INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS NEEDS ASSESSMENT IN HAITI

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UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS NEEDS ASSESSMENT IN HAITI

Key findings

Summary

The 2024 *Information and Communication Needs Assessment* (ICNA) in Haiti, developed by UNHCR and Acted in collaboration with the AAP Working Group, integrates data from the Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (MSNA) collected by IOM and IMPACT/REACH with insights from focus group discussions and validation exercises conducted by Acted.

Partially funded by CERF, this assessment is part of an effort to strengthen a collective AAP approach in Haiti by listening to communities to ensure that responses are rooted in the realities and priorities of those affected. This report is aligned with efforts to establish a collective AAP system in Haiti which will enable regular feedback analysis beyond the annual MSNA, enhance accountability by tracking how complaints are resolved, and ultimately improve the effectiveness of the humanitarian response.

This report presents a detailed assessment of the information and communication needs of urban and rural communities as well as Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) living in both IDP sites and outside settings and the communities hosting them.

Context and purpose

Haiti is facing a multi-dimensional crisis, with 5.5 million people in need[1] of humanitarian assistance due to a series of shocks including deepening insecurity, forced displacement, disrupted supply chains, and political instability. Gang violence, particularly in the Port-au-Prince Metropolitan Area (ZMPP), has displaced over 1,041,229[2] people within the country and forced many to seek safety abroad.

Amid this crisis, significant gaps in accountability have been identified, with 2023 MSNA results showing that 84% of surveyed households were unaware of feedback and complaints mechanisms and 89% were unaware of beneficiary selection criteria.[3] Local actor involvement remains limited, with limited engagement of community-based mechanisms and lack of a cohesive functioning complaint systems. The deployment of the Multinational Security Support Mission has also introduced operational changes,

[1] Haïti : Besoins Humanitaires et Plan de Réponse, Janvier 2024.

[2] IOM, Displacement Tracking Matrix, 2025. Among the displaced, approximately 83% are staying with host families, while the remaining 17% are living in designated IDP sites. In the ZMPP area, most IDPs are concentrated in sites, with 65% of the displaced population in the capital living in such locations. In contrast, 99% of IDPs in the provinces are living off-site. Of the 142 IDP sites across the country, 108 are located in the ZMPP area, while the remaining 34 are spread throughout the provinces.

[3] Haïti : Besoins Humanitaires et Plan de Réponse, Janvier 2024.

underscoring the need for a cohesive strategy to address affected people considering negative public perceptions of previous international missions.

In this context, this assessment analyzes the communication needs and preferences of individuals in urban and rural areas, as well as IDPs residing in and outside of sites and host communities. It highlights the populations' information needs, preferred communication methods, trusted sources of information, barriers to accessing information, as well as perceptions of humanitarian interventions.

Combining quantitative and qualitative data from different sources, this assessment addresses a critical gap: the lack of a recent, comprehensive nationwide report of communication preferences across Haiti's diverse communities, particularly following the escalation of violence in 2024. It provides a detailed understanding of the communication and information needs of affected populations, offering actionable insights for more effective and targeted humanitarian responses.

Methodology

The key findings in this report are based on data collected using a mixed-methods approach across 10 departments from June to September 2024. It combines **quantitative data** from household surveys led by IOM and IMPACT/REACH as part of the Multi-Sector Needs Assessment[4] and **qualitative data** from Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and a validation exercise conducted by Acted.

The AAP section of the MSNA questionnaire remained largely consistent with previous years, enabling the tracking of trends in needs and preferences related to AAP. Some adjustments were made, including the incorporation of a few additional questions adapted from UNHCR's Information and Communication Needs Assessment tool[5], which were validated by the AAP Working Group in April 2024. The MSNA Terms of Reference outlining the methodologies used by IOM and IMPACT/REACH are available through this link.

The sampling for the FGDs followed a non-purposive approach to ensure broader inclusion of women, persons with disabilities, older individuals, and adolescents, complementing the data collected by the MSNA, which surveyed heads of households. 32 FGDs were conducted in-person with 8-12 participants per semi-structured session, utilizing open-ended questions that allowed participants to share their views freely[6]. Two FGDs were conducted exclusively with adolescents. Except for a few participants, including local authorities and community focal points, most FGD participants were IDPs living in IDP sites in ZMPP or in host communities in the Artibonite and Centre departments. The FGD guide and concept note were validated by the AAP Working Group in May 2024.

After completing the data collection, ACTED conducted a validation exercise with key stakeholders, including key informant interviews in the Center and Artibonite departments, followed by a workshop in Port-au-Prince. The workshop brought together 19 participants, including representatives from the

[4] In this report, we followed IOM's and IMPACT/REACH's categorization of (1) urban households, (2) rural households, (3) host communities, (4) IDPs living in IDP sites, and (5) IDPs living outside of sites. IDPs outside of sites and host communities may include those living in urban and rural areas, and ZMPP households (which are included under "urban households") may also be affected by displacement. Please access more information on the AAP results published by IOM through this link. Please access more information on the AAP results published by IMPACT/REACH through this link.

[5] UNHCR's Information and Communication Needs Assessment tool.

[6] The adult FGD questionnaire contained 22 questions, while the adolescent questionnaire had 15 questions.

Haitian General Directorate of Civil Protection, local authorities (CASEC[7], ASEC[8], and city delegates), community leaders, IDP site management committee members, local organizations, host communities, and IDPs. The main goal of the workshop was to validate the ICNA findings and gather recommendations to enhance AAP in Haiti, which are summarized at the end of the report.

