



## INTRODUCTION

Since August 2017 an estimated 744,000<sup>1</sup> Rohingya refugees have arrived from Myanmar to Cox's Bazar district in Bangladesh, bringing the total number to approximately 912,000.<sup>2</sup> The unplanned and spontaneous nature of the post-August Rohingya refugee camps have combined with high population densities and challenging environmental conditions to produce a crisis with especially acute water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) needs.

In July 2019, REACH implemented this assessment in support of the Cox's Bazar WASH Sector's Hygiene Promotion Technical Working Group (HP TWiG). This assessment took the form of a household survey covering 32 out of the 34 camps recognized by the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG), with Kutupalong Registered Camp (RC) and Nayapara RC the exceptions due to security concerns during the data collection period. **This factsheet presents an analysis of data collected throughout these 32 camps, where 472 households were surveyed.**

An all female enumerator team surveyed only female respondents. The majority of the questions were asked to all respondents about experiences with menstrual hygiene management (MHM), with several questions specifically asked about the respondents' direct experiences at distributions. Findings are generalisable to the population of all assessed camps with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error (unless stated otherwise).

See [page 5](#) for full methodology.

## SECTOR-RECOMENDED CONTENT LIST (JULY 2019)<sup>3</sup>

	Item	Detail	#	Unit	Frequency
<b>MHM kit</b>	Cotton cloth	4 sq. m. per person per year	5	Pcs.	3 months
	Panty (tai)	6 per person per year	3	Pcs.	3 months
	Laundry soap	130 gr.	6	Pcs.	3 months
	Enclosed bag	N/A	1	Pcs.	3 months

## DEMOGRAPHICS & MENSTRUAL HYGIENE KITS RECEIVED

Population in assessed camps (individuals) <sup>1</sup>	<b>886,703</b>
Population in assessed camps (families) <sup>6</sup>	<b>205,152</b>
Average age of respondent	<b>27</b>
Average household size	<b>5.5</b>

## Primary source of menstrual hygiene materials in the 12 months prior to data collection:<sup>7</sup>



## OBJECTIVES

A key objective of the HP TWiG is to improve distributions of hygiene kits and MHM kits and to assist in meeting the hygiene-related needs of refugees residing in the camps. In order to inform effective decision-making to achieve this objective, the HP TWiG requires a strong evidence base on refugees' needs, preferences, and experiences.

With over 30 implementing partners distributing different types of hygiene kits at varying frequencies, this assessment aims to produce data to support the HP TWiG in updating sector-level hygiene item lists, as well as developing new sector-level guidelines for implementing partners to follow before, during and after distributions.

Findings from the Menstrual Hygiene Materials Assessment are presented within this factsheet. For further information please see the following:

- [REACH Menstrual Hygiene Materials Assessment Dataset](#),
- [REACH Hygiene Item Assessment Terms of Reference](#),
- [REACH Hygiene Item Assessment Dataset](#),
- [REACH Hygiene Item Assessment, July 2019 Overall Level Factsheets](#),
- [REACH Hygiene Item Assessment, July 2019 Upazila Level Factsheets](#).

## KEY FINDINGS

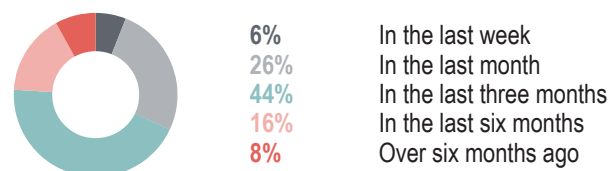
• **24%** of households reported not receiving menstrual hygiene materials in the three months prior to data collection, as recommended by the WASH Sector.<sup>3</sup> In addition, only **27%** of respondents reported that they themselves directly received menstrual hygiene materials at a distribution site in the 12 months prior to data collection. This suggests the following:

- 1) In the majority of cases, women are reportedly reliant on other household members to collect MHM materials. Findings from REACH's WASH focus group discussions (FGDs) in September 2019 indicate that husbands or sons often collect materials from distributions / markets or women cope through making their own materials / using materials for longer periods of time.<sup>4</sup>
- 2) Women and girls that do not attend distributions do not directly benefit from awareness sessions on menstrual hygiene materials / menstruation conducted at the distribution site.

