

Post Distribution Monitoring SHELTER AND NON-FOOD ITEMS **ROHINGYA REFUGEE RESPONSE BANGLADESH** **JULY 2020**



Acknowledgements

This Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) is the first PDM conducted in 2020 due to COVID-19 and restrictions that needed to be placed on many activities in the interest of public health. The PDM was initiated by the UNHCR Sub-Office in Cox's Bazar in July, with built-in COVID-19 prevention measures, to monitor various aspects of Non-Food Item (NFI) distribution through feedback from refugees, including on the quality, usefulness, and sufficiency of the items. The previous PDM on NFIs was conducted in November 2019. UNHCR would like to thank its staff members and a Multi-Functional Team composed of selected technical staff who provided support and guidance for the planning and the completion of this exercise, as well as the members of the refugee community who participated in the survey by providing their valuable feedback.

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH:

Bangladesh. Solar panels bring light in Kutupalong refugee camp © UNHCR/Vincent Tremeau

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Bangladesh. Kutupalong camp for Rohingya refugees opened following the mass influx of people fleeing the violence that broke at at the Rakhine State in Myanmar in August 2017 @UNHCR/Jordi Matas

Introduction

Background

Since August 2017, over 700,000 Rohingya refugees have fled from Myanmar into Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, increasing the total number of refugees present in the district to an estimated 860,697¹. Within two months of the first arrivals, the refugee population in Cox's Bazar district had quadrupled, which made it one of the fastest growing refugee crisis in the world at the time. The influx continued over the subsequent months with more refugees arriving by foot and by boat. Most of them arrived from Myanmar without taking their belongings or cash, while others reportedly fled only wearing their clothes, and without the means to buy anything else. Half of the refugees (nearly 51%) are children under the age of 18 years.

UNHCR was among the first of the many humanitarian organizations to respond to the refugee influx through the provision of life-saving assistance. Distributions consisting of blankets, plastic sheets, sleeping mats, family tents, plastic rolls, kitchen sets, jerry cans and buckets initially reached 250,000 refugees within weeks after their arrival. This year, from January to the end of July, UNHCR has distributed 933 Core Relief Item (CRI) kits to newly arrived refugee families - each kit containing tarpaulins, a kitchen set, blanket, a jerry can, a bucket, sleeping mats and a solar lamp.

Up until December 2018, 90,569 families had also received an Upgraded Shelter Kit (USK) consisting of multi-type² and borak-type³ bamboo poles, rope, plastic tarpaulins, sandbags and toolkits, meant to reinforce their shelters during the harsh monsoon season. In 2020, as of July, UNHCR has distributed shelter repair items and provided shelter replacement assistance for 18,117 households, and distributed Tie-Down Kits⁴ (TDK) to 87,795 households.

1. UNHCR population factsheet: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/78973>

2. UNHCR Bangladesh specifications: Min 16 feet long. Circumference 2" nominal or 3" nominal. Mix of sizes is acceptable

3. UNHCR Bangladesh specifications: Min 25 feet long; At least 8" (eight inch) perimeter measurement at 1/3 length from the toe of the borak bamboo. No insect defect in the circumstances of the borak bamboo. No split ends

4. Tie-Down Kit (TDK) comprises iron pegs (6 pieces); 60m of rope (1 piece) and wire (1 kg). It is also called Pre-Monsoon Kit

UNHCR has almost fully replaced the distribution of compressed rice husks (CRH) with liquified petroleum gas (LPG) in all camps that fall under UNHCR's agreed inter-agency distribution areas. This has been a big step forward for NFI support with significant cost savings and improvements for the environment as well as the protection environment for refugees. Over 90,000 refugee households were regularly receiving LPG refills through UNHCR's distribution points by the end of August 2020. Also, over 10,000 host community households are also benefitting from LPG cylinders and refills.

UNHCR, in close collaboration with its partners and other humanitarian actors, continues to support the Government of Bangladesh in responding to the refugee situation in Cox's Bazar by ensuring relief items are also prepositioned and available to be delivered to the most vulnerable households in a timely manner in case of monsoon or cyclone-related damage or emergencies.

A Global Distribution Tool was introduced in 2019 to speed up the recognition of beneficiaries at distribution points using biometric data. This system aligns distribution data with the available registration data on refugees from a joint UNHCR-Government of Bangladesh registration process. It has reduced waiting times for refugees and decreased any potential for multiple distributions to the same recipient or household.

This year, the humanitarian situation in Cox's Bazar has been affected by the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. In Cox's Bazar, only critical activities approved by the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC) are possible in the camps for the time being. UNHCR continues to provide critical services focusing on Protection, Health, WASH, nutrition, fuel support (LPG) and other non-food items, as well as communication with the community. The COVID-19 restrictions have required changes in the distribution process to ensure the safety of refugees and staff and partners. and the public health situation also made the possibility of needs assessments and post distribution monitoring more challenging.

Objectives of Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM)

UNHCR uses Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) as a mechanism to collect refugees' feedback on the quality, sufficiency, utilization and effectiveness of the assistance items they receive. The underlying principle behind the process is linked to accountability, as well as a commitment to improve the quality and relevance of support provided, and related services. Usually the surveys that form the basis of the assessment are conducted soon after the distribution of relief items is completed. Four PDMs on Non-Food Items (NFI) have been conducted since 2018. One in March 2018 covering the period from the beginning of the refugee influx in August/September 2017, and the second one in August 2018 covering distributions made during the monsoon season that year. A third PDM exercise covered the period from September 2018 up to March 2019. And a fourth one in November 2019 covered the period from April to November 2019. The current PDM survey and recommendations cover the period from November 2019 up to July 2020. This PDM exercise was initially planned in April 2020, however, it was delayed due to the lockdown imposed at the beginning of COVID-19 pandemic. A total of 1,166 households that had received NFIs from UNHCR took part in this PDM exercise. The findings from this report will be used in improving further upcoming distributions in 2020 and take into consideration lessons learned from COVID-19's impact on the distribution process.



