Post Distribution Monitoring - Non-Food Items

Summary

Since the beginning of the international conflict in Ukraine on 24th February 2022 until the end of October 2024 **more than 7.7 million border crossings of refugees from Ukraine were recorded** by Romania, directly from Ukraine and via the Republic of Moldova, and **175,331 individuals have been issued Temporary Protection**.

In Romania, refugees receive humanitarian support from UNHCR, in close collaboration with the Government of Romania and other partners, in complementarity with protection and inclusion services, such as counselling, legal aid, language training and other initiatives aimed at fostering self-reliance. These actions create a safe and supportive environment, addressing immediate needs and promoting long-term inclusion into society.

From January to September 2024, UNHCR and its partners have assisted **39,849** refugees with over **75,243** non-food items (NFIs), including blankets, bedding, clothing, and hygiene kits, thus providing in-kind support for the many refugee households that would have faced difficulties in affording them.

To monitor service quality and ensure accountability, UNHCR conducted a Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) survey assessing the NFI distribution in Romania. This document presents the survey findings in five sections: (1) Demographic Characteristics of the Sample, (2) Methodology, (3) Receiving and Applying the Non-Food Items, (4) Outcomes, and (5) Accountability to the Affected Population.

1.Demographic composition

The average household size of the 99 refugee households surveyed (357 individuals) consists of 3.6 individuals. Regarding gender disaggregation, 92% of the respondents were women, and 8% were men. In terms of residence, the top respondents reported living in the following counties: Constanța (44), Bucharest (9), Sibiu (9), Suceava (7) and Timis (5). In the other counties, the number ranged from 1 to 4 individuals.

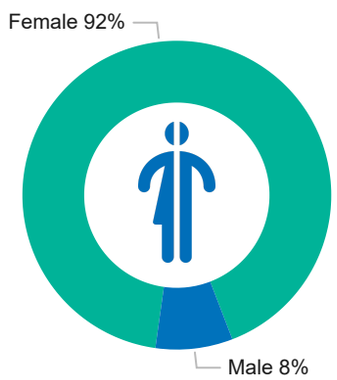
Geographical distribution of the sample

99
Households

357
Total Individuals

3.61
Average of Household Size

Respondents' gender breakdown



2.Methodology

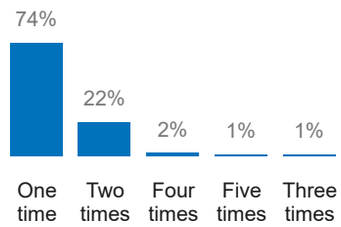
Using a structured survey, UNHCR conducted self-administered interviews (via SMS) with a total of 239 refugee households, out of which 99 households responded between 25 September and 29 October 2024. These households were randomly selected from the UNHCR list of refugee recipients of non-food items assistance. The sample was selected with a confidence level of 95% and a 7% margin of error. Additionally, a 100% buffer was included in the sample to account for potential non-responses due to the fluidity of the number of refugees.

3.Accessing and receiving Non-Food Items

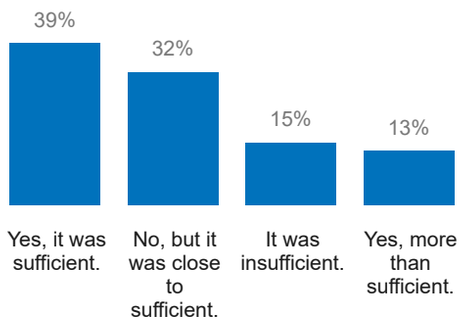
This section assesses the access and receiving process of the NFIs. Reportedly, 74% of respondents received a distribution of NFIs in the last six months prior the survey, while the remaining 26% received NFIs at least two times during the same number of months.

Regarding the top five items received, the most frequent are: hygiene kits - 70%, body towel - 43%, bed linen set - 43%,synthethic pillow - 34%, thermos - 31%. Assessment showed the following results regarding the quantity of the items received for the household's current needs: 39% of the respondents reported that they received a sufficient quantity of items, 32% - specify close to sufficient, while 15% stated that they received an insufficient quantity of items, and 13% expressed that items provided were more than enough for their family members' current needs.

