

2023 MSNA BULLETIN

BRIEF

DECEMBER 2023
BANGLADESH

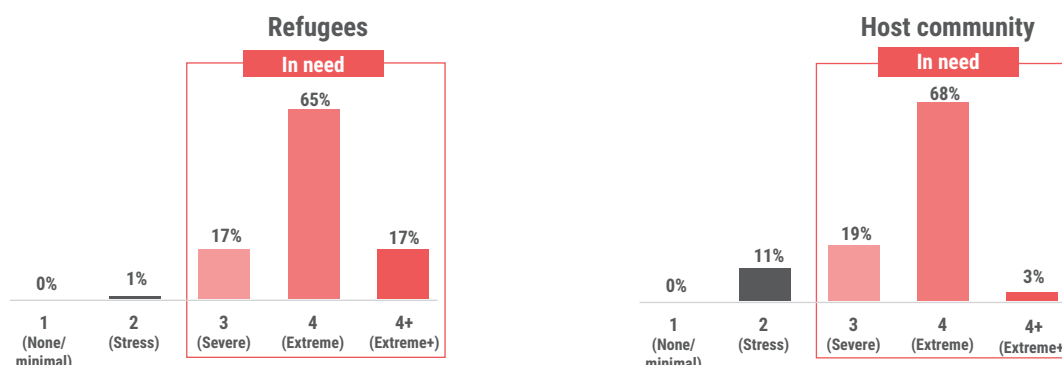
CONTEXT. Over the last four decades, Rohingya people have been fleeing in successive waves to Bangladesh from Rakhine State, Myanmar. Bangladesh hosts now more than 967,000 Rohingya refugees in some of the largest and most densely populated refugee camps in the world.¹ Cox's Bazar district is characterised by some of the poorest living conditions in the country, with approximately 33% of its population living below the poverty line,² mostly rural communities (78%),³ with difficult access to basic services such as healthcare and education. Around 978,000 Rohingya refugees and 538,000 host community individuals were estimated to be in humanitarian need in 2023.⁴ REACH conducted a Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment (MSNA) in coordination with the Inter-Sectoral Coordination Group (ISCG), ACTED's support on data collection in the camps, and with United Nations Migration (IOM) Needs and Population Monitoring (NPM) cooperation in collecting data in the host community, thus ensuring evidence-based identification and prioritisation of needs. Data collection took place between the 27 August and 17 September 2023, collecting 3,400 households surveys in the refugee camps and 1,149 households surveys in the host community of Ukhiya and Teknaf Upazilas.⁵

KEY MESSAGES

Co-occurring needs across multiple sectors were commonly reported by households, especially refugee households. Households facing extreme (4) or very extreme (4+) needs were prevalent among both population groups.

- **Almost all refugee households (99%) and most host community households (89%) were found in need** (MSNI severity of 3, 4 and 4+). Among them, 17% of the refugee households and 3% of the host community households reported facing very extreme needs (4+).
- **Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH), Livelihoods, Shelter & non food items (NFIs)** were the main drivers of needs for both population groups.
- **Assessed households with a person with disability faced comparatively higher levels of needs across multiple sectors**, especially among refugees, and female-headed households faced higher levels of needs in livelihoods, highlighting the importance of inclusive and targeted response efforts.
- A larger proportion of refugee households (82%) had **extreme or very extreme unmet needs**, compared to host community (72%).
- Refugee households with extreme or very extreme unmet needs were more prevalent in camp 10 (94%), camps 19 and 9 (92%), camp 3 (91%), and camps 6 2W and Nayapara (90%); Baharchara (85%) and Sabrang (84%) unions had the highest proportion of host community households with extreme or very extreme unmet needs.
- The **main drivers of shelter needs** for both population groups were the **shelters' precarious materials and shelter damage** in a context where weather conditions can make this life-threatening.
- Reliance in **seasonal or highly unstable income** sources resulted in **widespread use of coping strategies** to cover their basic needs.
- **Limited access to improved sources of drinking water** was the main driver of needs in WASH, especially for the host community.
- Cultural norms and safety concerns among refugees posed a barrier for children's enrollment and attendance to camp's learning centres, and thus were a driver of **education needs**.
- Refugee households' **protection needs derived from their feelings of unsafety** while walking alone at night, which was likely connected to the ongoing insecurity in the camps.

PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS PER SEVERITY PHASE^{6*}



99% of the **refugee** households were found in need in at least one sector

89% of the **host community** households were found in need in at least one sector

* Findings are presented disaggregated by population group (refugees and host community) due to being targeted separately during funding and programming

MULTI-SECTOR NEEDS ASSESSMENT (MSNA) OVERVIEW

CONTEXT. Rohingyas in Myanmar have been denied citizenship since 1982 by the government of Myanmar, facing violence, persecution and discrimination over decades. Following a wave of Myanmar military violence in August 2017 in Rakhine State, that the UN designated as “a textbook example of ethnic cleansing”,¹ 730,000 Rohingya refugees fled to nearby Cox’s Bazar, in Bangladesh.

With limited movements, access to regular income and livelihood/educational opportunities in camps,² it was estimated that 95% of the Rohingya refugee population were moderately to highly vulnerable,³ and remained entirely dependent on humanitarian assistance.

With the refugee population being almost double the host community population in Ukhiya and Teknaf,⁴ the massive increase in population density following the influx, coupled with the pre-existing lack of livelihoods, and levels of poverty and vulnerability among the host community population, has led to tensions over labour competition, falling wages and price hikes of daily essentials.⁵

Most of the agricultural land in Ukhiya and Teknaf is no longer available due to the establishment of refugee camps, and overcrowding has also heightened the risk of landslides and fires.⁶

In this context REACH in coordination with the ISCG, the cooperation of ACTED, NPM-IOM, and United Nations

High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), conducted an MSNA to ensure the evidence-based identification and prioritisation of humanitarian needs. The implemented methodology was designed in order to be in line with global standards and the information needs of the Sectors in the Bangladesh response, thus, informing the 2024 Joint Response Planning (JRP).

METHODOLOGY. The methodology was based on a main quantitative component, a household survey, which was complemented by a qualitative component (focus group discussions or FGDs).

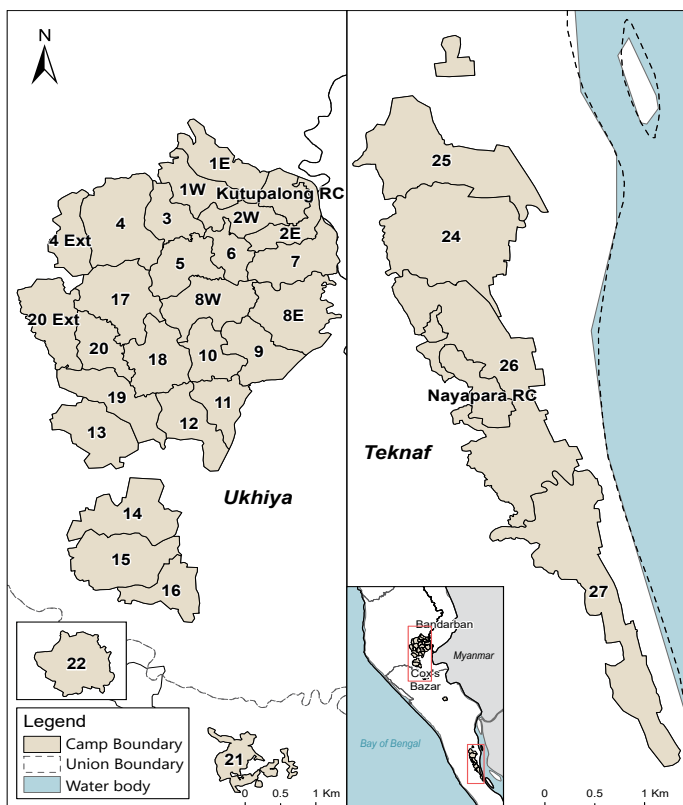
Between the 27th August and the 17th of September 2023 a total of 3,400 households surveys in the refugee camps and 1,149 households surveys in the host community of Ukhiya and Teknaf Upazilas were conducted following a sampling strategy reaching 95% of confidence level and 10% margin of error at the camp and union level. The household survey reached an equal representation of male and female respondents. ACTED, NPM-IOM and REACH worked in partnership to collect the household surveys. Findings are based on the households self-reporting.

