

WAITING AREA
remove your shoes



I was told 'Hey, get lost, we have no medicine.' I felt sad because I didn't know anything and still they spoke roughly with me. I can't fight them and they can do whatever want because they are doctor or volunteer. They are deployed by the authorities so we are not able to do anything.

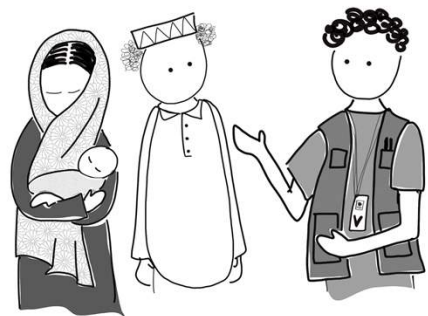


We were told to stay outside and when we tried to enter my child wanted to lay because he had a headache. The female volunteer said, "go home and lay down there. If you want to lay down, why did you come to clinic?"



They said if we get infected they will not take care of us and will take our dead bodies away in trucks.

Have you ever walked a mile in their shoes?



You know there is a dangerous disease that is infecting people. That's why the cleaner washed the seats at the hospitals. But when we were there in the hospital she forbid us to sit on the seats. She said, "Don't sit there, the seats will get dirty again, this is prayer time, so we will not allow anymore patients."



They spoke to me nicely but I was afraid when they said I would be taken somewhere. They told me I would be given treatment but I was afraid and ran away .

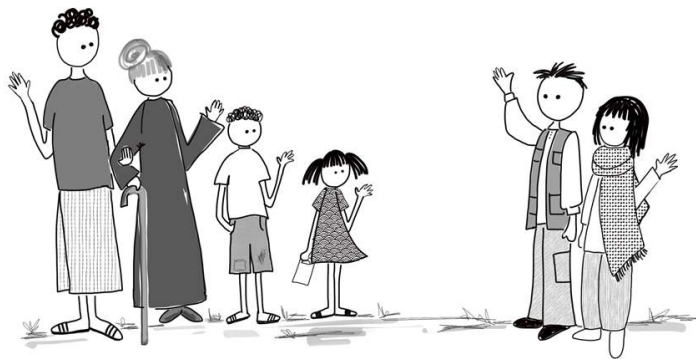


COVID-19 Explained - What's in a story?



Introduction

There is a risk that stories, quotes, and narratives can be anecdotal, non-representative, or prone to misappropriation. The research team of over 20 people has worked hard to include as many people in our consultations as possible. To date, over 540 people have participated in discussions for the COVID-19 Explained series since the response began. Over 200 consultations were conducted and included in our data, and an estimated 600+ pages transcribed as a part of these interviews. Rather than being concerned with whether the findings are “representative,” we are more concerned with losing the very powerful stories that convey the day to day reality of living in the camps during the COVID pandemic for the Rohingya. In reading and listening to these narratives in their full telling, we uncover powerful vignettes that clearly convey what is needed without analysis or further elaboration. The stories speak for themselves. COVID-19 Explained Illustrated contains nine stories of people seeking healthcare during the pandemic in full. Among the fifty-six stories collected during the research, nine were illustrated to try and convey the full context of what these people felt. We hope you they help transport you into the shoes of the story tellers for a brief moment. As feedback, many participants have said that simply sharing their stories has been a source of relief and have requested more of this activity – which they sometimes call “awareness raising” – the act of making us aware of them seemingly. Perhaps in sharing their nine stories it is also some service to them as much as it is awareness for us.



Methodology

Each storyboard represents the experiences shared by key informants that were interviewed as a part of this edition. As such, each person was asked to tell their own experiences of a health visit they made since the beginning of COVID-19 and were asked to describe from start to finish their recent experience seeking healthcare at a humanitarian run health facility in the refugee camps. The stories represent many of the themes and variables discussed in full analysis of Edition 6. Please note that all the narratives cited in the storyboards are direct quotes from the key informants. Only minor language changes were made to clarify who was being referred to by the respondents (ie. “the guards” instead of “they”). The real names of those who participated are not used. No other changes were made to the narratives other than reductions to the length for story boarding. The stories are available in full for review with details concerning the specific clinics involved removed. In order to ensure the integrity of quotes remain intact, the original transcripts were checked against the final edited version to confirm accuracy. In total, transcripts were completed and checked a total of 3 times by three different people trained in transcription and translation.

