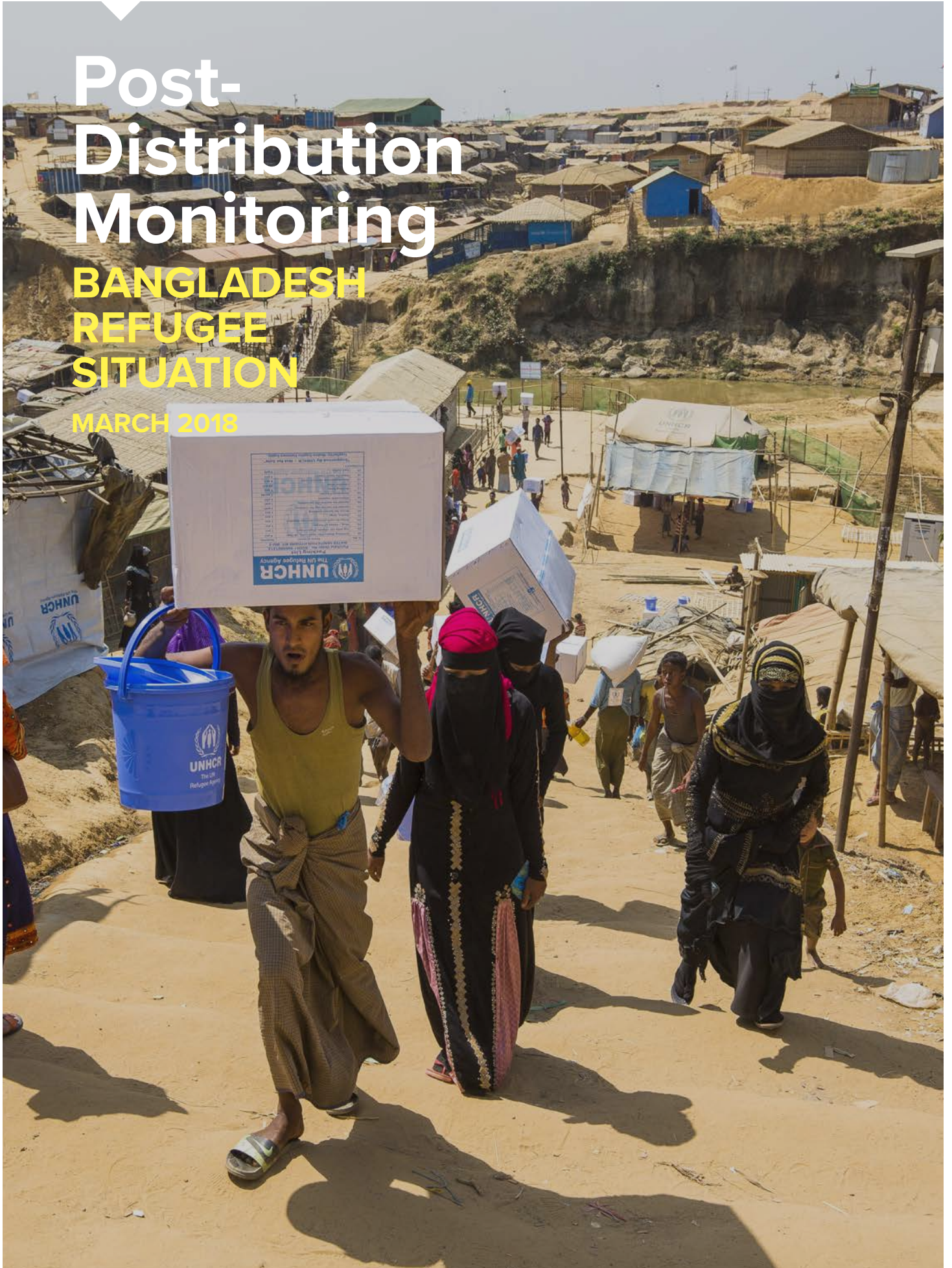


Post-Distribution Monitoring

BANGLADESH REFUGEE SITUATION

MARCH 2018



Acknowledgements

This Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) was initiated by UNHCR's Sub-Office in Cox's Bazar to monitor its distribution of Non-Food Items (NFIs) as well as to collect refugees' feedback on the items distributed. UNHCR would like to thank its staff members and a multi-functional team in the Office for providing their support and guidance to complete this exercise. UNHCR would like to thank the refugee families who also participated in the post distribution monitoring exercise and provided their valuable feedback.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNHCR, Sub-Office Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

COVER PHOTOGRAPH:

UNHCR distributing 50,000 Water, Sanitation-Hygiene Kits to refugee families in Kutupalong and Chakmarkul refugee settlements, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.

UNHCR / R. Arnold

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Introduction

Background

Since 25 August 2017, massive human rights violations and targeted violence¹ in Rakhine State, Myanmar, forced over 700,000 people (55% of them children) to seek safety in Bangladesh. This has made the Myanmar situation one of the largest refugee crises in the world.