• **68%** of households reported receiving information on menstrual hygiene materials and **58%** reported receiving information on menstruation since arriving to Bangladesh. Almost all assessed households reported wanting to receive (more) information on menstrual hygiene materials or menstruation (**92%** and **89%** respectively).

• **72%** of respondents reported a preference for reusable pads while **40%** reported pieces of cloth for period use and **37%** reported disposable pads as their preferred materials.<sup>5</sup>

## % of households reporting receiving a distribution of a kit containing menstrual hygiene materials in the 12 months prior to data collection (July 2018 - July 2019):



<sup>1</sup> Population numbers were derived from the UNHCR Population Data and Key Demographical Indicators Dataset from 15 September 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Population figures for the total numbers of refugees in Cox's Bazar are derived from the ISCG Situation Report Rohingya Refugee Crisis from May 2019.

<sup>3</sup> As as of July 2019, the WASH Sector recommends menstrual hygiene management kits are distributed every three months.

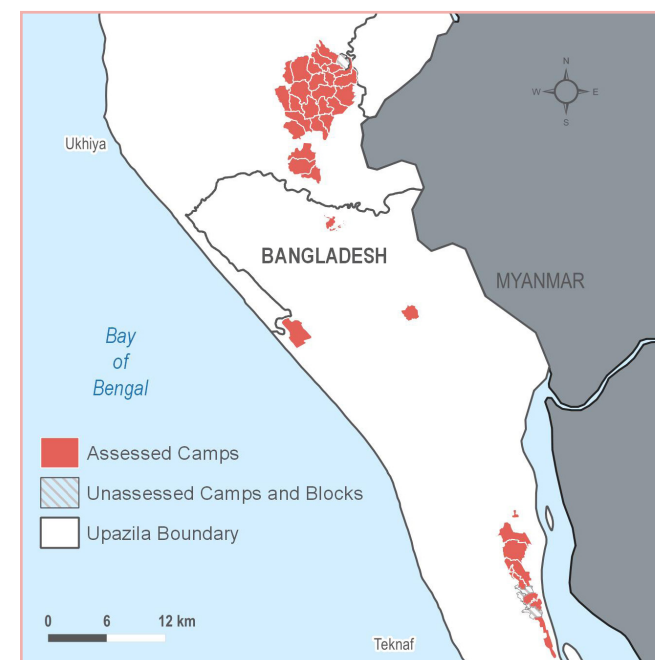
<sup>4</sup> Please see the REACH FGD Report's Menstrual Hygiene section here: <https://bit.ly/2opwYA2>

<sup>5</sup> Respondents could select multiple responses.

<sup>6</sup> This assessment considers a 'household' as a 'family' as defined in the UNHCR Population Data and Key Demographical Indicator datasets.

<sup>7</sup> Households were asked if they received a kit containing menstrual hygiene management materials including any or a combination of disposable pads, reusable pads, or a piece of cloth in a distribution in the 12 months prior to data collection.

## COVERAGE MAP



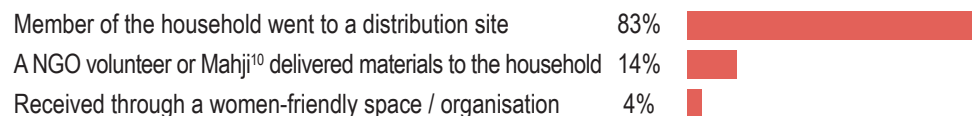


### DISTRIBUTIONS, NOTIFICATIONS, COMPLAINTS / FEEDBACK

Of the 472 households surveyed as part of this assessment, **397 (84%)** reported receiving menstrual hygiene materials in a distribution in the six months prior to data collection. Findings presented below relate to a range of questions that were asked only to these households. All data presented are representative at the response level with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error.