Below is a table with the number of households surveyed /individuals consulted by each organization.

Organization	Type of Data Collected	Population Group	Geographic Coverage	% of female respondents	% of male respondents	N. of households / respondents
IOM	Household Surveys (quantitative data collected using the MSNA questionnaire)	Displaced households (in sites)	West department	54%	46%	432
		Displaced households (outside sites)	10 departments	62%	38%	4,152
		Host community households	10 departments	58%	42%	4,327
IMPACT/REACH		Urban households	10 departments (except for ZMPP)	56%	44%	1,289
		Rural households	10 departments	52%	48%	1,222
		ZMPP households	West department	46%	54%	650
Acted	Focus Group Discussions (qualitative)	Community members	Center, West and Artibonite departments	65%	29%	339
	Workshop & Key Informant Interviews (qualitative)	Key stakeholders	Center, West and Artibonite departments	55%	45%	55

<u>Note on methodology:</u> This report presents MSNA data collected by IOM and IMPACT/REACH, which utilized distinct sampling methodologies. The data in this report is not intended for comparative analysis but serves to illustrate the communication and information needs of each group, offering a consolidated reference from a mix of quantitative and qualitative data sources for humanitarian practitioners.

Challenges and limitations

The MSNA survey conducted by IMPACT/REACH and IOM encountered limitations due to security constraints, which impacted sampling in certain areas, reducing geographic coverage and affecting the

[7] CASEC stands for the Boards of the Municipal Sections.
[8] ASEC stands for the Assemblies of the Communal Sections.

representativeness of the data. Additionally, certain questions of the MSNA were contingent on previous responses, which reduced the number of respondents to these questions and limited the generalizability of the results. Sensitive topics may have been under-reported, potentially introducing response biases.

The qualitative survey conducted by ACTED also had similar limitations. FGDs were held in only nine communes across three departments, which limited the diversity of perspectives. The small sample size of FGDs and group dynamics, such as some participants dominating the discussions, further restrict the generalizability of the findings.

Key findings[9]

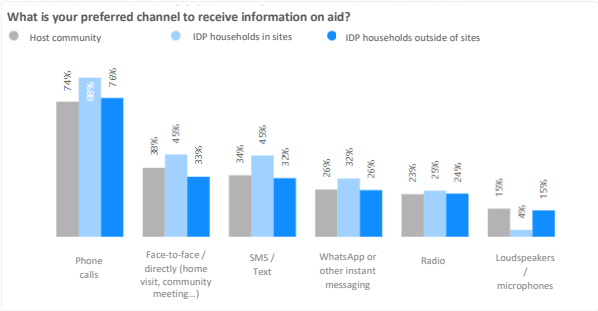
1. What are the main information needs of communities regarding humanitarian aid?

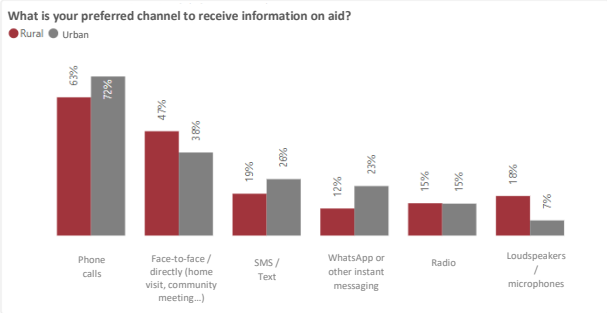
- The most frequently requested information across all groups surveyed during the MSNA pertains to the process of **registering for aid**, followed by **guidance on accessing water and food**.
- Among those in displacement settings, **50% of IDPs living outside sites**, **42% within sites**, and **49% of host communities** identified information on registering for aid as a priority. Notably, IDPs residing in sites also highlighted the need for information on **employment opportunities** (30%) and the **security situation** (20%). Communities also prioritized information related to water, food, shelter, and health, with diversity in responses depending on demographics and geographic settings.
- Similarly, information on aid registration was a top concern for **52% of rural households** (42% of those in ZMPP) and **44% of urban households**. Beyond this, communities prioritized information related to water, food, shelter, health, employment, and updates on the general situation.
- FGDs indicated that communities require information on **aid**, **water, sanitation and hygiene**, **security, health**, **employment,** and **gender-based violence**, including procedures to follow in case of sexual violence incidents. They also requested more information on return processes for IDPs.

2. What are the preferred communication channels of communities?

2.1. What are the preferred channels for communities to receive information on aid?

- **Phone calls** are the preferred method of **receiving information across all groups and locations,** preferred by 88% of IDPs in sites, 76% of IDPs outside sites, 74% of host community households, 72% of urban households (65% of ZMPP households), and 63% of rural households. There is also a strong preference for **in-person communication**, particularly among displaced households in sites (45%) and rural households (47%).





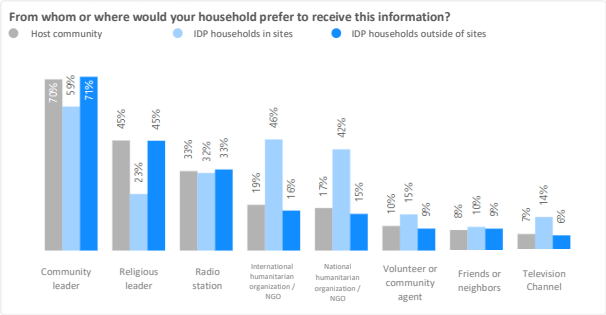
[9] Key findings showed throughout the report refer to analysis from the MSNA data and FGDs (which is explicitly stated as the source).