The Government of Bangladesh immediately opened its borders to provide refuge to the new arrivals from Myanmar. Over two short months, the refugee population in Cox's Bazar District, south of the country, quadrupled. The influx has continued steadily in subsequent months, with people arriving by foot and by boat.

The refugees arrive exhausted and hungry, often after having walked for days. They recount reports of violence they witnessed or experienced. Many have lost family members in their home villages or on the way before crossing into Bangladesh and are deeply affected and stressed by what happened to them.

The new arrivals have joined other Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar that fled in earlier waves of displacement². They are concentrated in two areas of Cox's Bazar District (Ukhiya and Teknaf), increasing demands on services that half a million local community also rely on. Infrastructure, health, water services, and the environment (especially forest and land resources), are under significant pressure. As a result of the large number of new arrivals in Bangladesh, current settlements are stretched to provide adequate services due to limited space.

In September 2017, an average of 16,000 refugees were fleeing into Bangladesh daily, UNHCR urgently airlifted much needed aid. In less than three months, these airlifts counted for over 7,100 metric tons of emergency life-saving aid – including blankets, plastic sheets, sleeping mats, family tents, plastic rolls, kitchen sets, jerry cans and buckets, collectively valued at USD 13.47 million – to assist some 250,000 refugees. More assistance was transported by sea. UNHCR also boosted its presence in the field from 49 staff before the crisis to over 220 staff now based in Bangladesh. As of the time of this report, UNHCR distributed 79,974 plastic sheets and buckets, 399,870 blankets and sleeping mats (part of core relief item sets). At the same time, 78,133 families received shelter kits. With its partners, and in close collaboration with other humanitarian actors, UNHCR continues to support the response of the Government of Bangladesh by ensuring the pre-positioning of supplies, and continuing to deliver assistance for new arrivals and vulnerable refugees, particularly for the monsoon season.

¹See Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Mission report of OHCHR rapid response mission to Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, 13-24 September 2017*.

²There have been successive waves of displacement of the Rohingya population from Rakhine State (in western Myanmar) to Bangladesh since the 1990s. The government of Bangladesh estimates that there were some 303,000 Rohingya in Bangladesh before 25 August 2017.

Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM)

Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) is a mechanism to collect and understand refugees' feedback on the quality, sufficiency, utilization and effectiveness of the assistance provided to them by UNHCR. PDMs are widely used by UNHCR and help to evaluate the effectiveness of the assistance provided. PDM is conducted independently from the distribution exercise itself, but closely following it in time. This PDM was conducted during March 2018, and surveyed 1,474 households.

Over the past six months, UNHCR and its partner organizations distributed various non-food items to Rohingya refugees, such as Compressed Rice Husks (CRH)³, Core Relief Items (CRI)⁴ including essential household items such as a kitchen set and a solar lamp, mattresses, blankets, and jerry canes, Shelter Kits⁵, WASH Hygiene Kits⁶ and clothing⁷. Following the onset of the emergency, over 142,000 CRI and Shelter Kits have been distributed to refugee families by the end of March 2018, reaching an estimated 350,000 new arrivals.

Methodology

For this PDM exercise, a sample size of 100 households from each camp were randomly selected with 95% confidence level and 10% margin of error. In order to assure that the minimum target number of respondents were met for the desired level of precision, a 15% buffer was added bringing the total randomly selected households to 115 per camp. A total of 1,474 households participated during this survey.

The PDM covered all 14 camps (see map 1) where UNHCR is directly distributing non-food items in coordination with its partners. Over 70 trained independent enumerators collected the primary data from randomly-selected households using a standard questionnaire. The data was collected using kobo online data collection system.

³Compressed Rice Husks (CRH) contains one bag of 19 kg, irrespective of the family size. However, UNHCR is planning to increase the quantity to two bags of 19 kg for families with sizes of 7 and above, starting from May 2018. CRH was distributed to 84,148 families from January to March 2018, while in 2017 CRH was also distributed to 71,400 families in all camps where UNHCR was directly distributing non-food items.