Refugees receiving distribution items @UNHCR/Sabrina Sayed



Refugee receiving LPG cylinder with COVID prevention measures © UNHCR/Sabrina Sayed

This fifth PDM survey and exercise covers the distribution of six types of NFI assistance provided through UNHCR and its partners in 2020. It includes Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG)⁵, Core Relief Item kits (CRI)⁶, WASH Hygiene kits⁷, Compressed Rice Husks (CRH)⁸ and shelter repair and replacement assistance⁹.

5. Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) was introduced in September 2018 as an alternative fuel to address the tree cutting witnessed in local forest for use as firewood and for cooking. The distribution is part of a comprehensive response targeting all refugee households, as well as 20,000 host community households around the camps.

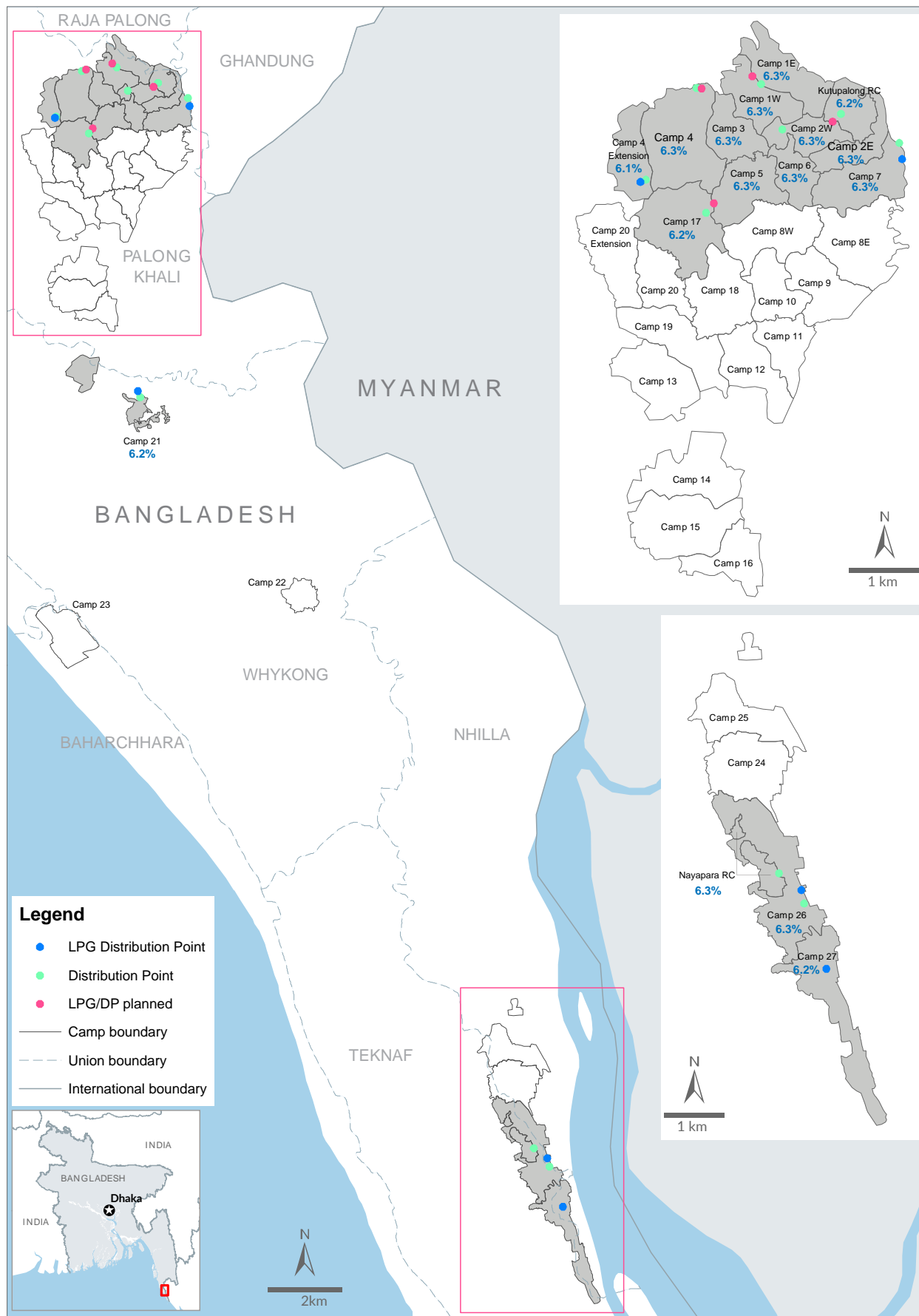
6. Core Relief Items (CRI): a kit contains sleeping mats (5 pieces); blankets (5 pieces); jerry can (1 piece); solar lamp (1 piece); bucket (1 piece); plastic sheet (1 piece); kitchen set (1 pack).

7. WASH Hygiene Kit contains drinking water pot (jerry can) 10 liters (4 pieces); potty for children for safe excreta disposal (1 piece); disposable nappies (1 piece); bathing soap (5 bars); laundry soap (10 bars); non-disposable sanitary cloth (6 pieces); gamcha (local towel) (2 pieces); heavy duty plastic bucket with lid – 15 litre capacity (1 piece).

8. 705,782 bags of CRH were distributed from January to August 2018 in all camps where UNHCR was directly distributing non-food items. Distribution of CRH was progressively phased-out with the introduction Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) from September 2018 onwards. Only 10,612 bags of CRH were distributed from April - October 2019.

9. Shelter repair and replacement assistance contains rope (30m); tarpaulin 4 x 5m; bamboo – borak; bamboo – mulli; sandbag; wire. Following a comprehensive shelter assessment, shelter repair and replacement assistance items had been provided to 78,778 household by October 2019.