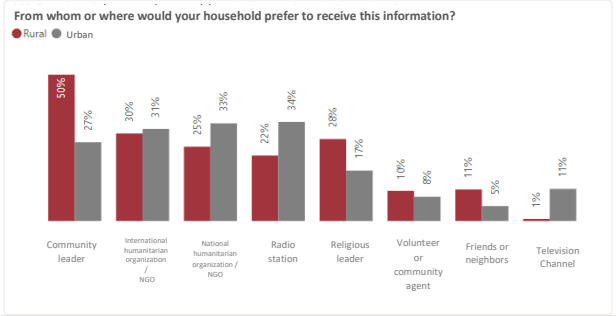
- FGDs highlighted **regional differences in communication preferences**, shaped by diverse contexts. In the West department, participants favored traditional channels like telephone and radio, while also mentioning digital options such as social media and SMS. In the Centre and Artibonite departments, face-to-face meetings were highlighted as the most effective communication method due to limited connectivity. Phone calls were also preferred, as they remain accessible. While social media, SMS, and radio were recognized for spreading mass messages and quick updates, they were not seen as effective for two-way communication or feedback. This highlights the importance of adapting communication strategies to the specific needs and access levels of each region.

"Face-to-face meetings are essential here due to poor connectivity. Phone calls are also preferred as they are accessible even with limited infrastructure." - IDP from Petite Rivière de l'Artibonite

2.2. From whom or where would communities prefer to receive information on aid?

- When it comes to preferred sources for receiving information, a significant number of households in displacement settings showed a preference for **community leaders**. Specifically, 71% of IDPs living outside of sites and 70% of host community households selected community leaders as their trusted source, while this was the preferred source for lesser households among IDPs in sites (59% of them).
- Although at lower percentages, 38% of both urban and rural households expressed a preference for **community leaders**, with trust being higher among rural households (50%) compared to **urban** households (27%). Among **ZMPP** households, only **18%** of respondents expressed trust in community leaders. In ZMPP, most households expressed trust in **radio** stations (38%), followed by **national NGOs** (34%) and **international NGOs** (26%).





"We would trust community leaders more to share information from humanitarian organizations. We trust the leader, and we are sure that the information shared will come from a reliable source." – IDP, Petite Rivière de l'Artibonite 3 (Deslandes 2), Artibonite Department.

- Participants in FGDs indicated that they generally **trust community leaders** and **humanitarian actors** and **distrust some government actors** and **social media** which are perceived as less reliable sources. Many communities expressed preference on local, familiar figures over other channels when seeking accurate and trustworthy information. Limited trust and preference for humanitarian organizations among certain groups stem from several factors, including the inconsistent presence of aid organizations in certain areas, perceptions of inefficiency and unmet needs, and concerns about retaliations when it comes to reporting misconduct. Negative past

experiences, such as lack of response to feedback and perceived disrespect, have also contributed to the mistrust.

Radio was also cited as an important source of information in ZMPP and areas with limited network connectivity. Some **IDPs** living in sites expressed trust in IDP management committees while also noting the importance of engaging directly with humanitarian actors. In the West, the use of **social media** and **SMS** reflects an increasing adoption of digital tools, though concerns about their reliability remain.

"We remain cautious on social media. Some pages provide useful information, while others spread false information to attract attention. It is extremely difficult to differentiate them. We know a few that are reliable." – IDP, downtown Verrettes, Artibonite Department.

3. What types of phones do community members own?

- **Types of phones owed by households varied across communities**, with most having at least one type of phone—whether basic, digital, or smartphone[10]—though 15% of rural households do not own any phone. A significant number of households rely on **basic phones**; 54% of households in urban and rural areas use them for calls and SMS (58% in ZMPP), but these devices lack internet access.

  Among IDPs, 71% in sites and 59% outside sites own basic phones, similar to 60% of host community households. In contrast, **smartphones**, which offer touch screens and advanced internet access, are owned by 52% of urban households (54% in ZMPP) and only 30% of rural households. 35% of IDPs in sites, 31% of IDPs outside of sites, and 32% of host communities households reported having a smartphone.
- This data underscores the **reliance on basic phones** by most households while revealing a higher prevalence of smartphone ownership in urban regions, highlighting disparities in technology access across different areas.
- FGDs participants indicated that many people in their communities have access to phones, with some participants noting that smartphones are more common among younger people and basic phones among older individuals. However, some participants noted that some community members lack phones.

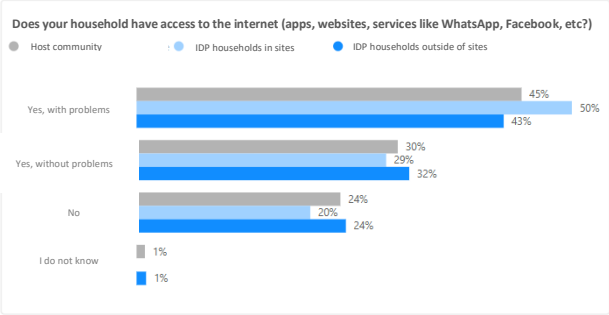
4. What type of network coverage do communities have access to?