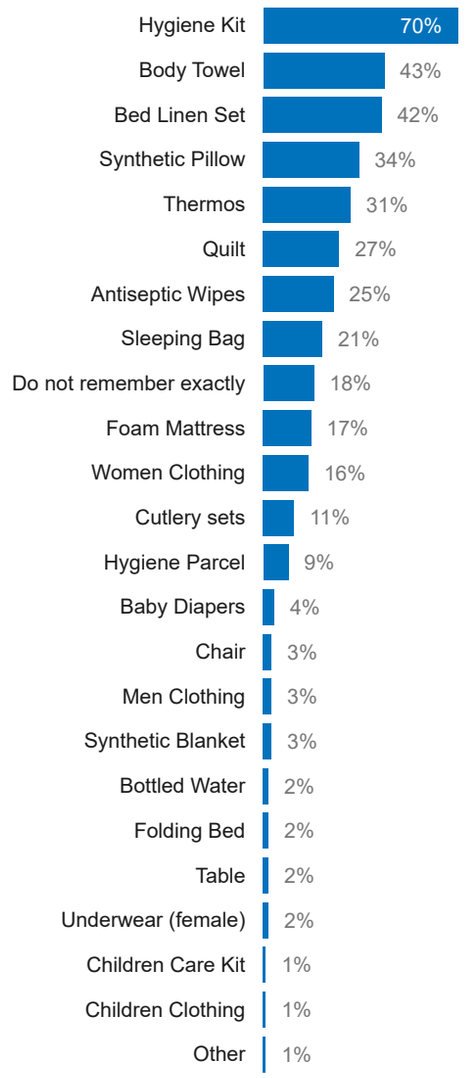
Received distribution in the last 6 months



Quantity of the items sufficient for the household's current needs



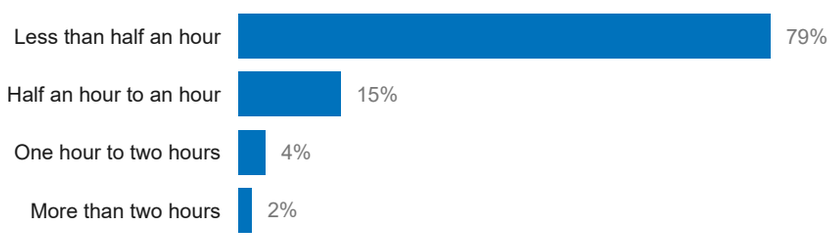
Items Received



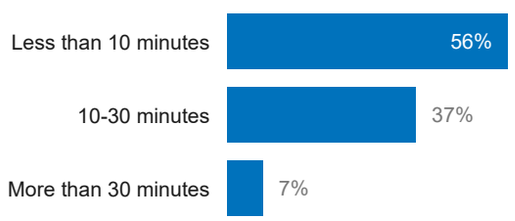
In terms of timing, almost four out of five (79%) of the respondents reported that they had to wait less than half an hour before entering the distribution place, while 15% reported that it took them 30-60 minutes. Another 4% reported that they had to wait between one hour and two hours before entering the distribution place and 2% stated that they spent more than two hours to enter the distribution place.

Regarding the duration to receive the NFIs, more than half (56%) of the respondents reported that they received the items in less than 10 minutes, while 37% reported that it took them between 10-30 minutes, the other 7% of surveyed people reported that receiving the items took them more than 30 minutes.

Waiting time before entering



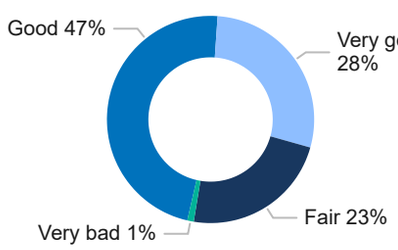
Duration to receive distribution



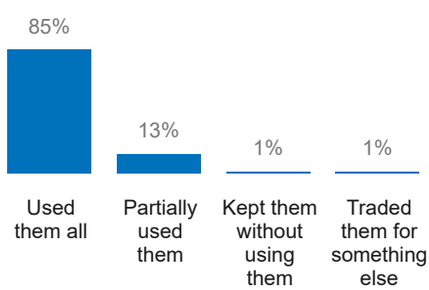
During the survey, participants were also asked about the quality of non-food items received. The answers were divided as follows: **28% of the respondents stated that the quality of items was very good, almost half of the people (47%) reported that the quality of the items was good.**

The significant majority of beneficiaries (85%) reported that their household already used all items received prior the data collection survey, while 13% partially used them and only 1% reported that they have kept them without using, and another 1% traded the items for something else.

