90% of children who had attended learning facility in the previous week did so for at least 4 days—similar to the reported situation prior to displacement.

Access barriers

- Lack of available learning centres was identified as access barrier for children by 20% of parents of all ages and genders. Learning centres are running at capacity and are unable to enrol more primary aged children. For adolescents, lack of overall services is the main barrier.
- Distance to learning centres was reported as barrier especially by parents of younger children and then gradually declining with age. 40% of parents for 3-5, 30% for 6-14 and 26% for 15-18. This was linked to challenging terrain—especially during rainy season—as well as dealing with hazards and threats along the way (see below).
- Safety threats at learning centres was identified as access barrier particularly by girls, and cited as priority area for improvement. The specific nature of threats remained unidentified by this assessment

and requires further analysis. This was more acute for girls than boys at age 6-14 (32% vs 25%) and aged 15-18 (32% vs 18%).

- CGD discussions suggested adolescent girls were concerned not having gender-segregated classrooms and learning centres being unsecure from intrusions leading to a degree of shame in attending education. Given the overall lack of services for adolescents, this should be interpreted as the perception of adolescent female respondents on access barriers. Furthermore secondary Data contradicts these findings, repeatedly citing that learning centres are perceived as safe spaces.
- CGD data suggest that for adolescent girls, these concerns are exacerbated due to the fact that those learning spaces that do exist are not gender-segregated classrooms, and that spaces are not secure from intrusion by people who should not be able to enter the space, such as men from the immediate community physically entering or observing activities inside learning facilities.
- Work at home or outside home was identified as barrier by 20% of parents of primary aged children (6-14). The percentage increases to approximately 50% with parents of adolescents (15-18), while the lack of education possibilities might negatively impact this figure.
- Around 40% of parents of adolescent girls and 33% for adolescent boys reported that education was not appropriate for children of their age. This is likely linked to conservative social norms constraining mixing with the opposite sex and restricting movement outside the household after the onset of puberty, as well as the belief that education is of limited use for girls who will grow up to fulfil primarily domestic responsibilities.
- Mental health and disability were not mentioned as barriers by the study's survey, which is in contradiction with secondary data analysis indicating psychosocial trauma linked with displacement being a factor limiting children's abilities to access education.

Facilities and services

- Focus group discussions pointed to lack of WASH facilities to be a key gap, including lack of latrines and safe drinking water. Public latrines were perceived to be dangerous places for children.
- Other key gaps relate to overcrowding of classrooms and lack of gender segregated spaces. The vast majority of learning centres currently operate as single classroom units, and whilst gender segregation is predominantly prioritised by adolescents, CGD suggest this begins to be a barrier for girls as young as 10 and 12. The average enrolment established by the assessment was 110 students split across two to three shifts.

Teaching and Learning

- Lack of learning materials was reported as a challenge by 31% of parents of children aged 3-5 and 27% of parents of children aged 6-14. The CGDs brought out specifically the lack of teaching materials such as blackboards. Although not directly related to teaching and learning material, lack of weather and culturally-appropriate clothing for children were also brought up as a material need. It should be noted that this is not what is normally interpreted as teaching and learning materials by partners, adding our important contextual nuance to the findings of this and other assessments.
- Teachers report that the content of teaching (given no formal curricula has been approved) is often improvised and unstructured, and that they lack the means to adequately distinguish between children of different ability levels. Children report feeling under-stimulated in learning facilities, often covering material they have already studied in Myanmar.

- Parents of adolescent children in particular report feeling that “what is taught is not relevant” (34% of parents of girls and 46% of parents of boys). This again is possibly linked that secondary aged children are attending primary learning facilities. 40% of parents of girls aged 15-18 and 47% for boys listed vocational training as a priority area for improvement. This is echoed by adolescent CGD participants. However, it needs to be noted that provision of vocational training is currently not allowed by the government.
- Majority of adolescents when asked what activities that too lace me learning facilities they found most useful, CGDs identified language learning, literacy, and recreational activities. This contrasts with parents, as only one-fifth prioritized these areas for improvement.
- The majority first preference for language of instruction is Rohingya (50%), followed by Burmese (15%) and English (15%). For preferred languages to learn, English is the overwhelming priority, reported by 90% of parents, followed by Bengali (62%), Burmese (60%), Rohingya (57% - likely referring to a desire to learn a written form of Rohingya) and Arabic (29%).

Teachers and Other Education Personnel

- According to most recent 4Ws data, the average student to teacher ratio across the response is 47:1, split roughly evenly between Rohingya language instructors and Bangladeshi teachers. 60% of Rohingya instructors are reportedly male while the reverse is true for Bangladeshi teachers.
- According to CGD and secondary data, recruitment of Rohingya teachers is a major challenge. Recruitment challenges are due to a small pool of sufficiently educated, Burmese-speaking teachers among the Rohingya population, as well as competition from better-paying work elsewhere in the response.
- There are currently no agreed-on sets of standards for teacher training, resulting in uneven levels of training across different partners, as well as a perceived lack of quality control standards.
- Out of 12 CGD groups with teachers, four reported receiving four or more trainings, while three reported receiving only basic teacher training. While not statistically representative, it indicates that the quantity and content of trainings offered teachers are not standardised across partners.
- For female staff members a lack of adequate WASH facilities and security concerns over remote facilities and/or working late are also posing significant challenges.

Coordination and Community Participation

- Humanitarian distributions were listed as a significant cause of disruption to learning centre activities by teachers, who reported that children would regularly leave their learning facility to help parents.
- In general, madrassahs are widely respected among the Rohingya population—including children themselves—and seen as a critical part of community religious life where children can feel safe. Parents report being comfortable with madrassah staff providing secular education to children as a possible alternative modality to building more learning centres. Madrassahs are significantly better-attended than learning centres, with close to 80% of children age 6-14 attending since arrival, compared to 60% for learning centres (50% report attending both facilities).
- Results from CGDs paints a more ambivalent picture. A lack of relevant qualifications among madrassah staff was identified as an issue, supported by secondary data from Myanmar suggesting few, if any of the teachers, have completed high school education. Some adolescents felt strongly that madrassahs were religious rather than secular spaces and that this divide should be maintained.
- Timetabling clashes with madrassahs are reportedly common. Some teachers in CGDs reported that staff at madrassahs were hostile to learning centres and were pressurizing children not to attend.
- Teachers in CGDs called for increased engagement with parents on raising awareness of the importance and value of education of children and to understand the priorities of parents.

1.4 Key Recommendations

To Education Sector

- **Expand access to learning:** 40% of surveyed households report that their ECD and primary aged children are not currently enrolled. Insufficient capacity of learning centers is the main access barrier. Consider reducing contact time through alternate days as an option to increase capacity.
- **Alternative options for access to learning need to be developed** given the lack of available land to establish new learning centers at scale. These modalities should be established in consultation with children, parents, and teachers. Home based learning was identified by focus groups as a culturally preferred option, while engagement with madrassas was cited another option with reservations.
- **Improve the focus on addressing the learning needs of adolescents and youth,** which remains a key gap with the needs of age group 15 – 24 unaddressed by partners. Currently less than 2% of adolescents have access to secondary education. Context-appropriate activities need to be developed, including content for secondary-level education.
- **Education opportunities for adolescent girls requires further attention** as long-standing cultural practices prevent girls from accessing education at puberty. Culturally appropriate entry points need to be identified to provide learning opportunities for adolescent girls beyond learning centres.
- **Address safety concerns of learning environments** as children and parents highlighted concerns, including lack of WASH facilities. Partners are encouraged to conduct further assessments to better understand the exact concerns of parents and children.
- **Develop mechanisms to increase parental involvement** as concerns that parents do not see the value of education and have no sense of involvement in learning centres were identified by this assessment. Approaches to ensure engagement and ownership of parents need to be developed.
- **Strengthen teaching and learning** through provision of continuous standardised teacher training as training opportunities and content currently diverge widely between partners. Minimum standards need to be established, including recognition for Rohingya staff. Improve language skills of teachers, particularly in English and Myanmar language.
- **Develop assessment and monitoring tools** aligned with the learning framework to enable appropriate placement and to establish progress of students to avoid drop-out over short and medium term.
- **Seek to better understand the role and education provided by the Madrassah system,** given its social importance and its possible role as both an enabler and a barrier to children's secular education. In future needs assessment, scale and content of education provided by religious actors should be addressed in detail.

To Government of Bangladesh

- **Endorse the Learning Framework** developed by Ministry of Education in collaboration with education sector partners to enable the delivery of standardized, relevant learning for children. Ensure further development of learning framework to cover full primary cycle and secondary education.
- **Facilitate the fast development of teaching and learning material** for the learning framework together with sector partners to minimize delays in implementing education to Rohingya children.

2.1 Introduction, Context and Background

Long building tensions in Rakhine State, Myanmar erupted in violence on the 25 August 2017. It has driven out an estimated 693,000 Rohingya across the border into Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. Prior to August 25, approximately 212,000 Rohingya had already sought safety and protection in Bangladesh. To date, the total number of Rohingya in Cox Bazar District is 905,000. More than half of the Rohingya population are children. Given the size of the influx, the lack of basic services, and low standard of living conditions, refugees require a range of support. This includes over 530,000 children aged 3 to 17 who are in immediate need of Education in Emergency services.

Beyond the challenges which accompany such a large and rapid influx; the ability for humanitarian aid agencies to respond to the needs of the Rohingya is restrained by a chronic lack of space for safe dwelling and facilities. The land granted for the refugees by the government of Bangladesh has rapidly become saturated with spontaneous and makeshift shelters. The geography of the area is dominated by undulating hills, especially around Kutupalong Balukhali Expansion site. These shifts in elevations have greatly limited where it has been possible to set up facilities. This suitable land is further limited as large areas are at risk of landslide and flooding during the monsoon and rainy season. In February hundreds of existing learning facilities have been identified as at risk, along with over 100,000 refugees. The Education Sector has faced additional challenges due to government restrictions preventing any formal or non-formal education programmes being offered to the Rohingya. These significant restraints require a creative and targeted response to create the maximum impact within the physical and operational space available. In turn, this requires a substantial evidence base.

Since the beginning of the Rohingya Refugee crisis, there has been a volume of data collected, from household composition to sector specific needs. However, there has been relatively few sources of information on Education specific needs. Key Education indicators have been included in the NPM as well as other repeat and agency specific assessment (see Secondary Data Review below). The Education and Child Protection Sectors conducted a Joint Rapid Needs Assessment focusing on sector specific needs in December 2017, which provided indicative information of each of the affected populations.¹ However, this was not comprehensive nor representative. There remained significant information gaps, most notably the perspective of adolescent and accurate data on attendance.

¹ Post and pre August 25 2017 refugees, refugees in the host community, as well as the Bangladeshi Host community.

2.2 Assessment Objectives

For the urgent education needs of children to be met, this assessment aimed to do the following;

- Produce representative data to allow for improved geographic prioritisation, for resource mobilisation and response planning.
- Provide evidence so that partners can better advocate for the physical space and funding required to meet beneficiaries' needs.
- Provide data to fill information gaps on the barriers faced by adolescents.
- Provide a greater understanding of the driving factors behind the barriers and areas of improvement identified by parents.
- Consolidate existing data from available sources to provide a baseline from which to compare impact of the rainy season and possible cyclone.
- Gather beneficiaries' inputs to feed into ongoing discussions around alternative modalities, including the suitability of learning from home and how to approach religious entities providing education.



3.1 Methodology

The assessment comprised of a structured Household level survey targeting the head of households and semi-structured CGD targeting adolescents and teachers. This combination was chosen as it would provide the statistically representative and reliable quantitative data needed to improve the accurate targeting of the response, as well as the qualitative perspective needed to make the findings contextually valid.

The training of enumerators, data collection and data entry were all conducted between February 12th and February 28th 2018. The data collection team was composed of 46 enumerators, contributed by Education Sector partners². The initial round of data verification and analysis was conducted in country by Education Sector partners with the support of Education Sector Needs Assessment Specialist, with further data cleaning and analysis was conducted over March and April 2018. Additional analysis was completed remotely with a Needs Assessment Consultant, Education Sector Needs Assessment Specialist and support of Education Sector Coordination and IM team in Cox Bazar. The Assessment was funded through Education Cannot Wait.

3.2 Secondary Data Review

A review of relevant secondary data was conducted as part of this study. This was done to verify and contextualize the findings of the study's primary data collection component, as well as to provide up-to-date information (where possible) on issues not covered by this data. Overall, 21 reports and databases were reviewed. Where relevant, their findings have been reported in the main body of the report. This section provides a brief overview of the methodology, timeline and thematic focus of key documents covered by the Secondary Data Review.

Data on the performance of the education system and status of its facilities was drawn from two key monitoring databases. The Education Sector's 4Ws database is updated monthly with activities and outputs by sector partners, and was used to provide figures for enrolment and teacher training. REACH Initiative's education infrastructure database is updated monthly via site visits, and was used to provide data on facility WASH infrastructure and hazard risk.

Two reports drawing on surveys of key informants have been used to triangulate many of the findings in this report across its different thematic areas of focus. The Education and Child Protection in Emergencies Joint Rapid Needs Assessment (JRNA) interviewed 185 key informants (KIs) from both pre/post-August refugees and the host community in December 2017, and provides indicative (i.e. not statistically representative) data on most of the thematic areas covered by this study. The Needs and Population Monitoring Site Assessment (NPM) interviews approximately 1,800 KIs and is updated monthly. It provides a multi-sectoral overview of the refugee crisis, including relevant data on education access/barriers, livelihoods, and safety.

Two additional reports have provided additional depth and insight through a more qualitative approach. "Childhood Interrupted: Children's Voices from the Rohingya Refugee Crisis" consulted 200 mothers and children from both refugee and host communities in December 2017. The report synthesizes their thoughts and feelings on issues related to safety, access to learning, and experiences learning environments themselves. "Education Capacity Self-Assessment: Transforming the Education Humanitarian Response of the Rohingya Refugee Crisis" used a variety of methods including KI interviews and reflection workshops in November 2017-January 2018 to explore the perspectives of teachers and administrators. It provides extensive information on

² Total Enumerator Contributions - 29 UNHCR; 8 SCI; 5 BRAC; 4 PLAN

staff perspectives on teaching and learning at learning centres, as well as the status and experiences of teaching personnel.

A number of more rapid assessments have been reviewed for data on key cross-cutting issues. The unpublished “Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Needs Assessment” is the main source of information on mental health issues among refugee children, while the “Rohingya Crisis in Bangladesh: Age and Disability Inclusion Rapid Assessment Report” provides brief coverage of issues related to access to education for children with disabilities. In addition to being explored across other reports mentioned above, issues related to protection and gender-based violence are outlined in the “Rapid Protection Assessment: Bangladesh Refugee Crisis” and “Myanmar Refugee Influx Crisis: Rapid Gender Analysis.” Questions of language and literacy are explored in depth in “Rohingya Zuban: A Translators without Borders rapid assessment of language barriers in the Cox’s Bazar refugee response.” All of the above assessments involved a mix of KI interviews and FGDs conducted in the last quarter of 2017, with the exception of “Rohingya Zuban,” which also includes a small survey component.

Finally, three reports have provided data on the pre-crisis context. The “Joint Education Sector Needs Assessment, North Rakhine State, Myanmar” was conducted in 2015 using a combination of KI interviews with village administrators, site visits to schools and FGDs with parents and children, and covers similar issues to this study. “Social and cultural factors shaping health and nutrition, wellbeing and protection of the Rohingya within a humanitarian context” reviews secondary data from Myanmar and Bangladesh to provide background on social norms, beliefs, and hierarchies among Rohingya communities. And the ACAPS “Review – Rohingya influx since 1978” provides historical background on the Rohingya refugee response in Bangladesh prior to the latest influx.