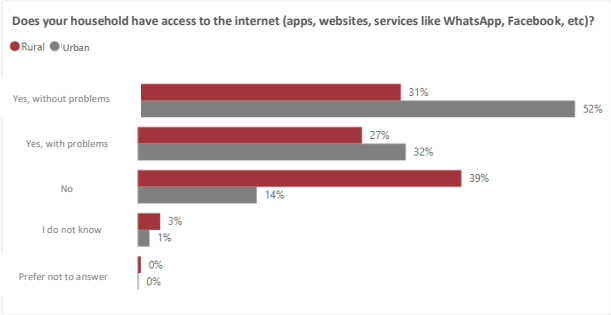
- **Digicel** and **Natcom** are the two most widely used mobile networks across Haiti. Digicel is more predominant in urban areas, with 81% of urban households nationwide using it (92% in ZMPP), compared to 61% in rural areas, and is especially prevalent among IDPs in sites (94%). In contrast, Natcom has stronger usage in the Grand Nord region (Nord, Nord-Ouest, Nord-Est, Artibonite, and Centre), where it is the most commonly used network. In urban areas, 78% of households use Natcom, compared to 65% in rural areas.
- FGDs show that some communities **alternate** between the two operators, depending on where they live and network outages, allowing them to maintain their connectivity, which is important for their daily activities and staying informed.

[10] A "Basic Phone" refers to a device that allows calls, SMS, and mobile money transactions but does not have internet access. A "Digital Phone" provides basic internet access with pre-installed applications but does not allow users to download additional apps; it typically features a digital keyboard. A "Smartphone" includes a touchscreen interface, advanced internet access, and the capability to download and use various applications.

5. Do communities have access to the internet?

- **Urban households generally enjoy better internet access** compared to rural and displaced households, with 52% of urban households nationwide (59% in ZMPP) reporting **no issues with internet access**. Rural households face **significant barriers to connectivity**, with 39% of rural households reporting no access to the internet. In displacement settings, host community households and IDPs in-site and out-of-sites also face some challenges in digital inclusion.





- During FGDs, communities noted **many challenges in accessing the internet**, with **poor and unstable signal quality** being a common issue. Regular access is difficult, often requiring moving to areas with a better signal. The high cost of prepaid plans and power outages, which makes it difficult to charge phones, further limit internet connectivity. Few respondents said they were able to maintain consistent internet access, with the exception from those who have the financial means to maintain connectivity.

6. Among those with access to the internet, which social media platforms do communities use the most, if any?

- Among those with internet access, **Facebook** is the most popular social media platform, used by over 70% of communities in displacement settings, and around 60% of urban and rural households. 19% of ZMPP households also mentioned using **Tik Tok** as a social media platform. 25% of rural households indicated not using any social media.
- Meanwhile, **WhatsApp** leads as the preferred messaging app across all surveyed groups that have internet access, with 89% of urban households (91% in ZMPP), and 80% of rural households using WhatsApp for communication. Similarly, WhatsApp is widely used among displaced populations and host communities who have internet access, with 87% of IDPs in sites, 86% of IDPs outside sites, and 85% of host communities identifying it as their primary messaging app.

"We use WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger applications when the Internet connection improves, but WhatsApp is the most used. Voice recordings are used more by those who can't read but text messages are used much more by others." – Female IDP, Petite Rivière de l'Artibonite 1 (Savane à Roche), Artibonite Department.

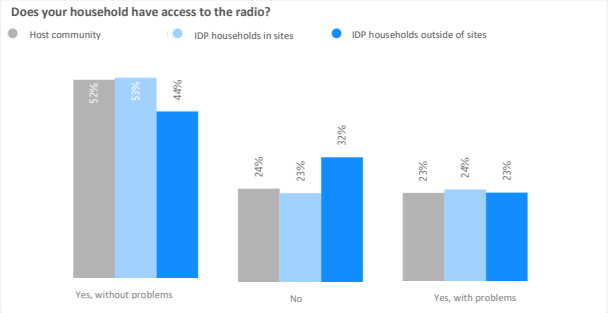
- In contrast with MSNA data, a significant number of FGD participants reported having **smartphones**. Those with smartphone access indicated that they used devices to engage with **social media** platforms like Facebook and TikTok. Participants highlighted that WhatsApp, in particular, plays a key role as a communication tool, enabling quick information sharing and helping maintain social connections. Voice messages are especially valued by those with literacy challenges and older individuals who prefer speaking over writing, while younger users generally

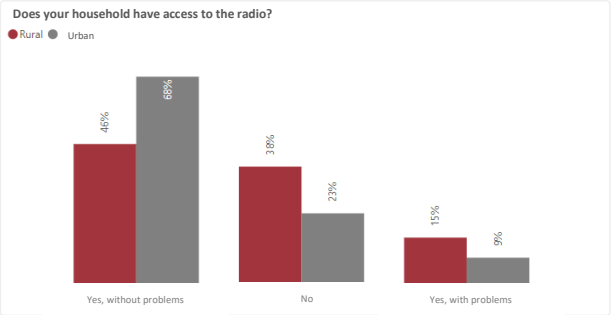
use text messages. Despite the usage of social media, there is a **distrust** towards the reliability of the information received through these platforms, highlighting the communities' desire for trustworthy sources and clearer and direct communication from humanitarian actors.

