

RAPID RETURNEE ASSESSMENT KEY FINDINGS REPORT

DECEMBER 2023



INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVE

In early October, Pakistan's Ministry of Interior announced a decision to enact the "Illegal Foreigners' Repatriation Plan (IFRP)," setting a deadline for unregistered or undocumented foreigners to voluntarily return to their countries or face deportation. In early December, IOM Afghanistan conducted a household-level phone survey among 4,031 returnee respondents to better understand their priority needs, current conditions including access to services, and migration histories and intentions. Phone numbers for this sample were obtained from the overall returnee caseload that IOM has been supporting at the border with Pakistan.

METHODOLOGY

The questionnaire was developed by IOM Afghanistan, followed by a one day online training for enumerators and one day of data collection. After completion of the data collection, IOM conducted data cleaning and analysis, making sure to disaggregate key indicators by gender and location where possible.

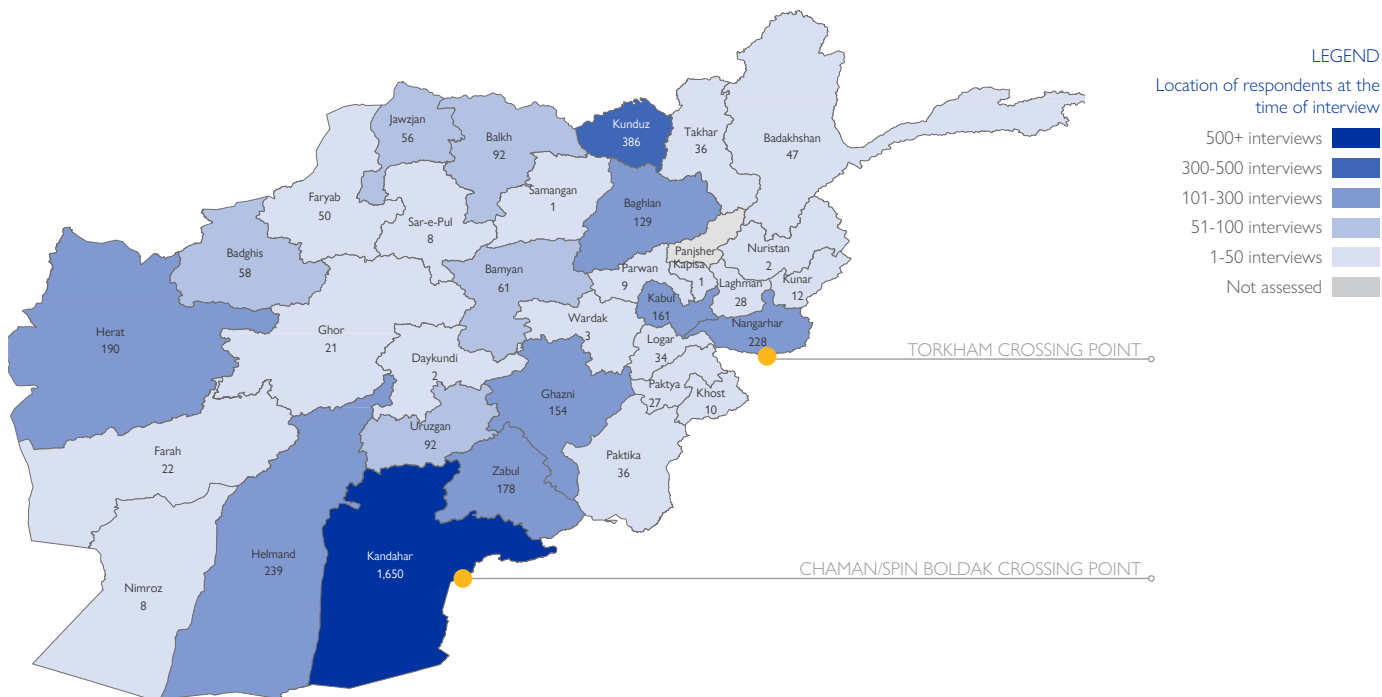
LIMITATIONS

Biases due to self-reporting of household level indicators may exist. Certain indicators may be under-reported or over-reported, due to the subjectivity and