Map 1: Proportion of sample size by refugee camps where PDM was conducted



Methodology

For this PDM exercise, due to the limitations placed on the footprint of the humanitarian response in the camps due to COVID-19, the data collection was conducted using phone-based interviews. Four teams of enumerators (each team consisting of 9 enumerators and a team leader) were trained on remote data collection techniques, interview ethics and UNHCR’s code of conduct.

Stratified random sampling methodology was used to create the sample of households to be interviewed using camp as a stratum. The sample was created with a 95% confidence level and 10% margin of error. Due to lack of contact numbers for refugees and due to connectivity issues also, a sample pool with three times of the size of the targeted sample was created in order to ensure that the minimum target number of respondents was included to achieve the desired level of precision. The total number of randomly selected households participating in the survey was approximately 70 respondents per camp.

A total of 1,166 households were interviewed by the 40 trained independent enumerators from 29 July to 11 August 2020 in 16 refugee camp locations (see map 1) where UNHCR and its partners are directly distributing non-food items. Data was collected using a Kobo online data collection system.

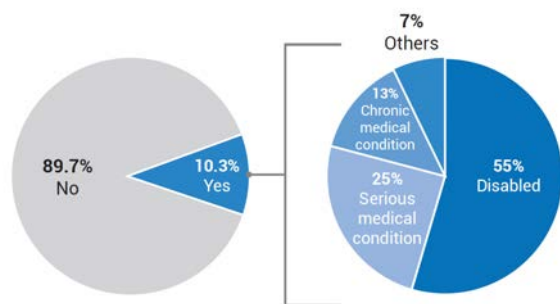
Qualitative data collection and focus group discussions were not possible due to the remote nature of the data collection.

Findings and comparative analysis

Respondent’s profile

About 25% of the respondents were female and 75% were male refugees. They provided feedback on various items distributed. The majority of the surveyed refugees (63%) were aged between 26 to 59 years old, while 29% were aged between 18 to 25 years old. 1% were below 18 years of age. Some 7% of refugees were above 60 years of age. Around 83% of the surveyed refugees were heads of household, consisting of 23% females and 77% males.

Chart 1: % of respondents with specific needs



10.3% percent (Chart 1) of surveyed refugees reported having specific needs in their households. Out of the those 10.3% who reported having a specific need, 13% stated having chronic medical conditions, 25% reported having serious medical conditions, while 55% said they had a disability. More than 90% of the surveyed households had less than eight members per household; around 10% lived with eight to ten family members; and less than 1% had more than 10 family members.



Key findings

The PDM survey found that NFI packages distributed by UNHCR and partners, including CRI Kit, shelter repair and replacement assistance, CRH, WASH Hygiene kits, Female Hygiene kits and LPG generally met the declared household needs ¹⁰.

UNHCR and its partners continued to organize distributions to meet refugees' needs during the pandemic, including the emerging needs for items to help mitigate the risks posed by COVID-19.

The overall satisfaction score emanating from the survey was positive. The refugees reported high satisfaction ratings for the items received. They rated them on average as 4.4 on a 5-point Likert scale for quality and usefulness. The overall satisfaction score emanating from the survey was positive despite the slight decrease from 3.87 to 3.85 compared to the results from November 2019 PDM.

Some highlights of the survey:

- The findings show that the quality of the distributed materials was considered to have been improved, with the overall quality of items scoring 4.41 on a 5-point Likert scale, comparing favorably with the November 2019 PDM overall score of 4.3.
- About 89% of surveyed refugees reported receiving a sufficient quantity of items, compared to 91% surveyed in November 2019. This finding indicates a marginal decrease which may be due to a decrease in shelter items and CRH distributed to refugees based on needs assessments and the conversion to LPG gas.
- Almost all refugee respondents surveyed (99%) reported using the NFI items received, while very few refugees (less than 1%) reported that they either stored, sold or had their items stolen. The results are similar compared to the November 2019 PDM.
- Five out of the six NFI packages scored above 4.3 on a 5-point Likert scale in terms of usefulness. Only CRH scored 3 which is due to the phasing out of its use and replacing it with LPG.
- The Female Hygiene Kit received a score of 4.41 for quality¹¹. This was followed by the CRI kit and shelter repair and replacement assistance kit (scoring 4.40) and the WASH Hygiene Kit (4.35). Kitchen sets and iron pegs received the highest (4.51) followed by sleeping mat with 4.46 for quality among all the individual items distributed.
- The Female Hygiene Kit received the highest score (4.45) in response to questions on usefulness compared with the other six NFI assistance packages. Shelter repair and replacement assistance kits scored next with 4.42, followed by the CRI Kit (4.40). Iron pegs scored the highest as an individual item (4.50), followed by the kitchen set, aqua tabs and antiseptic liquid, each scoring (4.47) for usefulness from among all the individual items.
- Refugees reported on the organization of the NFI distribution with a score of 3.85 (a slight decrease compared to November 2019 PDM). 89% (Chart 9) of the surveyed refugees rated the distribution process as average or above average with a score of 3.0 points or more on a Likert scale; this indicates a significant decrease (10%) compared to November 2019 PDM. LPG and Female Hygiene Kit distributions were indicated as the most appreciated by the respondents with a score of 4.05 and 4.01 respectively.
- Less than 1% of surveyed refugees reported problems during and after distribution. Most of the refugees expressed concerns about the unfriendliness of some volunteers.
- The long waiting times due to crowded distribution points and transportation issues due to heavy loads and the distance from their shelters were also among the complaints received. The average waiting time at distribution centers was about 65 minutes, which is an improvement on the time duration spent at distribution sites that was reported in the November 2019 PDM when the average waiting time was over two hours (129 min).

10. Meet minimum quality standard for NFI approved by the Shelter/NFI Sector in Cox's Bazar.

11. During the female only consultations conducted by Community Based Protection team, refugees expressed some concerns about the quality and adequacy of the Female Hygiene Kits.