3.3 Sampling strategy

Household Survey

The Household survey had to provide statistically representative data for all the households in a given geographic area. A random sample of households was used, drawn from UNHCR’s FCN which provides a comprehensive registry of refugee households. In total, 1,554 refugee household interviews were collected, providing the required sample size based on a 5% margin of error and a 90% confidence level at each level of geographic disaggregation. This is the highest level of confidence and lowest level of margin of error possible given time and resources constraints.

Similarly, it was not possible to collect data representative at each camp and site level due to limited time and resources. In order to produce information which can be reported as representative, camps/sites were grouped together based on common characteristics, namely terrain, types of refugee settlement as well as levels of service and facility density for Education and other sectors. These groupings of camps/sites are referred to as Geo Zones. It is not a term or common grouping used beyond the context of this assessment. It is at the Geo Zone level which data can be considered representative.

Community Group Discussions

The CGDs aimed to provide the perspective of teachers as well as adolescent children aged 12 to 18. Teachers were chosen to provide professional insight. Adolescents were chosen as a group able to articulate the perspective of younger children, but also for their own perspective, since adolescents and youth have been relatively overlooked in previous assessments.

10 sites were chosen through purposive sampling across all refugee camps/sites. Across these 10 sites, 36 interviews were conducted in total. 12 interviews with adolescent girls, 12 interviews with adolescent boys and 12 interviews with teachers in a mixed gender group. Each group contained between 8 and 12 participants. The adolescents groups were arranged on the day of data collection by each team of enumerators with the assistance of Rohingya interpreters and local Majhi when possible. No host community areas were selected due to the sensitivity around identifying Rohingya adolescents within a host community. Each teacher CGD was held in a NGO-ran learning facility. The teachers who participated were nominated by the NGO running the selected learning facility. The participants nominated included trained Rohingya facilitators and Bangladeshi teachers. The learning facilities were selected to represent a range of implementing NGOs, and to cover each of the refugee camps.

3.4 Data collection, entry and analysis methodologies

Each of the 46 enumerators received training on the tools, methodology, ethical standards and child safe guarding policy to be applied during the JENA, between the 12th and 14th of February 2018. 12 of the 46 enumerators received additional training provided by SCI on how to conduct CGD on 24th February 2018, including how to identify, approach and brief potential participants and appropriate locations to conduct adolescent CGD. Both the Structured Household Survey questionnaire and Semi-structured CGD questionnaire were designed by the Education Sector Needs Assessment Specialist and validated by Education Sector partners in workshops and individual feedback.

Household Survey

The questionnaire was uploaded online using the open source mobile data collection programme KoBo, so that data could be used by Android mobile devices. The KoBo system made it possible for questionnaires results to be uploaded at the end of each day's data collection, therefore avoiding an additional data entry phase.

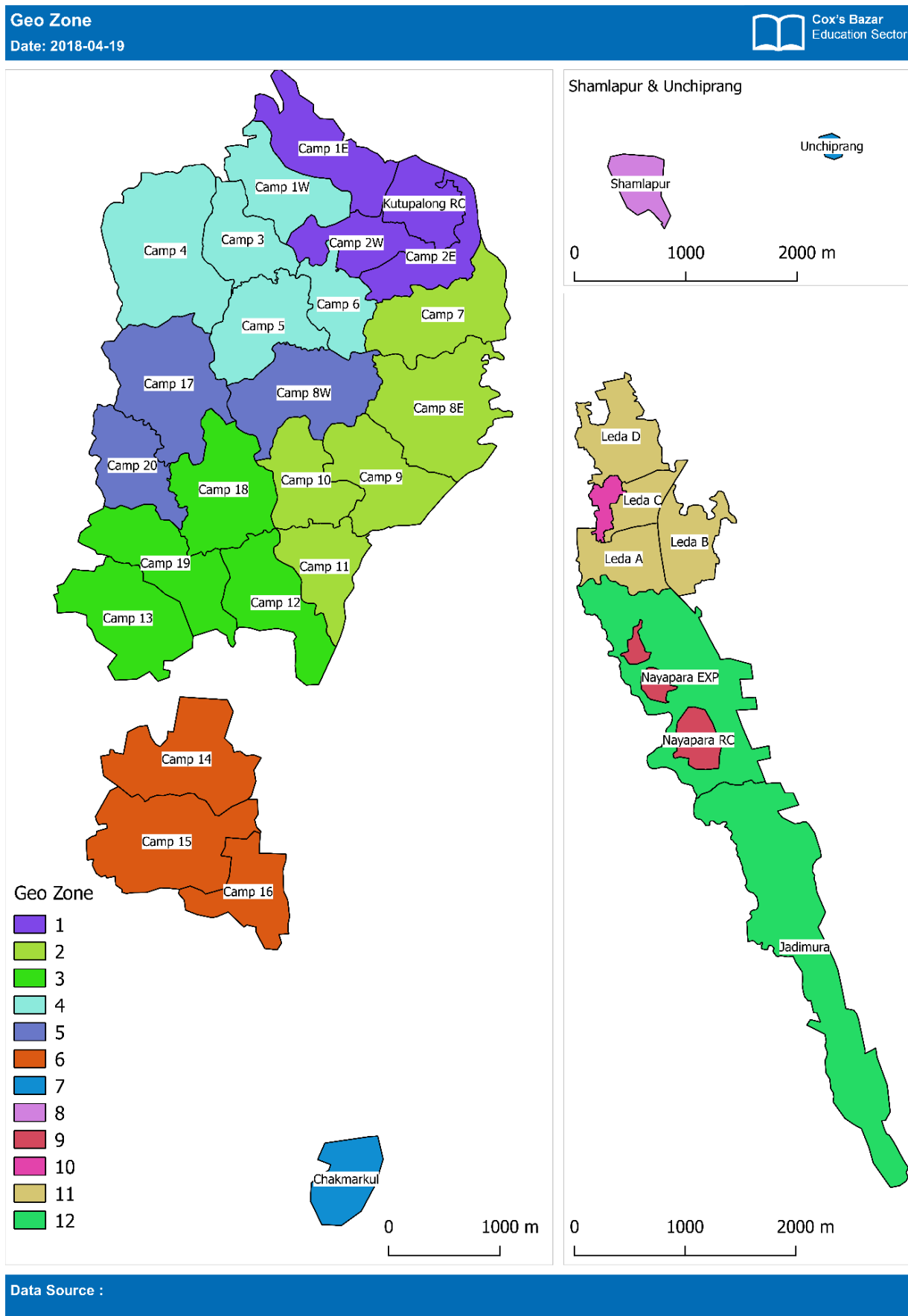
Enumerators were divided into teams of 4 to 6, with one Team Leader nominated to be focal point for coordination. Upon arrival at a site/camp, enumerators located the target respondent using their Android mobile devices, which had an application containing a map with the GPS locations of each household targeted for data collection. In the event that the GPS coordinates did not match the FCN, each enumerator was provided with replacement GPS coordinates for each site.

CGD

Enumerators were divided into teams of 3, with at least one female enumerator in each group who would facilitate the female adolescent groups. At each site, they would interview both gendered groups of adolescents and teacher at a pre-arranged learning facility. Consent forms were secured from each participant's parents (for adolescents) and from themselves (for teachers).

The team used a paper based questionnaire, with one team member facilitating, and the other two taking notes. Each group was debriefed at the end of each day and their answers were codified in a data base for analysis.

Map 1: Camps and Sites in their Geo-Zones



3.5 Limitations and assumptions

- **Representativeness:** The study's survey component was conceived as a household survey with parents, but also collected information on individual children within each household. Data on individual children (e.g. attendance) are thus not statistically representative as these children were not selected randomly. In addition, the survey sampling design included sampling strata broken down by geographical zone, not by age. Data for age/sex groups are therefore also not representative, since these strata were not specifically sampled for. In general, data disaggregated below the household level should therefore be taken as strongly indicative of the relevant strength of important trends, rather than fully statistically representative.
- **Community Group Discussions:** In CGDs with teachers, time constraints meant that these groups were not always balanced in terms of gender or representation of different Education Sector partners. Time constraints also prevented the study from conducting CGDs with parents, limiting its ability to triangulate the survey findings. For all CGDs, the quality of transcription varied, limiting the interpretation and analysis of findings.
- **Observation of Facilities:** The study did not include any direct assessment or observations of learning centres. Information on this issue is therefore derived either from the perceptions of teachers, parents and students, as well as from secondary data.
- **Madrassas:** Past experience showed that the religious education offered by the madrassas can be confused with the non-religious education offered by NGOs and other EiE actors in learning facilities. The tools used for the household survey and CGD were designed to make this distinction as clear as possible to the respondents (See Annex). Based on this clarification, when this report refers to learning facilities it excludes madrassas unless stated otherwise.



4.1 Findings

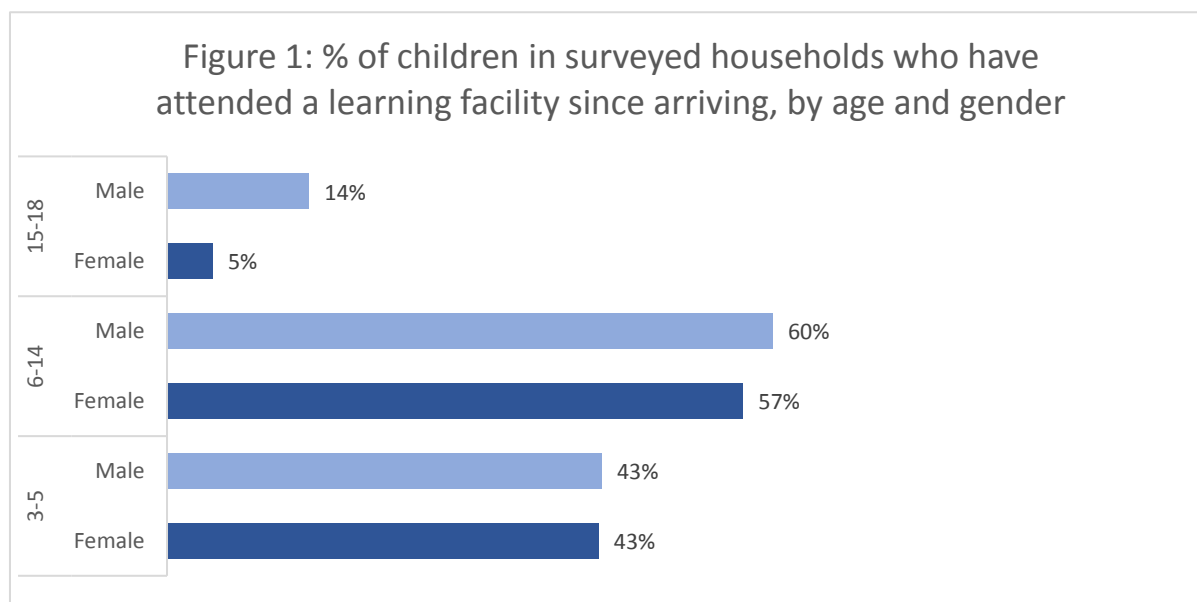
4.2 Access and learning environment

This section explores data on the extent to which children are accessing learning centres, and the environments they encounter while attending. It explores levels of enrolment and attendance, identifies key barriers to education access, and reviews data on the level of facilities and services at learning centres.

Enrolment and attendance

Overall, the study found that enrolment levels for girls and boys are similar at both ECCD age and at primary age, starting at around 40% for children aged 3-5 and rising to around 60% of children aged 6-14 (see Figure 1). The percentage of children of secondary age (15-18) reporting that they have enrolled at a learning facility since arriving in Bangladesh is low for boys at 14%, and extremely low for girls at only 5%. It is assumed that this reflects the number of secondary aged children enrolling in primary learning facilities, as there are very few secondary learning facilities currently operating.³

Significantly, reported attendance rates differ only slightly from enrolment, with almost all of those children, of any age, who have attended a learning centre since arriving in Bangladesh also reporting attending a learning centre within the past week. In terms of geographic variation, Geo Zones 12 and 9 showed significantly below-average levels of ECCD and primary enrolment, while attendance levels for Zones 8, 10, and 6 were significantly above average. Overall these figures add nuance to the JRNA's finding that "the majority" of children do not attend a learning facility,⁴ suggesting a more varied picture in which age, gender and location are key determinants in who does and does not attend.



³ The Education Sector reports that only 1% of secondary aged children are enrolled in a secondary learning facility.

⁴ "Education and Child Protection in Emergencies: Joint Rapid Needs Assessment [JRNA], Rohingya Refugee Response 2017" (Cox's Bazar: Education Sector and Child Protection Sub-Sector, 2018), p. 11.

In order to estimate levels of primary intake, the study calculated the proportion of children aged 8 and above who had completed grade 1⁵, resulting in figures of 50% for girls, and 58% for boys. The average grade completed was 3 for both boys and girls. This increased for boys between the ages of 17 to 18 to grade 5 and 6, whereas it remained static for girls, reflecting the cultural convention of girls not attending learning facilities beyond the age of 12. 50% for girls and 42% for boys report having not completed any grades in Myanmar. While these figures do not account for drop-out during grade 1—reportedly high in Maungdaw district⁶—they are broadly similar to current levels of enrolment in Learning Centres. Significantly, the children currently enrolled in Learning Centres are not necessarily the same children as those previously in education in Myanmar.

Of children at primary school level who had completed grade 1 in Myanmar (i.e. ages 8-14), 57% have attended a Learning Centre since arriving in Bangladesh. This percentage is similar for children who have not completed grade 1, at 51%. The fact that previous education attendance does not correlate strongly with current education attendance points to a different set of barriers and facilitators to education access in Bangladesh compared to Myanmar, affecting different households in different ways.



⁵ Under Myanmar's education system, grade one in primary school serves children 6-7.

⁶ "Joint Education Sector Needs Assessment [JENA], North Rakhine State, Myanmar" (Geneva: REACH Initiative, 2015), p. 23.