The FGDs aimed to fill information gaps in the areas of Protection, as well as to provide contextual information to the household survey. A total of 32 FGDs were collected thanks to NPM-IOM and Save the Children, with the support of the Child Protection Sub-Sector and Humanity and Inclusion.

ASSESSMENT SCOPE AND GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

Dates of data collection: August 28 - September 17, 2023

Number of assessed households	Refugee	3,400	Host Community	1,149
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MULTI-SECTOR NEEDS INDEX (MSNI): CRISIS-LEVEL SEVERITY

Percentage of households per severity phase:

	Refugees	Host community
1 (None/minimal)	0%	0%
2 (Stress)	1%	14%
3 (Severe)	17%	22%
4 (Extreme)	65%	68%
4+ (Extreme+)	17%	3%

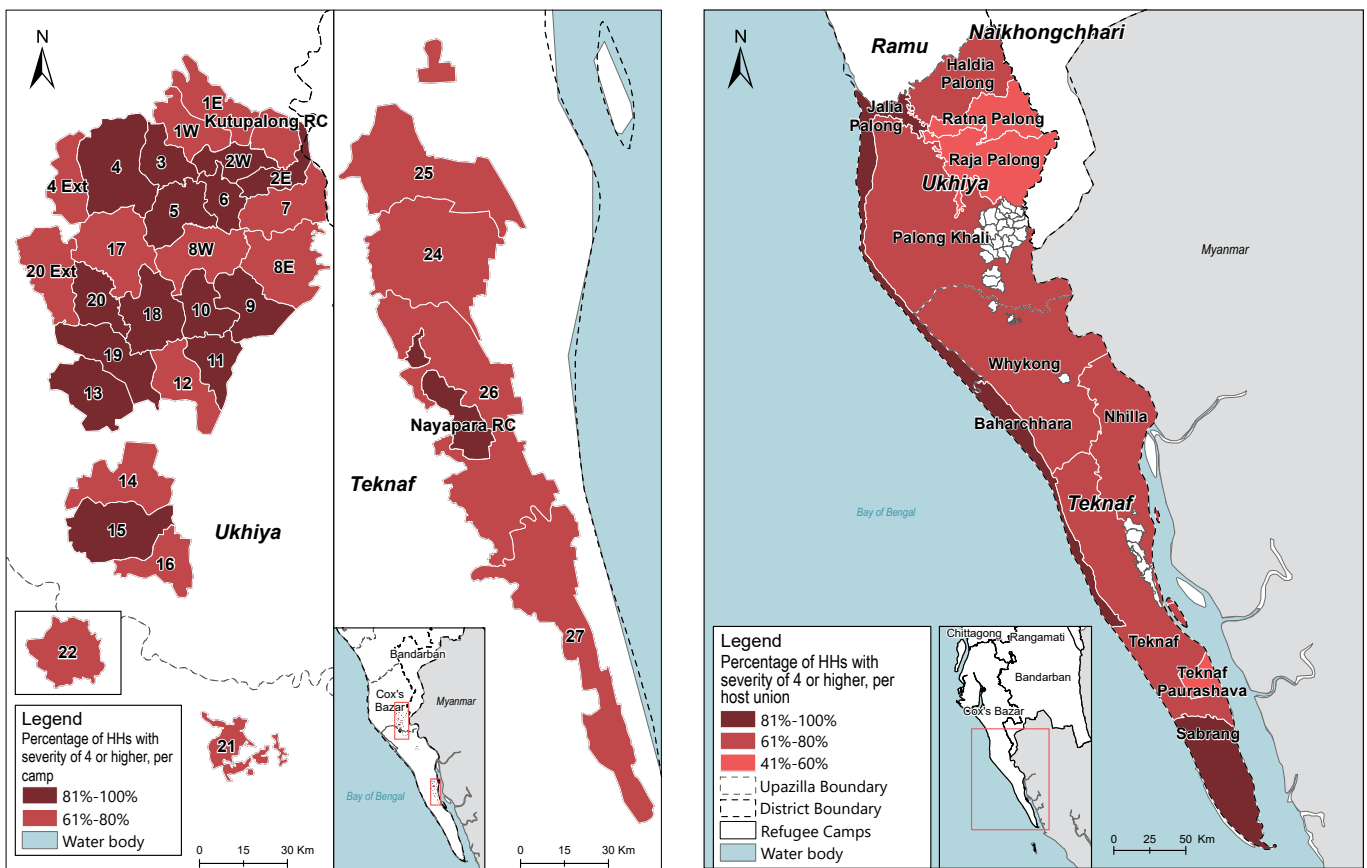
In need → 3, 4, 4+

The MSNI is a composite indicator, designed by REACH to measure the overall severity of humanitarian needs experienced by a household. It is based on the highest sectoral severity identified in each household and expressed through a scale of 1 to 4+. Sectoral severity is determined through the calculation of sector-specific composite indicators. The MSNI considers every household in need in at least one sector (severity score of 3 or more). The full methodology behind the calculation of the MSNI and sectoral severities (living standard gaps, or LSG), in accordance with the [REACH MSNA Analytical Framework Guidance](#), can be shared upon request.

HOUSEHOLDS IN NEED BY GEOGRAPHIC AREA

Percentage of households with an MSNI severity of 4 or higher, per geographical area:*

* Only households with MSNI severity of 4 or higher are mapped to help with the prioritisation of programming as a large majority (90% or higher) were found in severity 3 or more.



MSNI SEVERITY PHASE BY POPULATION GROUP

Percentage of households per group¹ and severity phase:

	1	2	3	4	4+	
Refugees	HH with female HoHH	0%	0%	11%	71%	18%