Quality of the received items



Usage of the received items

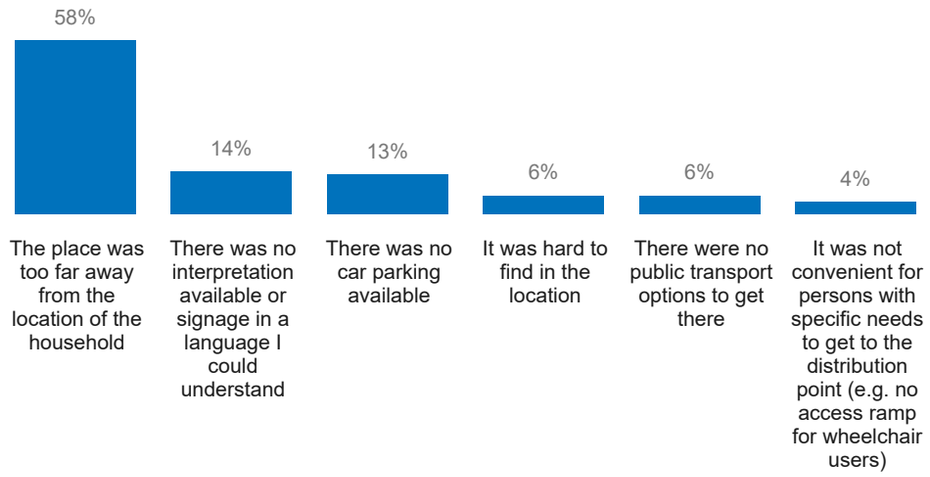


*the results don't add up to 100% because the question allowed for multiple choice

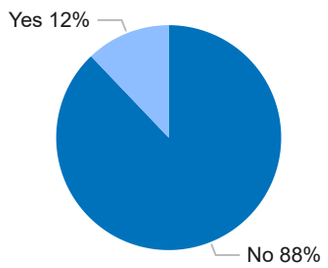
The inquire into the challenges beneficiaries faced in reaching the NFI distribution site revealed three main response categories with the highest number of mentions: distance between household accommodation location and the distribution place, the absence or interpretation or signage in a language that they could understand and parking space for cars near the distribution place.

The survey also showed that **88% of surveyed people did not face any challenges** in transporting the non-food items to their accommodation.

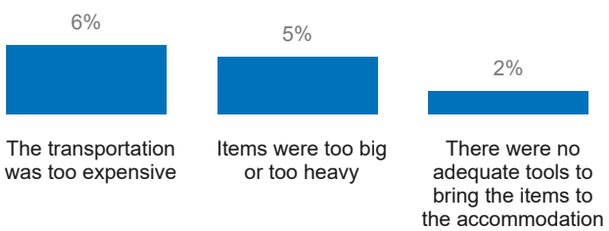
Challenges while approaching the distribution place



Faced challenges in transporting the items



Challenges while transporting the items



In terms of challenges while transporting the items, 6% of the respondents, choose option "transportation was too expensive" as the main challenging reason for items' transportation.

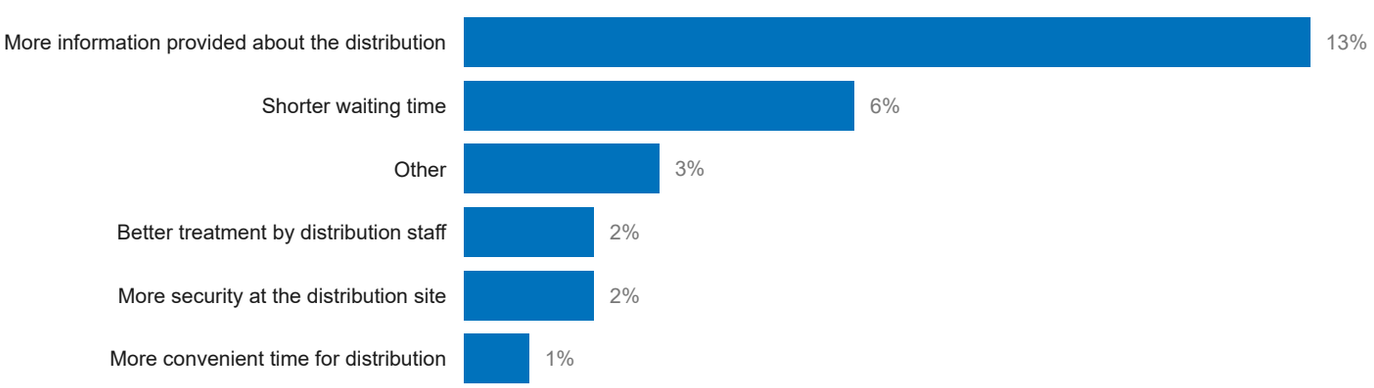
While 5% faced challenges because the items were too big or heavy, 2% stated that there were no adequate tools to bring the items to their accommodation.