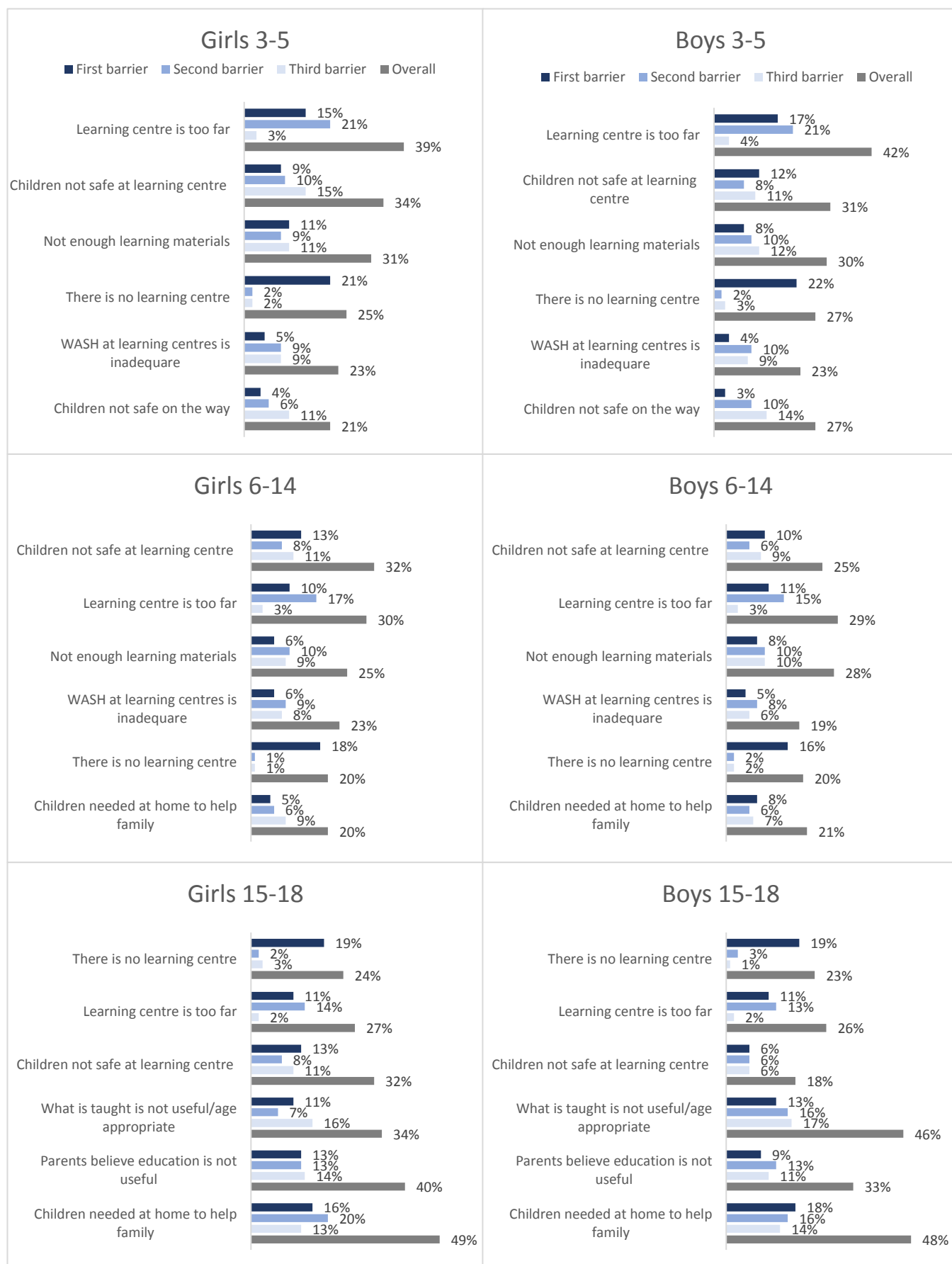
Table 1: Last Grade Completed in Myanmar by Gender

<i>Grade Completed</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Grand Total</i>
1	11%	13%	12%
2	14%	14%	14%
3	10%	11%	10%
4	9%	8%	9%
Over Grade 5	6%	12%	9%
None	50%	42%	46%

Table 2: Average Grade Completed by Age and Gender

<i>Age</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>
8	2	2
9	2	2
10	2	2
11	3	3
12	3	3
13	3	4
14	4	4
15	4	4
16	4	4
17	4	5
18	3	6

Figure 2 - Top barriers or challenges to education access reported by parents for different ages/genders of children: first, second, and third ranked barriers, plus overall frequency



Physical access

As of March 2018, there are currently 1,180 learning centres spread across the response area. While in most camps these are relatively evenly distributed, there are fewer or less well-distributed centres in camps 5, 6, 7, and Nayapara Expansion. According to the most recent NPM, key informants in 82% of locations reported that education services were reachable within 30 minutes by foot.⁷ Whilst this distance could likely be a considerable barrier to children with disability and those of ECCD age, it is significant that a lack of available learning centres remains the most common first priority, listed by around one-fifth of parents across all ages and genders, with parents living in Geo Zone 12 (including Nayapara Expansion) significantly more likely to report the lack of a learning centre across all gender and age groups. However, it is also important to note that while the most urgent, the lack of learning centres was not the most widespread priority, and was rarely listed as a second or third priority. In addition, the majority of respondents reporting the lack of learning facilities were parents of children who had not attended a learning facility since arriving and, along with distance, is the main response distinguishing them from parents whose children have attended a learning facility. Similarly, parents whose children had not attended a learning facility since arriving were again roughly twice as likely to list distance as a barrier than those whose children had attended. Although less urgently prioritised than lack of facilities, distance to learning facilities was a much more widespread concern. Overall, distance was the most mentioned priority overall for children aged 3-5—unsurprising given their young age and limited mobility—reported by around 40% of parents of children of this age group. As above, parents in Geo Zone 12 were significantly more likely to report this issue, as were parents in Geo Zone 1. While remaining common, the prominence of this issue then declines with age group, reported by 30% parents of children aged 6-14, and 26% of parents of children age 15-18⁸.

CGD responses may throw some additional light on what this reported perception of “no learning facilities” and “distance” might mean in practice. Almost all teachers’ groups reported that one of the main factors limiting children’s attendance was the fact that existing learning facilities are essentially full and there is no more space for new enrolments. Adolescent CGDs participants also mentioned enrolment difficulties for children in ten of 22 groups. These factors suggest that it may not always be the physical presence of learning facilities nearby that is the issue, but children’s ability to enrol in them. However, when discussing their journeys to a learning facility, few made mention of duration as a problem. Instead the main emphasis was on the difficulty of the terrain, with students describing a daunting journey through steep hills and along badly-maintained walkways.⁹ These comments were often matched by concern over the continued viability of these routes after the start of rainy season. Furthermore, the perceived threats to students’ safety, would mean that an increased distance travelled to access a learning facility, is an increased exposure to those safety and security issues expanded upon below (See “Safety and Security”)

⁷ “Needs and Population Monitoring [NPM] Site Assessment: Round 9” (Cox’s Bazar: International Organization for Migration, 2017), p. 12. Note that “Education Services” in the NPM excludes Madrassas.

⁸ As mentioned above, this concern likely refers to the distance to any learning facility, not specifically secondary learning facilities, as secondary aged children are believed to have attended primary learning facilities.

⁹ These challenges are also described in similar terms in “Childhood Interrupted: Children’s Voices from the Rohingya Refugee Crisis” (London: Save the Children International, World Vision, Plan International, 2018), p. 14

Finally, it is important to note that even though there are minimal dedicated education activities for adolescents aged 14 and over, lack of learning facilities and distance to learning facilities was not raised with the same frequency or intensity by parents of adolescents, suggesting that other barriers, such as livelihoods and social norms, are more significant than availability.

Safety and security

After lack of facilities and distance, concerns that children are not safe at learning centres was generally the third most commonly listed first priority across age groups, listed as a first priority by around 10-15% of parents across age groups. It is also a key priority overall for children of both genders aged 3-5 (around 30%), while declining in priority for boys relative to girls of older age—32% for girls aged 6-14 against 25% for boys, and 32% for girls aged 15-18 against only 18% for boys (this distinction for older children likely reflects concerns around gender segregation—see further discussion below). Geographically, respondents in Geo Zone 8 reported consistently higher levels of safety concerns at centres, followed to a lesser extent by Zones 6 and 7. When discussing priorities for improving learning facilities, parents also overwhelmingly identified improvements to safety at spaces, with around 40% of parents prioritising it for children 3-5 and 6-14, rising to 50% for girls 15-18 and lowest at 30% for boys 15-18. Parents in Geo Zone 8 were again more likely to prioritise safety relative to other improvements, along with those in Zones 12 and 7.

Table 3: Safety at learning centres as a concern and a priority for parents, by age and gender of children

Age	3 to 5		6 to 14		15 to 18	
Gender	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
Concerned that children are not safe at learning centres	34%	31%	32%	25%	32%	18%
Improving safety at learning centres is a priority	46%	45%	39%	34%	50%	30%

Safety on the way to learning centres is less urgent a priority, reported most widely overall as a barrier for boys aged 3-5 (26%), followed by girls aged 3-5, and then dropping off for children aged 6-14 (around 18% for both) and 15-18 (16% for girls and 10% for boys). Parents in Geo Zone 11 were consistently more likely to report safety as an overall concern relative to other camps, while parents in Zones 9 and 10 reported significantly higher concerns for girls age 6-14 in particular. By contrast, improving safety on the way to a learning facility is ascribed higher importance among parents when listed as an area for improvement, with similar overall numbers of parents identifying it as a priority as did for improving safety inside learning facilities. It is important to note here that the questionnaire specifically distinguished between safety issues and traffic issues. These were less widely mentioned as a barrier at around 10-15% overall across all age/gender groups,¹⁰ and are likely limited to the relatively small areas of the camp located near passable roads.

However, the findings are somewhat at odds with both the study's CGD data and much of the other available secondary literature. Teachers in CGDs and the Education Self-Assessment report scarcely mention safety at centres as a major issue. Security issues—framed as education spaces not being secure to intrusions by

¹⁰ This stands in contrast to JRNA findings, where key informants list traffic accidents as among the most important threats for boys (54% for boys, and 37% for girls – see JRNA p. 37-8).

outsiders—are mentioned among CGDs with adolescents, but only in six out of 22 groups (all female, and five of which were not attended by any girls currently enrolled in a learning facility). Similarly, key informants in the latest round of NPM did not list learning centres among the most common places where security incidents happen,¹¹ while both children and parents consulted in a recent Children’s Consultation reported a perception that children were safe and well looked-after while attending learning centres.¹²

By contrast, security threats to children travelling to and from learning facilities and moving around the camp more generally are discussed widely, both in the study’s CGDs and the secondary literature. Security issues were discussed in sixteen out of 22 CGDs with adolescents. Boys reported being “bothered by outsiders” although did not elaborate further, while girls placed a strong emphasis on the risk of sexual harassment. A small number of CGD participants also expressed fears of encountering elephants, dogs, or snakes on their way to a learning facility. Overall, these concerns can be situated within a much broader range of perceived security threats laid out in the secondary literature, where harassment, sexual violence, kidnapping and trafficking, or simply getting lost are widely discussed by both parents and children.¹³

According to the Children’s Consultation, kidnapping and trafficking in particular is an acute concern for parents and children, regardless of gender, and has led to parents significantly restricting their children’s movement outdoors, compared to pre-displacement, as a “negative coping strategy.”¹⁴ These issues are also reportedly having a knock-on effect on children’s freedom of movement in the host community. According to the JRNA, 67% of key informants reported the presence of possible traffickers, in the form of people on their block who had offered to take children away with the promise of jobs, better care or other incentives.¹⁵ These key informants also listed trafficking and kidnapping as common risks to children; 37% identified trafficking as a risk for boys and 35% as a risk for girls, while 25% identified kidnapping as a risk for boys and 22% as a risk for girls. More generally, fear of children getting lost appears widespread, since it is linked with children’s greater exposure to secondary threats. “Getting lost” is the second most common threat listed for boys by JRNA participants (45%), while it also features prominently as a threat to girls (36%). As adolescents in CGD discussions for this study emphasised, learning to read and write is vitally important children because it allows them to read signs in the camp and better navigate their environment.

Based on the data available it is possible to explain the high levels of perceived risk to children at learning centres reported by respondents as linked more with issues around privacy and gender segregation, in the case of adolescent girls in particular (although this does not account for high levels of reported concerns for younger children of all ages). However, the Household survey was not able to collect information on the complexity of parental concerns. Ultimately more research and engagement with parents will be required to better understand their priorities and concerns in this regard.

¹¹ NPM, p. 11

¹² Childhood interrupted, p. 15.

¹³ Childhood interrupted, p. 12-14. See also “Rapid Protection Assessment: Bangladesh Refugee Crisis” (Cox’s Bazar: CODEC, Save the Children International, Tai, UNHCR, 2017); “Myanmar Refugee Influx Crisis: Rapid Gender Analysis Report” (Cox’s Bazar: CARE Bangladesh, 2017).

¹⁴ Childhood interrupted, p. 12.

¹⁵ JRNA, p. 49.

Opportunity costs

The need for children to stay home and help their families is the most frequently listed barrier overall for both girls and boys aged 15-18, mentioned by almost half of parents for both genders. It is also the second most common first priority barrier for this age group following a lack of learning centres. The issue also features less prominently among responses for children aged 6-14, where it is mentioned by one-fifth of parents for both genders. In general Geo Zones 10 and 8 were more likely to report this barrier. Explicit discussion of children working was rarely mentioned, but the fact that working and household chores were usually discussed at the same time during CGDs suggests that both are included under the concept “helping the family.” Interestingly, CGD participants did not devote much time overall to discussing this barrier, which emerged in only two out of 8 teacher CGDs and three out of 22 adolescent’s CGDs.

Overall, secondary data presents a varied picture of the extent to which children are keeping their children out of a learning facility in order to work. It is clear that many households arriving after August did so with very few resources and faced major challenges in generating income and getting enough to eat. According to an October 2017 household survey, food security for the majority of recently arrived households was poor, while 82% listed “lack of money” as a priority household concern. The March NPM reports that cash is both the most severe and the highest priority need listed among its key informants. However, access to work also appears to be limited – according to the NPM, key informants in 82% of locations reported that refugees in their areas have no access to regular income at all,¹⁶ while members of the host community make frequent reference to the collapse of wage rates due to intense competition for work.¹⁷ This trend is possibly reflected in the JRNA finding that the proportion of key informants reporting children working in their area is only 59%, compared to 85% in the host community and 93% for refugees living in the host community.¹⁸ Similarly, while “children working” is identified as the main barrier to attendance by 23% of JRNA key informants who arrived post-August, this figure is much higher for host communities (38%) and refugees living in host communities (38%).¹⁹ Overall, these data appear to suggest that labour market participation by children in the post-August refugee community is constrained somewhat by the limited availability of work. Nevertheless it is also clear that supporting households—whether through participation in the labour market, or through helping with domestic chores or collecting firewood—occupies a major part of children’s time and is likely affecting their ability to attend or adequately engage with activities at learning centres.²⁰

While prioritising work over continuing education for adolescent children in particular is an issue common to Rohingya refugee populations both prior to and following displacement, the cost of education is not. Prior to displacement, the prohibitive cost of sending children to middle or high school was a key factor limiting older children’s access to education.²¹ However, cost is scarcely mentioned as a limiting factor by either CGDs or survey participants. Less than one percent of parents surveyed for this study reported having to pay fees to access education, while other associated costs (e.g. for textbooks) were not discussed in CGDs and do not appear in the secondary literature.

¹⁶ NPM, p. 10.

¹⁷ “Rohingya Crisis: Host Communities Review” (Geneva: ACAPS-NPM Analysis Hub, 2017), p. 7.

¹⁸ JRNA, p. 57-8.

¹⁹ JRNA, p. 27-8.

²⁰ The question of competing demands on children’s time is strongly emphasised in *Childhood Interrupted*, p. 17

²¹ REACH JENA, p. 41.

Gender and age

For children aged 15-18, parental concerns that education is not appropriate for adolescents are a significant barrier. Overall, this concern is reported by 40% of parents of girls this age, and 33% for parents of boys. Significantly however, it is much less widely reported among parents of younger children, reported as a barrier by only around 10% of parents of children aged 6-14, and less than 3% of parents aged 3-5. CGDs with teachers reveal a common concern that parents are “not aware of the importance of education” (mentioned in half of all groups). Smaller numbers of teachers also mentioned hostility on the part of some religious leaders, reporting one incident in which madrassah staff had reportedly made children take an oath not to attend non-religious education. These challenges—and the consequent need for better linkages with both parents and religious leaders—are also discussed at length by teachers in the Education Self-Assessment²² (see Coordination/Community Participation below for further discussion).