	HH with male HoHH	0%	2%	19%	57%	15%
	HH with people with disabilities	0%	0%	15%	68%	17%
	HH without people with disabilities	0%	2%	18%	64%	16%
Host Community	HH with female HoHH	0%	9%	18%	67%	6%
	HH with male HoHH	0%	11%	19%	68%	3%
	HH with people with disabilities	0%	4%	33%	66%	1%
	HH without people with disabilities	0%	11%	18%	68%	3%

Refugee households with a female head of HH or people with disabilities were more likely to have living standard gap (LSG) in Livelihoods. In addition, refugee households with people with disabilities were more likely to report LSG in Health. Host community households with people with disabilities were more prevalent to have LSG in Health and Education.

HUMANITARIAN NEEDS AND DRIVERS

Who and where are the most in need? What are the drivers of those needs?

Results from the MSNA indicate the presence of widespread humanitarian needs in the refugee camps of Bangladesh and in the host community of Ukhiya and Teknaf. At the camp level, households facing extreme (4) or very extreme (4+) needs were more prevalent in camp 10 (94%), camps 19 and 9 (92%), camp 3 (91%), and camps 6 2W and Nayapara (90%). At the union level, they were more prevalent in Baharchara (85%) and Sabrang (84%).

64% of assessed refugee HHs faced needs in 3 or more sectors, compared to **35%** of the host community HHs.

- **Almost all refugee households (99%) and most host community households (89%) were found in need** (MSNI severity of 3, 4 and 4+). Among them, 17% of the refugee households and 3% of the host community households reported facing very extreme needs (4+).
- **Five sectors** accounted for the high proportion of **refugee households in need**: Shelter (74%), Livelihoods (60%), Education (54%), Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) (51%), and Protection (51%).
- **Three sectors** accounted for the high proportion of **host community households in need**: WASH (61%), Shelter & NFIs (44%), and Livelihoods (37%).