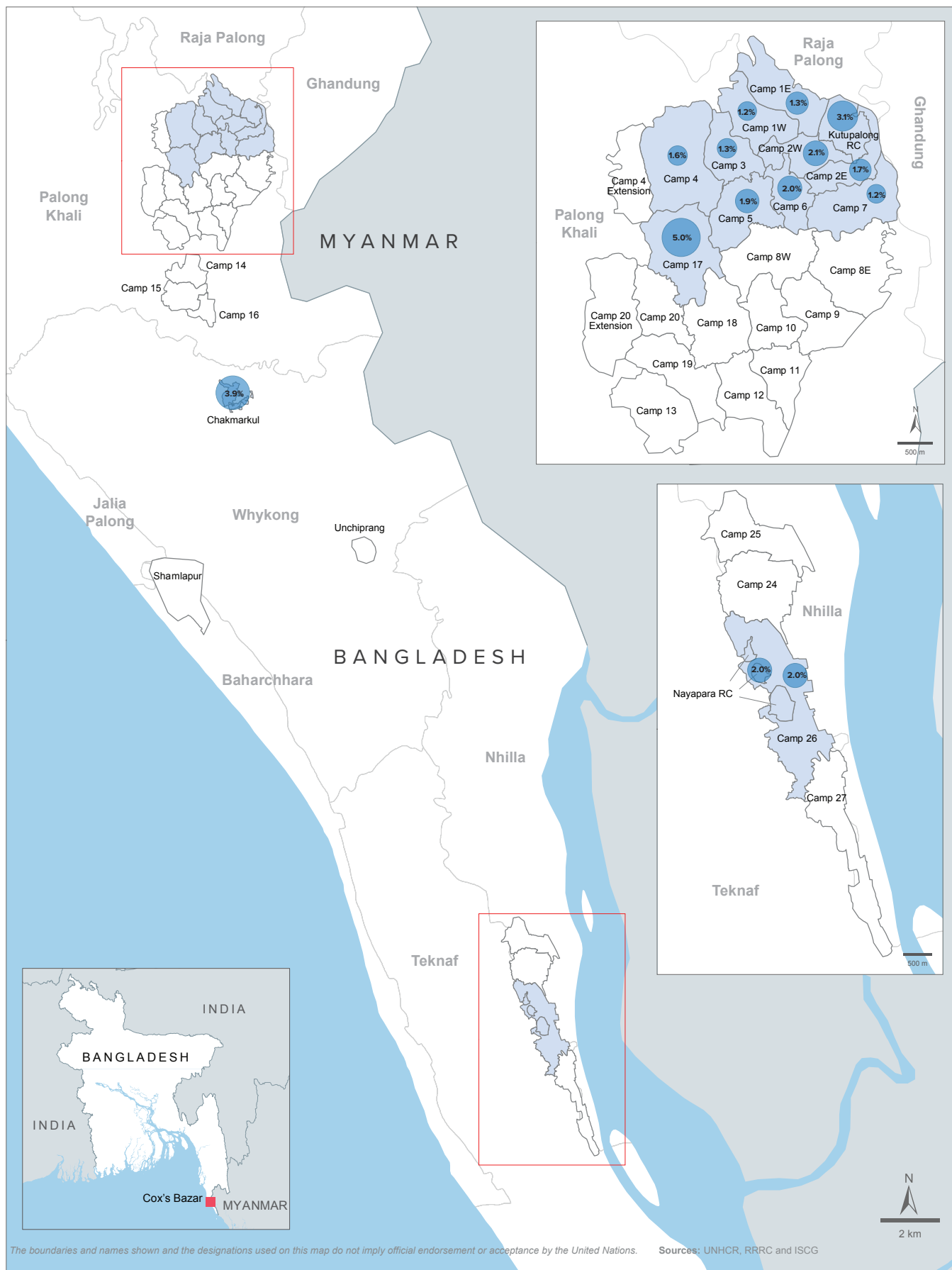
⁴Core Relief Items (CRI) - a kit contains sleeping mats (5 pieces); blanket (5 pieces); jerry can (1 piece); solar lamp (1 piece); bucket (1 piece); plastic sheet (1 piece); kitchen set (1 pack). 47,053 families received CRI during August – December 2017 whereas 32,932 families received CRI during January – March 2018.

⁵Upgraded Shelter Kit (USK) contains rope (2 bundles x 30m); tarpaulin (2 pieces); bamboo – borak (4 pieces); bamboo – mulli (60 pieces); sand bag (20 bags); tool kit (1 kit / 5 families); wire (wire is part of pre-monsoon kits not included in the USK). 27,709 USK were distributed during August to December 2017 whereas 34,532 USK were distributed during January to March 2018.

⁶WASH Hygiene Kit contains nail clipper (1 piece); multi-purpose clothing (6 pieces); reusable menstrual pads (6 packs); plastic soap box; clothes line with clothespin (6 pieces); bucket with lid (1 piece); torch; safety pins and tooth brush. WASH Hygiene Kit were distributed to 17,750 families from January to March 2018.

⁷Clothing: Except for shawl (2 per family) and sweater, clothing was distributed on ad-hoc occasion based on available stock with no formal standard. 168,485 shawls were distributed to 84,248 families from January to March 2018.

Map 1: Refugee Camps where PDM was conducted



Findings and comparative analysis

Respondents' profile

Fifty-one (51) per cent of the respondents were female and 49% were male. The majority, some 87% were in the age range 18 to 59 years old, 8% of the respondents were over the age of 60, and 5% under the age of 18. Some 77% of the respondents were heads of households.