The assessment also focused on understanding how the beneficiaries experience can be improved in relation to the non-food items distribution process.

When asked, 13% of the respondents reported that more information need to be provided about the distribution, 10% would prefer to wait a shorter time for distribution, as well as 2% that would prefer better treatment by distribution staff and 2% prefer more security at the distribution site. Another 1% would prefer a more convenient time for the distribution.

Regarding the perception of risks and safety concerns when accessing the NFI distribution, one person reported feeling unsafe or at risk on the way to the distribution center and another person reported feeling unsafe at the distribution center at the data entry area, both indicating overcrowding as an issue.

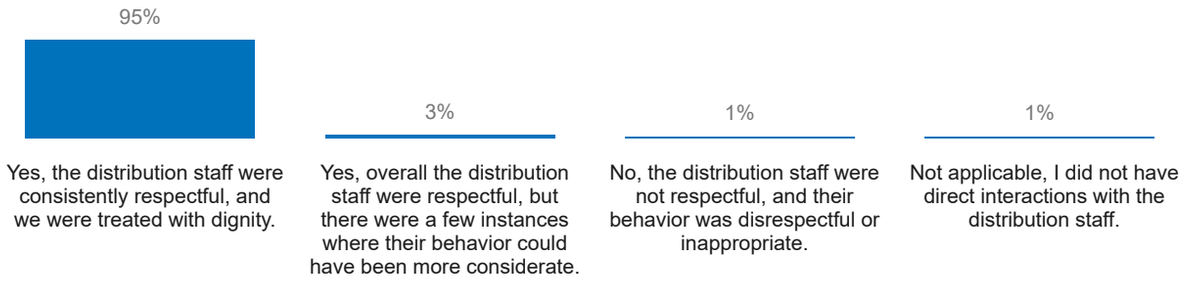
Ways to improve distribution experience



*The results don't add up to 100% because the question allowed for multiple choice

The **significant majority of the respondents (95%)** stated that the distribution staff members were consistently respectful, and that they were treated with dignity during the distribution process. 3% of the surveyed expressed that there were few instances where staffs' behavior could have been more considerate, but overall the distribution staff were respectful. Only 1% of the respondents reported that the distribution staff were disrespectful and that their behavior was inappropriate, while another 1% of people reported that they did not had direct interactions with the distribution staff.

Distribution staff behavior



4.Outcomes

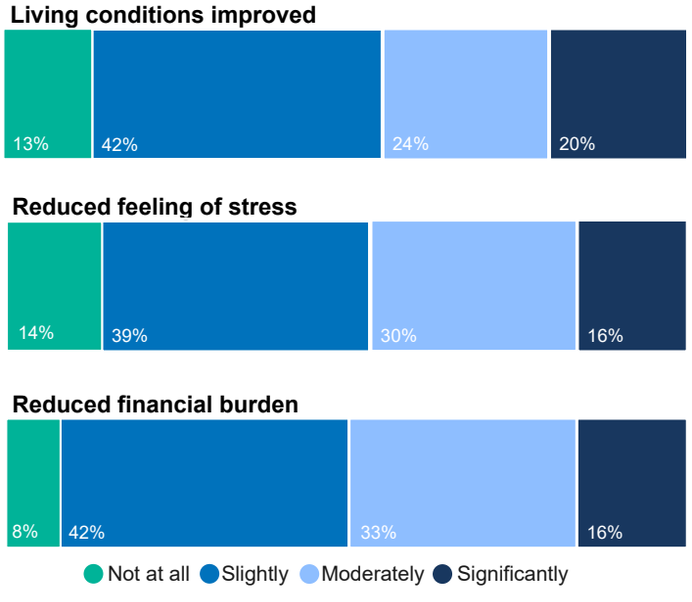
The survey also sought to understand the impact of the non-food items distribution on the respondents, specifically in three key areas: improvement of living conditions, reduced feelings of stress, and the alleviation of the financial burden on their households.

The respondents' assessments were categorized into four levels of impact: "slightly", "moderately", "significantly", and "not at all".