Unmet needs in WASH, Shelter & NFIs, and Livelihoods were the most prevalent for both population groups.

Shelter & NFIs

The main drivers of shelter needs for both population groups were the shelters' precarious materials and shelter damage in a context where weather conditions can make this life-threatening.

The severity breakdown of shelter and NFIs needs for refugees showed 57% of households were with severe, and 17% extreme need, and for host community, 42% households were with severe 3 and 3% with extreme need.

In the camps, severe shelter needs were driven by **the type of shelter refugees can live in and minor damage to shelter (57%)** such as leaks during rain (39%), minor damage to roof (35%) and damage to floors (25%). Some households in the camps with extreme needs reportedly lived in a shelter with **major damage to the roof and risk of collapse (13%)**. The second driver of severity was households living in crowded shelters, with 8% reportedly having one room for every 3 household members (severe), 3% having one room for every 4 members (extreme), and 1% having one room for every 5 or more household members (extreme+). In addition to these conditions, government regulations limitations on the materials to be used for refugee shelters,¹ shelters built in close proximity to

each other, and in deforested areas. All these factors combined make refugees' shelters sensitive to damage, at high risk of collapse due to landslides,² destruction by fire,³ and to suffer damage during cyclonic storms.⁴

For host community, the main driver of needs was the shelter type, with many households living in **shelters built with less robust materials** (Kutchra, Jhuprie, tent, makeshift shelter, collective shelter)⁵ and reporting **minor damage to the shelter (41%)** such as leaks during rain and minor damage to the roof. A small proportion reported **living in a shelter with a roof at risk of collapse (2%)**. Due to the precarious materials of their shelters and the weather conditions of the region, the host community faces similar risks of landslides,⁶ flash floods, and shelter damage due to cyclonic storms.⁷

Livelihoods

Reliance in seasonal or highly unstable income sources resulted in widespread use of coping strategies to cover their basic needs.

In terms of the severity of livelihood needs for refugees, 30% of households were found to be in severe and 30% in extreme need, and host community 31% of households were with severe, and 6% in extreme need. **Refugee households with a female head of**

Percentage of households in need by sector with highest needs*:

Sector	Refugees	Host community
Shelter & NFIs	74%	44%
Livelihoods	60%	37%
Education	54%	26%
WASH	51%	61%
Protection	44%	15%

* Due to a relatively high food consumption score (FCS) no household was found in need in Food Security. Other partners on the ground such as World Food Programme (WFP) had different findings in FCS.

Number of co-occurring sector LSGs, by population group:

Population Group	No LSG	At least 1 LSG	At least 3 LSGs	At least 5 LSGs
Refugees	1%	99%	64%	13%
Host community	11%	89%	35%	0%

The table above shows the proportion of households that are in need in more than one sector. For example, 64% of refugee households were found to be in need in three sectors or more compared to 35% of host community households.

The table on the left shows the proportion of households in need by sector to identify the most commonly occurring needs.

household (49% of female compared to 25% of male headed households) **and households with people with disabilities** (45% of households with people with disabilities compared to 27% of households without people with disabilities) **were more likely to face extreme livelihood needs.** Among the host community, there were no differences between these groups.

The first driver of needs was the use of livelihood coping strategies (LCSi) to cover basic needs,¹ 33% of refugee households reported using crisis coping strategies (severe), and 5% reportedly used emergency coping strategies (extreme). In the case of host community, 21% of households reported using crisis coping strategies, and 4% emergency coping strategies.