Key findings

The findings of the PDM suggest that the distribution of humanitarian items is on the right track with 97% of respondents reporting that they had received at least one type of non-food items (NFIs), such as Compressed Rice Husks (CRH), Core Relief Items (CRI), Shelter Kits, WASH Hygiene Kits and clothing. In fact, the majority of those who reported that they did not receive any kind of assistance were from Camp 17 where distribution had not yet taken place at the time of the survey, due to it being a new area in the western expansion of the settlement⁸. The usefulness of the distributed items was considered 'average; or 'above average' by 98% of respondents⁹. At the same time, just above half of those who received items said that the quantities were sufficient to meet their needs, though the monitoring indicated that some households received more than they were entitled to as compared to the distribution plans.

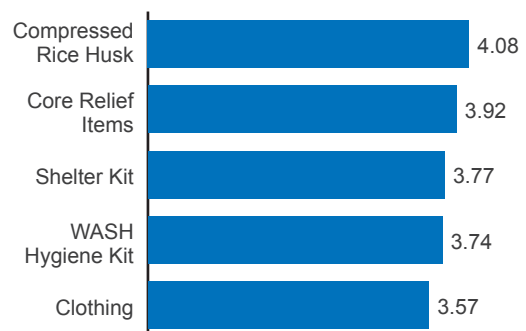
The majority of refugees interviewed perceived the distribution of assistance in a positive light, though a few concerns were raised and suggestions made on how to improve the distribution mechanism as well as the contents of the packages provided.

Some of the findings also suggest that UNHCR needs to refine its questioning to mitigate the potential of refugees providing "desired responses" and focus more on unmet needs in the questionnaire. This first PDM also covered a long distribution period during which distribution arrangements improved considerably. The findings reflect some concerns that were relevant at the time of the initial emergency response in the beginning of the crisis, as well as findings related to the period after physical structures and mechanisms for items distribution were improved.

Quality of items

Most respondents rated the quality of individual items they received as at least 'average' (64%), with an overall score of 3.79 on a 5-point scale. As seen in chart 2, within the CRI kit, the kitchen set was the most appreciated item, scoring 4.21 points, closely followed by plastic sheeting at 4.09. Compressed rice husks scored 4.08. While no item was ranked below average, the sleeping mat in the CRI kit scored the least points comparatively with only 3.18, which was related to its durability/ score for its bad durability.

Chart 1: Score on quality of items

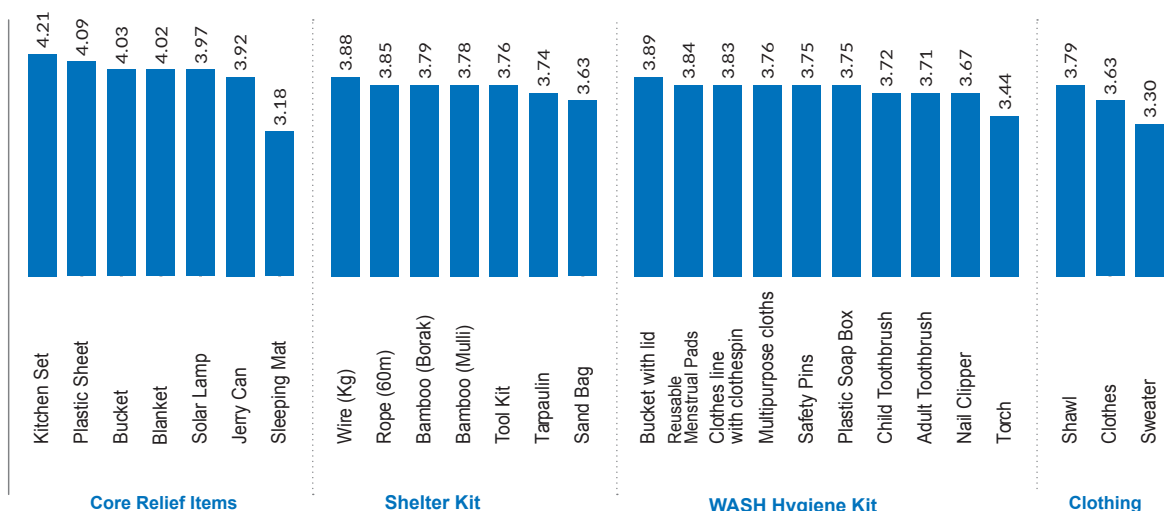


On a scale of 1 (very poor), 2 (poor), 3 (average), 4 (good) to 5 (very good)

⁸Camp 17 is in western side of KTP and was only newly plotted in 2018, with gradual relocations taking place to it.

⁹Scoring system « Not useful at all, Not useful, Average, Useful and Very useful ».