"To communicate with humanitarian organizations, we suggest having a focal point on the IDP site, distribute flyers and create WhatsApp groups with the displaced persons on the site. We would prefer that our parents receive the information first and then communicate it to us." – Adolescent IDP, École Nationale République du Colombie IDP site, ZMPP.

7. Can communities access the radio?

- **Urban areas** have better access to radio, with 68% of urban households nationwide (76% of ZMPP households) reporting no access issues, compared to 46% in rural areas. Additionally, rural households (38%) and displaced households outside sites (32%) experience higher rates of **no radio access**, indicating barriers to radio access among these groups.





- FGDs reveal that **radios**—both standalone AM/FM sets (some solar-powered) and phones with built-in radios—are used by some communities, despite challenges with electricity and reception. Social media platforms and digital media, such as YouTube and TikTok, also serve as channels for distributing content from traditional radio shows. For instance, excerpts from popular radio programs like Ti Koze ak TT are often shared on platforms like TikTok, as noted by respondents across various departments. Radio station preferences are typically localized: Radio Caraïbes and Radio Émancipation FM were more cited in Port-au-Prince, while Radio Zao was favored by respondents in the Artibonite department, and Radio Mont-Carmel in the Centre department. Radio Panique FM and Radio Victoire were mentioned in both the Centre and Artibonite regions. While traditional radio is generally seen as a more reliable source of information compared to social media, there is also some distrust from certain stations due to perceived misinformation.

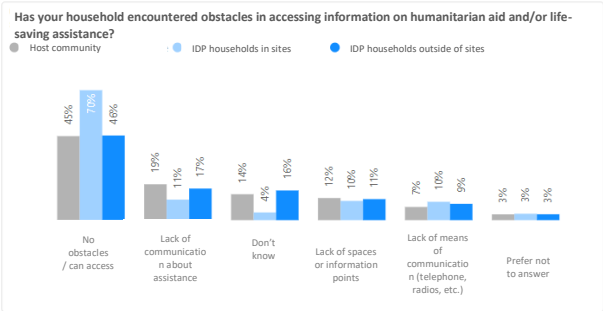
8. What are the barriers communities face in accessing information on aid?

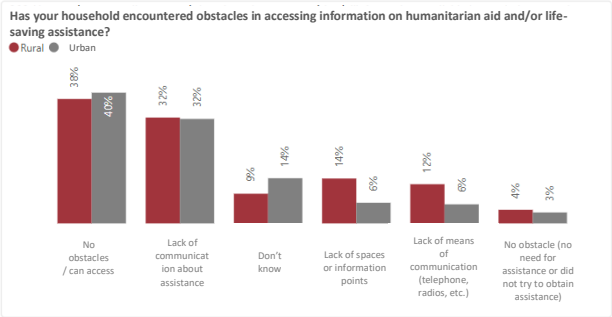
- 70% of IDPs in sites report no barriers to accessing information. In contrast, only 46% of both host community households and IDPs outside sites report similar access, pointing to a **disparity in information reach between locations with higher engagement with humanitarian actors such as IDP sites**, where assistance has been predominantly focused[11], and those with less. Among

[11] IDPs households in sites received the most assistance in the 12 months prior to MSNA data collection, with 67% reporting they had been assisted. In contrast, for IDPs outside of sites and host community households, 9 out of 10 households reported not receiving any assistance during this period. Additionally, IDPs in sites were the most recent beneficiaries of assistance, with 80% of those who received aid having done so within the three months prior to MSNA data collection (IOM published AAP MSNA data, page 21).

those facing barriers, the key issue reported is a lack of communication about available assistance, affecting 19% of host community households, 17% of IDPs outside sites, and 11% of IDPs in sites.

- 39% of urban and rural households (36% in ZMPP), **report no obstacles**, however, 32% of urban and rural households (39% in ZMPP) cite a **lack of communication regarding available assistance** as a barrier, underscoring the **ongoing challenge of ensuring consistent and reliable dissemination of aid information**. Additionally, 12% of rural households report a lack of essential resources such as phones and radios to access information, and 14% of rural households mention the absence of physical spaces or information points in their communities.





- FGDs highlighted that communities feel **disconnected** from humanitarian aid, voicing concerns about accessibility and the responsiveness of aid organizations. Participants pointed to challenges such as lack of presence of humanitarian organizations in certain areas (particularly in rural areas/areas outside of ZMPP), unresponsive hotlines, poor network coverage, and difficulties charging their phone due to lack of electricity as obstacles to effective communication. Moreover, despite improved connectivity in the West department, certain groups continue to face barriers to access information. Low-income households often cannot afford phones or other devices, limiting their access to information. Additionally, older persons and individuals with disabilities often face challenges to use digital tools (digital illiteracy, lack of smartphones/adapted devices, etc), even in environments with relatively good connectivity. In Port-au-Prince, some displaced persons feel excluded from direct communication with humanitarian organizations, which primarily engage with community leaders or IDP committee members. This has resulted in mistrust, with some IDPs believing that information is being withheld from them. A general distrust of authorities may also hinder the effective dissemination and receipt of information.

"We are asked to call a number provided by an organization. However, when we try to contact them, the calls never go through." – IDP, Collège Antilles site, ZMPP.