All stories were illustrated by Sandie Walton-Elery from ACAPS. Without her talent, this edition would not have been possible in its present form.

This and all editions of COVID-19 Explained would also not have been possible without our dedicated team of Rohingya volunteers who continue to work tirelessly to conduct and transcribe interviews in difficult circumstances so these stories can be shared



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Have you ever waited hours, sick, in the high sun?



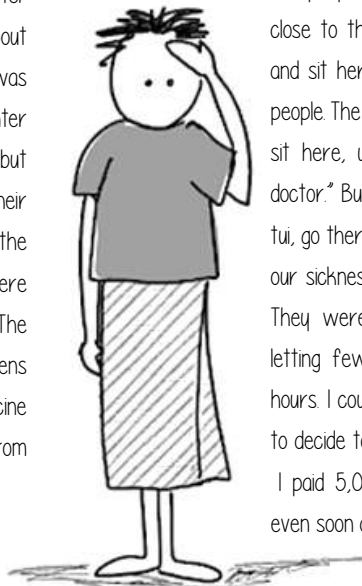
Ayesha & her daughter

"I took my daughter to the hospital because she was bleeding and suffering with lots of body pain. After we arrived at the facility, we had to wait for about one hour at the door. Only when my daughter was suffering more and more were we allowed to enter inside the hospital. We were sitting there but the staff of the facility were playing with their mobile phones. The doctor only seemed to see the patients when they wanted so some patients were leaving the hospital without getting treated. The security guard and the person who gave us tokens yelled at us but the person who gave us the medicine spoke to us respectfully. I got treatment from doctor properly but some didn't get it well."



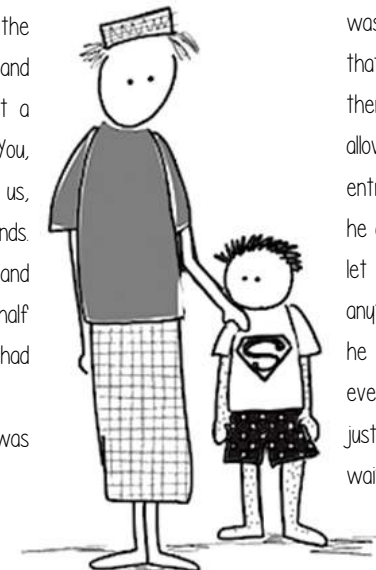
Abdul Karim

"I went with a headache, body ache and cramping. The people of hospital didn't even allow the patients close to them. They were asking us to stay away and sit here and there. They don't care about the people. The volunteers could say, "brother come and sit here, you will have to wait a bit to meet a doctor." But now they say, "why are you here! You, tui, go there and sit quietly". The way they talk to us, our sickness gets disappeared hearing their sounds. They were taking only a few people inside and letting few out. I waited there for one and half hours. I couldn't tolerate the pain anymore. So, I had to decide to go to the pharmacy of Pan Bazar. I paid 5,000 BDT for treatment there and was even soon cured."