Chart 2: Score on quality of items

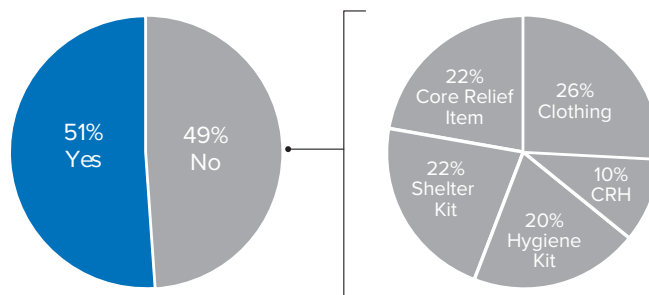


In terms of the kits received, in terms of the kits received, chart 2 shows that refugees appreciated the quality of the CRI kit most (3.92), followed by the Shelter kit (3.77). The package least appreciated in terms of quality was clothing which was given an overall score of 3.57. It is worth mentioning that clothing is not part of UNHCR’s standard distribution items and is often received as an unsolicited in-kind donation. UNHCR prefers to address clothing requirements through cash-based interventions (CBI), which at the initial phase of the response (due to local limitations) was not an option.

Sufficiency of items

Despite receiving sometimes more than what they were entitled to, almost half of the respondents reported that the quantities received were insufficient, in particular for clothing, followed by core relief items (CRIs), shelter kit, hygiene kit, and compressed rice husks (CRH)¹⁰. It appears surprising that CRHs did not come out as particularly insufficient as the allocation only addresses about one third of the requirements due to limited, seasonal supplies.

Chart 3: Sufficiency of items

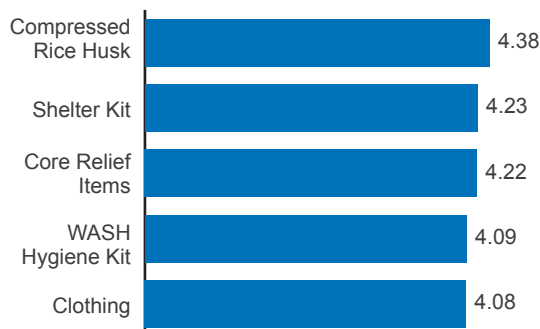


It suggests that the shortfall compensated with the collection of firewood and biomass, is not felt so badly.

Usefulness of items

The majority of respondents rated the items they received as useful, with an overall score of 4.17 on a 5-point scale. Of the assistance received, CRH was viewed as the most useful form of assistance, scoring 4.38 points (chart 4). It was followed closely by tarpaulin (part of the Shelter kit) at 4.36 (chart 5). No item was ranked below average.

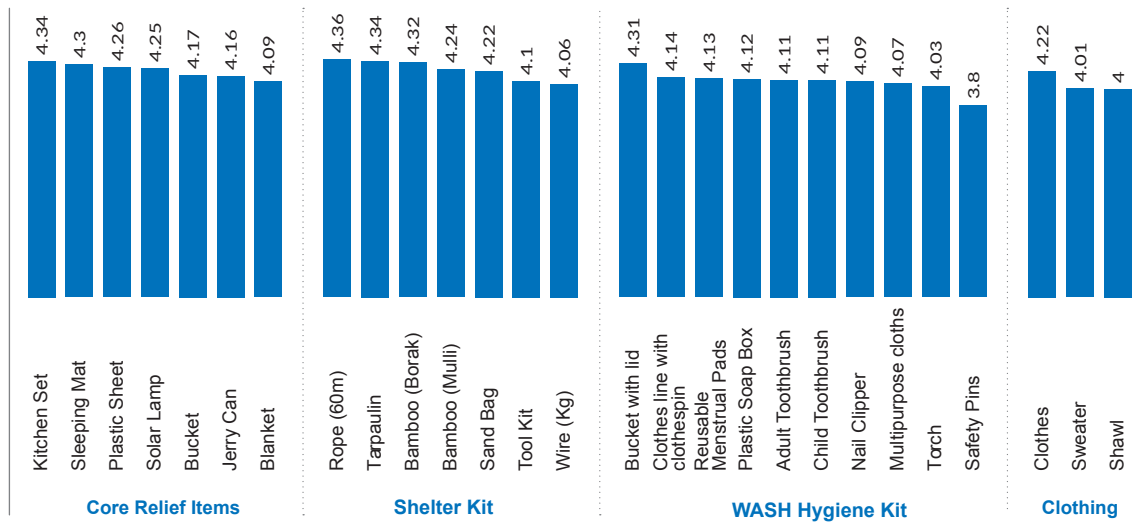
Chart 4: Score on usefulness of items



On a scale of 1 (very poor), 2 (poor), 3 (average), 4 (good) to 5 (very good)

¹⁰CRH is a seasonal item and local supplies cannot cover demand - only some thirty per cent of the planned needs can be sourced locally. UNHCR and partners recognize the shortfall. The survey result is surprising for not being higher in terms of respondents identifying insufficiency of CRH. Since the initial round, UNHCR through partners distributed enhanced shelter kits and is following up on hygiene kits. Meanwhile, any clothing distributed through partners were (unsolicited) in-kind donations - it is overly challenging to address needs for clothing in a targeted fashion (type, number sizes, etc.).