perceptions of respondents (especially "social desirability bias"—the documented tendency of people to provide what they perceive to be the "right" answers to certain questions). These biases should be taken into consideration when interpreting findings, particularly those pertaining to sensitive indicators. In addition, findings based on the responses of a subset of the sample population have a lower confidence level and wider margin of error. For example, questions asked only to households planning to leave their current location produced results of a lower precision level. Similarly, disaggregated analysis by gender or province produced may only be indicative, since the sample size of female respondents or respondents from certain provinces may be too small to represent a minimal degree of statistical confidence. The survey was conducted with one representative from each household who was asked to provide answers on behalf of all individual household members. Thus, intra-household dynamics and biases may be present in the data.

Finally, out of the 4,031 respondents IOM enumerators were able to reach via phone, 91 per cent had arrived through the Chaman/Spin Boldak border and 41 per cent were located in Kandahar province. As a result, the following analysis may be biased towards those who re-entered through Chaman/Spin Boldak and those located in Kandahar at the time of the interview.

ASSESSMENT COVERAGE

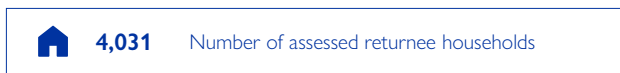


DATE OF RETURN

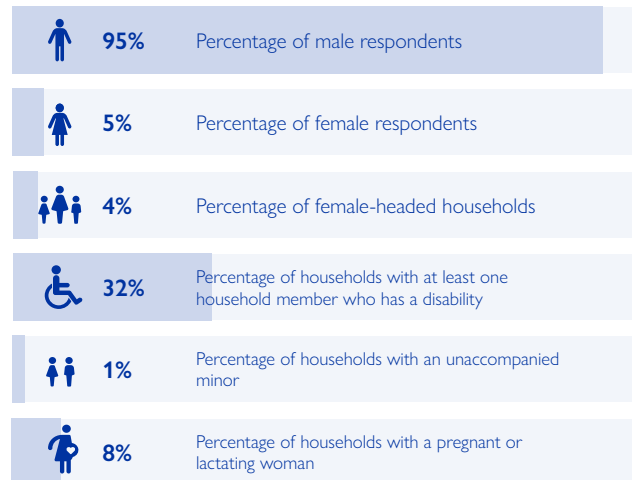
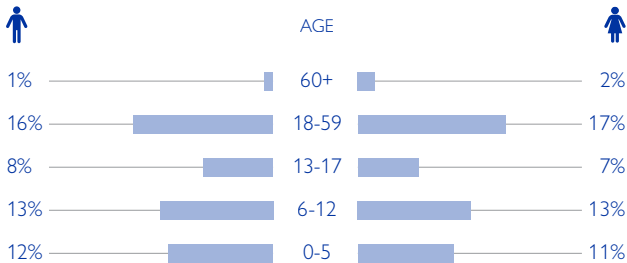