#### Distributions

**% households reporting different methods for receiving menstrual hygiene materials:<sup>8,9</sup>**

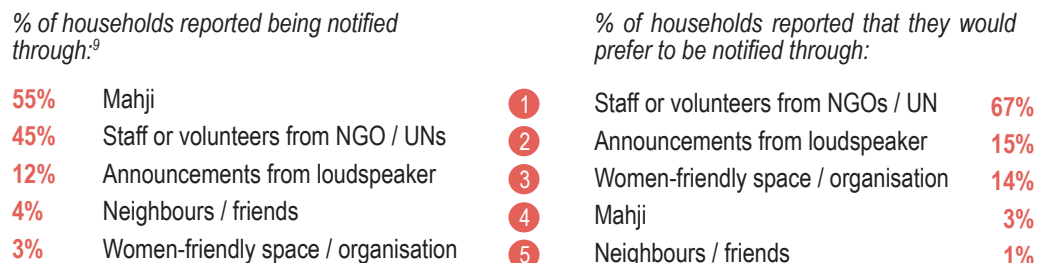


#### Notifications

**Notifications prior to distributions:<sup>8</sup>**

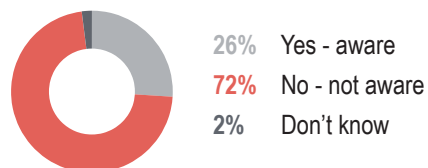
**46%** of households reported that they were notified of distributions the same day they occurred. Slightly less commonly, **36%** of households reported being notified one day before they occurred, **15%** reported that they were notified a week before, and **3%** reported that they were notified over a week prior to the distribution.

**Current versus preferred means of notification for distributions (five most commonly reported answers shown):<sup>8</sup>**



#### Complaints / Feedback

**% of households reporting being aware of a location to provide complaints or feedback regarding the menstrual hygiene materials distribution process:**



Of the **26%** of assessed households that reported being aware of complaints mechanisms:

**4%** reported providing a complaint or feedback. Around **three-quarters** of these households felt that their complaints were addressed.<sup>11</sup>

### INFORMATION RECEIVED ON MENSTRUAL HYGIENE MANAGEMENT

The WASH Sector has identified an information gap relating to information provided to women regarding menstrual hygiene management. To address this, all 472 households were asked if they have received any information on menstruation and using menstrual materials since arriving to Bangladesh, including when and how they received it, and if they would like to receive more information. All data presented are representative at the response level with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error.

#### Information on menstrual hygiene materials

**68%** of households reported receiving information on menstrual hygiene materials since arriving in Bangladesh

**% of households reporting receiving information on menstrual hygiene materials:**



5%	In the last week
14%	In the last month
28%	In the last three months
9%	In the last six months
12%	Over six months ago
32%	Never

**92%** of households reported wanting to receive (more) information

**Current versus preferred means of receiving information on menstrual hygiene materials (most commonly reported answers shown):<sup>9</sup>**

**% of households reported receiving information through:<sup>12</sup>**

<b>61%</b>	Demonstration (not at the distribution) <sup>13</sup>
<b>26%</b>	Demonstration (at the distribution)
<b>6%</b>	Leaflet with text and / or pictures
<b>7%</b>	Neighbours / friends

**% of households reported that they would prefer to receive information through:**

<b>1</b>	Demonstration (not at the distribution) <sup>13</sup>	<b>69%</b>
<b>2</b>	Demonstration (at the distribution)	<b>33%</b>
<b>3</b>	Leaflet with text and / or pictures	<b>17%</b>
<b>4</b>	-	

#### Information on menstruation

**58%** of households reported receiving information on menstruation since arriving to Bangladesh

**% of households reporting receiving information on menstruation:**



3%	In the last week
12%	In the last month
23%	In the last three months
9%	In the last six months
10%	Over six months ago
42%	Never

**89%** of households reported wanting to receive (more) information

<sup>8</sup> This question refers to the last time households received menstrual hygiene materials at a distribution.

<sup>9</sup> Respondents could select multiple responses.

<sup>10</sup> A Mahji is a traditional leader who is in charge of a block. One block typically consists of around 100 households.

<sup>11</sup> Findings relating to a subset of the population may have a lower confidence level and wider margin of error.

<sup>12</sup> This question was only asked to households that reported receiving information since arriving in Bangladesh.

<sup>13</sup> Demonstrations (not at the distribution) could be held in the respondent's house, at women-friendly spaces, and / or at the Mahji's house.