- Sixty-seven percent of the surveyed refugees stated that the distribution site was far from their shelters, which is 2% less than the November 2019 PDM when 69% of those surveyed made a similar statement.
- Twenty percent of refugees reported paying between BDT10-350 to collect and transport their relief items from distribution points to their shelters, compared to 13% who reported paying cash for these services in the November 2019 PDM . 34% of them are female respondents which forms 44% of total female responses.
- Fifty-one percent of refugees stated that they received information on distributions and their entitlements prior to the NFI distribution, compared to 58% reporting on this in the November 2019 PDM. Like in previous PDMs, the majority of surveyed refugees identified majhis (Army-appointed block leaders) as the main source of information (73%), followed by UN/NGO staff (22%).
- Forty-six percent of the surveyed refugees received information on their items during distributions, which is lower than what was reported in the November 2019 PDM when information sharing during distributions was stated to have taken place by 56% of the surveyed refugees.
- An average of 98.4% of the surveyed refugees reported feeling safe during the distributions and while collecting their items.
- About 41% of surveyed refugees stated they preferred voucher assistance systems, a slight decrease from the 43% reporting this preference in the November 2019 PDM exercise. 38% indicated a preference for a combined voucher and cash assistance system, similar to the November 2019 PDM.

Quality of items

Refugee respondents rated the overall quality of distributed items with a score of 4.4 on a 5-point Likert scale. There is an increment of 0.1 points in the score on the quality of NFIs from last PDM in November 2019. Each of the kits saw an increment in rating in the survey except the CRH which showed a slight decrease in satisfaction by 0.07 points. 100% of the surveyed refugees who received the five NFI packages rated the quality of items highly, scoring them at 4.0 points and above.

Female hygiene kits scored highest among all six NFI packages with 4.41 (Chart 2), whereas the CRH kit scored lowest with 4.24 (Chart 2).

Kitchen sets and iron pegs were rated the highest in quality amongst the items, with a score of 4.51 (Chart 3), followed by sleeping mats (4.46), and plastic sheets, aqua tabs and antiseptic liquid (all 4.45). CRH scored the lowest amongst the items (4.24).

Chart 2: Score on quality of items

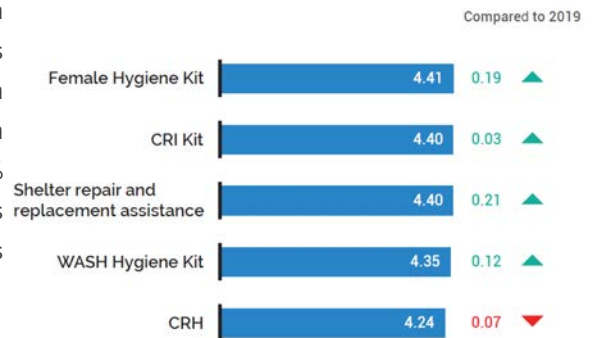
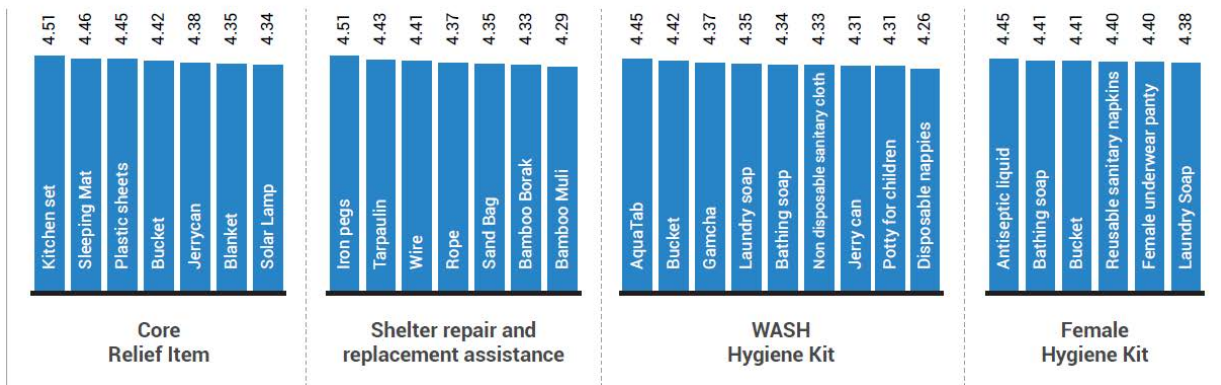


Chart 3: Score on quality of items



Sufficiency of items

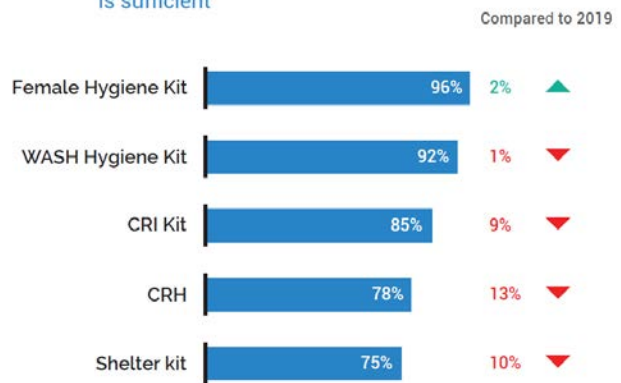
Eighty-nine percent of the refugee respondents reported receiving enough in terms of the quantity of items. This figure represents a 2% decrease compared to the results in the November 2019 PDM in which 91% of the respondents had reported they had received a sufficient quantity of items.

The Female and WASH Hygiene Kits were rated by refugees as the two types of assistance most meeting their needs in terms of the sufficiency of the items provided, with 96% and 92% of the respondents respectively reporting that they received enough for meeting their needs.