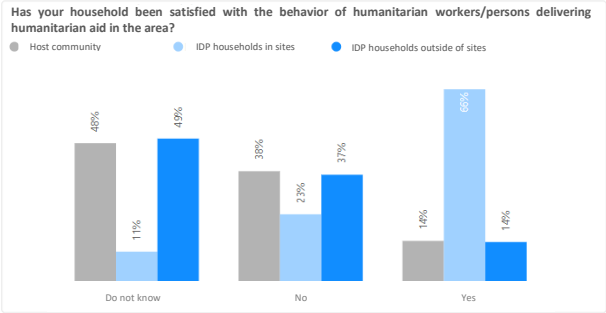
9. If a household received assistance in the last twelve months, were they consulted on the humanitarian assistance provided?

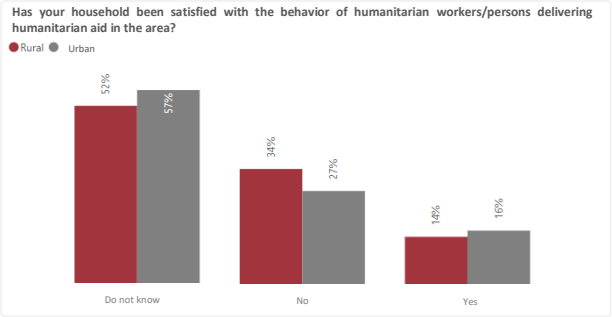
- Among households that received humanitarian assistance in the past 12 months — representing only 7% of those surveyed by IOM and 4% of those surveyed by IMPACT/REACH — consultation on aid preferences varied across groups in the MSNA, reflecting **differing levels of engagement in decision-making processes**. Among households who responded to this question, 50% of urban households and 43% of rural households reported they were consulted about the type or modality of assistance they received. Among displaced populations, 56% of IDPs in sites and 51% of IDPs outside sites reported being consulted, compared to 42% of host communities.

"The assistance provided by organizations does not meet our major needs, we were not involved in decisions that affect us, and I believe that is why this aid is not relevant."
– IDP, École Nationale Caroline Chauveau site, ZMPP.

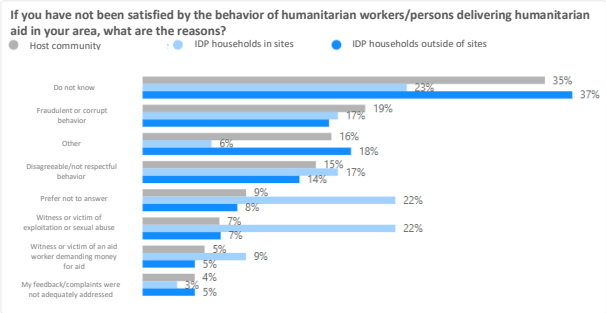
10. Are communities satisfied with the behavior of humanitarian actors?

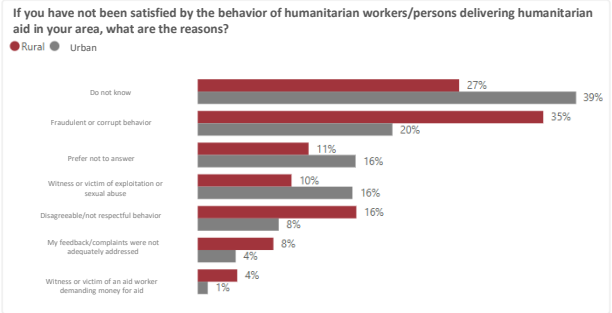
- With the exception of displaced households in IDP sites, most households are either **uncertain or dissatisfied with the behavior of humanitarian workers**. This may indicate potential gaps in clarity or communication about the role and actions of aid workers and need for more transparency, improved communication, and consistent follow-up on aid delivery practices. **Satisfaction is notably higher among displaced individuals in IDP sites**, suggesting that more regular engagements with aid workers contribute to higher levels of satisfaction.





- Among households who responded that they were dissatisfied with aid workers – noting that 37% of households surveyed by IOM and 33% of households surveyed by IMPACT/REACH responded to this question – a notable number of respondents said did not know the reasons for their dissatisfaction or chose not to answer. Among those who shared concerns, the reported issues included instances of **fraudulent** and **corrupt behavior,** being a witness or a victim of **sexual exploitation or abuse,** and **disrespectful/disagreeable behavior**, with significant differences between household types and regions. 30% of respondents in ZMPP and 22% in IDP sites expressed dissatisfaction due to having witnessed or experiencing exploitation. In rural areas, 35% of respondents raised issues related to fraud or corruption.





- Among the same households above dissatisfied with the behavior of humanitarian workers, the findings indicate **reluctance among households in reporting misconduct**. Among them, 56% of urban and rural households (62% in ZMPP) said they were **not comfortable reporting such incidents**, with **only 8%** of ZMPP households indicating they would feel comfortable doing so. Similarly, **73%** of IDPs in sites, **52%** of IDPs outside of sites, and **58%** of host communities expressed that they do not feel comfortable reporting misconduct, emphasizing a broader issue of hesitancy in engaging with existing reporting mechanisms.

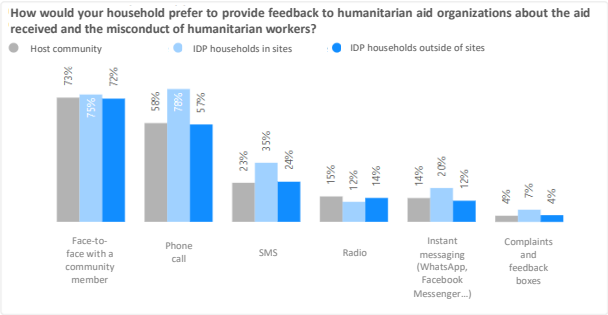
"Humanitarian workers support each other. Reporting their misconduct could result in us being cut off from the little help we might have received." – IDP, Lycée des Jeunes Filles site, ZMPP.