Chart 5: Score on usefulness of items



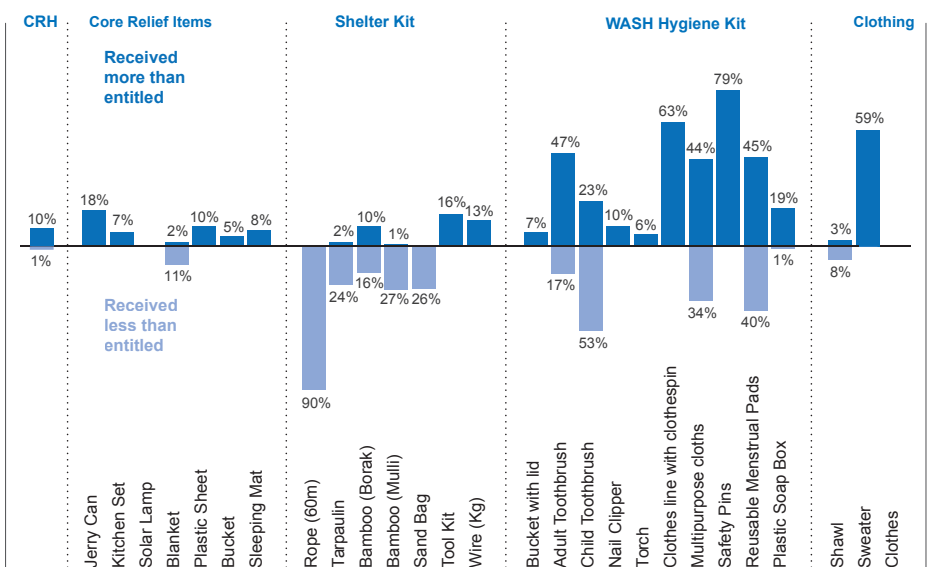
Quantity of items received versus entitlement

The survey’s findings show that in most instances the majority of respondents received at least their entitlement or more items, with some items like clotheslines and other items included in the WASH Hygiene kit reported as over distributed. Of the 27 individual items distributed, there were 12 items reported as under- distributed, in particular rope, which is distributed as part of the Shelter kit, with 90% respondents saying they received less than what they were entitled to.

Based on observations of the UNHCR Shelter Unit in Cox’s Bazar, it is known that some beneficiaries were using their kits differently from the advised method and might have been under the impression that the quantity received was not the full entitlement. Efforts were made to address these concerns by explaining the intended use of rope, but also by providing more when needed. The only item reported as distributed according to right quantity was solar lamps,

with all respondents saying they received exactly what they were entitled to. This analysis could not be applied to the distribution of used clothes since there is no standard entitlement package.

Chart 6: Quantity of items received Versus distributed



Use of items

More than 99% of the respondents reported that either they used the items they received or kept them for future use. All respondents reported that they used the compressed rice husks. Very few respondents (0.1% to 0.2%) reported that they sold the items they received, or that items were stolen. A small number of respondents reported using items to provide gifts and/or exchanged items. Out of the items received by the respondents, 0.8% indicated they sold kitchen sets, followed by toothbrushes (0.6%), sleeping mats and torches (0.5%), and plastic sheeting and sandbags (0.4%). It is important to note that those reporting items stolen were higher than reports of selling. It is worth noting also that the low report of sales of humanitarian relief items from respondents does not match observations in the open market where some core relief items are visibly on sale from all humanitarian agencies. It is recommended that further enquiry is conducted on this matter to clarify whether destitute households started to sell additional items they received since the survey was undertaken, or whether respondents catered to what they thought were desired responses for the survey. Below table summarizes the actual use reported by the respondents.

Table 1: % of respondents reporting actual use of items received¹¹

Non-Food Item Type	Used	Stored	Used and Stored	Sold	Gifted	Stolen
Compressed Rice Husk (CRH)	100%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Core Relief Items (CRI)	92%	2.3%	4%	0.3%	0.2%	0.4%
Shelter Kit	93%	3.9%	3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
WASH Hygiene Kit	93%	3%	4%	0.2%	0.0%	0.5%
Clothing	85%	8%	6%	0.1%	0.3%	0.0%

Though very few respondents reported the case of selling items, their reason for selling items is primarily related to buying (fresh) food (37%), catering for different household expenses (29%), medical expenses (21%), and other requirements. The top three items which fetched the highest price on the market were the kitchen sets (BDT 686, about USD 9), solar lamps (BDT 550, USD 7), and tarpaulins (BDT 400, USD 5) all of which are below their actual cost. The least popular items were toothbrushes which sold for BDT 10-15, and sandbags (BDT 5). Three of the families that reported exchanging items did so for other household items, while two other families exchanged for food and fuel. This indicates not so much of an oversupply but highlights the desperate need of people to have cash for items or services not covered by in-kind distributions, and can indicate additional needs not covered within current service provision. UNHCR would like to scale up cash-based interventions (CBI) for the most destitute in the settlements and host communities.