### Information received on menstruation (cont.)

Current versus preferred means of receiving information on menstruation (most commonly reported answers shown):<sup>14</sup>

% of households reported receiving information through:<sup>15</sup>

62%	Demonstration (not at the distribution) <sup>16</sup>	1
25%	Demonstration (at the distribution)	2
9%	Leaflet with text and / or pictures	3
4%	Neighbours / friends	4

% of households reported that they would prefer to receive information through:

Demonstration (not at the distribution) <sup>16</sup>	71%
Demonstration (at the distribution)	33%
Leaflet with text and / or pictures	13%
-	

### EXPERIENCES WITH DISTRIBUTIONS

Of the 472 respondents, **126 (27%)** reported directly receiving menstrual hygiene materials at a distribution site. All findings presented on this page relate to a range of questions that were only asked to these respondents. These findings are representative with a 95% confidence level and 9% margin of error at the response level.

#### Characteristics of respondents directly collecting menstrual hygiene materials at distribution sites

**32%** of respondents directly collecting distributions were the head of household

**8%** of respondents directly collecting distributions were either single, divorced, or widowed

The short list of Washington Group Questions - which measure disability by asking how much difficulty people face with six key functions in their daily lives - were asked to women that directly attended distributions as a means to understand the proportion of people with disabilities attending distributions. Overall, a low proportion of respondents reported facing difficulties - although it is important to note that people with disabilities may be less likely to attend distributions due to the access barriers presented by current distribution modalities. The proportions below represent respondents that reported facing **a lot of difficulties**.<sup>17</sup>

<b>3%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>0%</b>
Difficulty seeing	Difficulty hearing	Difficulty walking or climbing steps	Difficulty remembering or concentrating	Difficulty washing all over or dressing	Difficulty communicating

<sup>14</sup> This question was only asked to households that reported receiving information since arriving in Bangladesh.

<sup>15</sup> Respondents could select multiple responses.

<sup>16</sup> Demonstrations (not at the distribution) could be held in the respondent's house, at women-friendly spaces, and / or at the Mahji's house.

<sup>17</sup> As per standard practice for analysing data for Washington Short Group indicators, a respondent is considered to have a certain type of functional difficulty (seeing, hearing, walking, remembering, washing / dressing, or communicating) if they reported that they 'cannot do at all' or face 'a lot' of difficulties. In this assessment, no respondents reported 'cannot do at all' for any type of functional difficulty.

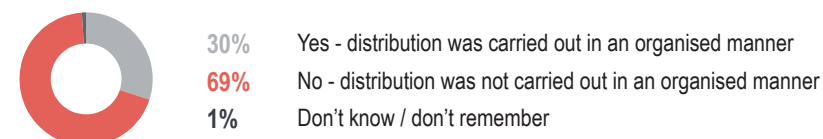
<sup>18</sup> An 'organised manner' means that the distribution site was not overcrowded, and that the respondent did not have to wait long to receive materials.

### Experiences at distribution sites

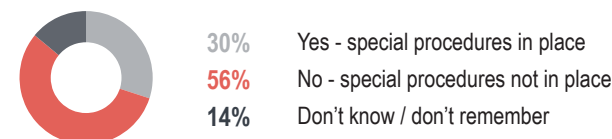
% of respondents reporting feeling safe and secure at the distribution site while receiving menstrual hygiene materials:



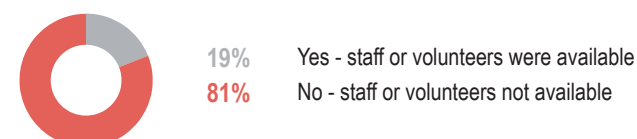
% of respondents reporting that the distribution was carried out in an organised manner:<sup>18</sup>



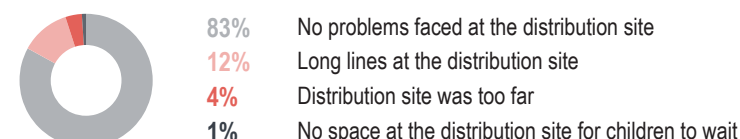
% of respondents reporting there were special procedures in place at the distribution site for older people or people with disabilities:



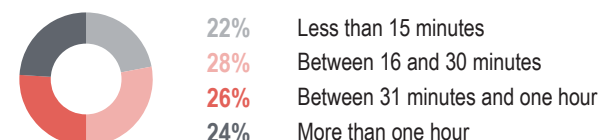
% of respondents reporting that there were staff or volunteers available to take care of children at the distribution site:



% of respondents reporting facing problems at the distribution site:



% of respondents reporting different times spent transporting materials home from the distribution site:





### MHM MATERIALS AND COMPLEMENTARY ITEMS

The WASH Sector identified an information gap relating to materials and complementary items received in an MHM distribution and their usefulness / use. To assist in filling this information gap, questions were asked relating to these materials and complementary items to the 126 households that reported directly receiving a distribution of menstrual hygiene materials in the 12 months prior to data collection. These findings are representative at response level with a 95% confidence level and 9% margin of error (see data in light pink boxes).