The second driver of needs was the sources of income, 9% of refugee households only receiving income from seasonal and unstable sources such as remittances, cash for work, or casual or daily labour (severe) and 26% only receiving income from highly unstable sources of income such as loans, charitable donations and humanitarian assistance (extreme). Without any freedom of movement and permission to officially work, the majority of refugee households rely on humanitarian assistance (83%).^{2 3}

Host community households also relied on unstable income sources, 21% of households receiving only income from seasonal and unstable sources such as remittances, cash for work, or casual or daily labour, and 2% only receiving income from highly unstable sources of income such as loans, charitable donations and humanitarian assistance. During FGDs, host community participants were concerned about the limited income opportunities they were able to access, due to them being seasonal and limited during monsoon, and also governmental restrictions over fishing.

WASH

Limited access to improved sources of drinking water was the main driver of needs in WASH, especially for the host community.

The severity of WASH needs for refugee households was as follows: 18% with severe, and 34% in extreme need while for host community was 1% of households with severe, and 60% in extreme need, being the sector with most severe needs among host community.

The main driver of refugees' WASH needs was their main source of drinking water and the time it took to obtain water. Twelve percent (12%) of refugee households with severe needs had access to an improved source of water but taking 30 minutes or more to collect it, and **32% with extreme needs used unimproved sources of water such as different types of tubewells.**⁴ In the case of host community, the first driver of needs was also the source of drinking water, where **58% of households with extreme needs reported their drinking water source was unimproved,** followed by sanitation facilities types, with 6% of households using unimproved sanitation facilities.⁵ Findings from FGD participants supported this, particularly among the

host community who often complained that access to clean drinking water was a challenge, especially in the monsoon season, reporting that water was often salty, unclear or had arsenic.

The locations with highest needs for refugee households were camp 2W (65%), Camp 10 (62%), and camps 9 (61%), and for host community Baharchara (80%) and Sabrang (78%) unions.

Education

Cultural norms and safety concerns among refugees posed a barrier for children's enrollment and attendance to the camps' learning centres, and thus were a driver of education needs.

In Education, 29% of refugee households with children had severe while 24% had extreme needs. **The main driver of needs was school enrolment and attendance** in the camp learning centres, 31% of households in severe need had at least one child who was not enrolled or attending the learning facilities. The households reporting that the reasons why their children were not enrolled or regularly attending the camp's learning facilities were protection-related, such as child helping at home/farm, protection risks while travelling to school, and marriage (16%) were considered to be in extreme need. **FGDs confirmed these findings, where the most reported challenge for children to go to school was safety** while travelling to school due to the risk of kidnapping, and for girls reaching puberty who risked catcalling on the streets and hence were not enrolled in school.

Protection

Refugee households' protection needs derived from their feelings of unsafety while walking alone at night likely connected to the ongoing insecurity in the camps.

In terms of severity of protection needs of refugees, 21% of households were in severe and 23% were in extreme need.

The main driver of protection needs was the households reporting their level of safety while walking alone at night, 22% reported feeling a bit unsafe and 20% very unsafe. Refugee households in Nayapara RC (75%) and camp 6 (69%) were more likely to report feeling unsafe. The second driver for households with extreme or very extreme needs was the **separation of children,** where 2% of households reported children left because of marriage or to seek employment, and 0.2% reported the children were missing, kidnapped, or left to join armed groups.

Refugee FGD participants often stated safety concerns in the camps related to kidnappings, robberies, and violence, and that since the security management of the camps was transferred from the army to the Armed Police Battalion (APBn) in 2020 security had deteriorated.⁶

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY

The majority of refugee households (83%) reported having received humanitarian assistance in the 12 months prior to data collection.¹ Based on informal feedbacks provided during interviews, several obstacles were contributing to the humanitarian assistance not being reportedly received by all households: individuals being too old to collect assistance, delays before receiving the assistance if the households recently arrived in Bangladesh or moved to another camp, and discrimination or favouritism from community leaders who play a role in the distribution of humanitarian assistance.

The most reported types of assistance received were Food assistance (94%), Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (64%), Health (64%) and NFI (53%).

The majority of refugee households were satisfied with assistance although those who were unsatisfied (17% of the refugees who received assistance) reported **assistance was insufficient** (100%).