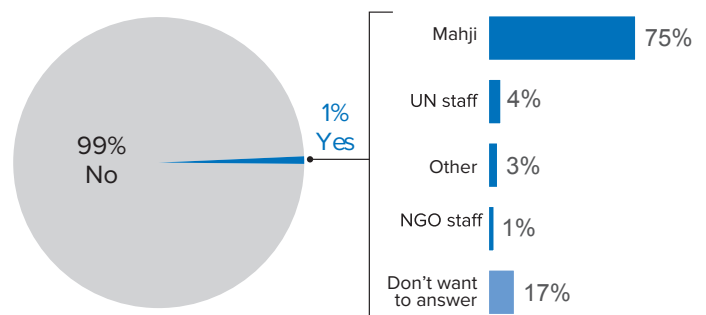
¹¹ Due to the multiple selection nature of some of the questions, the total percentage could go above 100%.

Distribution method

In general, the majority of respondents gave ‘above average’ for the organization of the distribution, with an overall score of 3.8 on a 5-point scale¹². Among the complaints made by respondents about distribution was the lack of special arrangements for individuals with medical conditions who had to queue along with others. Through the work of UNHCR and Protection partners this concern is being addressed, and special arrangements were already put in place to facilitate the delivery of assistance to all persons with special needs. Another complaint included verbal bullying and pushing among refugees as they waited in line. Respondents complained of long waiting times (an average of 1 hour 48 minutes reported) according to feedback collected for this survey. Averaging the waiting times however is a challenge as the initial distributions earlier in the response took place under very difficult circumstances, and the situation has improved considerably over time.

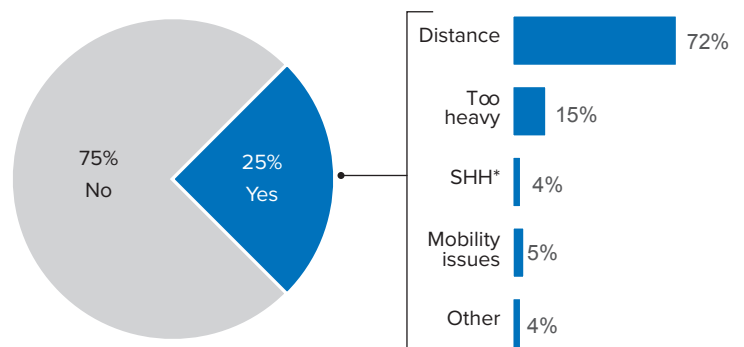
A small but important proportion of refugees surveyed, 1% of respondents, stated that they had to pay or ask someone as a favour to be put on the distribution list. The amount paid to be on the distribution list ranged from BDT 71 to 116 (USD 0.83 to USD 1.40). When responding, 75% of this group reported making payments to ‘majhis’ who are refugees that were designated by local authorities to assist with humanitarian relief efforts. UNHCR does not utilise *majhis* to support its relief work. UNHCR works directly with partners such as the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS), which organizes appointments for distributions directly with the refugee community. The result of the survey confirms UNHCR’s ongoing concerns about the need for more elaborated community governance structures at camp level that are representative of refugees’ choice and reflect the age, gender and diversity composition of the refugee population, while underscoring the need to establish safeguards to stop misconduct by individuals entrusted to serve the community.

Chart 7: % of respondents who paid to be included on distribution list



Meanwhile, 25% of respondents reported payments related to the collection and transport of the assistance from distribution points to their homes. The main reasons cited were: the distance (72%); followed by the weight (15%). Other reasons cited included specific needs such as being a single-parent (4%) or having mobility issues (5%) and being unable to leave children alone, or having mobility issues and being unable to manage the camp terrain (4%). Only 38% of the respondents reported that they received information about the distribution beforehand. This suggests that more effort is needed to ensure that information about entitlements is made available before distributions.