The CRI kit was rated third at 85% with a decrease of 9% compared to November 2019 PDM. Moreover, the shelter repair and replacement assistance showed a decrease of 10% scoring only 75%, the lowest in terms of sufficiency for any type of assistance.

CRH saw the biggest decrease of 13% with only 78% saying what they received was sufficient. It had scored 91% in November 2019 PDM. This decrease might be due to the increased use of LPG and the lower number of respondents who were receiving CRH as a fuel .

Chart 4: % of respondents reporting items received is sufficient



Usefulness of items

Almost 99% of surveyed refugees rated the items they received as useful, with an overall score of 4.41 on a 5-point Likert scale, which is an increase of 0.1 compared to the previous November 2019 PDM exercise which scored the usefulness of items as 4.3.

CRH kit was not counted in the overall percentage of the usefulness of items since the CRH distribution was only for new arrivals; only 6% of the respondents have stated they received CRH. UNHCR phased out the use of CRH and replaced it with LPG kits which scored 4.38.

The female hygiene kit was rated as the most useful form of assistance out of the NFI packages distributed, scoring 4.45 (Chart 5), followed by the Shelter repair & replacement assistance (4.42). The CRI Kit, WASH Hygiene Kit and LPG scored 4.40, 4.39 and 4.38 respectively. CRH scored a 1.22.

Chart 5: Score on usefulness of items

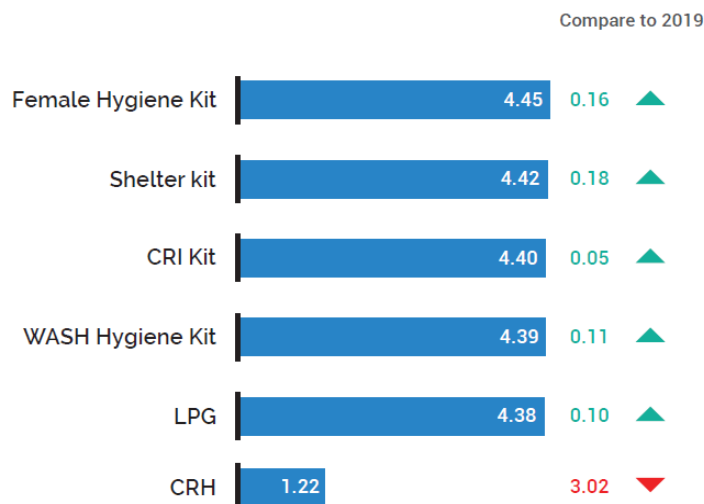
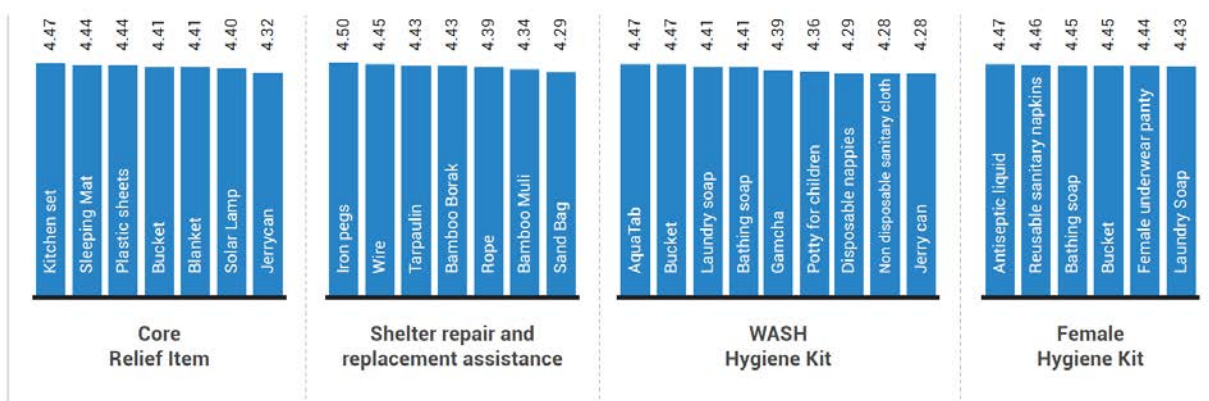