In addition, all 472 households were asked about menstrual hygiene material preferences and perceived quantity needed of disposable pads, reusable pads and pieces of cloth for period use. These findings are representative at response level with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error (see data in light gray boxes).

Relevant MHM findings from the WASH Household Dry Season Follow-up Assessment (May 2019) have also been included for triangulation.

### Received complementary items, and usefulness (asked only to respondents that reported directly receiving distributions in the 12 months prior to data collection)

Name of assessed items	% of respondents reporting receiving items in the 12 months prior to data collection	% of respondents reporting the item was useful in managing menstrual hygiene needs <sup>19</sup>
Laundry soap	95%	99%
Bathing soap	82%	99%
Enclosed bag	91%	99%
Regular underwear	83%	100%
Sandals	56%	99% <sup>20</sup>
Solar torch	43%	100% <sup>20</sup>
Dress	27%	100% <sup>20</sup>
Scarf	35%	100% <sup>20</sup>
Towel	24%	100% <sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> The proportion of respondents reporting on usefulness is a subset of assessed respondents that reported receiving the item.

<sup>20</sup> The sample size of respondents that received this item is below the 95/9 confidence level. Therefore, data on usefulness or usage of the item are indicative only.

<sup>21</sup> Respondents could select multiple responses.

<sup>22</sup> Please see the REACH FGD Report's Menstrual Hygiene section here: <https://bit.ly/2opwYA2>

<sup>23</sup> The disaggregated sample size of the different amount of materials respondents perceived needing each month is below the 95/9 confidence level. Therefore, data on amounts of material needed are indicative only.

<sup>24</sup> Data for the % of all women who participated in the menstrual hygiene section of the survey are shown. For more information on methodology for the WASH Household Dry Season Follow-up Assessment (May 2019) see full report here.

<sup>25</sup> This was the most commonly reported problem with accessing materials.

<sup>26</sup> Only women reporting using disposable pads were asked this question. Data for the % of women using disposable pads are shown. The three most common methods for disposing of disposable pads are shown.

<sup>27</sup> Only women reporting using reusable pads, reusable period underwear, or pieces of cloth for period use were asked where they wash and dry these materials. Data for the % of women using these types of materials are shown.

Name of assessed materials	Disposable pads	Reusable pads	Pieces of cloth for period use
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Received menstrual hygiene materials and use (asked only to respondents that reported directly receiving distribution in the 12 months prior to data collection)

% of respondents reporting receiving materials in the 12 months prior to data collection	33%	63%	78%
Of the respondents reporting receiving materials:			
% of respondents reporting using materials for menstrual management <sup>21</sup>	85%	97%	88%

### Preferences on materials (asked to all respondents)<sup>21</sup>

% of respondents reporting preference on item for managing menstrual hygiene	37%	72%	40%
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Findings from the recent REACH WASH FGDs indicate that preferences could be impacted by a public solid waste management system that does not allow for discrete disposal of MHM materials. However, findings from the FGDs also indicate that women face difficulties accessing enough water in Teknaf to wash their reusable period materials during the dry season. Adjusting the type of distributed MHM materials according to the dry and wet season could support in safe MHM practices in Teknaf.<sup>22</sup>

### Perceived amount needed (asked to all respondents)<sup>21</sup>

When asked about the perceived amount of menstrual hygiene materials needed in an average month, respondents were able to select multiple types of materials. Below is the proportion of respondents that reported needing different amounts of materials as well as the prevalence and amounts needed for each reported combination:

% of respondents reporting needing different amounts of menstrual hygiene materials each month:	Below are the most common combinations for the 47% reporting needing two different materials: <sup>22</sup>	Below is the most common material for the 38% reporting needing only one: <sup>22</sup>
	Reusable pads (5), pieces of cloth for period use (4) 28% Disposable pads (7), reusable pads (4) 13% Disposable pads (8), pieces of cloth for period use (4) 6%	Reusable pads (5) 17% Pieces of cloth for period use (5) 17% Disposable pads (8) 4%