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HOUSEHOLD PROFILES

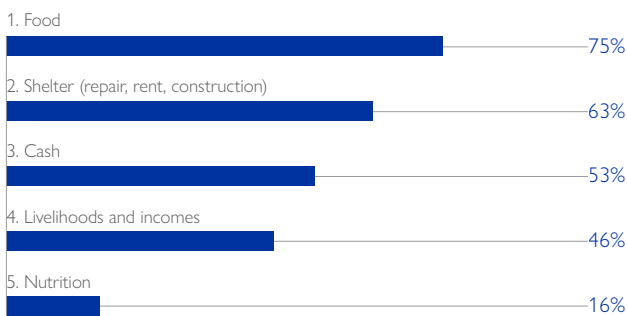


Household age and gender demographics

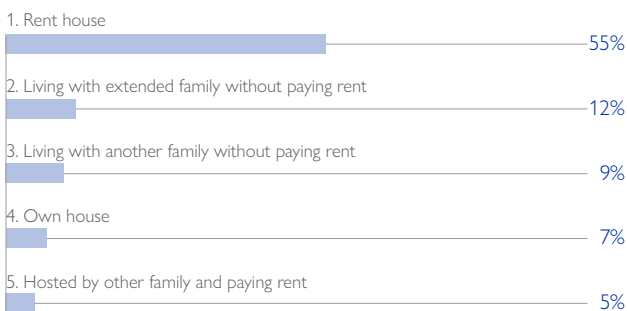


CURRENT SITUATION

PRIORITY NEEDS (TOP 5)*

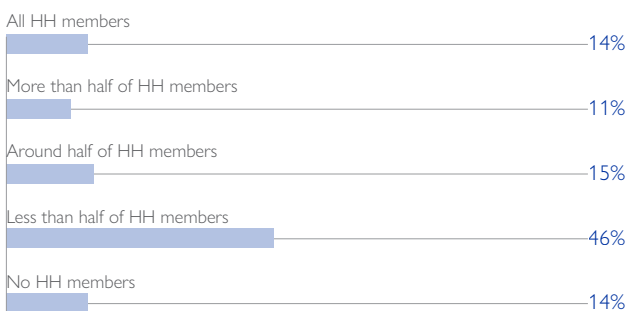


SHELTER (TOP 5)*

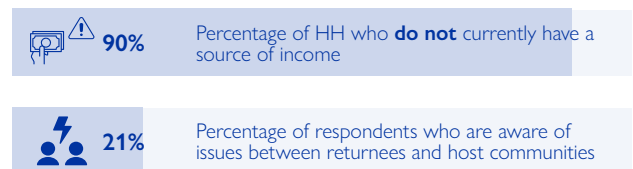
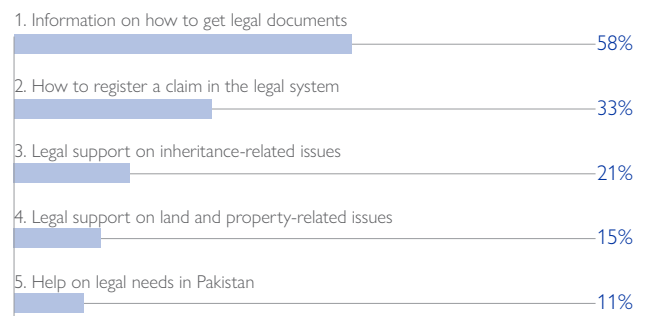


DOCUMENTATION

Proportion of HH members with tazkira, national ID, or passport



LEGAL NEEDS (TOP 5)*



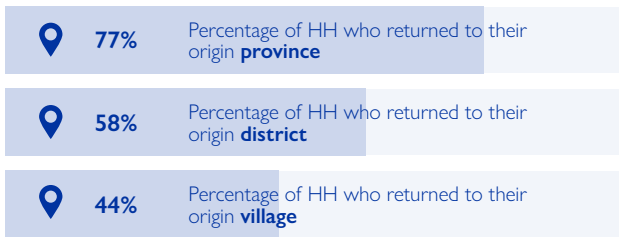
Overall, respondents' most urgent needs are food (75%), shelter (63%), and cash (53%). While the order of these needs is the same among both male and female respondents, a larger majority of female respondents cite food as a priority need (83%) while three-quarters of male respondents cite the same (74%), suggesting a greater urgency for food among females. Around half of all assessed households are currently living in a rented house (55%) and a further 22 per cent are being hosted by a family. Regarding documentation, around half of households (46%) reported that less than half of all household members hold documentation. Fourteen per cent of households were completely undocumented. Lack of documentation may be more prevalent among female respondents, three-quarters of whom responded that their main legal need is understanding how to get legal documents such as Tazkira (national ID), passport, marriage, and birth certificates (74%), while the same demographic accounted for a little over half of all male respondents (57%).

Most households currently do not have an income (90%), though households in Kunduz (97%), Baghlan (95%), and Herat (93%) reported a lack of income at the highest frequencies.** Additionally, female-headed households were marginally less likely to have an income compared to male-headed households (6% versus 10%, respectively). Regarding social cohesion, households in Kabul (86%), Ghazni (75%), Kunduz (75%), and Kandahar (73%) most frequently reported being aware of issues between those who have returned and those already residing in assessed locations.