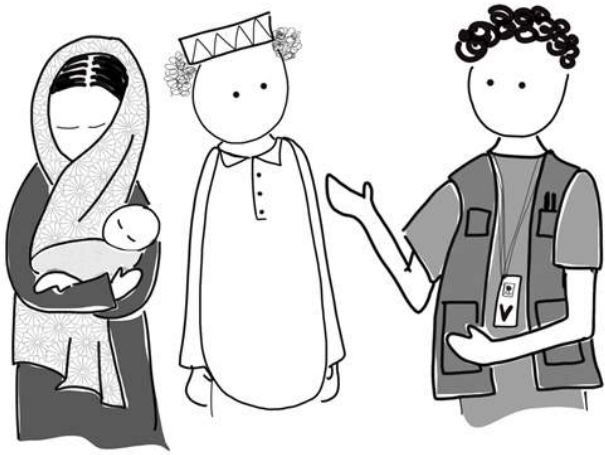


Abdullah & his son

"My stomach was aching and heavy. All over my whole body. My chest was burning. My back was hurting. I went because of this pain. And the child was itching a lot. Something appeared on his skin, that is why I took him. We went at 9 am and sat there for about two hours but the child was not allowed to enter. The guard who was at the entrance - it's not good he didn't let people in and he didn't let my little son enter. If he would have let my child enter, others would not have said anything. Even though we came from far away, he wouldn't let my son in. The guard didn't reply even when we ask why we couldn't go in. He just says that we can't enter. So, my child had to wait outside until I came out."



Have you ever been afraid that they would kill you?



My grandson who born recently cries at night without sleeping and twist his body. The volunteer who is working in my block came to my shelter and told that "I'm the responsible person for your grandson. Please admit him to our hospital. If your grandson doesn't get treatment and isn't respected, I will handle it and you can blame me."



Actually we didn't want to go at that clinic because people told us so many scary things about that clinic - I heard from people that this clinic doesn't give proper treatment and kills babies. I didn't see it with my eyes but I heard it from people. The hospital only provides paracetamol no matter what types of patients come and the patients don't get proper care.



The volunteer came at my shelter more than 20 times in one day. Because he struggled, we decided to go to the clinic to admit my grandson. While we were leaving from home to go there, the volunteer was with us. We went there by car and he made a call to the hospital when we got there. Then we were brought inside the hospital.



Most of the doctors there are from the host community and there was only one female doctor who was foreign. There was a local doctor who helped the foreign doctor translate because we didn't understand what she said and she couldn't understand what we said. The translator translated well. He spoke in a peaceful way and I felt good speaking with him.



This was how I found out that the clinic is really good, and I will tell people about my experience. I will tell them clearly what I observed there. If I convey wrong information about that clinic, people who are in need will not go there.



I should have gone there while the mother was giving birth but unfortunately I didn't admit her to the clinic because of what my neighbours said. The neighbours told me that your grandson will die if you admit her to the clinic to give birth that's why I didn't go but now I know it was really my fault.

Have you ever been turned away with a sick child?



Suddenly my youngest child had Coronavirus symptoms. I heard from the microphones of NGO that if anyone gets the symptoms they should go to hospital and discuss with doctors. So, I decided to go there to see a doctor about my child.



I went with a Rohingya woman who lives nearby me. We went early in the morning. It was maybe 7:30am. Lots of people were there already sitting on the stairs waiting. The volunteers came at 8:30. They started to yell at people who were sitting on the road. I was feeling shy because I had never been there. The volunteers are using rude language to people of all ages. They started to take people inside in the waiting area. But the way they were calling people and telling them to wash their hands, it seems, they are the owner and other people are their servants. I wanted to return home but I didn't have money to see a private doctor. If my son couldn't see a doctor, he may get worse. So I had to stay.



It was so hot that all my clothes were wet with sweat. People were getting tired under the sun. Finally, I went to the entrance and they asked me about symptoms of my child. I told them he was having fever, cough and sore throat when they were checking his fever with a gun machine.



Suddenly the man started yelling at me, asking me why I didn't tell him my son's symptoms before he touched my son. He asked me to leave the hospital and pointed to the gate. I wanted to cry but I showed them my ID card and said that I want to meet doctor to discuss about his symptoms. Only after he looked at my National ID card, he went to talk with doctor.



After few minutes he came back and said they don't have the medicines for the disease my son has. I said I don't need medicines. I just want to talk to doctor. I waited few minutes but they didn't allow me in. I returned to my house crying. Then I borrowed money from my neighbour and went to pharmacy to buy medicines. Alhamdulillah, my son is now good now after taking those medicines.

Has anyone tried to deny you the medicine you needed?