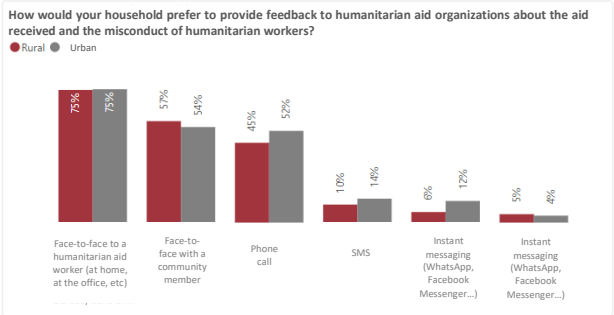
- FGDs also revealed **mixed levels of satisfaction** with humanitarian assistance. While some communities appreciated the support received, others, particularly those outside ZMPP, expressed frustration over a lack of clear communication and a feeling of exclusion from decision-making processes regarding the aid provided.

11. Reporting misconduct

11.1 What are the preferred channels for communities to provide feedback on the aid they receive and report misconduct by aid workers? [12]

- **Face-to-face communication** is the most preferred method to provide feedback on aid across most households, including on misconduct, except for IDP households in sites. 75% of urban and rural households expressed preference to provide this type of feedback face-to-face to a humanitarian worker and 56% face-to-face to a community member. IDPs in sites (75%), IDPs outside of sites (72%) and the communities hosting them (73%) also expressed a strong preference to provide feedback and report misconduct face-to-face to a community member.[13]
- **Telephone calls** is the most preferred method to provide feedback on aid, including misconduct, for IDPs households in sites (78%), the second most preferred channel for host communities (58%) and IDPs outside of sites (57%), and the third most preferred channel for rural (45%) and urban households (52%). While **SMS**, **radio** and **social media channels** are less popular for providing this type of feedback, SMS and digital communication (like WhatsApp) is still important for displaced households in IDP sites. Few respondents preferred **complaints and feedback boxes**.





11.2 To whom communities prefer to report misconduct by humanitarian workers?

- When reporting **misconduct** by humanitarian workers, **community leaders** are the most trusted and preferred reporting channel across most household types, with the exception of IDPs in sites. **International NGOs** are the preferred channel to report misconduct by most IDPs in sites (72%) and the second most preferred channel for urban and rural households (45% and 43%, respectively), though only 29% of host communities and 18% of IDPs outside sites favor them.

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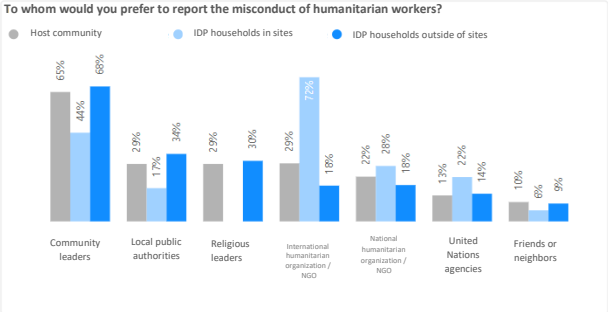
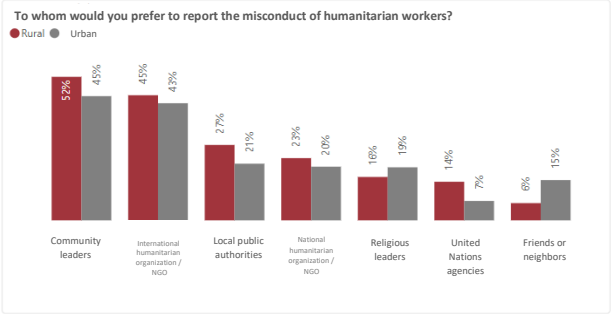
[12] Categories of responses to this question in the MSNA survey conducted by IOM and IMPACT/REACH are slightly different. While there was a response option for "face-to-face to a humanitarian worker" for urban and rural households, this was not a response option in the dataset for IDPs in and outside of sites, host communities, and ZMPP households.

[13] The IOM MSNA dataset did not include a response option for "face-to-face to a humanitarian worker", which was the most preferred option by rural and urban households surveyed by IMPACT/REACH.

"If someone asks us for something in exchange for humanitarian aid, we would report it. Indeed, we would inform the humanitarian organization about the situation. However, it is risky because there could be reprisals. If we don't feel safe using the existing reporting mechanisms, we would contact the organization by phone." – IDP, Mirebalais 2 (Gascogne), Center Department.





- FGDs indicate a preference for **in-person direct communication** and **phone calls** over other channels when raising more **sensitive issues** or **providing feedback**. FGDs participants noted that these channels provide the opportunity to ask questions in real time and address sensitive topics with confidentiality.

11.3 What prevents communities from sharing serious concerns or filing a complaint?

"Even if an employee commits a reprehensible act, we do not know where to file a complaint." – IDP, Ministère de la Communication site, ZMPP.