\* Average amount of each item needed for respondents that reported needing three different materials: disposable pads (6), reusable pads (4), pieces of cloth (3)<sup>23</sup>

### Menstrual Hygiene Management Findings - WASH Household Dry Season Follow-up Assessment (May 2019)<sup>24</sup>

**13%** of respondents reported facing problems with accessing menstrual hygiene materials

**10%** of respondents reported that not enough menstrual hygiene materials are provided in distributions<sup>25</sup>

### % of respondents reporting different methods for disposing of disposable pads:<sup>26</sup>

1 Bury it	39%
2 In the latrine	23%
3 Household bin	13%

### % of respondents reporting washing, drying and changing menstrual hygiene materials in different spaces:

Spaces	Washing <sup>27</sup>	Drying <sup>27</sup>	Changing
Inside the household	39%	60%	45%
In the latrine	2%	1%	4%
In the bathing facility	59%	39%	51%



## METHODOLOGY

REACH conducted this household survey using a random sampling approach with findings aggregated to the overall response level. In order to attain a representative sample at the overall response level, the sampling frame was developed using [UNHCR population data \(30 April 2019\)](#) to determine the number of interviews per camp. The 472 households assessed in this survey were determined by using [the UNOSAT shelter footprint](#), with GPS points dropped on shelters within each camp. Within each Upazila, a random distribution of sample points was drawn; aggregated together they provide a sample significant at 95% confidence level with 5% margin of error at aggregate level for the overall response. Data collection took place from 16-22 July 2019.

This survey contained two components. The first was asked of all eligible respondents and focused on engagement with distribution processes, complaints and feedback, and information received on menstrual hygiene materials and menstruation. The second focused on experiences at

distributions and menstrual hygiene materials received and was asked only in cases where respondents reported directly attending distributions themselves. Since less than half of the assessed households contained an available respondent with direct experience of attending a distribution, these questions have a 9% margin of error at the aggregate level only.

The research and analysis plan were developed by REACH in consultation with the Cox's Bazar WASH Sector's HP TWiG. Tools were translated into Rohingya language with the support of Translators Without Borders. REACH collected data in July 2019 with an all female team of 27 enumerators (four teams of 7 or 8 enumerators) using Kobo forms. Data was cleaned daily throughout the collection process, and checked to monitor consistency and enumerator performance. Data analysis was conducted in excel based on the analysis plan. The finalized dataset is available [here](#).

The Hygiene Item Assessment ToR included two separate surveys (the Menstrual Hygiene Materials survey and the Hygiene Item survey), developed due to differing target respondents. This Menstrual Hygiene Materials survey targeted only female respondents above 18 that have menstruated in the nine months prior to data collection, focusing on access to menstrual hygiene materials and experiences during distributions of menstrual hygiene materials. The Hygiene Item survey targeted male and female respondents above 18 with a focus on hygiene items and experiences during distributions of hygiene items. For further information on these surveys see the following:

- [REACH Menstrual Hygiene Materials Assessment Dataset](#),
- [REACH Hygiene Item Assessment Terms of Reference](#),
- [REACH Hygiene Item Assessment Dataset](#),
- [REACH Hygiene Item Assessment, July 2019 Overall Level Factsheets](#),
- [REACH Hygiene Item Assessment, July 2019 Upazila Level Factsheets](#).

## CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

The findings cannot be extrapolated to sites that were not visited; aggregate data for this assessment is therefore representative of the refugee population living within camps exclusive of Kutupalong RC, Nayapara RC, Blocks A, C, and E in Camp 26, and Block B in Camp 27.

Respondent bias (social desirability bias) is likely to have influenced the responses to some questions. Families might have felt pressure to give answers that are socially acceptable or perceived to be the 'right' answer.

Findings relating to a subset of the population may have a lower confidence level and wider margin of error.

## 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). For more information, please visit our website at [www.reach-initiative.org](http://www.reach-initiative.org), contact us directly at [geneva@reach-initiative.org](mailto:geneva@reach-initiative.org) or follow us on Twitter at [@REACH\\_info](https://twitter.com/REACH_info).