*Multiple answers possible; sum of percentages may equal more than 100%

**Province-level analysis only includes those provinces with high enough sample sizes as can be considered indicative

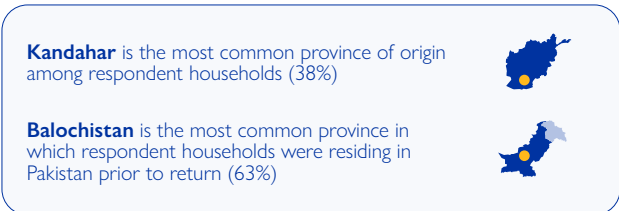
RETURNS HISTORY



UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

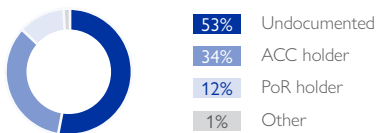
9% of respondents reported having travelled with an unaccompanied minor upon their arrival to Afghanistan from Pakistan.

8% of respondents reported having travelled with an unaccompanied minor to their current location from the border.



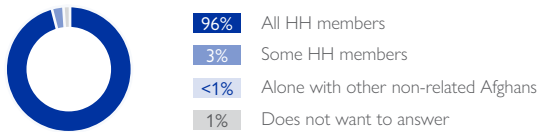
While slightly less than half (44%) of respondents reported having returned to their origin village, over half (58%) returned to their origin district and most (77%) returned to their origin province. This trend was consistent in most provinces except for in Kabul and Herat, where most respondents (74% and 83%, respectively) were not originally from those provinces. Those who returned via the Torkham border point were more likely to come from Nangarhar (58%) or Laghman (14%) while those returning via the Chaman/Spin Boldak border point mainly originated from Kandahar (42%) or Kunduz (11%).

Documentation status while in Pakistan



The majority of respondents were either undocumented (53%) or ACC card holders (34%) while living in Pakistan. A higher proportion of female respondents (20%) were PoR card holders in Pakistan compared to male respondents (12%), who were more likely to hold ACC cards (35%) compared to females (24%). Almost all respondents returned to Afghanistan with either their entire household (96%) or some of their household members (3%), as opposed to alone (<1%).

Who respondents travelled with during their return



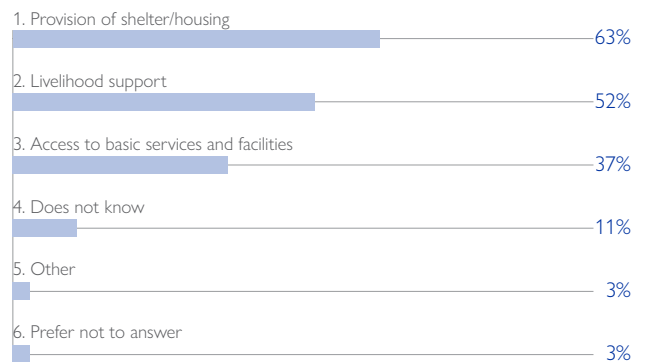
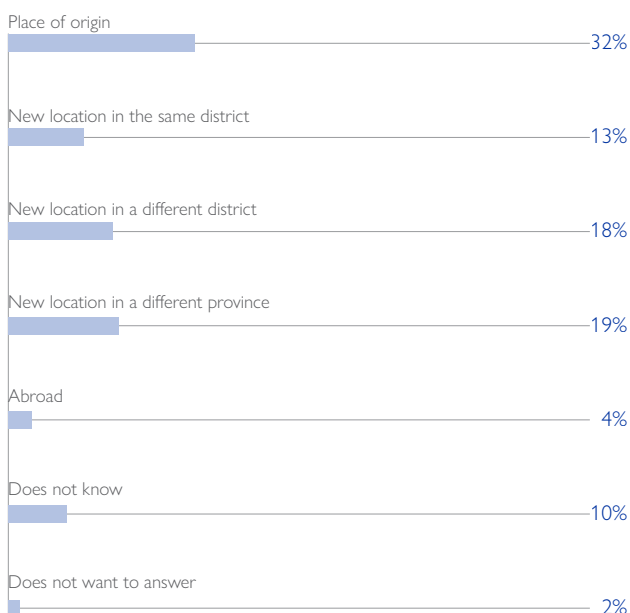
The presence of unaccompanied minors was uncommon during the return journey, with less than one out of ten respondents reporting that an unaccompanied minor had traveled with them with Pakistan (9%) or from the border to their current location (8%). In Nangarhar, however, nearly one in four respondents reported that an unaccompanied minor had traveled with them from their border to their current location (23%).