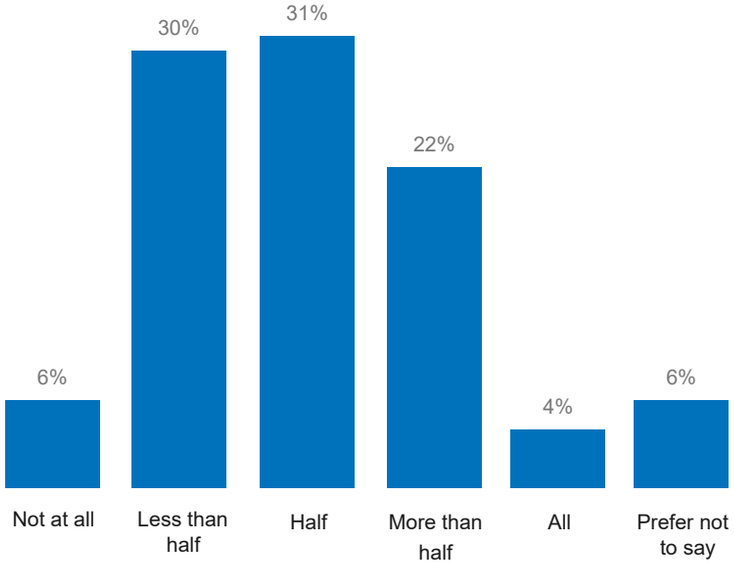
In terms of **living conditions**, 42% reported a 'slight' positive impact, 24% 'moderate', 20% 'slight', and 13% 'not at all'.

For **reduced stress**, 39% experienced a 'slight' reduction, 30% 'moderate', 16% 'significant,' and 14% not at all'.

Regarding a **reduced financial burden**, 42% felt a 'slight' effect, 33% 'moderate', 16% 'significant', and 8% 'not at all'.



Meeting the households basic needs



The assessment focused on understanding how well the respondents could meet their households' basic needs on their own. The answers were categorized into six levels, each representing different levels at which they were able to meet these needs: "All", "More than half, "Half", "Less than half", "Not at all" and "Prefer not to say".

According to the answers, every third family (31%) reported that they were able to meet half of the basic needs of their households, while 30% reported that they were able to meet less than half of the basic needs.

On the other hand, almost every fifth respondent (22%) indicated that their household is able to meet more than half of the households' basic needs, while 6% prefer not to say and another 6% reported that they can meet all basic needs of their household. Respondents which cannot meet households' basic needs at all were 4%.

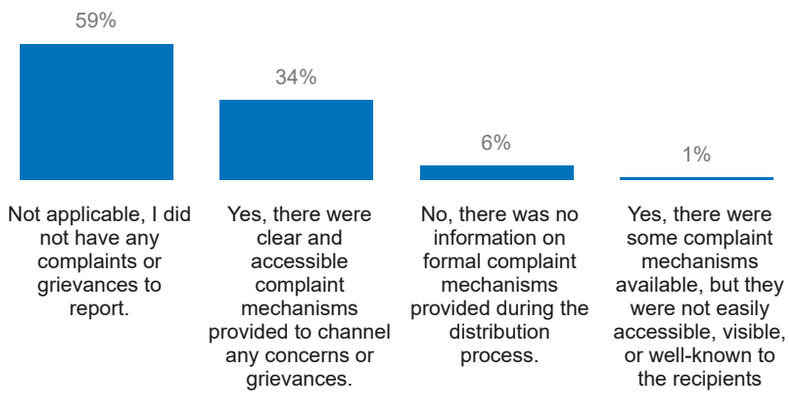
*the results don't add up to 100% because the question allowed for multiple choice

5.Accountability to Affected Population

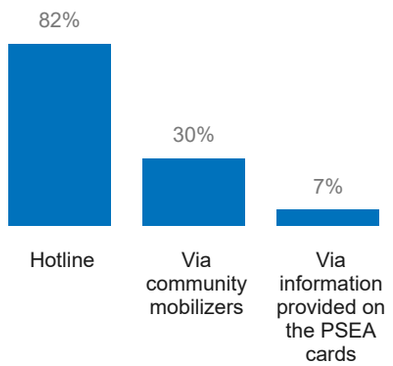
Regarding awareness for reporting complaints and providing feedback on NFIs distribution from UNHCR, all of the respondents answered affirmatively. Asking about availability of the complain mechanisms during the distribution process, 59% of surveyed people indicated that they did not have any complains to report, while 34% expressed that during the distribution process there were clear and accessible complaint mechanisms provided to channel any concerns or grievances. Also, 6% stated that there was no information on formal complaint mechanisms, and the remaining 1% reported that during the distribution process were available some complaint mechanisms were available, but they were not easily accessible, visible, or well-known the recipients.