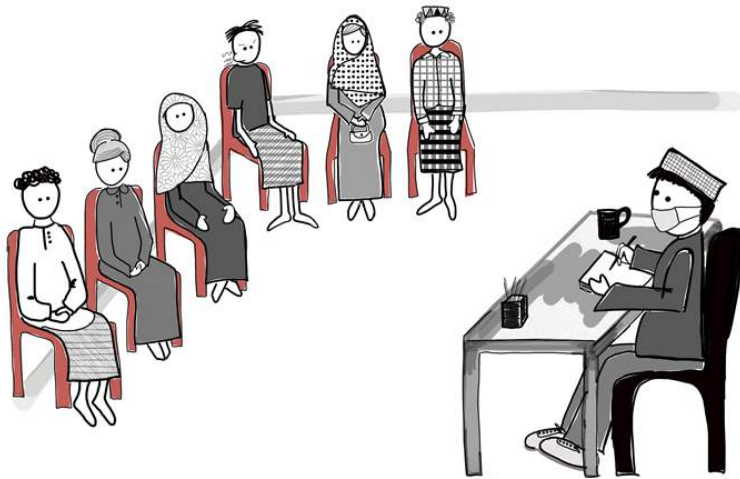
Nurul Islam

I had excessive pain in my wisdom tooth. I was unable to eat anything because of the pain. That's why I went to the doctor alone. I needed to wait there for 2 or 3 hours but then the doctor came and told me to wait in a separate room. The women there were facing a lot of trouble because they have to stand all day long in a queue under the sun. There is a huge space inside the waiting room but they don't allow us to enter there.

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I felt very uncomfortable because all the staff and security guards use sandals there even though they asked us to take off our sandals and enter barefoot. They said it was because our sandals may carry germs. If our sandals carry germs, then their sandals also may carry germs. So why are we the only ones barefooted?



I was not satisfied with the service because a doctor always needs to check our blood pressure, weight and other things but he didn't do anything. He just listened to my problem and sent me to the pharmacy. If I had high blood pressure or low blood pressure problem, then it may create a lot of problems in my body. I had to wait some more time in the waiting room beside the pharmacy to collect my medicine.

I can read Bengali and I asked him, "The doctor prescribed me medicines for 5 days but why are you giving me enough for only two days?" Then the pharmacist replied, "this is our rule". Then I requested, "Brother, I am suffering from excessive pain and that's why doctor gave me these medicine - to complete my prescription. Otherwise my pain will not go away." Then he looked at me for a while with a bad expression and asked "can you read Bengali?". I told him that I can read Bengali then he gave me all the medicine"



Have you ever felt the relief of kindness?



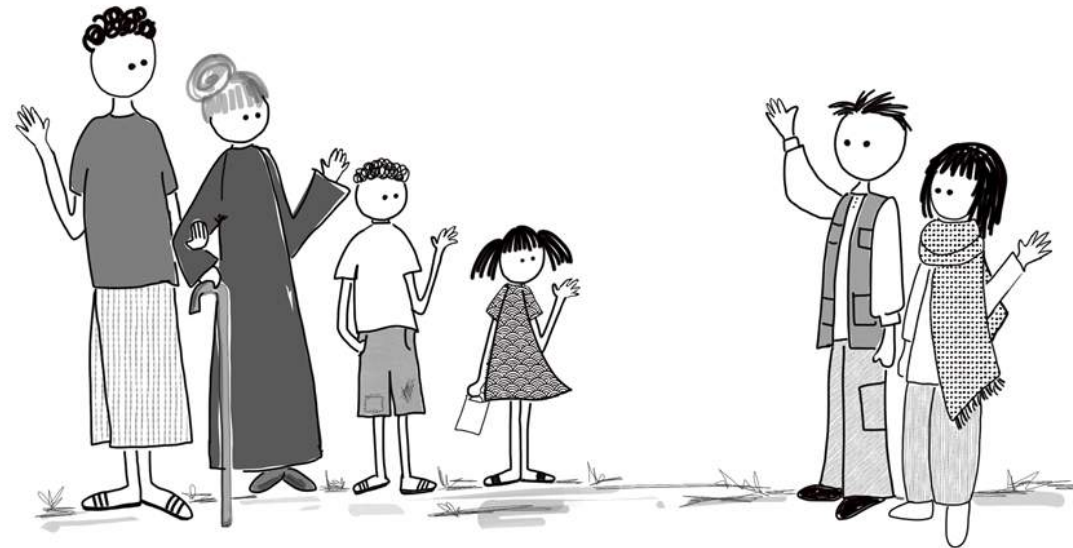
Grandmother
Rohima Hatu

I had a fever and also diabetes. I was not feeling good that's why I came. I came with my grandchildren. I told them to go back to home because it was very hot.