Table 4: Parental perceptions that education is not useful/appropriate for children, by age and gender of children

Age	3 to 5		6 to 14		15 to 18	
Gender	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
Parents believe education is not useful	0%	1%	9%	10%	40%	33%

In the case of adolescent girls in particular, these responses are likely to be linked with the widely-held cultural and religious norms constraining girls’ education after the onset of puberty. *Purdah*, or the seclusion of women after puberty, was widely adhered to among Rohingya communities prior to displacement. This practice represents a “sign of religious achievement” for women, as well as signifying family pride and status more broadly, and is closely linked with the huge religious and social significance of marriage and women’s ascribed gender roles resting within the household.²³ As a consequence, many Rohingya parents in Myanmar do not send their adolescent girls to school, either because they are fundamentally opposed in principle, are unable to ensure that their daughters will be taught in a gender-segregated environment, or because they do not see the relevance and value of educating women who will grow up to be housewives.²⁴ For adolescent girls participating in CGDs, these issues manifested themselves in a number of ways, both at home, on the way to the learning facility and at the learning facility itself. Some participants described feeling “ashamed of learning and going outside,” while teachers explained that this stigma was in some cases being reinforced by religious leaders. En route to learning facilities, this sense of shame was exacerbated by widespread reports of harassment and teasing by men on the roads, with several girls’ groups requesting distribution of more conservative clothing to mitigate the issue. At a learning facility, girls did not feel comfortable in spaces that did not segregate by sex, were inadequately shielded from view, and inadequately secured from trespassing outsiders. This last point was especially strongly emphasised, reported in nine out of 12 girl’s CGDs along with three out of ten boys’ groups.

²² “Education and Child Protection in Emergencies: Joint Rapid Needs Assessment, Rohingya Refugee Response 2017” (Cox’s Bazar: Education Sector and Child Protection Sub-Sector, 2018), p. 6.

²³ “Social and cultural factors shaping health and nutrition, wellbeing and protection of the Rohingya within a humanitarian context” (Brighton, UK: Social Science in Humanitarian Action, 2017), p. 12.

²⁴ REACH JENA, p. 43.

Significantly, while the majority of girls' groups expressed aspirations for education to girls to carry on into their early 20s, they also acknowledged that in practical terms girls will stop attending education after they get married.²⁵ This is critical given that the "normal" age of marriage reported by parents of Rohingya girls in displacement settings in Myanmar is between 15 and 19.²⁶ While marriage was not mentioned as a major barrier to education by survey participants, it was listed as the main risk to girls by JRNA key informants (reported by 46% of informants), while 27% also felt instances of early marriage had increased since displacement. With marriage commonly seen to represent a way to protect girls, a way to reduce household expenses by shifting the burden of providing for girls to their husbands' families, and an aspiration to "continue with life" for girls themselves,²⁷ there is thus a clear concern that rates of early marriage as a negative coping strategy may increase as displacement continues. This in turn is likely to have negative knock-on impacts on access to education for the girls involved.

Mental health and children with disabilities

Neither mental health nor disability were mentioned as key barriers by survey or CGD participants in this study. However, they have nevertheless been identified as key issues by more targeted secondary studies. Based on its results, the Children's Consultation report expresses concerns that children's emotional state—linked both to the traumas of displacement and the "daily stressors" of camp life²⁸—is likely affecting their ability to access or effectively engage with education. Meanwhile, a recent rapid mental health assessment points to the presence of widespread pre-displacement delays to children's cognitive and emotional development and points to "massive threats to cognitive and social/emotional development" in the current displacement environment.²⁹ In the JRNA, 50% of respondents reported observing evidence of psychosocial distress among children in their communities, of which 36% reported unwillingness to go to a learning facility as a symptom for girls, and 46% for boys.

Regarding disability, UNHCR data report that 3% of displaced Rohingya households in the response area have members with disabilities, while a recent profiling exercise among displaced Rohingya populations in Myanmar using the short set of Washington Group questions reported a prevalence rate of 0.68% for people aged 10-39.³⁰ JRNA data indicates that 57% of key informants perceive children with disabilities to be suffering more than other children, while UNHCR community assessments report that parents of children with disabilities are concerned their children will not be able to access education. Furthermore, a recent rapid disability assessment recorded anecdotal data of teachers excluding children with disabilities from learning facilities,³¹ and not a single teacher's CGD mentioned either receiving, or wanting to receive, training on disability and inclusion. According to the Myanmar profiling exercise—which took place in easier terrain in the context of a well-established emergency response—Rohingya children with disabilities reported significant challenges to

²⁵ Similarly, married adolescent girls consulted for "Childhood Interrupted" reported concerns for girls' education, but not for their own – p. 17.

²⁶ "Gender based violence among displaced communities in Sittwe township, Rakhine state: A knowledge, attitudes and practices study" (Yangon: International Rescue Committee, 2016), p. 5.

²⁷ Social Science for Humanitarian Action, p. 12-13.

²⁸ "Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Needs Assessment and Plan of Activities" (Cox's Bazar: Save the Children International, 2017) [Unpublished].

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ "Disability and Access to Services in IDP Camps – Rakhine State, Myanmar" (Sittwe: Danish Refugee Council, 2018) [Unpublished]

³¹ "Rohingya Refugee Crisis in Bangladesh: Age and Disability Inclusion - Rapid Assessment Report" (Cox's Bazar: Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund (ASB) and the Centre for Disability in Development (CDD) Bangladesh, 2017), p. 6.

mobility, and well over half of children aged 5-19 reported not participating regularly in community activities. Together, this evidence strongly suggests that major access barriers do exist for children with disabilities, and that research and monitoring of this group is urgently required.

Facilities and services

The study did not directly assess the status of facilities and services at learning centres. However, secondary data along with perceptions from the study's CGD and survey component allow for a number of key issues to be highlighted. Much of the secondary data is drawn from a February 2018 REACH assessment of facility infrastructure at 1103 learning centres. While the assessment did not include all learning centres and partners have raised questions regarding the accuracy of some of its data, it remains the best available data source on infrastructure in the sector as a whole.

The REACH assessment did not collect centre-level data on enrolled students, meaning that the ratio of students per classroom can only be calculated as an average for the response as a whole, dividing the total number of enrolled students by the total number of classrooms. With the vast majority (over 99%) of learning facilities assessed by REACH contained only one classroom, the average ratio of enrolled students per classroom is 110. Bearing in mind that there are three shifts³² and not all students will be in the classroom at the same time, this average of 35 students per single-shift compares relatively favourably to an average of 77 enrolled students per single-shift classroom in learning facilities sampled by a REACH assessment in north Rakhine state prior to displacement.³³ However, according to CGDs with teachers, overcrowding in small classrooms remains a major issue, highlighted as the "most important" challenge to effective teaching in six out of 8 discussions. As discussed above, the lack of ability to properly segregate existing spaces by gender also represents a major barrier to the effective participation of adolescent girls.

REACH data also provides basic information about latrines and handwashing facilities. While the majority of learning facilities without latrines and handwashing points were reported as having access to these services off-site, no information is available on the quality of these facilities. Moreover, having to travel outside of a learning facility to use latrines raises clear protection risks, especially for adolescent girls; NPM data suggests key informants believe latrines are among the most common locations where security incidents involving children are likely to take place, reporting them as a safety risk in 58% of assessed sites.

Reflecting this situation, participants in this study's CGDs with adolescents reported high levels of dissatisfaction with the quality of WASH facilities. The issue was raised in 16 out of 22 discussions, with children focusing on both a lack of latrines and safe drinking water, and in many cases emphatically stating that this represented an urgent priority. Some CGDs also specifically addressed the issue of using WASH facilities off-site, explaining that doing so is disruptive and negatively affects their studies. In survey responses from parents, inadequate WASH facilities was raised as a challenge to learning facility attendance by around one-quarter of parents of girls aged 3-5 and 6-14, one-fifth of parents of boys of the same ages, and around 15% of parents of children aged 15-18 (see Figure 2). Overall, similar numbers raised it as a priority issue for improvement (see Figure 5 below). Parents in Geo Zone 11 consistently highlighted WASH issues as both a challenge and a priority for improvement across all age groups relative to other sites.

³² Three shifts is the Education Sector Standard but a minority of learning facilities run two shifts.

³³ REACH JENA dataset.

Table 5: WASH at learning centres as a concern and a priority for parents, by age and gender of children

Age	3 to 5		6 to 14		15 to 18	
Gender	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
Concerns about WASH at learning centres	23%	23%	23%	19%	13%	16%
Improving WASH at learning centres is a priority	18%	22%	23%	22%	23%	19%

Finally, REACH data provides information on learning facilities that may be built on land prone to flooding and landslides during rainy season. Overall, it found that approximately 350 learning facilities are at risk, with around 180 at risk from landslide.

4.3 Teaching and learning

This section examines the education that children receive when they attend learning centres. It discusses issues related to teaching learning materials, addresses what is currently being taught in learning centres (including issues around curriculums and languages), presents data on current levels of contact time for children in learning centres, and finally examines parents' and students' priorities and aspirations for learning.

Teaching and learning materials

While no learning facility-level data on the provision of learning materials is available, the study's survey component demonstrates that a perceived lack of learning materials is an issue for many parents. The issue was listed as a challenge for children accessing education by 31% of parents of children aged 3-5 and 27% of parents of children aged 6-14 with minimal gender differences. The lack of learning materials was also widely discussed in the study's CGDs, mentioned by participants in ten out of 12 teachers' groups and 21 out of 22 student's groups. Teachers widely mentioned a lack of blackboards as well as other teaching aids and toys for children. A minority of teachers also pointed to the issue of uneven availability of learning materials at different learning centres, which was seen as a contributing factor to children "shopping" between different learning centres and thus disruptive to activities. Similarly, some also felt that a lack of learning materials made it hard to demonstrate to parents that learning centres were providing a quality and worthwhile service. Adolescents in CGDs did not often specify the types of learning materials they lacked, although a minority of both boys and girls groups did specifically emphasise clothing: some were worried about lacking appropriate clothing to travel to a learning facility during the monsoon, while girls in particular reported that they would be more comfortable going to learning facility if they had access to burqas.

These findings contrast the Education Sector's monitoring of the response which reports that approximately all children who are enrolled have been given materials. This also goes for classroom equipment. It is therefore not possible to conclude exactly why learning materials remain a primary concern for parents, teachers and children. For children, it could be linked to the inadequate quality of materials and that the materials being sold or used in other non-education activities. For teachers, it may also be a need for improved instruction on how to effectively use the teaching materials provided.

What is being taught?

At present, there is no standardised curriculum being taught across learning centres. Children are not permitted to access the formal education system directly and the Bangladeshi curriculum cannot be taught inside learning centres³⁴. At the same time, there is a lack of available teaching capacity and resources (see section on Teachers and Other Education Personnel below) to align curricula in learning centres with the Myanmar curriculum, and there is currently no process in place to secure recognition, validation or accreditation of the activities that take place in the learning centres by either Bangladeshi or Myanmar authorities.³⁵ At present, teaching is currently delivered in Rohingya and Burmese by Rohingya instructors and English and Chittagonian by Bangladeshi instructors. While teachers report attempting to separate children by ability, there are currently no clearly-established grade boundaries, and the focus is on providing basic literacy and numeracy education up to an approximately equivalent level of grade 2 in Myanmar, along with basic recreational and psychosocial support activities.

Perceptions of current learning activities

The scope of what content can be taught in learning facilities is currently limited by government policy³⁶. This is reflected in the concerns raised by both parents and children. In the study's survey component, "what is taught is not relevant or age appropriate" was listed as a challenge for children's education by parents across age groups. The issue was most prominent for adolescents, with 34% of parents of adolescent girls and 46% of parents of adolescent boys reporting "what is taught is not relevant" as a challenge to education access. By contrast, around 15% of parents of children of other ages reported it as a barrier. CGD responses and secondary data suggest that these perceptions are linked in part to perceptions of current teaching approaches as limited and poorly-targeted, and the lack of a proper certification process.

Participants in three adolescent CGDs felt they were under-stimulated in learning facilities, with too much time spent covering material they had already learned prior to displacement, or on irrelevant activities. In the words of one male participant, "it's monotonous, we're always just learning the alphabet." As another female participant put it, "We go to learning facilities for learning, not for singing and dancing" (student and parent priorities for improving learning activities are discussed in more detail below). Participants in teachers' CGDs also spoke of the challenge of teaching effectively when curricula often appeared haphazard or unstructured,³⁷ and in half of all CGDs reported struggling to keep children engaged and responsive during classes (though this could also be related to mental health issues—see discussion in Teachers and Other Education Personnel below). Related to this, teachers pointed to the challenge of teaching children of mixed ability without the diagnostic processes or the teaching materials to do so. In this respect, they pointed to the presence of widely mixed abilities not just between, but within age groups. This appears to be supported by data on previous

³⁴ The registered refugees who arrived prior to the 2017 August Influx have access to a specific non-formal programme that results in a certificate of participation or attendance. There are no pathways from this into the formal system for Rohingya children. There are some Rohingya from previous influxes who have purchased ID cards and are therefore able to enrol in formal schools.

³⁵ Education Capacity Self-Assessment, p. 19.

³⁶ The government of Bangladesh currently does not all formal education for Rohingya children. Those registered refugees in Kutupalong and Nayapara Register Refugee Camp are able to participate in a sanctioned UNHCR programme.

³⁷ See also Education Capacity Self-Assessment, p. 11

learning facility attendance presented above, which suggests that current learning centre attendance is an even mix of children who have progressed some way through Myanmar's education system, and those who have never engaged with it before.

While the issue of certification was not reported directly by participants in this study, the Education Capacity Self-Assessment reports that this is perceived by teachers in particular as a barrier to persuading parents of the value of children attending learning centres.³⁸ Likewise, the lack of a pathway to proper certification has reportedly been linked with low enrolment rates among the pre-August refugee population.³⁹

Despite these issues, children in CGDs also spoke positively about many of the activities they were able to access at learning centres. When discussing the most useful subjects in their learning spaces, adolescent students spoke in equal numbers about the importance of languages—which helped them better communicate in their day to day lives—and of learning “manners”—which they reported as improving interactions with adults. A smaller number also spoke of the importance of literacy in terms of improving their ability to interact with the world around them, especially when it came to reading signs in the camp (see discussion on safety in the section on Access and Learning Environment above). In terms of subjects they enjoyed most, almost all boys' groups said sports, saying these activities balanced out more academic subjects and helped them learn more effectively. Meanwhile, around half of all adolescent groups of both genders mentioned arts, poetry or drama as their preferred activity.

Languages

As discussed above, children are theoretically taught in English by Bangladeshi instructors, and in Burmese by Rohingya instructors. In practice, Rohingya instructors are also likely to use Rohingya language to facilitate comprehension. Bangladeshi teachers who speak Chittagongian dialect may also be able to use this to communicate with students given the overlap between the two languages. However, those who speak only Bengali will not be able to do so since it is not mutually comprehensible with Rohingya, while teaching of Bengali in learning centres is prohibited by government legislation.⁴⁰

When asked about preferred language of instruction, half of parents requested Rohingya as a first priority while a further 15% preferred Burmese, 16% preferred English, and a further 10% preferred Bengali or Arabic—all with minimal differences for gender and age. Meanwhile, adolescent CGD participants unanimously reported preferring Rohingya as the language of instruction. When asked about languages they would like their children to learn, the largest group (34%) of parents reported Rohingya as a first priority. It is unclear whether this finding represents a comprehension issue—with parents not between distinguishing medium of instruction and language teaching in their responses—or a genuine preference for more structured teaching of Rohingya language or script⁴¹. However, while those who were familiar with the script ranked it as their first priority for language education, very few people overall had even heard of it.⁴² The fact that adolescent CGD participants did not mention Rohingya language education (rather than simply as a language of instruction) suggests this finding should be viewed with caution.