Refugee households' preferred method to receive food assistance were in-kind assistance (52%), cash assistance (24%) or a combination of both (19%). For other types of assistance, in-kind assistance was still the preferred modality such as shelter assistance (71%), and NFI



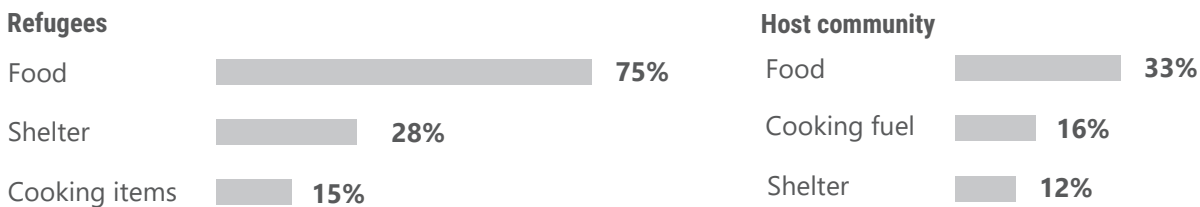
Of the 18% of the host community households who reported having received humanitarian assistance in the 12 months prior to data collection, they reported this assistance was mostly provided by the government (61%) and humanitarian organisations (42%).

The most commonly reported types of assistance received were food assistance (45%) and cash assistance (39%). A large majority of the host community households who reported having received humanitarian assistance were satisfied with it (96%).

Last time households reported receiving any kind of humanitarian assistance prior to data collection:



Top 3 self-reported priority needs, by ranking:



Refugee households' preferred means of communication to receive information (top 3):

Face-to-face communication	60%
Direct observation	50%
Mosque	41%

Refugee households' information needs (top 3):

Food assistance	54%
Shelter (housing, repair)	33%
NFIs	21%

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THE MSNA WAS CONDUCTED IN THE FRAMEWORK OF:



FUNDED BY:



Funded by
European Union
Humanitarian Aid



Global Affairs
Canada

Affaires mondiales
Canada

WITH THE SUPPORT OF:



Methodology. Primary data was collected through 3,400 household surveys (incl. buffer) in the camps between the 28th of August and the 17th of September 2023, and through 1,149 household surveys (incl. buffer) in the host community between the 27th of August and the 14th of September 2023. Households were randomly sampled. Findings are generalizable at a 95% confidence level and with a 10% margin of error at the camp or union level.

About REACH: REACH Initiative facilitates the development of information tools and products that enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery and development contexts. The methodologies used by REACH include primary data collection and in-depth analysis, and all activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. REACH is a joint initiative of IMPACT Initiatives, ACTED and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research - Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT).

ENDNOTES

PAGE 1

1. Joint Government of Bangladesh, UNHCR Population Factsheet (As of October 2023). Available [here](#).
2. Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics & World Food Programme, Poverty maps of Bangladesh 2016: key findings (December 2020). Available [here](#).
3. World Bank, Bangladesh Interactive Poverty Maps (November 2016). Available [here](#).
4. ISCG, IOM, UNHCR, 2023 Joint Response Plan: Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis (January - December 2023). Available [here](#).
5. For the purposes of this assessment, the host community is defined as including all Bangladeshi households residing in the following 11 Unions in Ukhiya and Teknaf Upazilas where refugee camps are located: Haldia Palong, Ratna Palong, Raja Palong, Palong Khali, Jalia Palong, Whykong, Nhilla, Teknaf, Sabrang, Teknaf Paurashava, Baharchhara. The refugee population is defined as including all Rohingya households residing in the 33 camps across Ukhiya and Teknaf Upazilas. Saint Martin's Island and Bhasan Char are outside of the scope of the assessment.
6. The different levels of severity can be broadly defined as follows:
 - Very extreme (4+) : Indications of total collapse of living standards, with potentially immediately life-threatening outcomes (increased risk of mortality and / or irreversible harm to physical or mental well-being).
 - Extreme (4) : Collapse of living standards. (Risk of) significant harm to physical or mental well-being.
 - Severe (3) : Degrading living standards, with reduced access to / availability of basic goods and services. (Risk of) degrading physical or mental well-being.
 - Stress (2) : Living standards are under stress. Minimal (risk of) impact on physical or mental well-being / stressed physical or mental well-being overall.
 - Minimal (1) : Living standards are acceptable, at a maximum showing some signs of deterioration and / or inadequate access to basic services. No or minimal (risk of) impact on physical or mental well-being.