Chart 8: % of respondents who paid to transport items to/from distribution point

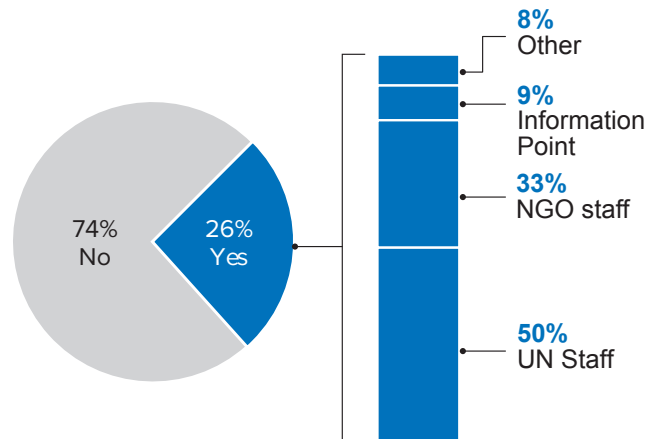


¹² (very bad), 2 (bad), 3 (Average), 4 (good) to 5 (very good)

* Single-parent headed household

Twenty-six (26) per cent of the respondents reported that they faced problems during or after the distribution. Most problems occurring during distribution were related to the long waiting time, harassment, and lack of fast-tracking procedures for individuals with special needs. Most issues occurring after distribution were related to the distance from the distribution centre to the shelter, or the weight of the kit distributed. Half the complaints were addressed to a UN staff member, and 33% to NGO staff as shown in chart 9. Only 9% of the complaints were registered at information points (however, it is worth noting that only a few existed in the early months of the emergency). In response to these issues, information desks are now a standard feature of distributions.

Chart 9: Problems during and after distribution



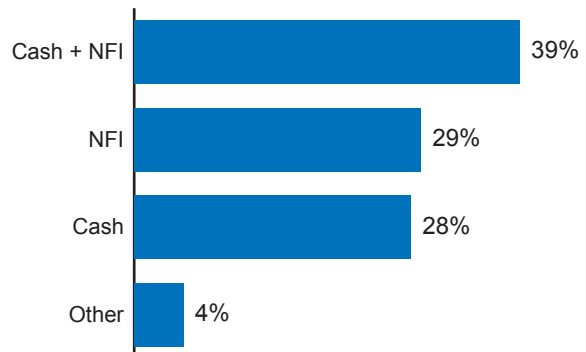
More generally, UNHCR is following up with its staff and partners to ensure absolute clarity on rights, entitlements, and strengthening awareness among refugees on expected distribution standards.

Preferred Items

Among the distributed items, the majority of the respondents selected Core Relief Items (kitchen set, jerry can) and Shelter kits (bamboo poles, tarpaulin) as their 'highly preferred' items.

Most of the families (39%) stated that regardless of the type of assistance, they would prefer to receive a combination of in-kind and in-cash assistance. 29% of the respondents stated that they would prefer to receive all assistance as in-kind, suggesting that the confidence in local markets is still limited. A similar percentage 28% said that they would prefer cash assistance. UNHCR is working on scaling up its cash-based interventions (CBI).

Chart 10: Preferred type of assistance



Recommendation and way forward

Overall findings indicate that the quality, quantity, usefulness and actual use of items received is very good. However, there were a number of issues reported which need further attention and action from both UNHCR, partners and by refugees themselves. Though UNHCR has already taken action on some, the following are key issues that will be given attention as a result of this PDM exercise:

- Information regarding the entitlements of refugees for in-kind items will be communicated well in advance, including explaining the intended use of the items provided.

- The organization of the distribution, although reported as above average, needs further improvement. Some improvements were made already, including the installation of information desks, as well as better catering for the needs of elderly persons and women and more generally persons with special needs. Efforts were made to improve waiting times (e.g. through tokens provided for certain days and times). UNHCR is exploring the issue of support for transporting items in-camp (possibly through cash-for-work). Guidelines on portering have been developed by the UNHCR-led Protection Working Group in Cox's Bazar.
- In view of the fact that 1% of the respondents reported making payments to receive assistance, UNHCR is placing top priority on working with partners, local authorities and the refugee community to ensure that refugees understand that they should be able to freely access assistance without payments. This renewed effort to raise awareness on this issue includes more information and awareness campaigns for refugees, and enforcing a Code of Conduct with partners, as well as engaging the support of Camp in Charges (CiCs) and '*majhi*' (appointed refugee representatives). However, this PDM report covers the period of six months during which not only distribution mechanics improved but also the understanding of how distribution lists are produced as well as the fact that assistance is free. UNHCR bases its distribution lists on the RRRC-UNHCR family counting data aligned with registration undertaken by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA) available since November 2017 while other agencies rely on lists compiled by '*majhis*'. Therefore, it might be conceivable that these payments reported by 1% of the respondents are a problem of the past, pre-dating the availability of better data on the refugee population. Information desks are now also available at every distribution and are intended to record problems for appropriate follow-up and the resolution of cases identified that need support. More fundamentally, UNHCR is engaged with the authorities and other partners in a discussion on the need for a transparent and accountable community governance structure.
- Though very few households reported selling items at the time of the PDM survey, UNHCR will revise its approach in subsequent surveys to lessen the potential for "desired answers" being given. A closer examination of items being sold on the market will also be undertaken, with a view to supplementing the analysis of responses given in future PDM surveys.

Post- Distribution Monitoring

BANGLADESH REFUGEE EMERGENCY

MARCH 2018

THANK YOU

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United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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