- FGDs revealed that, in the West department, particularly in Port-au-Prince and its nearby areas, communities have received some information about misconduct through awareness campaigns and posters, especially in IDP sites; however, there is still a strong demand for additional information and training. In contrast, communities in the Artibonite and Center departments shared significant gaps in awareness about misconduct, which leaves them uninformed about misconduct and reporting mechanisms.

"There has been no awareness or training on inappropriate behavior by humanitarian workers or abuse of power, and no organization is truly offering help. It is impossible for them to reach us because criminals are threatening to carry out another raid in Saut-D'Eau." – IDP, Croix-Bouquet towards Saut d'Eau, Center Department.

Recommendations by communities and humanitarian actors[14]

SHORT-TERM

Strengthen Accountability to Affected People through inclusive and effective communication

Lead actors: Humanitarian Country Team supported by the AAP Working Group.

[14] Key recommendations were validated by community members and authority representatives as indicated in the methodology section and by the members of the AAP Working Group in September 2024.

- Develop a **targeted communication strategy** to address information needs related to aid, safety, employment, and services based on regional needs. Given the significant demand, especially among IDPs and host communities, clearer guidance on how to register for assistance should be prioritized, using channels most preferred by the community.
- **Enhance use of preferred communication channels by** prioritizing **telephone calls** as the primary method for disseminating information, as they are the preferred channel to receive information on aid across all groups. Utilize **face-to-face interactions**, particularly where connectivity is limited, through community centers or designated information points. Integrate **radio and SMS** into communication strategies to reach a broader audience, ensuring a balanced approach that reaches a wide range of community groups considering the distinct priorities of various households, their displacement context and locations. Collaborate with local media outlets to share verified information and reach a wider audience, thus improving the credibility of the information and expanding reach.
- **Leverage digital tools** to complement traditional communication channels with digital channels such as social media and messaging apps i.e. **WhatsApp** in regions with higher digital engagement, while addressing concerns about reliability by ensuring the information shared is verified and accurate. Offer training sessions on digital literacy to help communities effectively use digital tools for accessing information and support in closing digital inclusion gaps.
- **Engage trusted local leaders** whenever possible, work with respected **community and religious leaders** to disseminate information, as they are the most trusted sources within some community groups. This approach strengthens trust and fosters greater community engagement in humanitarian efforts. In areas like ZMPP, where trust in community leaders is lower, use radio stations and collaborate with national and international NGOs to spread information.
- **Use clear and accessible language** by ensuring that all communication is delivered in **clear**, **simple** language, and is **accessible** to community members of different age, gender and diversity groups. Use easy-to-read formats and audio and visual materials to improve understanding of aid messaging, especially in communities with lower literacy rates. These can be disseminated through online and offline channels.

Address barriers to reporting misconduct

Lead actors: Humanitarian Country Team in coordination with the PSEA Network and the AAP Working Group

- Efforts should be made to address misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse, fraud and corruption, by **raising awareness** of what constitutes misconduct as well as reporting mechanisms and ensuring their confidentiality, security, and accessibility. Ensure that **face-to-face** mechanisms to report misconduct are available as this was the preferred channel by most households surveyed, as well as **phone lines** as this was the preferred mechanism by IDPs in sites. Clear referral pathways are essential, alongside comprehensive training for humanitarian staff and **trusted community leaders and members** on misconduct and integrity issues. **Community engagement** should be a cornerstone of these efforts, empowering communities to actively participate in awareness-raising initiatives to build trust and strengthen accountability.

Enhance coordination

Lead actors: Humanitarian Country Team in coordination with the General Directorate of Civil Protection, local authorities, PSEA Network and the AAP Working Group.

- Strengthen **coordination** of communication efforts among humanitarian organizations to avoid duplication, confusion, and gaps in information delivery. Regularly update communities on humanitarian activities. Collaborate closely with **government** authorities to align humanitarian

efforts with national priorities and enhance service delivery, while remaining mindful of the challenges posed by community distrust in information disseminated through government channels.

Conduct trainings to enhance accountability

Lead actors: AAP Working Group and PSEA Network with support from the Humanitarian Country Team.

- Conduct **training** of humanitarian workers and oversight of humanitarian aid, particularly where concerns are more pronounced. Regular monitoring and community feedback can help identify areas for improvement. Engage authorities on trainings in AAP, particularly the General Directorate of Civil Protection as they closely engage with communities.

LONG-TERM

Enhance communication infrastructure

Lead actors: Government and the Humanitarian Country Team.

- Invest in expanding **communication infrastructure**, particularly in more remote areas, to enhance phone and internet access. Partner with telecom operators like Digicel and Natcom to extend network coverage and establish free hotlines across networks. Additionally, solar charging stations or portable generators in IDP sites can support in addressing electricity challenges and ensuring reliable communication.

Increase transparency and consultation in humanitarian aid

Lead actors: Humanitarian Country Team in coordination with the AAP Working Group, local authorities, and Government.

- Increase community engagement by involving affected populations in **decision-making** processes, regularly updating them on ongoing projects, and ensuring transparency in how decisions about aid allocation are made.

Consolidation and analysis of feedback from multiple channels

Lead actors: All actors who have Complaints and Feedback Mechanisms in Haiti in coordination with the AAP Working Group.

- Adopt a **systematic approach to consolidating and analyzing feedback** from multiple channels in Haiti through the CERF-funded project on collective complaints and feedback mechanisms. This approach will create a more integrated and efficient mechanism for capturing and addressing community concerns, ensuring that feedback effectively informs programmatic adjustments and enhances accountability to affected populations.

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