MIGRATION INTENTIONS



Conditions under which HH would be encouraged to stay in their current location*

Intended destination among those who plan to leave current location



Most respondents reported that they intend to stay in their current location (94%). Among the six per cent who intended to leave, a third (32%) intended to go to their place of origin, a fifth (19%) to a different district, and another third (32%) to somewhere within their current province. Most respondents who intended to leave their current location plan to leave with all members of their household (92%).

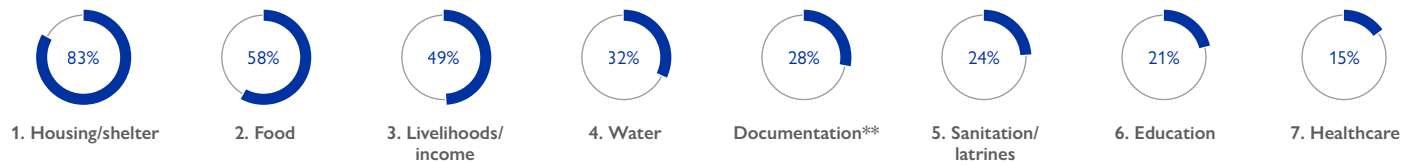
Regardless of their intentions regarding whether to leave or stay in their current location, respondents were asked about the conditions under which they would be further encouraged to stay in their current locations. Access to shelter (63%), livelihoods (52%), and basic services such as WASH services (37%) were most prominent. There were no major differences between the responses of female and male respondents.

*Multiple answers possible; sum of percentages may equal more than 100%

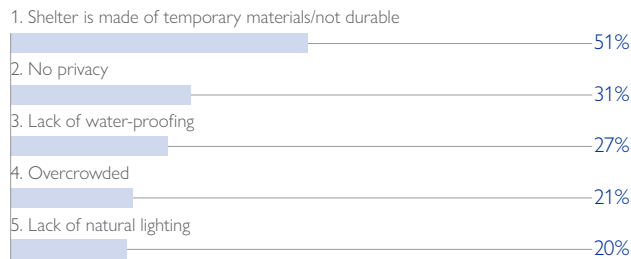
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ACCESS TO SERVICES

Percentage of respondents who **experience difficulty** accessing the following services



1. Top 5 problems with housing/shelter*

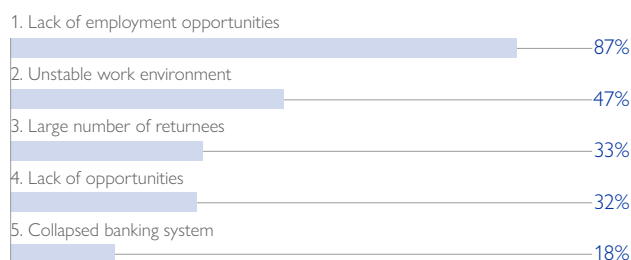


2. Food security

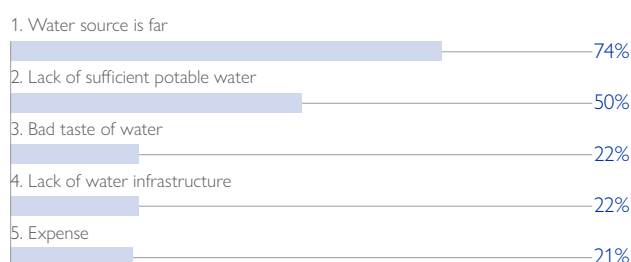
Percentage of HH who have had to resort to the following coping mechanisms in response to food shortage in the seven days prior to data collection

Rely on less preferred and less expensive food	98%
Borrow food or rely on help from a friend or relative	86%
Limit portion size at mealtimes	89%
Restrict consumption by adults in order for small children to eat	77%
Reduce number of meals eaten in a day	80%
Send household members elsewhere to eat	56%
Restrict consumption by women and prioritize other members of the household	60%
Restrict consumption by men and prioritize other members of the household	61%
Everyone in the household went a whole day without eating	55%

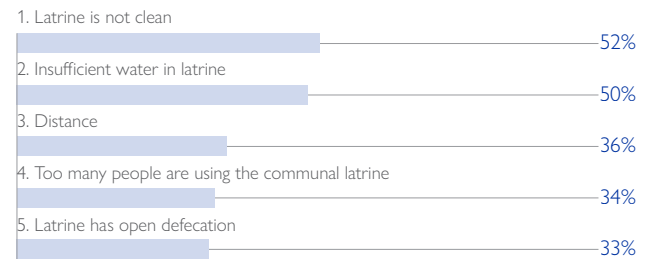
3. Top 5 barriers to livelihoods/income*



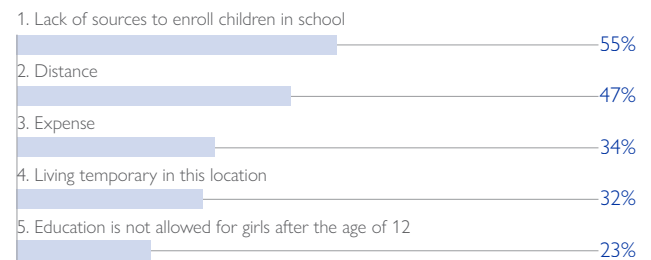
4. Top 5 barriers to water*



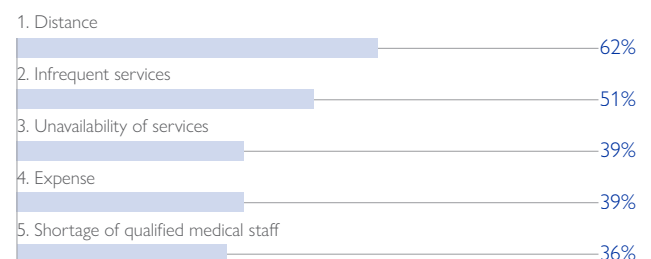
5. Top 5 barriers to sanitation/latrines*



6. Top 5 barriers to education*



7. Top 5 barriers to healthcare*



Respondents reported facing the most amount of difficulty when trying to access shelter services (83%), food services (58%), and livelihoods (49%). There was no significant difference between difficulty in accessing services between male and female respondents, however, when female respondents were asked specifically about women and girls' access to services, 43 per cent responded that their access to services was poor.

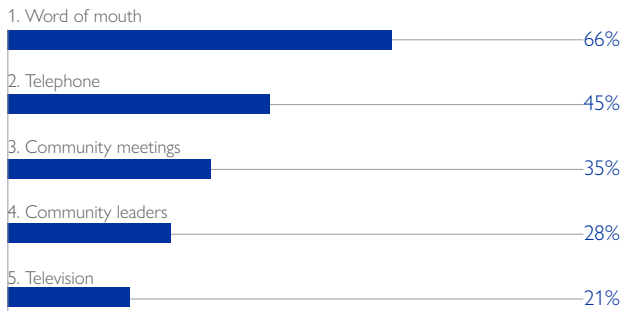
Households who reported facing difficulties accessing food services were asked how many times a week they had resorted to particular coping mechanisms in response to food shortages. The table on the left lists the coping mechanisms in order from least to most severity. Overall, almost all households had to rely on less preferred or less expensive food in the week prior to their interview (98%). According to respondents, households resorted to this coping mechanism 4.4 days out of the week prior on average. The majority of households also had to borrow food from a friend or relative (86%) and limit portion sizes at mealtimes (89%). More severe coping mechanisms happened less frequently but were still present in over half of all households, with 55 per cent reported they went a whole day without eating sometime in the past seven days.