Then, I was called to meet with a doctor. The doctor did blood test and said my sugar is high. Then I got medicine. Another man explained me how to take the medicines

We entered into the hospital. They told us to sit in a line and stand apart from one another. They gave us a training about a virus. They told us, "don't be upset. There is a virus which spreads from each other. Some of you heard about it, some didn't. That's why we told you to sit in a distance, this virus can kill your whole family. So, you need to maintain your hygiene."



I liked the staff at the facility. They talked with me in a good way. I got medicines. InshaAllah, I will feel better. They explained everything to me in a nice way. They spoke to me with respect. I liked that. The doctor treated us like their parents.

Have you ever wondered what the difference was?

Khodiza & her granddaughter



I went to health facility because my grandchild was unwell with chicken pox. I went in a car that cost 80 BDT. I heard from people that better treatments are provided. When we entered, they asked us to wash our hands. Afterwards, they tested us to see if my grandchildren had a fever.



They put my grandchild into a bowl and measured the weight. And provided us a paper. Then, they sent us to the north side. There, they tested my grandchild and provided another paper to receive treatment and we received tablets.



“They told me to feed my child the tablets three times a day and use the ointment three times a day. And I did this. Everyone spoke to me kindly. I felt good.”

Shamshun Nahar & her daughter



After washing my hands, I entered the hospital. They asked me what happened. I told them that my son had a fever, cough and diarrhoea. Then they started to yell. They were saying “you Rohingya people are getting diseases from your poverty and unhygienic life.”



How can they say that? I am a mother; will I not keep my children clean? I called my husband who is a Majhi and explained that they will not give us medicines. When they learned that I am the wife of Majhi they wrote the name of my son in a slip and allowed me inside.



Then I went to the doctor. The doctor asked me the symptoms and checked my son with a machine. Then they gave medicines and I returned back at home.



Five things can make a difference

Clear, understandable facility rules

"They opened the door of the gate in the morning at 07:00 AM - 07:30 AM. Doctors arrived to the Hospital before 08 :00 AM. Nowadays, patients enter through the gate after they are sprayed and they wash their hands with soap. Patients have to wear masks and sit with social distance because of the virus. Their systems work very well. And then people enter and sit on the benches. There they put numbers on every single bench such as 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. There are separate rooms and doctors for different diseases, such as an operation room, circumcision room, sick and diarrhea room.. So, there aren't any difficulties



Staff Behaviour

"The women volunteers sent me away. When I tried to go with my child they called me mad. They said 'Is she crazy? How can we explain. If you can't control them, then why have you brought them here? Rohingya give birth to a lot of children. If you can't control them, then keep them inside of you."



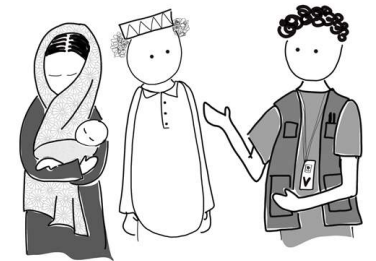
Quality of consultations

"After taking the medication, they didn't even ask about our feelings and told us to go to the home.. But I didn't feel better after their treatment. They spoke to us respectfully, but we didn't get good quality care. Now, I am feeling better after taking medication from another doctor who treats people in Kutupalong Bazar but it costed 35,000 BDT."



Communication with Doctors

"I didn't understand the ICU nurse properly because she spoke in Chittagonian language and mixed with our language.. We feel shy to ask them again repeatedly. Doctors spoke to us in Bangla language about patient experiences. We couldn't understand any word that they said to us, and they went away without a proper explanation"



Clear information on perscriptions

"After they arrived, they wrote 4, 5, 6 items of medicine on a paper but they distributed only 2 items of medicine. Why did they not give the rest of the items?"



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