Choices about preferred channel for reporting complaints or providing feedback were divided as follows: a significant majority (82%) indicated that they would use the hotline, 30% mentioned through community mobilizers (refugees who taken an active role to help mobilize and empower members of their community) as their preferred means of communication and the rest 7% reported that they prefer information provided on the PSEA cards as a channel of communication.

Complain mechanisms available

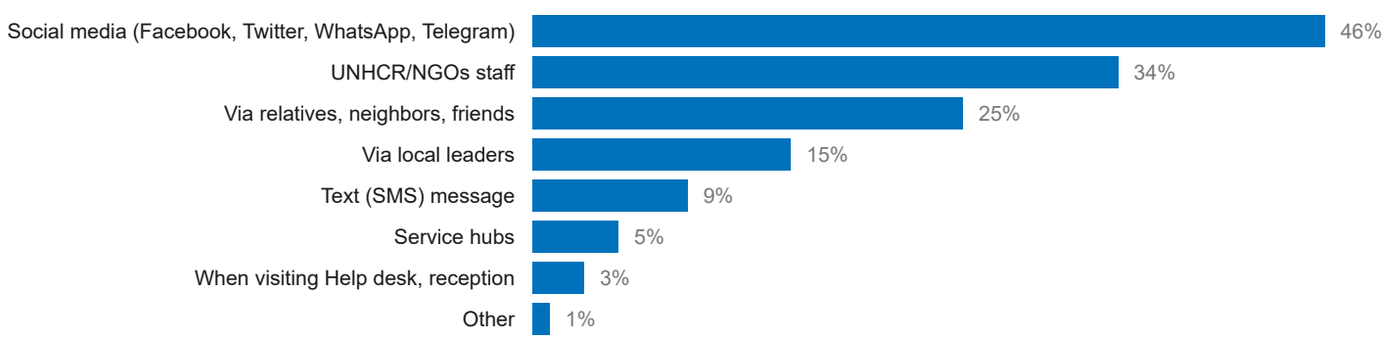


Ways of reporting feedback and complains

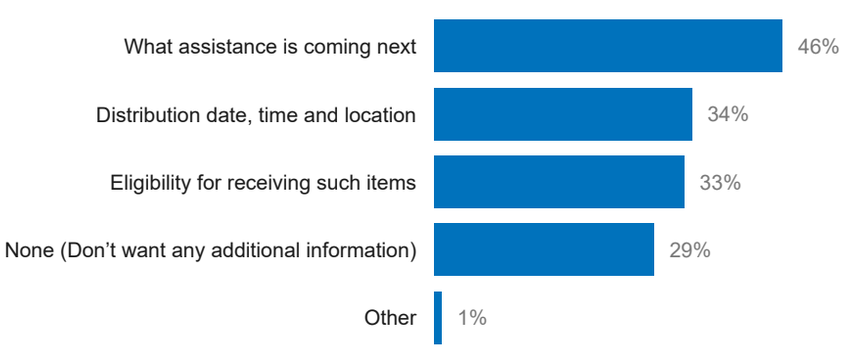


Regarding the way of receiving information about the non-food items distribution, the opinions of respondents were divided. Specifically, 40% of the respondents chose "Social media" as the main source of receiving information about distribution, one third of respondents (30%) received information through UNHCR/NGO staff and 25% found out about NFIs distribution from relatives and friends. Another 15% reported that they received the information via local leaders, 9% via SMS, 5% at the service hubs, 3% when visiting the help desk/reception and the remaining 1% received the information in another way.

Ways of found out about NFI distribution*



Information needs



The survey also asked about additional information that the recipients would like to know about the non-food items distribution.

The responses showed that 46% of the respondents were interested in knowing what assistance is coming next. On the other hand 29% reported that they do not need any additional information.

Another 34% of the respondents wanted to know details about the upcoming distributions and 33% of the respondents were interested about information regarding the eligibility criteria for receiving such items, with only 1% of the respondents choosing "Other" as an option.

*the results don't add up to 100% because the question allowed for multiple choice