*Multiple answers possible; sum of percentages may equal more than 100%

**Information on barriers to documentation was not collected in the assessment tool

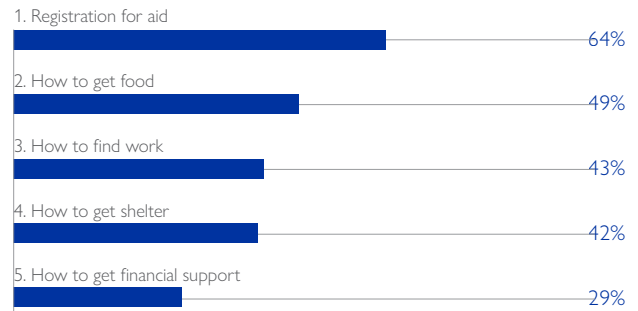
ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Top 5 types of sources of information after returning from Pakistan*



Respondents reported using word of mouth (66%) most frequently as a means of information sourcing, followed by phone (45%), community meetings (35%), and community leaders (28%). When asked what information would be most beneficial to them at the moment, the most common response was information on how to register for aid (64%), though half also wanted to know how to get food (49%). Higher percentages were recorded among female respondents regarding how to get nutrition (22% versus 13% among male respondents), aligning with data on female

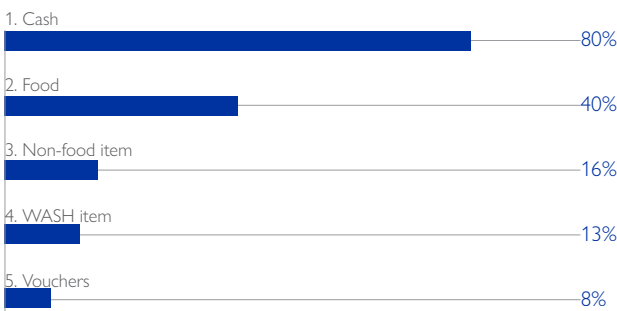
Top 5 types of beneficial information needed right now*



respondents' priority needs, specifically food (83%) and nutrition (21%). Female respondents also cited the following information needs at higher frequencies than male respondents: how to get water (33% versus 25% among male respondents), how to get cooking fuel (24% versus 19% among male respondents), and how to find out about safety and security issues around the area (19% versus 10% among male respondents).

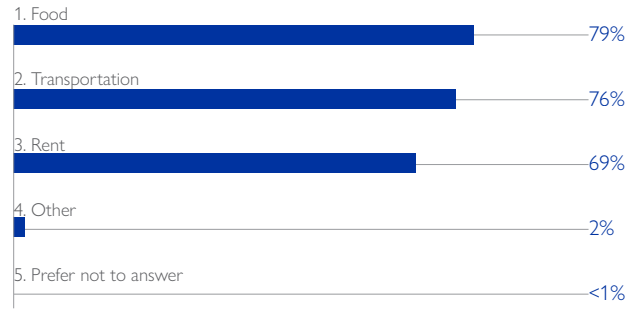
HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Top 5 types of assistance received since returning from Pakistan*



Most households reported that they had received cash assistance since returning from Pakistan while less than half reported that they had received food assistance (40%). However, the proportion of female-headed households who reported not having received aid was nearly double the proportion of male-headed households

Usage of the cash received at the border



(13% compared to 7%). When asked for which purposes they had used the cash that they had received at the border, around equal portions of respondents reported using it for transportation (76%) and food (79%) followed by rent (69%).

HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD GENDER ANALYSIS ON NEEDS

Key indicators on household needs were analysed to highlight differences between female- and male-headed households. Findings suggest that female-headed households are more likely to focus on needs related to food while male-headed households are more likely to focus on needs related to livelihoods and cash.

Priority needs

Need (top 10)	Female	Male
Food	90%	75%
Shelter	65%	62%
Cash	43%	53%
Livelihood	40%	46%
Nutrition	21%	16%
NFI	17%	13%
Hygiene	6%	6%
Health facilities	3%	5%
Education	4%	4%
Drinking water	4%	4%

Difficulty accessing services

Service (top 5)	Female	Male
Housing/shelter	83%	83%
Food	63%	58%
Livelihoods/income	42%	49%
Water	30%	32%
Documentation	24%	28%

Priority information needs

Info need (top 10)	Female	Male
Registration for aid	78%	64%
Finding food	57%	49%
Finding work	38%	43%
Finding shelter	52%	42%
Financial support	22%	29%
Finding water	38%	25%
Aid agencies	25%	25%
Food prices	27%	21%
Cooking fuel	27%	19%
Healthcare	22%	16%

*Multiple answers possible; sum of percentages may equal more than 100%