³⁸ Ibid, p. 19.

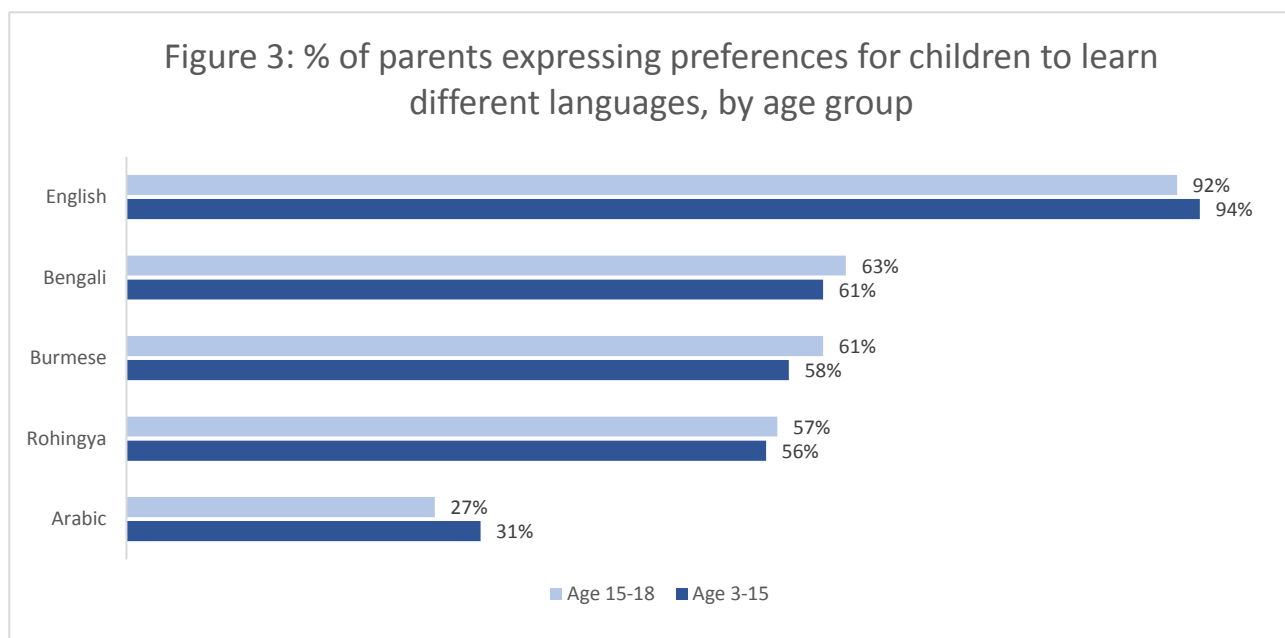
³⁹ “Review – Rohingya influx since 1978” (Geneva: ACAPS-NPM Analysis Hub, 2017), p. 7.

⁴⁰ Rohingya Zuban.

⁴¹ See footnote 39

⁴² Ibid.

Overall, English was the most frequently mentioned priority for languages children should learn, reported as an overall priority by over 90% of parents of children regardless of age and gender (see Figure 3). This was followed by Bengali (62%), Burmese (60%), Rohingya (57%), and Arabic (29%). This stands in contrast to the findings of the Translators Without Borders assessment, in which Burmese was cited as the most desirable language to learn, followed by English and then Bengali.⁴³



In CGDs with adolescents, children emphasised the importance of learning English as an “international language.” Some added that this would be especially important if they ended up spending their lives abroad, since it would help them better communicate with foreigners. Meanwhile, Bengali was seen as important for communicating with people around them in their current displacement setting, while Burmese was seen as important in the event of returns to Myanmar. In this respect, some children emphasised that, along with Rohingya language, learning Burmese was an important way for them to “understand their identity.”⁴⁴ Language instruction in general was also cited as a key priority for improving children’s education by around 22% to 24% of parents of children aged 6-14, 21% of parents of girls aged 15-18, and 34% for boys of the same age (see Table 6 below).

Contact time

While the study did not collect learning facility level data on teaching hours at learning facilities, it did collect data on the number of days in the past week each child had spent attending learning centres. However, we know that the Education Sector standards for contact hours is 2 hours per shift (based on 3 shifts per day). Overall, the findings suggest that while many children do not attend a learning facility at all, those who do so tend to attend regularly. Out of the children aged 3-5 who had attended a learning facility in the previous week, 91% of girls and 93% of boys had attended a learning facility four or more days, while only an additional 8% had attended between zero and three days. Geographically, children of this age in Geo Zones 1 and 2 were more likely to be attending a learning facility infrequently compared to children in other areas. For children aged 6-14, the pattern is the same—91% of both genders attended a learning facility more than four days in the

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

previous week, while only 8% reported 0-3 days of attendance. For this age group, children in Geo Zones 5 and 12 were less likely to be attending regularly. These figures are broadly similar to attendance rates reported pre-displacement in the REACH assessment, where a learning facility administrators estimated close to 90% of children attended a learning facility at least four days per week.⁴⁵ Despite these positive figures, teachers in CGDs did report that teaching hours were regularly disrupted by children leaving a learning facility to attend distributions, or scheduling clashes with madrassahs (see section on Coordination/Community Participation below).

Priorities and aspirations for parents and students

As part of the study's survey component, parents were asked to rank the three main priorities for improving services at learning centres for their children. Their responses are displayed in Figure 5 and Table 6 below. Issues related to security and WASH infrastructure at spaces were especially predominant, and are discussed at greater length in Access and Learning Environment above, while concerns around teaching quality are discussed in Teachers and Other Education Personnel below. Other common priorities for improvement included expanding learning facility feeding programmes, expanding recreational activities, and providing vocational training.

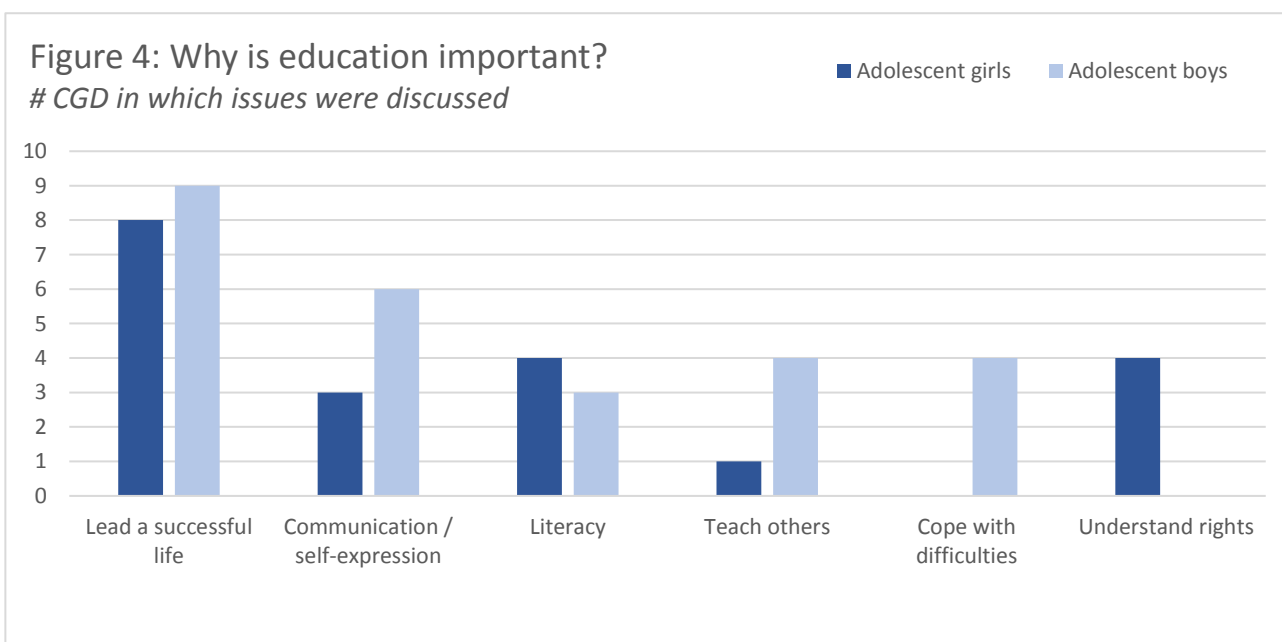
Table 6: Overall learning centre improvements for parents, by age and gender of children

Age	3 to 5		6 to 14		15 to 18	
Gender	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
Learning facility feeding	53%	55%	39%	37%	21%	27%
Improve safety at learning facilities	46%	45%	39%	34%	50%	30%
Improve safety on the way to learning facilities	36%	40%	34%	27%	50%	24%
Improved quality of teaching	31%	28%	35%	34%	32%	48%
Recreational activities	28%	27%	21%	23%	18%	20%
Improved WASH	18%	22%	23%	17%	23%	19%
Language skills	0%	0%	22%	24%	21%	34%
Vocational skills	0%	0%	20%	21%	40%	47%

⁴⁵ REACH JENA, p. 33.

Learning facility feeding was rarely listed as a first priority by parents. However, it was also the most widely listed priority overall for parents of children of both genders aged 3-5 (around 55% of parents) and 6-14 (just under 40% of parents). Significantly, eight out of 11 teachers' CGD groups placed significant emphasis on the need and expand feeding programmes at their learning facilities, suggesting that doing so would encourage more families to enrol their children. This is despite WFP reportedly distributing High Energy Biscuits at all learning centres. A request for a more robust feeding programmes was also raised as a concern in the March NPM, where key informants in 58% of locations reported that children in their areas did not have access to such services.

Recreational activities were mainly prioritised by parents of children aged 3-5 (28% overall) and 6-14 (22% overall). Adolescents in half of all children's CGDs also emphasised the importance of recreational activities such as sport, poetry, art, and drama, with one boys' group explaining that these activities helped them stay focused during more formal learning tasks. The critical need for recreational activities for children is discussed extensively in the Children's Consultation, where both boys and girls report being unable to play freely with their friends due to constraints on their movement by parents concerned over safety, constraints on their time due to a need to help with household chores, and a lack of places to play. According to the JRNA—where recreational activities for children were a priority for 67% of key informants overall—a lack of recreational activities was a major perceived driver of psychosocial distress in children, cited for girls by 42% of informants and for boys by 30%. The findings is likely in part driven by the de-prioritisation of additional educational and recreational facilities allocated within the refugee camps/sites given the extreme lack of physical space. However, the need for these spaces is underlined by a recent rapid assessment on mental health linked children's observed failure to hit age-appropriate developmental milestones with a likelihood that they have been "severely deprived of adequate play opportunities and stimulation."



Vocational training was viewed as a major priority for parents of adolescents. 40% of parents of girls aged 15-18 and 47% with boys age 15-18 reported vocational education as a priority for improving learning facilities. The importance of vocational activities was also raised as a priority by just under half of all adolescent CGD participants. Similarly, 54% of JRNA key informants arriving after August reported vocational training as a priority overall, while children taking part in a recent Child Consultation expressly asked for more vocational training opportunities so that they could help support their families. This prioritisation is fuelled by the major challenges many families face to secure adequate livelihood opportunities and maintain basic food security in the camps. This is exacerbated by government restrictions preventing Rohingya from participating in

employment or vocational training programmes. Income-enhancing vocational training opportunities may represent a crucial entry point—if appropriately and sensitively designed—in incentivising families to allow adolescent girls to attend learning spaces, as well as allowing boys to remain in some form of education for longer before their time is entirely committed to the labour market.

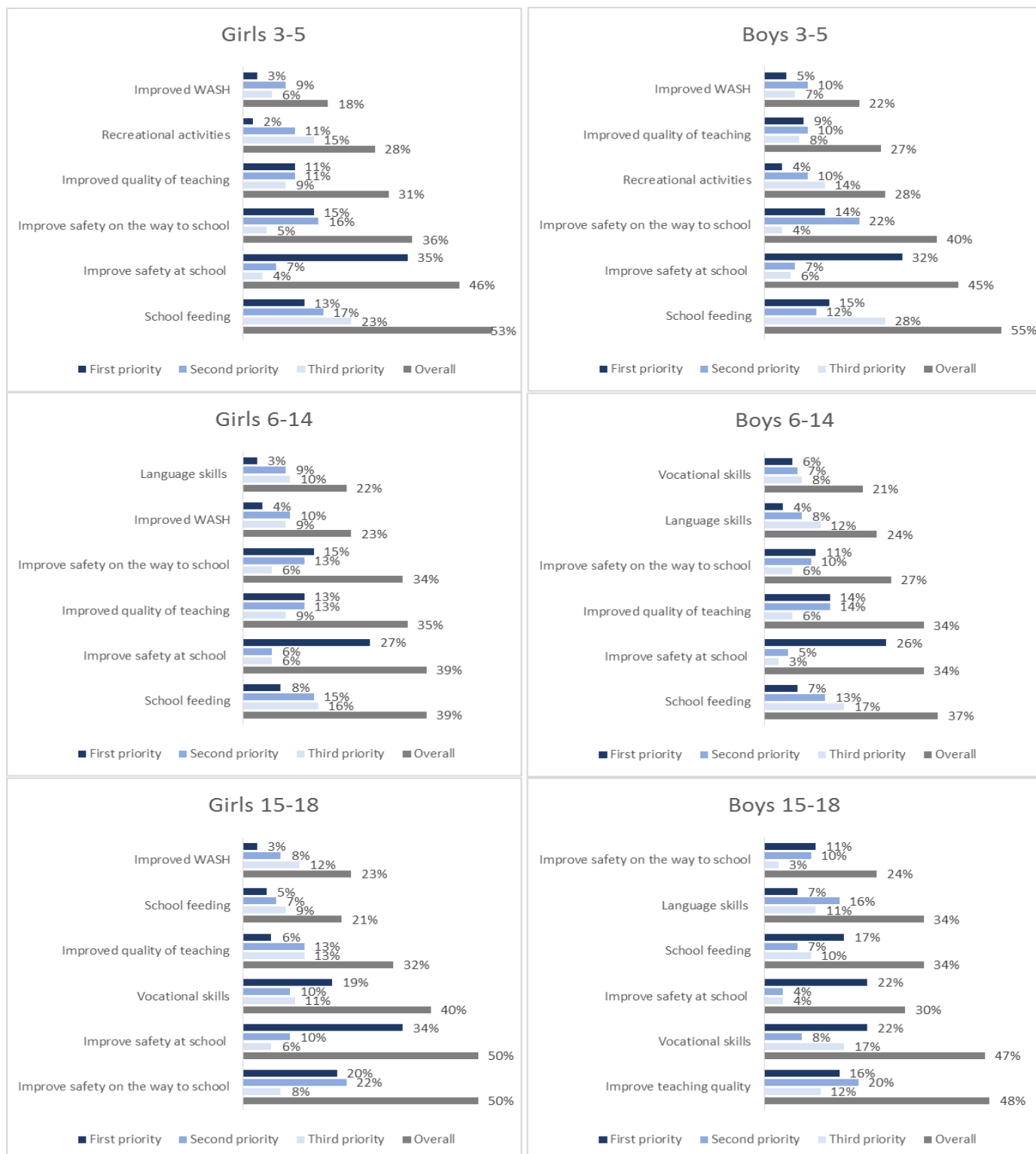
Student aspirations

At the beginning of CGDs with adolescents, participants were asked what they felt was important about education (see Figure 4). Almost overwhelmingly both boys and girls recognised its value in terms of building a successful life, whether in terms of preparing them for a job, making life more fulfilling, or as one student put it: “not being a loser in life.” In addition to this, significant numbers also highlighted the role of education in allowing them to communicate better with other people, whether through learning languages, or simply through being able to express their thoughts more effectively. Linked to this, just under half of all groups raised the importance of literacy. Differing by gender, just under half of all girls felt education was important specifically to help them better understand their rights, while just under half of boys also felt it would better equip them to deal with difficulties and shocks.