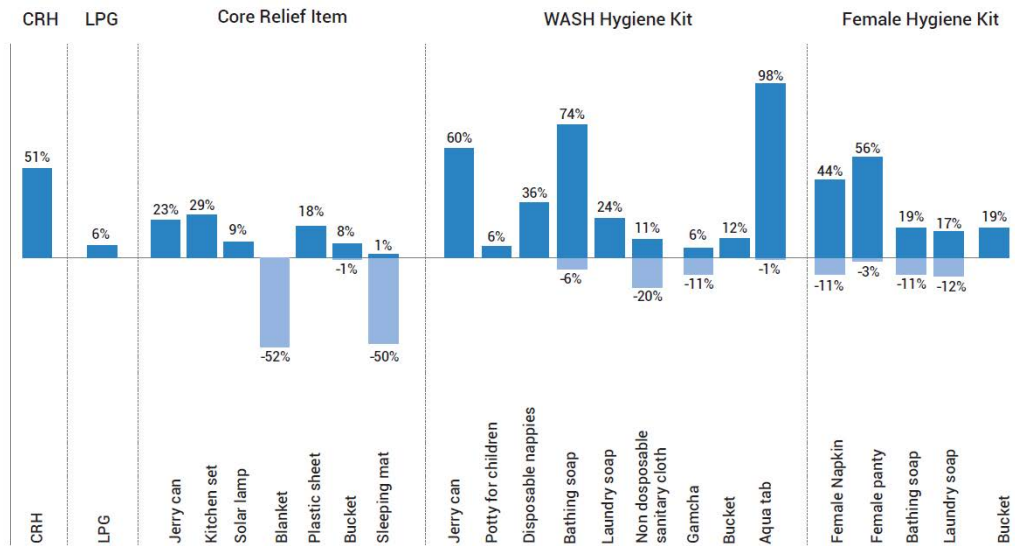
Chart 6: Score on usefulness of items



In the CRI Kit, kitchen sets scored the highest (4.47) (Chart 6) for their usefulness, whilst jerrycan scored the lowest with 4.32. Within the shelter repair and replacement assistance, iron pegs were rated as the most useful item (4.50), whilst sandbags were considered the least useful items (4.29). Aqua tabs were considered the most useful items as part of the WASH Hygiene Kit, scoring the highest (4.47), whilst jerry cans were viewed as the least useful (4.28). Amongst the items distributed as part of the Female Hygiene Kit, antiseptic liquid rated the most useful (4.47), whilst reusable laundry soap rated the least useful (4.43). The jerrycans are not preferred by the refugees, instead they prefer the aluminum jars named “goura”. This finding also appeared in the previous PDM exercise.

Quantity of items received versus entitlement

Chart 7: Quantity of items received versus entitlement



Refugees were asked whether they received the quantity of NFIs that were outlined as being part of the kits they received¹². Chart 7 shows their responses in detail for each item.

Sixty-six percent of the refugees reported receiving the same quantity as per their entitlement. This forms a decrease of 10% compared to the November 2019 PDM. An average of 24% of the respondents stated that they received more items than they were entitled to from the set of 25 individual items generally distributed. In particular, bathing soap distributed as part of the WASH Hygiene Kit – some 74% of the respondents stated that they received more than their entitlement. This could be due to the lack of knowledge of the double-ration distribution in response to COVID-19 pandemic.

An average of 10% of the respondents reported receiving less items than they were entitled to in 16 out of 25 relief items provided in all standard NFI packages .

12. In 2020, UNHCR did not distribute a standard kit for shelter but undertook a targeted distribution of shelter items based on specific need of each household, following an emergency shelter need assessment. Therefore Chart 7 do not include refugee's responses for shelter.

Use of items

Almost all the surveyed refugees reported using all NFI items received, and very few - less than 1% reported their items were either stored, gifted, sold or stolen (Table 1). The overall utility rate is similar to previous PDM results.

Among refugees reporting that they stored items, these items were from all packages, except the CRH Kit. The items reported to be kept were solar lamp and plastic sheets from the CRI Kit; all items from the WASH Hygiene Kit except jerry cans and potty for children; rope, tarpaulin and iron pegs from the shelter repair and replacement materials; and, all items from the Female Hygiene Kit (which had the highest number of respondents 38).

Table 1: % of respondents reporting on actual use of items received

Item Type	Used	Kept/Stored	Sold	Gifted	Stolen	Exchanged
Compressed Rice Husk	6.20%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
LPG	98.20%	0.20%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Core Relief Item	99.70%	0.30%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.10%
WASH Hygiene Kit	99.50%	0.30%	0.10%	0.10%	0.00%	0.00%
Female Hygiene Kit	99.12%	0.69%	0.11%	0.00%	0.04%	0.04%
Shelter repair and replacement assistance	99.50%	0.50%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Refugees reported selling items from the WASH and female hygiene kits. In the November 2019 PDM refugees reported selling items from shelter repair and replacement kit. The most sold item was the bathing soap, reported by only 7 respondents. The rest of items reported to be sold were laundry soap, antiseptic liquid and potty for children. Refugees mentioned that they sold or exchanged these items to fulfil other daily needs, for example, to buy vegetables, oil, fish and meat.



UNHCR and partners are distributing WASH Hygiene Kits at distribution centre. © UNHCR/Sabrina Sayed

Distribution process

In this PDM exercise, refugees gave an average score of 3.85 points for the organization of distributions (a slight decrease (0.05) compared to November 2019 PDM). The distribution of both LPG and Female Hygiene Kit was rated better than the distribution of other items or kits with 4.05 and 4.01. Both Wash Hygiene Kit and Shelter repair & replacement assistance scored 3.98; CRH was rated with a score of 3.90 on a 5-point Likert scale (Chart 8). Overall, the scores improved. Only the distribution of CRH saw a significant decrease by 0.64, scoring 3.18.

On a scale of 1 (Very dissatisfied), 2 (Dissatisfied), 3 (Average), 4 (Satisfied) to 5 (Very satisfied)

Chart 8: Score on distribution process

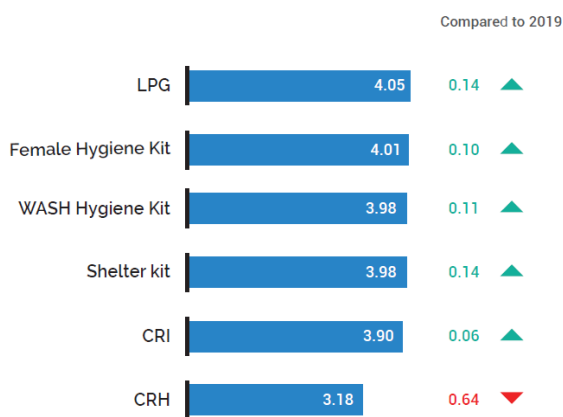
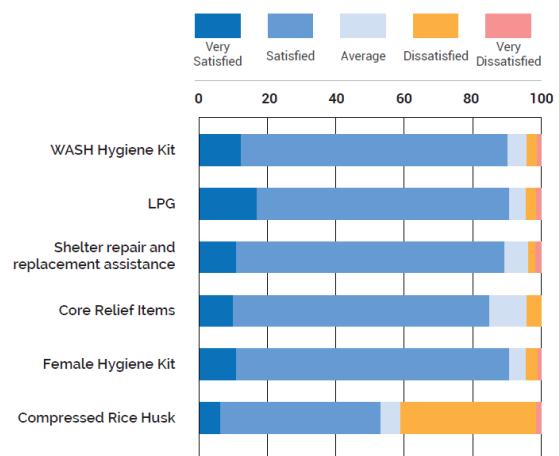


Chart 9: % of respondents rating on distribution process



Eighty-nine percent (Chart 9) of the surveyed refugees rated the organization of distributions as average or above average. Although the findings show a significant decrease (10%) in the satisfaction on distribution process compared to the results from November 2019 PDM, the major decrease is due to dissatisfaction about the distribution of CRH. Other items and kits showed slight decrease ranging between 3-5%.