Further details can be found in the [methodological note](#).

PAGE 2

1. United Nations, UN human rights chief points to 'textbook example of ethnic cleansing' in Myanmar (September 2017). Available [here](#).
2. Population Council, Assessment of Economic Opportunities for Young Rohingyas in Bangladesh (November 2022). Available [here](#).
3. World Food Programme (WFP), Refugee Influx Emergency Vulnerability Assessment (REVA-6) – Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char, Bangladesh (June 2023). Available [here](#).
4. Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Population & Housing Census-2011, National Volume-2: Union Statistics (Dhaka, 2011).
5. ACAPS & IOM-NPM, Cox's Bazar Upazila Profiles (September 2020). Available [here](#).
6. UNDP, Impacts of the Rohingya Refugee Influx on Host Communities (November 2018). Available [here](#).

PAGE 3

1. These population groups are a subset of the whole population and the sampling methods used for this assessment were not designed to show representative data of such disaggregations.

PAGE 4

1. UNHCR, Rohingya Refugee Response in Bangladesh: Shelter and Settlement Planning Factsheet as of 31 March 2022. Available [here](#).
2. Dhaka Tribute, 4 including 2 Rohingyas killed in Cox's Bazar landslide, 7 August 2023. Available [here](#).
3. UNHCR, Emergency response to the fire in Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh (7 January 2024). Available [here](#).
4. BBC, Cyclone Mocha: Inside the refugee camp that was nearly blown apart, 15 May 2023. Available [here](#).
5. 'Kutchra' is a shelter made of branches, bags, tarpaulin, jute, etc. 'Jhuprie' is a shelter made of earth, bamboo, wood, and corrugated iron (CGI) sheets or thatch as roofs.
6. Bangladesh Red Crescent, Bangladesh: Flash Flood and Landslide in Chattogram Region - Situation Report 1 | 7 August 2023. Available [here](#).
7. International Rescue Committee (IRC), Bangladesh: Cyclone Hamoon ravages Cox's Bazar as a severe cyclonic storm, affecting over 450,000 lives and damaging 13 IRC learning centres. Available [here](#).

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1. *Stress coping strategies*: spent savings, bought food on credit or borrowed food, borrowed money, sold households' assets/goods, sold NFI or food assistance. *Crisis coping strategies*: sold productive assets or means of transport, reduced essential non-food expenditures, withdrew children from school, whole household migrated, child marriage, female child marriage and intermixing. *Emergency coping strategies*: child work, adults engaged in high-risk or illegal activities, begged and/or scavenged.
2. According to the 2023 MSNA findings. The 2023 MSNA findings don't align with the fact that all refugee households are supposed to receive humanitarian assistance. A possible explanation is that respondents understood humanitarian assistance as in-kind assistance, and not cash assistance such as CVA.
3. International Crisis Group (ICG). Five Years On, Rohingya Refugees Face Dire Conditions and a Long Road Ahead, 22 August 2022. Available [here](#).
4. Improved drinking water sources include tapstands such as public tap/standpipe, piped into compound, piped water tap/tapstand into settlement site, piped to neighbour, piped into dwelling.
5. Improved sanitation facilities are those designed to hygienically separate excreta from human contact More information available [here](#).
6. ICG, Crisis Mounts for Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh, 6 December 2023. Available [here](#).

PAGE 6

1. The MSNA findings don't align with the fact that all refugee households are supposed to receive humanitarian assistance. A possible explanation is that respondents understood humanitarian assistance as in-kind assistance only, and not food assistance through e-vouchers.
2. This question was answered by those who listed this item/assistance as their priority need.