Following this, adolescents were asked what careers they would like to pursue in the future. By far the most common job preferences were to be teachers (listed in all groups) and doctors (listed in three-quarters of groups). This may partially reflect the historically well-paid and prestigious status of these professions in Myanmar. Following these, the majority of boys also listed working with computers in some form, while a fifth of both boys and girls listed tailoring and engineering. It should however be noted that while many girls’ groups listed a variety of professional aspirations, elsewhere in discussions many also indicated that they expected to be “housewives” by the time they entered their 20s. Interestingly for a stateless population, a significant majority of boys also discussed wanting to grow up to be government officials.



Figure 5: Main services that should be provided or improved at learning facilities, reported by parents for different ages/genders of children: first, second, and third ranked priorities, plus overall frequency



4.4 Teachers and Other Education Personnel

This section presents information—largely gathered from secondary sources—on teachers and other education personnel working on the response. It discusses issues of teacher recruitment and availability, explores priorities for teacher training, and briefly examines questions around teachers' conditions of work.

Teacher recruitment and availability

At present, learning centres are staffed by two teaching personnel, including one Bangladeshi teacher and one Rohingya language instructor. In line with Bangladeshi government policy, the former is responsible for instruction in English while the latter is responsible for instruction in Burmese.⁴⁶ As of March 2018, 2,948 teachers have been trained by Education Sector partners, split 50/50 between Bangladeshis and Rohingyas (see Table 7).

Table 7: Teachers trained against student enrolment, as of mid May 2018⁴⁷

	Rohingya Teachers	Host Community Teachers	Students	Estimated student: teacher ratio
Female	345	1,125	68,695	47
Male	846	359	68,951	57
Total	1,191	1,484	137,646	51

The estimated overall teacher-student ratio derived from this data is 43:1. This would theoretically provide a ratio of 96 learners and 2 teachers per learning centre. Taking into account triple shifting, this comes to approximately 32 learning per shift.⁴⁸ In aggregate, this is over the INEE minimum standards guidance used by the Education Sector of 40:1⁴⁹. Significantly though, data are not broken down by education level (ECCD, primary, secondary) and no data on teacher absenteeism or drop-out are available. The relatively high level of attendance reported in this study's survey data (see Figure 1 above) suggests that this ratio is broadly indicative of actual teacher workloads. However, given that the majority of learning centres operate on three shifts per day, it does not necessarily provide insight onto actual class sizes.

In terms of gender balance, almost two thirds (60%) of Rohingya instructors were reportedly male. The reverse is true for Bangladeshi teachers, where 78% are female, and overall almost 60% teaching staff

⁴⁶ Education Capacity Self-Assessment, p. 13.

⁴⁷ 4Ws; note that this data does not account for teacher or student drop-out, and includes a small number of children enrolled from the host community. It is therefore presented as a best-guess estimate rather than an exact set of figures.

⁴⁸ This contradicted the average calculated from the REACH data sent of 110 learners on average per classroom.

⁴⁹ "Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery" (New York: International Network for Education in Emergencies, 2010), p. 97.

are female. However, these gender imbalances are significant in light of student and parent preferences for gender-matched teaching staff, documented in the JENA and other secondary data. In almost all CGDs with adolescents, girls expressed a preference for female teachers while boys expressed a preference for male teachers. Possibly reflecting a greater desire for familiar reference points in a social context where girls' experiences are often confined largely to the household, a majority of adolescent girls in CGDs were emphatic that their teachers should be Rohingya as well as female. More broadly, gender-segregated environments—including teachers—are reportedly a precondition for even the minority of Rohingya families willing to consider education for adolescent girls (though this is not an issue for younger children).⁵⁰

In addition to questions of gender imbalance, multiple assessments point to a struggle to recruit qualified teachers. Among the refugee community, education actors have reported difficulties in identifying qualified Burmese-speaking Rohingya staff—especially women.⁵¹ For example, the JRNA reported that only 21% of Rohingya teachers arriving after August 2017 had higher than secondary level education.⁵² Among the host community, the availability of qualified teachers able to function in the challenging environment of the camps is also a major issue,⁵³ although data from JRNA suggests that teachers drawn from and serving the host community are comparatively better educated than their Rohingya counterparts.⁵⁴

The problem of finding qualified teachers appears to be linked to two major issues – competition from other sources of employment, and a lack of supply. On the first point, the majority teachers participating in the study's CGDs reported knowing people who had teaching qualifications or experience, but who were not currently working as teachers. This finding is supported by data from the March NPM Site Assessment, which reported that key informants in 54% of assessed sites reported the same thing.⁵⁵ In general, CGD participants linked this to low incentive levels and the prospect of better-paid NGO jobs in other sectors.

In terms of teacher supply, the limited pool of qualified Rohingya refugee teachers is closely linked to restrictions on access to Burmese-language education and teacher training prior to displacement, along with social barriers limiting girls' access to education after primary level. Movement and citizenship restrictions mean that Rohingyas in Myanmar have long faced significant access barriers to government-run teacher training, along with higher education in general. After the outbreak of intercommunal violence in 2012, the intensification of movement restrictions effectively shut down access to these opportunities altogether.⁵⁶ More broadly, systemic barriers to education access, and the limited involvement of Burmese-speaking teachers in educating children in Rohingya areas mean the knowledge of written and spoken Burmese is low among recently arrived Rohingyas, especially

⁵⁰ Social Scientists for Humanitarian Action, p. 13.

⁵¹ Education Capacity Self-Assessment, p. 18; Rohingya Zuban.

⁵² JRNA, p. 34.

⁵³ Education Capacity Self-Assessment, p. 13.

⁵⁴ JRNA, p. 34.

⁵⁵ NPM, p. 13.

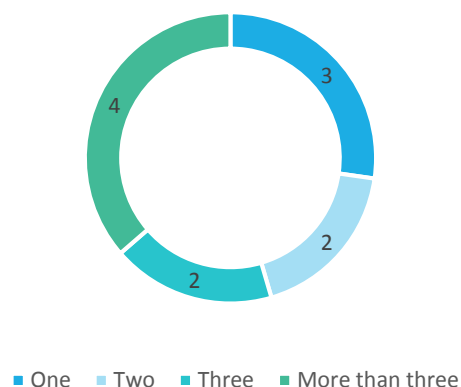
⁵⁶ "Rakhine State Needs Assessment II" (Yangon: Centre for Diversity and National Harmony, 2017), p. 94.

women.⁵⁷ According to a recent Translators Without Borders report, reading comprehension rates in written Burmese among this group are 6% for women and 17% for men; rates for English are 5% for men and 0% for women, with nobody proficient in Bengali.⁵⁸ Similarly, a recent profiling report among Rohingya communities in Myanmar reported that almost 90% of women could not speak Burmese.⁵⁹ It should be noted however that despite a lack of formal education or certification, a number of Rohingyas do have substantial experience as educators prior to displacement. Following 2012, Rohingya communities in northern Rakhine have reported high levels of absenteeism among formally-trained government staff, leaving communities to fill this gap with (mostly male) local volunteers. Although lacking support and training, these individuals have effectively been running a “parallel education system” for some years in the absence of the Myanmar state, and potentially represent a valuable capacity among the refugee community.⁶⁰

Teacher training

The challenge of finding qualified teachers makes the issue of teacher training especially urgent. While all teachers recruited to learning centres do currently undergo some form of basic training, there are currently no agreed-on quality control standards or means of training certification. Responses from teacher CGD participants indicate that the amount of training provided varies significantly from organisation to organisation. At one end of the spectrum, teachers in one CGD listed well over ten areas of training received (much of it prior to August). By contrast, teachers in three out of 12 groups reported receiving only basic teacher training.

Figure 6: Number of Trainings reported in each teacher CGD



Priorities for training identified by teacher CGD participants included pedagogy, language instruction, running recreational activities, and “child protection” (all requested in seven out of 11 groups). An additional two groups requested training in maths, and on disaster risk reduction, emphasising the latter’s practical importance in protecting students during the upcoming rainy season. These priorities are partially reflected in the findings of the JRNA, where pedagogy was listed as a first priority by around one-fifth of recently arrived Rohingya teachers and as an overall priority by just over half. In that assessment, emphasis on subject-specific training, and training on health and life skills—especially hygiene promotion—were more common, both listed by 67% of recently arrived teachers.⁶¹

⁵⁷ Rohingya Zuban.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ “Sittwe Camp Profiling Report” (Geneva: CCCM Cluster, Danish Refugee Council, UNHCR, Joint IDP Profiling Service, 2017), p. 37.

⁶⁰ REACH JENA, p. 35.

⁶¹ JRNA, p. 35.

The emphasis of CGD participants on “child protection” training (which was not elaborated further) is reflected on in more depth in the results of a recent Education Capacity Self-Assessment. Here, participants highlighted the unusually complex needs of the children they were serving, linking this to an urgent need for wider array of training for both teachers and management staff.⁶² This is especially important in light of secondary literature showing both a high level of immediate need for psychosocial support based on recent traumatic experiences during displacement, and the underlying presence of widespread developmental delays and malnutrition among Rohingya children that predate the current crisis.⁶³ According to the JRNA, 50% of key informants noticed signs of distress or change in children’s behaviour over the past three months.⁶⁴ Meanwhile, a recent rapid assessment on mental health highlights serious issues regarding children’s lack of previous exposure to cognitive stimulation, manifesting in a failure to reach age-appropriate developmental milestones.⁶⁵ These issues may be reflected in the common issue raised among teacher CGD participants that “we teach well, but student response is low.”

Conditions of work

When discussing challenges associated with their working conditions, teacher CGD participants focused mainly on issues surrounding infrastructure and access to learning supplies (see Access and Learning Environment above). A more detailed discussion of current conditions of work is provided in the Education Capacity Self-Assessment. Here, participants point to the fact that in the case of many national organisations, staffing structures and incentive scales for management staff were established prior to the August 2017 refugee influx. Since that time, workload has increased dramatically and the cost of living has ballooned due to rapid inflation. With organisations struggling to adapt, this has led to high rates of turnover and a lack of team sustainability, an issue which may de-incentivise investing more in staff capacity development. For teaching staff, low incentives relative to other sectors is reportedly an issue in staff retention (see above), while for female staff in particular difficult working conditions—including lack of WASH facilities, travel to remote areas, and long hours resulting in travel at night—also result in high turnover. While no data on teacher drop-out rates are currently available, this may well mean that the disproportionately small number of female Rohingya teachers trained may be even smaller in practice, with knock-on implications for retention of female students. Finally, the current lack of standardised training certification means that only limited professional development pathways exist for teachers involved in the response; this is particularly the case for Rohingya teachers, who currently have no formal or symbolic recognition of their role as educators.⁶⁶

⁶² Education Capacity Self-assessment, p. 17.

⁶³ Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Needs Assessment.

⁶⁴ JRNA, p. 52-3.

⁶⁵ Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Needs Assessment.

⁶⁶ Education Capacity Self-assessment, p. 13.

4.5 Coordination/Community Participation

This section explores issues of how learning centres interact with the environment around them, in terms of both coordination with the wider humanitarian response, and of engagement with the communities they serve. It examines learning centres' coordination with other actors in the humanitarian space, before looking at their interaction with parents and religious education systems within the refugee community.

Coordination

The main coordination issue identified by the primary data in this study was the interruption of learning centre activities by distributions. In around half of CGDs with teachers, participants explained how children would leave the learning centre to help their families carry goods after distributions, and tended not to return to the centres for the rest of the day once distributions were complete. To counter this, they suggested coordinating with distribution actors to prevent children attending distributions on behalf of their families, increasing awareness raising among parents; and allowing learning facilities to distribute food, clothing and other goods in order to keep children on-site during these processes and minimise disruption to timetables. This issue may potentially be symptomatic of a wider problem discussed at length in the Education Capacity Self-Assessment—namely that at field level in particular, learning centres are poorly integrated with other parts of the response. Teachers in the Self-Assessment felt their centres were not well-integrated with the activities of other actors, such as child-friendly spaces or youth centres. This was reportedly mirrored by a lack of understanding at management level of how the response is being designed or structured moving forward, limiting organisations' ability to strategies effectively.⁶⁷

Community Participation

Areas of weak coordination with other humanitarian actors also appear to be mirrored by a gap in coordination with communities. Throughout teacher CGDs, there is little evidence that learning centres are currently communicating or engaging effectively with parents in particular. While some staff report conducting follow-up household visits in the case of student absenteeism, the majority of CGD participants reported a need to engage in more sustained dialogue with parents and “raise awareness” about the value of education as a key priority for boosting attendance.⁶⁸

Similarly, teachers pointed to a lack engagement with madrassahs as a source of sometimes significant tension. At a basic level, teachers explained how scheduling clashes with madrassahs tended to negatively impact attendance at certain times. More seriously, teachers in some CGDs also felt that religious leaders in certain mosques or madrassahs were actively hostile toward learning centres, and were encouraging children—especially older girls—to stop attending learning centres. As with parental engagement, better coordination with madrassahs was a commonly-listed priority area for improvement among teachers.

As one study puts it, for the Rohingya community “meeting religious needs may be important as meeting material needs”⁶⁹ and religious education in madrassahs plays a critical role in supporting communities' sense of spiritual wellbeing. The Children's Consultation places significant emphasis on the importance of religious

⁶⁷ Education Capacity Self-Assessment, p. 15.

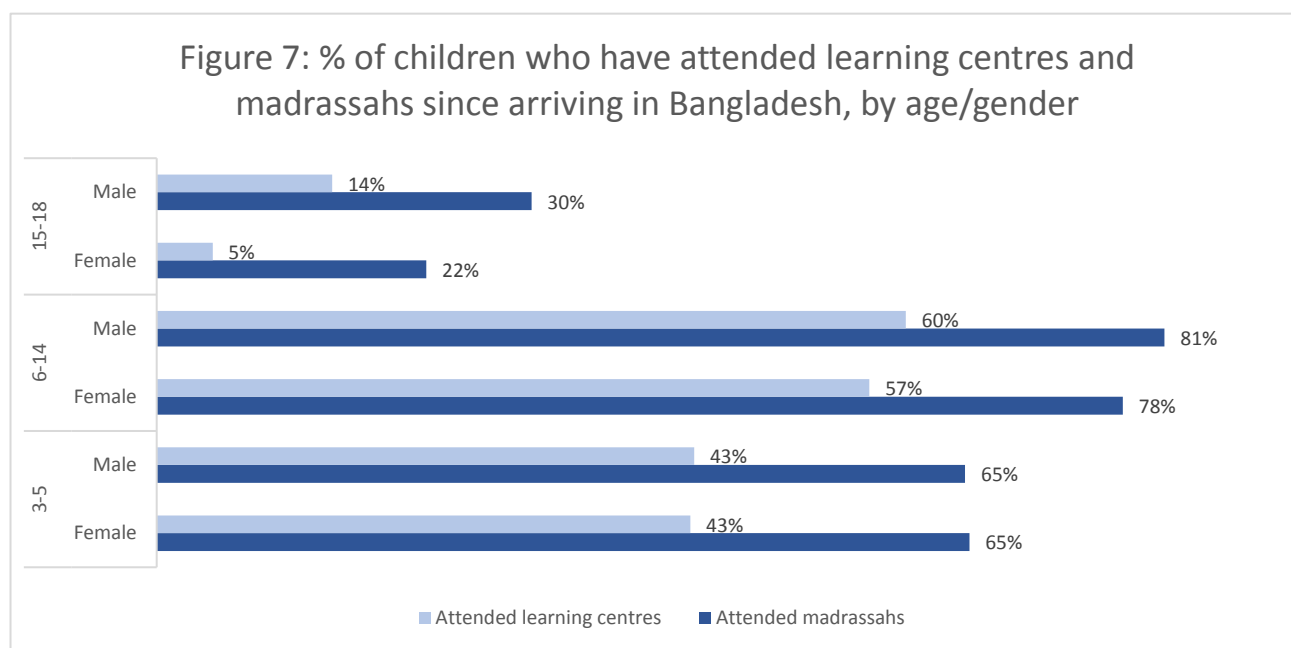
⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 15.

⁶⁹ Social Scientists for Humanitarian Action, p. 2.

practice as a source of hope and unity, and describes mosques in particular as places “where [children] felt very safe, where no one would hurt them, and where they would be at peace.”⁷⁰ Staffed by exclusively male *mulvis* or religious teachers, madrassahs generally provide religious education in Arabic or Urdu. According to a REACH assessment in Rakhine state, they are generally seen by parents as performing a separate and complementary—rather than competing—role alongside secular education. Nevertheless, in the context of poor rates of enrolment in formal schools, they also represent the only form of education many children will ever receive.⁷¹

To explore these issues further, the study’s survey component collected data on children’s enrolment and attendance at madrassahs since their arrival in Bangladesh. Overall, it found that the majority of children age 3-14 have attended madrassahs since arriving. This renders them significantly better-attended than learning spaces, with around 20% more children of both genders attending these facilities compared to learning spaces at ECCD and primary levels, and 15% more at secondary level (see Figure 7). Nearly 40% of all children aged 3 to 18 have attended both a Madrassa and learning facility, with only 6% reporting that they have only attended a learning facility. The highest proportion attending both being primary aged children, at around 50%. Significantly, almost one-quarter of adolescent girls at secondary level reported attending madrassahs compared to the negligible numbers attending learning spaces. Children’s levels of contact time in terms of days attended per week were largely comparable to learning centres, with over 90% of children who had attended madrassah in the previous week attending for four or more days.

Determining sensitive ways to engage with madrassahs is a particularly important issue given both their widespread status and acceptance within the refugee community. This is in part crucial given the obvious need for alternative modalities, as well as alternative suitable physical spaces of education delivery.⁷² It is equally



⁷⁰ Childhood Interrupted, p. 15

⁷¹ REACH JENA, p. 26-7.

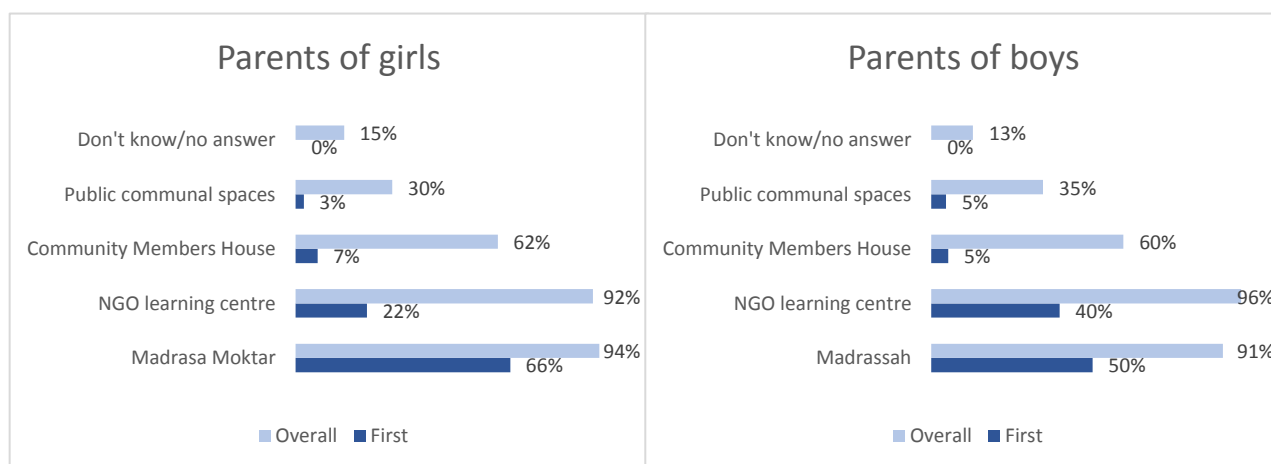
⁷² According to the JRNA, availability of space per person in post-August camps already falls well below international standards of 45m² per person, sometimes dipping as low as 8m² per person. Similarly, the JRNA found that 47% of key informants arriving since August felt that there was not space available for education in their areas. JRNA, p. 30.

important as the madrassahs provide an example of what Rohingya see as a safe space, and as a focal point of community engagement and activity.

In addition, the study explored levels of trust in madrassahs as well as perceptions regarding the possible extension of their role to include some form of secular education. When parents were asked to rank which spaces they trusted most in providing their children with secular education, madrassahs returned higher levels of trust than even NGO learning centres, listed as the first most trusted space by 66% of girls' parents and 50% of boys' parents.

Religious teachers were also relatively well-trusted to provide secular education to boys and girls, ranked as most trusted by just over one-third of parents and as trusted overall by close to 90%. However, in this respect they fall behind "Rohingya teachers", who were ranked as most trusted by 59% of girls' parents and 50% of boys' parents. However, CGD data adds a layer of complexity to these findings. The majority of boys' CGD groups said they would be comfortable learning all subjects in madrassahs, while a minority strongly resisted the idea, pointing out that religious teachers were not qualified to teach secular subjects and emphasising that madrassahs are an inappropriate space culturally for secular learning. In general, girls' groups felt that madrassahs were only appropriate for teaching Arabic. Some of these concerns appear to echo the findings of the REACH Rakhine study, which found that out of 181 staff—all male—at 55 madrassahs assessed across north Rakhine state, not one had completed high school education.⁷³ Teachers generally felt that secular teaching in madrassahs would be appropriate for boys but not for girls—in Myanmar girls do not generally attend madrassahs after menstruation begins. By contrast, some girls felt that being taught in madrassahs could mitigate parents' concerns about learning facility attendance due to the religious legitimacy offered by the space. Overall these results indicate that while entry points exist for greater collaboration with madrassahs, they will need to be navigated with significant sensitivity regarding both lines of communication and modalities of engagement.

Figure 8: % parents reporting different learning spaces as trusted to provide secular education: By first priority and overall frequency



⁷³ REACH JENA, p. 36.

As a further alternative modality to current learning centres, the study also explored communities' receptiveness to home-based secular education. This was generally ranked as the third most trusted space by parents behind madrassahs and NGO learning centres, and mentioned as a trusted space overall by around 60% of parents of both boys and girls. In 18 out of 23 adolescent CGDs, children were generally receptive to some form of home-based education, while in a further three groups children felt it would negatively impact their ability to make friends and play.

5.1 Summary of recommendations

5.2 To Education Sector and Partners

- **Expanding access to learning:** Evidence from this assessment indicates that a lack of places in learning facilities is a critical barrier for the ECD and primary aged children currently not attending learning centres in 40% of the households surveyed. Within learning centres, build on the existing shift system by introducing alternate teaching days for different groups of students. While this would reduce contact time for children already enrolled (the vast majority of whom attend 4 or more days per week), it would allow for an expansion of enrolment, as well as mitigate the competing demands on their time that many children currently face. This approach could also be combined with more structured attempts to separate children by age and/or ability.
- **Alternative options for access to learning need to be developed:** Given the lack of available space in the camps, extending existing spaces may not be a viable option, pointing to the urgency of finding alternative modalities. Outside learning centres, pilot alternative modalities for delivering basic education in consultation with children, parents, and teachers. This could include some form of home-based education—deemed acceptable by many participants in this study—as well as more sensitive efforts to engage with the madrassah system (see further discussion below).
- **Improve the focus on addressing the learning needs of adolescents and youth:** The vast majority of adolescents do not have access to relevant education opportunities. While the lack of activities and spaces catering to adolescents is a clear blockage, the need to support household livelihoods for boys and social constraints for adolescent girls are also major constraints on adolescents' ability to access educational opportunities. A vital part of this is ensuring that education activities respond to adolescents' stated need for market-relevant skills that will build their resilience for the future.
- **Education opportunities for adolescent girls requires further attention;** Identify pathways to support expanded access to education opportunities for adolescent girls. Given long-standing cultural hostility toward girls attending past puberty, these may involve working with Protection or Livelihoods Sector partners to identify and design culturally appropriate interventions beyond learning centres themselves.
- **Address safety concerns of learning environments:** Parents and students in this study highlighted widespread concerns about the safety of learning centres. They also expressed dissatisfaction with centre WASH facilities, which in the majority cases appear to fall below SPHERE standards.
 - Conduct additional research with parents and children to better understand the nature of safety concerns around learning centres.

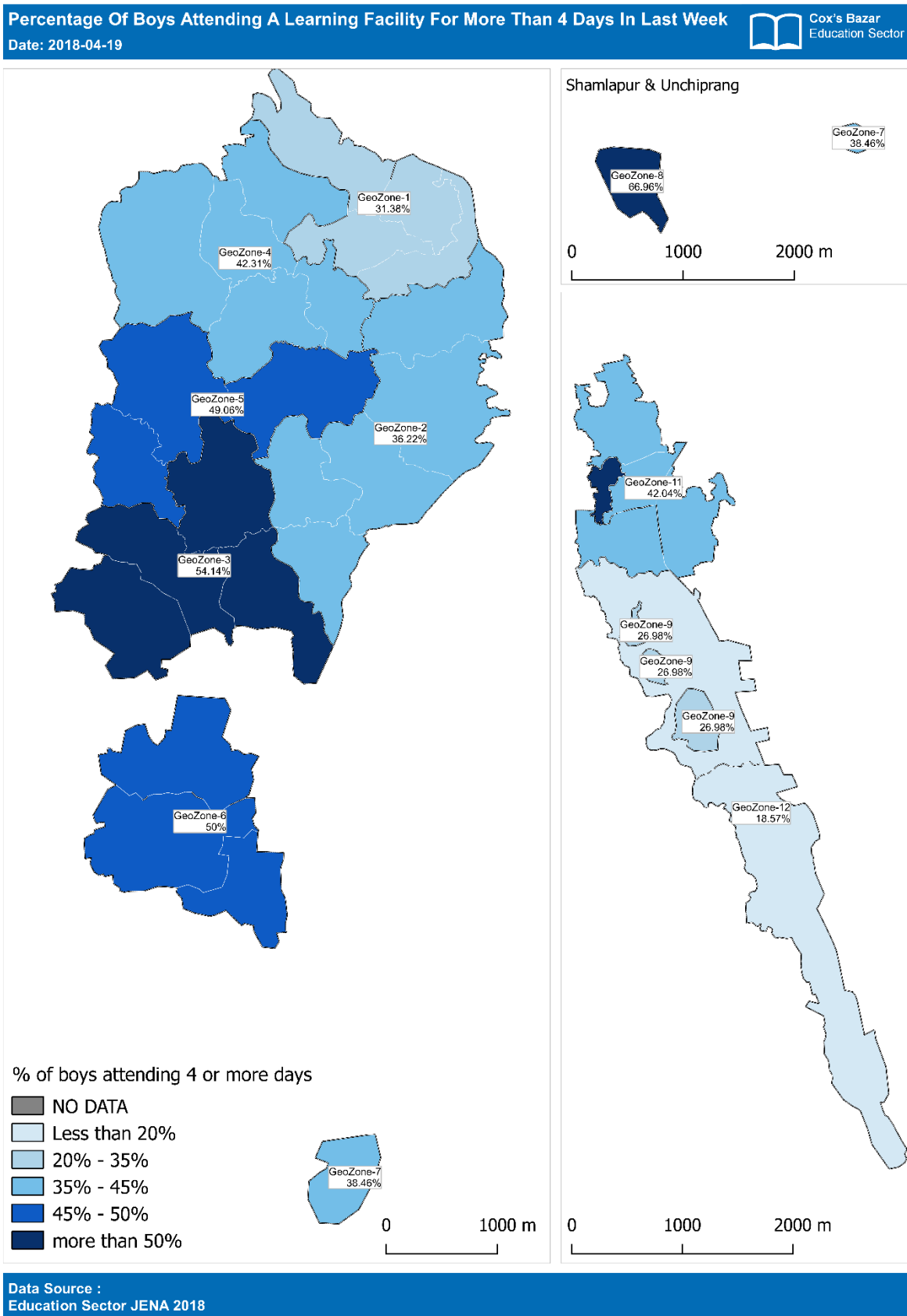
- For adolescents, explore possibilities to establish gender-segregated spaces to improve perceptions of security particularly for girls.
 - Ensure that learning facilities are resilient to risks from natural disasters – this should involve both retrofitting of physical infrastructure to the extent possible given the constraints on authorised structures, as well as the development of learning facility safety plans and the incorporation of disaster risk reduction (DRR) awareness-raising into teacher training and student curricula.
- **Develop mechanisms to increase parental involvement:** It is shown through the assessment that there is a need to increase the engagement of parents in their child's education beyond house visits. Mechanisms need to be developed which increase parental involvement and buy-in. At present, efforts to engage parents appear restricted by lack of staff capacity and systematic ways of engaging. Concerns were raised that parents do not see the value of education and have no sense of involvement in learning centres. Development of interfaces such as Community Education Committees should therefore be prioritised, and supported with additional staffing resources where appropriate.
- **Strengthen teaching and learning:** A common criticism of current learning approaches among both students and teachers is that they are too broad to meet the differing needs of students at learning centres.
 - Standardise teachers' existing efforts to separate children by age and ability through modification of scheduling/shift design.
 - Develop curricula or modules targeted toward the differing needs of different groups (literate/non-literate children, older/younger children).
 - Develop systems to track and acknowledge progress of students (e.g. through simple attainment certificates) in order to minimise drop-out over the medium term.
 - Standardise teacher training packages and provide recognition to Rohingya instructors. Teacher testimonies indicate that training opportunities are not harmonised and may diverge widely between different providers. Developing a sector-wide approach would allow minimum standards to be established, and provide the basis for basic certification of Rohingya staff.
- **Seek to better understand the role and education provided by the Madrassah system:** Given the social importance of the madrassah system and its possible role as both an enabler and a barrier to children's secular education, it is critical that Education Sector partners develop understanding of the system and ways of engaging with it. The diversity of actors and attitudes within madrassahs suggests that a one-size-fits-all approach is unlikely to be appropriate.

5.3 To Government of Bangladesh

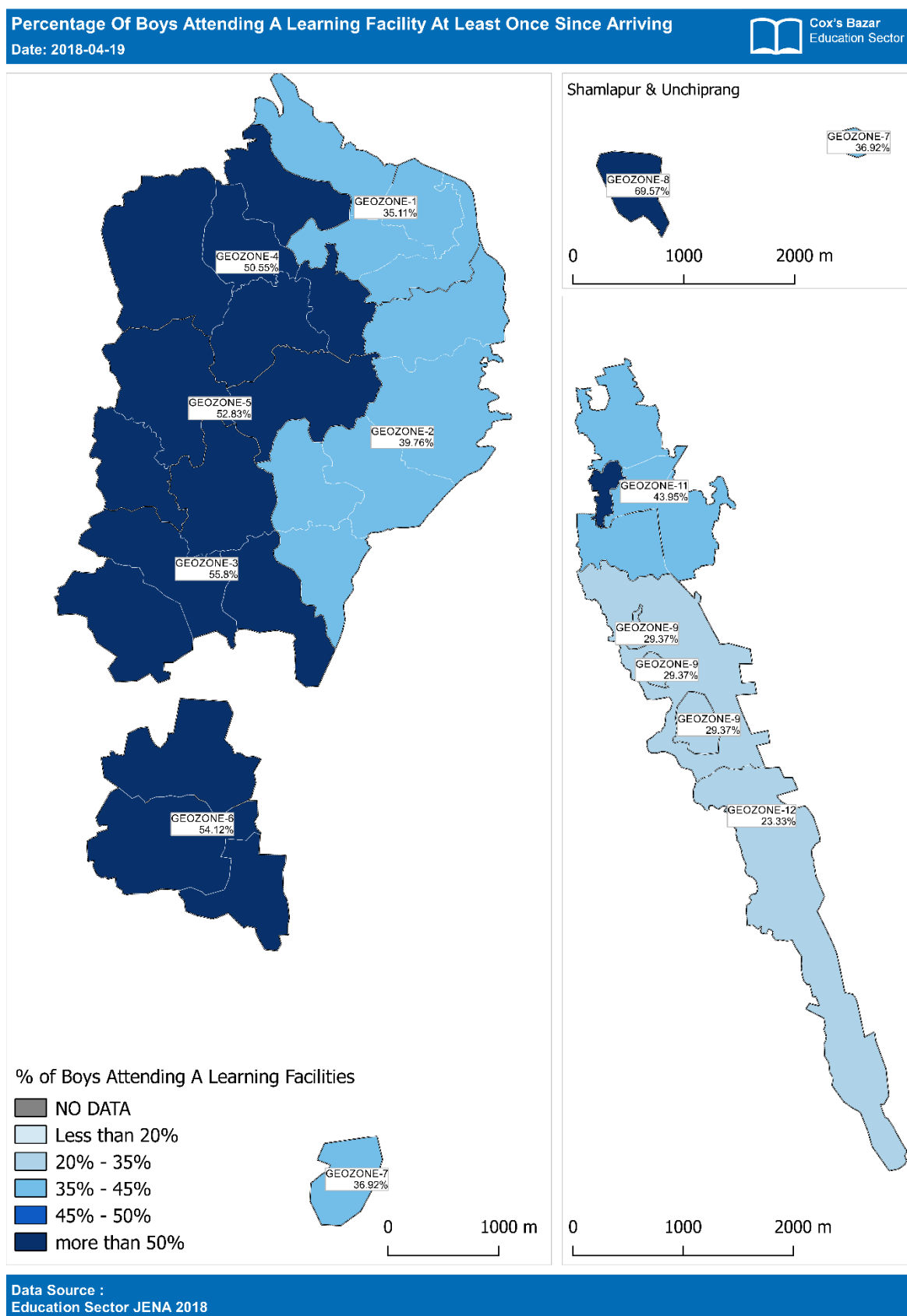
- **Endorse the Learning Framework** developed by Ministry of Education in collaboration with education sector partners to enable the delivery of standardized, relevant learning for children. Ensure further development of learning framework to cover full primary cycle and secondary education.
- **Facilitate the fast development of teaching and learning material** for the learning framework together with sector partners to minimize delays in implementing education to Rohingya children.

Annexes

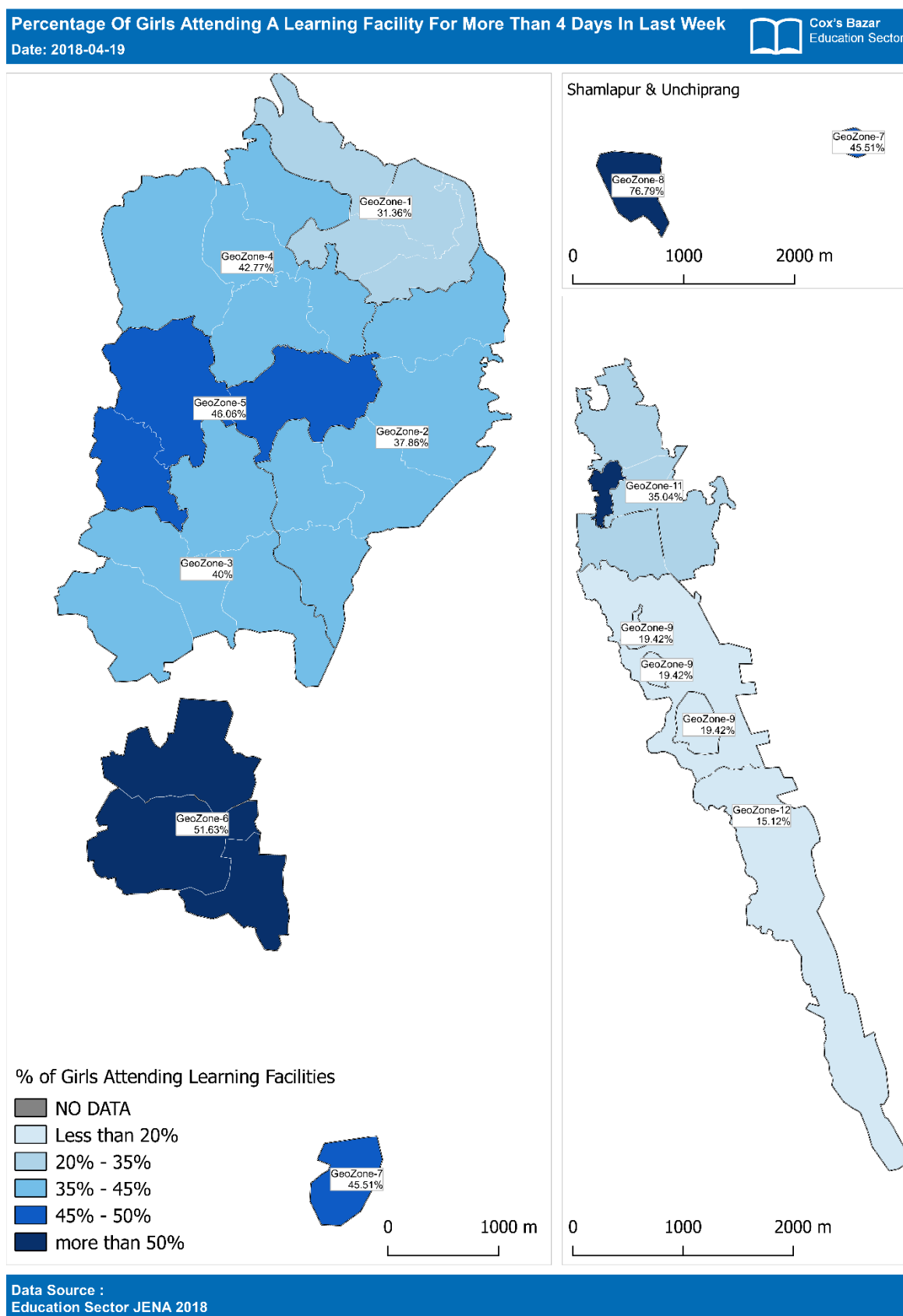
Map 2:



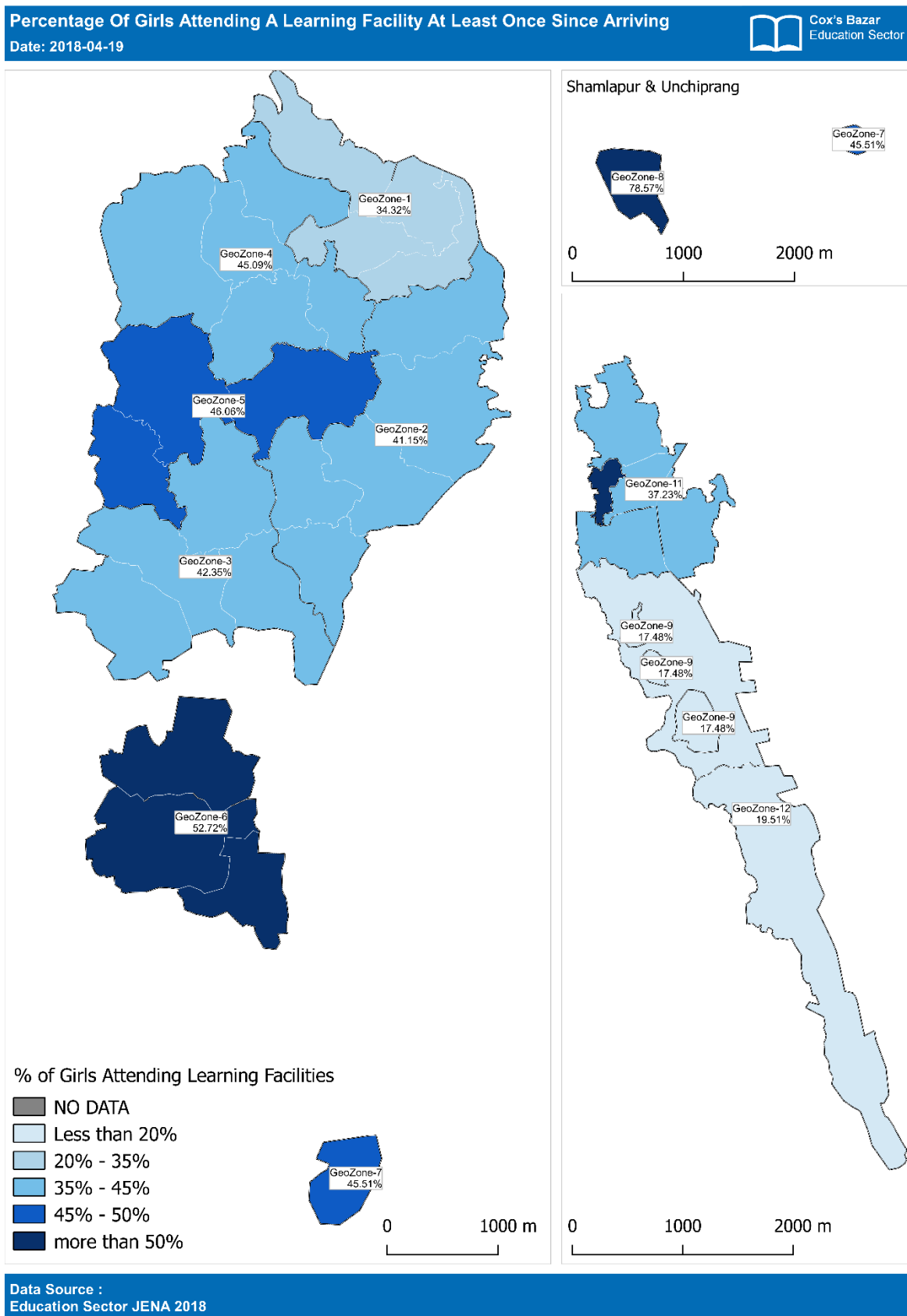
Map 3:



Map 4:



Map 5:



Bibliography

"2018 JRP for Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis: March-December 2018." Dhaka: Strategic Executive Group, 2018.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/jrp-rohingya-humanitarian-crisis-march-december-2018-0>

"Community Assessment." Cox's Bazar: UNHCR, 2017. [Unpublished]

"Cox's Bazar Refugee Settlement Learning Centers." Geneva: REACH Initiative, 2018.

<https://data.humdata.org/dataset/cox-s-bazar-refugee-settlement-learning-centers>

"Child Consultations for Learning Framework (7-14 Year Olds)." Cox's Bazar: Save the Children International, Norwegian Refugee Council, UNICEF, UNHCR, ObatHelpers, YPSA, 2018. [Unpublished]

"Childhood Interrupted: Children's Voices from the Rohingya Refugee Crisis." London: Save the Children International, World Vision, Plan International, 2018.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/childhood-interrupted-children-s-voices-rohingya-refugee-crisis>

"Education and Child Protection in Emergencies: Joint Rapid Needs Assessment, Rohingya Refugee Response 2017." Cox's Bazar: Education Sector and Child Protection Sub-Sector, 2018.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/rohingya-refugee-response-education-child-protection-emergencies-joint-rapid-needs>

"Education Capacity Self-Assessment: Transforming the Education Humanitarian Response of the Rohingya Education Crisis." Cox's Bazar: Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, Community Development Centerm Dhaka Ahsania Mission, Mukti Cox' s Bazar, Cox's Bazar Education Sector, 2018.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/education-capacity-self-assessment-transforming-education-humanitarian-response>

"Gender based violence among displaced communities in Sittwe township, Rakhine state: A knowledge, attitudes and practices study." Yangon: International Rescue Committee, 2016.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/gender-based-violence-among-displaced-communities-sittwe-township-rakhine-state>

"ISCG 4W: Humanitarian Response in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh." Cox's Bazar: Inter-Sector Coordination Group, 2018.

<https://data.humdata.org/dataset/iscg-4w-influx-cox-s-bazar-bangladesh>

"Joint Education Sector Needs Assessment, North Rakhine State, Myanmar." Geneva: REACH Initiative, 2015.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/joint-education-sector-needs-assessment-north-rakhine-state-myanmar-november-2015>

"Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Needs Assessment and Plan of Activities." Cox's Bazar: Save the Children International, 2017. [Unpublished]

"Myanmar Refugee Influx Crisis: Rapid Gender Analysis Report." Cox's Bazar: CARE Bangladesh, 2017.

<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/bangladesh/assessment/myanmar-refugee-influx-crisis-august-2017-rapid-gender-analysis>

"Needs and Population Monitoring Site Assessment: Round 9." Cox's Bazar: International Organization for Migration, 2017.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/iom-bangladesh-needs-and-population-monitoring-npm-site-assessment-round-9-7-25>

"October 2017 Analysis Report: Undocumented Myanmar Nationals Influx to Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh." Cox's Bazar: International Rescue Committee/Relief International, 2017.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/october-2017-assessment-report-undocumented-myanmar-nationals-influx-cox-s-bazar>

"Rapid Protection Assessment: Bangladesh Refugee Crisis." Cox's Bazar: CODEC, Save the Children International, Tai, UNHCR, 2017.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/bangladesh-refugee-crisis-rapid-protection-assessment-15-october-2017>

"Review – Rohingya influx since 1978." Geneva: ACAPS-NPM Analysis Hub, 2017.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/thematic-report-december-2017-review-rohingya-influx-1978>

"Rohingya Refugee Crisis in Bangladesh: Age and Disability Inclusion - Rapid Assessment Report." Cox's Bazar: Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund (ASB) and the Centre for Disability in Development (CDD) Bangladesh, 2017.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/rohingya-refugee-crisis-bangladesh-age-and-disability-inclusion-rapid-assessment>

"Rohingya Zuban: A Translators without Borders rapid assessment of language barriers in the Cox's Bazar refugee response." Translators Without Borders, 2017.

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=683a58b07dba4db189297061b4f8cd40>

"Sittwe Camp Profiling Report." Geneva: CCCM Cluster, Danish Refugee Council, UNHCR, Joint IDP Profiling Service, 2017.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/sittwe-camp-profiling-report>

"Social and cultural factors shaping health and nutrition, wellbeing and protection of the Rohingya within a humanitarian context." Brighton, UK: Social Science in Humanitarian Action, 2017.

<http://www.socialscienceinaction.org/resources/social-cultural-factors-shaping-health-nutrition-wellbeing-protection-rohingya-within-humanitarian-context/>

"What Matters? Humanitarian Feedback Bulletin." Cox's Bazar: BBC Media Action, Internews, Translators Without Borders, 2018.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/what-matters-humanitarian-feedback-bulletin-2-march-26-2018-enbn>