Among the respondents who said they were not satisfied; none mentioned any reasons for their dissatisfaction or made suggestions to improve the distribution process. This might be due to the remote nature of the data collection as all interviews were conducted through phone calls.

Sixty-seven percent of the surveyed refugees stated that the distribution site was far from their shelters. This is 2% less than reported in the November 2019 PDM when 69% of the surveyed refugees reported the same answer. 27% of them are female respondents which forms 57% of total female responses.

Table 2 refers to the time the beneficiaries waited at distribution centers before receiving their entitlements. The average waiting time at distribution centers was about 64 minutes (over 1 hour). The average waiting time shows a significant decrease compared to last November 2019 PDM which was reported as 129 minutes, which demonstrates great improvement. The introduction of GDT and the rearrangement of distributions to lessen the number of people coming at specific times or on specific days for assistance may have helped.

Fifty-two percent of the respondents spent less than one hour and 44% spent between 1-2 hours waiting their items at the distribution point, while only 0.1% of the respondents said they spent over 6 hours before collecting their items. Around 36% of the women respondents waited 1-2 hours to receive their Female Hygiene Kit at the distribution point.

Table 2: % of respondents reporting time to receive their entitlement at the distribution center

Item Type	Less than an hour	1-2 hours	3-4 hours	5-6 hours	6 hours or more
Compressed Rise Husk	26.39%	65.28%	6.94%	1.39%	0.00%
LPG	52.14%	42.55%	4.97%	0.09%	0.26%
Core Relief Item	51.11%	44.47%	4.20%	0.00%	0.22%
WASH Hygiene Kit	58.29%	39.30%	2.41%	0.00%	0.00%
Female Hygiene Kit	61.73%	36.39%	1.77%	0.00%	0.10%
Shelter repair and replacement assistance	61.51%	36.19%	2.20%	0.10%	0.00%
Grand Total	51.86%	44.03%	3.75%	0.26%	0.10%

The highest average waiting time for an individual item was for the distribution of the CRH Kit (85 minutes), followed by LPG (65 minutes). Respondent spent the least amount of time at the distribution centers collecting Female Hygiene kits (55 minutes).

During this PDM exercise it was reported by less than 2% that they paid a fee (ranging between BDT 20 - 200) to be placed on the distribution list. The PDM findings revealed that payments were paid to majhis similarly to the last PDM findings. UNHCR has continued, with its partners, to emphasize in oral and pictorial messaging to refugees and within their communities that distributions are free of charge and refugees need not provide payment at any stage to be eligible for assistance items .

Twenty percent of respondents reported paying between BDT 10-350 to porters to collect and transport their relief items from distribution points to their shelters as compared to 13% who reported paying between BDT 10-1,000 for this service in the November 2019 PDM. The highest amount paid for portering was reported for shelter assistance transportation. The reasons why refugees cited using porters included distance from shelters (78%), heavy weight of items (9%), mobility issues (9%), and single headed family (2%). Fifty-one percent of surveyed refugees stated that they were informed of their entitlements prior to distributions, compared to 58% in November 2019 and 77% in April 2019.

UNHCR has initiated further enquiries into this matter in order to find out the reason why there is such a significant decrease in reported information sharing on distributions. However, this decrease might be due to the limited footprint in the camps imposed as part of COVID-19 mitigation measures.

The majority of surveyed refugees identified majhis as the main source of information before distribution (73%), followed by UN/NGO staff (22%). During the November 2019 PDM, majhis were also identified as main source of information by 69% of respondents (4% less compared to this PDM), while UN/NGOs were also identified as the second source of information with 26% of the respondent (4% more than current PDM).

Less than 1% of the surveyed refugees reported challenges during and after distribution. In this PDM, challenges reported by respondents were mainly focused on long waiting times due to crowding at the distribution points, and difficulties of transportation due to the weight of items received and long distance. Also, refugees mentioned some challenges related to the available seats and shade at the distribution point which creates challenges particularly for older people. Similar challenges were also reported in the previous November 2019 PDM . An average of 98.4% of the surveyed refugees reported feeling safe while collecting their items.



Volunteer carrying distribution items from distribution center. © UNHCR/Santanu Sharma

Use of help desks and complaint mechanisms

A few of the respondents reported challenges during and after distribution (17 respondents). Among the respondents who reported challenges in this survey during and after distribution, only 5 of them have filed complaints to NGO staff .

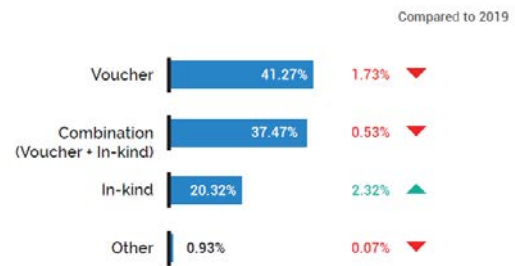


Bamboo and Tarpaulin are being used to build shelter © UNHCR

Preferred type of assistance

About 41% of surveyed refugees stated that their preference was for cash voucher type assistance. This represents a slight decrease since the November 2019 PDM when 43% of the refugees reported a preference for cash voucher support. 37% of the respondents stated that they would prefer a combination of voucher and in-kind assistance, almost similar compared to results reported in November 2019 PDM.

