

FACTSHEET

MASS COMMUNICATION ASSESSMENT

DOMIZ CAMP, DUHOK GOVERNORATE

KURDISTAN REGION OF IRAQ

MARCH 2014



Context

Domiz Camp is the largest refugee camp in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), hosting approximately 58,500 refugees according to the latest United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) data¹. In partnership with UNHCR, REACH supports information management activities in the KRI since November 2012. In particular, REACH supports the identification of the needs of refugee households with the aim to enable evidence-based targeting of the humanitarian response for Syrian refugees.

Due to the large size of Domiz Camp, humanitarian actors are using different mass communication systems for public announcements, including door-to-door leafleting, public information boards, community meetings, SMS text messages and public speakers, as well as directly through leaders of each sector of the camp. In addition, in Domiz Camp several unofficial Facebook pages and groups have been set up for information sharing. In this context, REACH facilitated a rapid assessment in December 2013 to assess the efficiency of the mass communication systems currently used within Domiz camp. This factsheet presents the main findings from the assessment.



¹ UNHCR Syrian Refugee Regional Response Information Portal:
<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=103>

METHODOLOGY

The assessment was carried out over two days. REACH deployed teams of local enumerators equipped with smartphones programmed with the Open Data Kit (ODK) software. Mobile data collection using ODK enables great control over collected data; ensures higher data quality; and eliminates the need for time consuming data entry.

Overall, REACH teams interviewed 424 refugee households who were randomly selected within Domiz Camp. The population sample size can be considered statistically significant, with a confidence level of 96.5% and a margin of error of 5%. The assessment was conducted across all quarters of the camp.

Households who participated in the assessment were presented with a set of multiple-choice questions. The questionnaire included an option for interviewees to provide additional comments. The data collection tool produced as part of this assessment is available upon request.

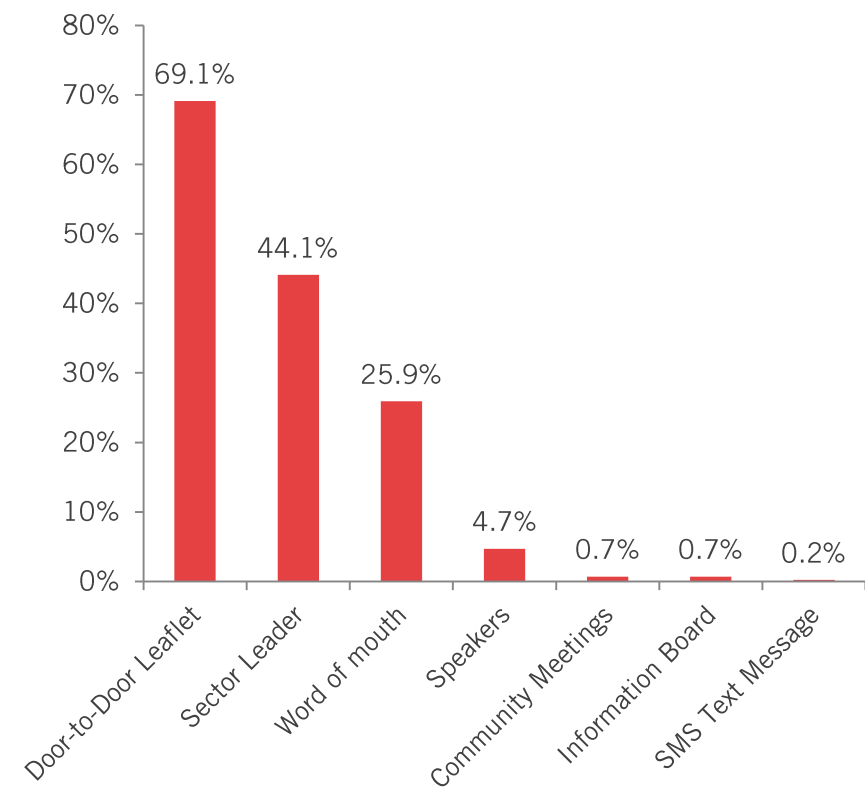
FINDINGS

Mass communication media

The most commonly reported medium for receiving public announcements was door-to-door leaflet distribution, reported by 69.1% of assessed households. Moreover, 44.1% of assessed households indicated that they received information through their sector leader and 25.9% had been informed through word of mouth. Few households reported they received information through public speakers (4.7% of households); community meetings (0.7%); information boards (0.7%); and SMS text messages (0.2%).

Door-to-door delivery of leaflets is often perceived as the most reliable mass communication tool, but this is a relatively expensive and time-consuming measure. Further, this method – used on its own – reportedly only reached over two-thirds of the assessed refugee population, which points to the need for complementary means to disseminate public announcements.

Figure 1: Proportion of refugee households by communication mean



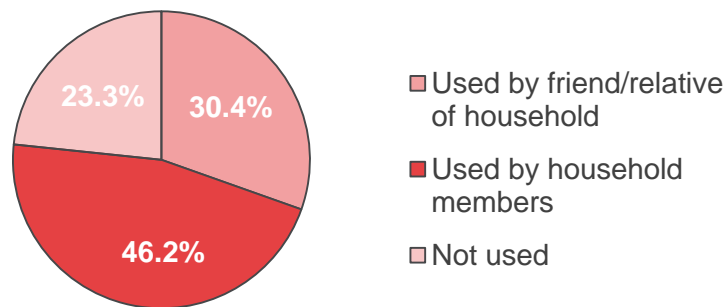
Focus on Facebook

The assessment specifically aimed to measure the level of Facebook use amongst the camp population, as well as to gauge the potential of Facebook to be used as a mass information tool in Domiz Camp. Unofficial Facebook pages and groups are already in place in Domiz², some of which have been created by refugees.

Findings reveal that in 46.2% of assessed households, at least one household member used a Facebook account regularly. Additionally 30.4% of households reported that Facebook was used regularly by a friend or relative close to the household, while the remaining 23.3% reported not being in close contact with any Facebook users.

Refugee households who used Facebook regularly reported to check the account on average every 2.5 days. Direct observations by REACH assessment teams indicate that the internet use reported by households may be facilitated by the existence of internet cafes that have been established in Domiz. A high level of smartphone use was also observed within the camp during the assessment.

Figure 2: Proportion of refugee households by use of a Facebook account

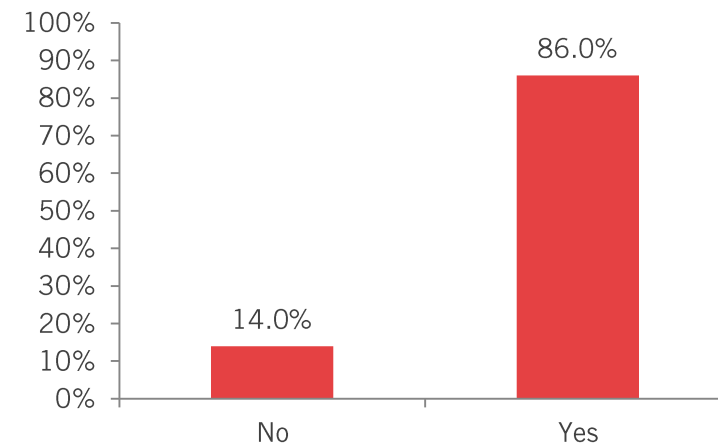


² See for example:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/121998061283281/289320124551073/?notif_t=group_activity, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/domizz/> or <https://www.facebook.com/groups/460658407374385/>

A large majority (86.0%) of assessed households expressed an interest in using a Facebook group to access public announcements for Domiz Camp. This indicates that in addition to the 46.2% of households that are currently using Facebook, an additional 39.8% would consider starting to use Facebook if an official Domiz Camp group was created.

Figure 3: Proportion of refugee households indicating willingness to use an official Facebook group for Domiz Camp



Amongst the households that reported not being interested in using a Facebook group, 46.7% indicated that this was due to unwillingness to use Facebook in particular and the Internet in general, because they considered these media unimportant or uninteresting.

Furthermore, 26.7% of households who were not interested in using a dedicated Facebook group for Domiz camp responded that this was due to lack of time.

CONCLUSIONS

When implemented alone, none of the mass communication media currently used in Domiz Camp allows aid actors to reach the entire refugee population. The low-cost use of the Internet coupled with the high level of interest in Facebook among refugee households, indicate that this platform could be an efficient channel of communication within Domiz Camp. An official Facebook group/page could be set up with dedicated capacity for monitoring online contributions. This Facebook group for Domiz Camp could release regular announcements about the situation within the camp, notably in terms of the camp facilities and services provided by aid actors.

However, Facebook should be considered only as a complementary public information tool, given that not all residents use or want to use this platform. Moreover, the usefulness of a Facebook group will depend on a) camp residents joining the group and b) if they enable the online feature for receiving group notifications, or alternatively if they access the page frequently. In addition, strict privacy settings must be put in place, to safeguard the privacy of all users.

This rapid assessment also highlighted the need to understand and address the reasons why public announcements delivered via information boards and SMS text messages each reach less than 1% refugee households. In addition, this initial assessment should be complemented by further data collection and analysis on the situation of specific groups among the refugee camp population, such as women, children, older persons and persons living with disabilities. Individuals from these groups may experience specific challenges in accessing the information disseminated at camp level, and targeted measures may be needed to ensure they are all equally informed.

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UNHCR

<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=103>

REACH

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About REACH

REACH is a joint initiative of two international non-governmental organizations - ACTED and IMPACT Initiatives - and the UN Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNOSAT). REACH was created in 2010 to facilitate 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. All REACH activities are conducted in support to and within the framework of inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms.

For more information visit: www.reach-initiative.org. You can contact us directly at: geneva@impact-initiatives.org follow us @REACH_info.