Chart 10: % of respondents reporting on preferred type of assistance



The remaining 20% stated that they would prefer in-kind assistance. This also represents a 2% increase over results in the November 2019 PDM when 18% of the respondents selected NFIs as their preferred type of assistance.

Recommendations and way forward

This PDM exercise found that the NFI packages distributed by UNHCR and partners largely met the household needs and minimum quality standards for NFIs as approved by the ISCG Shelter/NFI Sector in Cox's Bazar. However, the overall satisfaction had decrease compared to the previous PDM conducted in November 2019.

Based on the findings outlined in previous pages, the following recommendations were considered by UNHCR for action:



Recommendations

- **Improve and diversify the options for refugees to have a choice of materials and items fitting their specific needs:** More than 41% of the refugee respondents stated their preferences for voucher assistance. UNHCR is successfully finalizing the new pilot project for the CRI Kit pick-and-choose assistance approach in November/December 2019 in Camp 4X. After a careful assessment and lesson learnt stage, the UNHCR is looking to expand the use of this approach to all camps. Such innovative approach will provide refugees with greater freedom to choose items of particular use to their households above other types of assistance that come packaged in strictly defined kits. This pilot is still not rolled out in all camps due to the COVID-19 situation the regular distribution system is continuously maintained. Also, refugees are preferring to consider replacing the jerrycans with the aluminum jars “goura” since as more appropriate for their cultural and traditional needs.
- **UNHCR needs to further address and improve the waiting times reported:** The Global Distribution Tool (GDT) has been rolled-out for all NFI distribution sites in all camps. The direct outcome has been a significant decrease in the average waiting time from 129 to 65 minutes.
- **UNHCR should continue its efforts to improve the seating areas and shade available at distribution sites and management the process at collection sites.**
- **98.4% of the respondents stated feeling safe at the distribution centers, but some respondents reported that distribution centers are often overcrowded with no available seats and shade.**
- **Improve communication of information with refugees before and during distributions:** The survey points to a need for more information to be made available on the range of available services at distribution points, including free porter services, and the fact that in-kind or other assistance is free-of-charge. Further investigation is needed into reported charging of fees by mahjis. Information sharing related to refugee respondents' entitlements prior to distribution has decreased by 7% as compared to the last November 2019 PDM. As indicated in the previous PDM, communication channels with refugees by humanitarian organizations still need improvement, especially in communicating the challenges that exist and efforts being made which can help assure refugees that challenges are being addressed to improve services.
- **UNHCR needs to find alternate solution to assist refugees to transport their relief items:** More than 20% of respondents have said they are paying some money to porters to carry their items from the distribution points to their houses .
- **UNHCR should investigate that some refugees are receiving less than their entitlement.**
- **In the next PDM exercise, UNHCR should investigate whether refugees feel safe to file complaints and know how to do so, not only whether they complained or not.**
- **In the next PDM exercise, UNHCR to ensure more gender balance of respondents and provide in depth gender analysis.**

Working in partnership

UNHCR is a co-chair of the Strategic Executive Group (SEG) in Bangladesh with the UN Resident Coordinator and IOM. The UN Refugee Agency also leads on the protection response, as head of the Protection Working Group in Cox's Bazar. UNHCR has valuable partnerships with a number of UN agencies and coordinates the delivery of its assistance with humanitarian partners through the sectors and working groups, as part of the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG). UNHCR's main government counterpart in Cox's Bazar is the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief and its Cox's Bazar-based Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC), as well as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Home Affairs in Dhaka, among other government ministries and entities. UNHCR staff work closely with the RRRC's Camp-in-Charge officials in the 34 refugee settlements, as well as a range of international and national actors. UNHCR would also like to acknowledge the crucial role played by the refugees in the response, with over 7,000 volunteers from the refugee community who are often the first responders on the ground.

MoDMR (Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief) | Action Aid Bangladesh | ACF (Action Contre la Faim) | Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) | BRAC (Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee) | Caritas Bangladesh | Center for Natural Resource Studies (CNRS) | CODEC (Community Development Centre) | COAST (Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust) | Danish Refugee Council | FH Association (Food for the Hungry) | GK (Gonoshasthaya Kendra) | Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation | Handicap International | IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources) | Light House | Mukti Cox's Bazar | NGO Forum for Public Health | Oxfam GB | Relief International | RTMI (Research, Training and Management International) | Save the Children International | World Vision | Terre des Hommes | TAI (Technical Assistance Incorporated) | BLAST (Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust) | Rights Jessore | SARPV (Social Assistance and Rehabilitation for the Physically Vulnerable)

UNHCR would also like to acknowledge the crucial role played by the refugees in the response; with over 3,000 volunteers from the refugee community who are often the first responders on the ground. UNHCR and partners have trained and work with safety unit volunteers (SUVs) who support the emergency response, community outreach members who support raising awareness on important issues and in addressing protection risks, community health workers who assist with outreach for health and nutrition, and others who provide further critical support to the refugee response.

Donor support

The Government and the people of Bangladesh have shown extraordinary generosity in responding to the crisis. However, more support and solidarity is required from the international community to assist the ongoing humanitarian response. Continued political efforts to work towards a solution to the situation remains vital. UNHCR is appealing for 318.8 million USD in order to respond to the needs of hundreds of thousands of refugees per year.

UNHCR Bangladesh is grateful for the generous contributions of donors who have provided unrestricted and broadly earmarked funds, as well as to donors who have contributed directly to the Operation in 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020.

In 2020, continued generous support has been received from: Australia, Canada, China, Denmark, the European Union, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

UNHCR is sincerely grateful for the additional support received from many individuals, foundations, and companies worldwide including: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, CERF, Education Cannot Wait, and Thani Bin Abdullah Bin Thani Al-Thani Humanitarian Fund.

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Post Distribution Monitoring

SHELTER AND

NON-FOOD ITEMS

ROHINGYA REFUGEE RESPONSE

BANGLADESH

JULY 2020



United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNHCR, Sub-Office Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh