

# JOINT ASSESSMENT MISSION

*Myanmar Refugees in Cox's Bazar District,  
Bangladesh*

December 2012



United Nations  
World Food Programme  
(WFP)



Government of the  
People's Republic of  
Bangladesh



United Nations  
High Commissioner for  
Refugees (UNHCR)

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### **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

ACF	Action Contre la Faim
BCC	Behaviour Change Communication
BDRCS	Bangladesh Red Crescent Society
BMC	Block Management Committee
CBR	Crude Birth Rate
CMC	Camp Management Committee
CPR	Contraceptive Prevalence Rate
CRH	Compressed Rice Husks
GAM	Global Acute Malnutrition
GMP	Growth Monitoring and Promotion
GoB	The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
HDDS	Household Dietary Diversity Score
HIS	Health Information System
HKI	Helen Keller International
JAM	Joint Assessment Mission
LRTI	Lower Respiratory Tract Infection
LSD	Local Supply Depot
MAM	Moderate Acute Malnutrition
MDMR	Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief
MT	Metric tonne
NFI	Non-Food Item
OPD	Out-Patients Department
RDA	Recommended Daily Allowance
RRRC	Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SPHERE	Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNHCR	The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VIP	Very Important Person
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	The United Nations World Food Programme
WHO	The World Health Organization of the United Nations
YSP	Yellow Split Peas

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### a) Executive summary

1. The following report is the result of the ninth Joint Assessment Mission (JAM) since Myanmar refugees settled in Ukhiya and Teknaf Upazillas between 1991-1992. It was conducted by the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), with participation from the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (GoB), in Kutupalong and Nayapara refugee camps in Cox's Bazar district in December 2012.
2. The purpose of the JAM was to specifically reassess the situation of the 4,977 families/30,459 registered refugees residing in Kutupalong and Nayapara refugee camps<sup>1</sup>, with particular focus on the refugees' food security, nutrition, self-reliance and protection, with a view to identifying key issues that need to be addressed and informing future programming decisions. The assessment draws on primary data that was collected by the JAM team in December 2012, as well as a wealth of secondary data related to the situation in Kutupalong and Nayapara refugee camps that were gathered by many different agencies over the course of the recent months and years.
3. Since the time of the last JAM in 2010, prospects for durable solutions for the refugees in Kutupalong<sup>2</sup> and Nayapara<sup>3</sup> camps have worsened. Refugees are less inclined than before to consider voluntary repatriation as a viable option owing to the outbreak of violence that occurred in Myanmar in and after June 2012. The GoB suspended the resettlement programme in late 2010 citing concerns that it was creating a 'pull factor', and also limits local integration. The resulting governmental restrictions placed on refugee movement have limited self-reliance within the camps, meaning that food assistance continues to play an important role in terms of safeguarding food security and nutrition.
4. However, there are major challenges associated with the existing food assistance system. While certain components of the system are functioning effectively - notably, supplementary and therapeutic feeding, and also school feeding – the general food distributions have three significant shortcomings.
  - First, a significant proportion of camp-based refugees who are registered by UNHCR and whose registration by the GoB is pending 'on-hold' do not have access to general food distribution, which is undermining the food security and nutrition situation in the camps. This is because general food distributions are currently provided only to those refugees who are registered by *both* UNHCR and the GoB (e.g. herein referred to as "active" refugee households). This current situation is at odds with the agreement between WFP and the Government.
  - Second, the manner in which refugees are being provided with food assistance (through the 'family book') is not actionable, as it no longer reflects the current structure family units have developed since the refugees first settled in the camps. This creates a challenge for food assistance agencies to verify that the recipients of food assistance are those who are entitled to it, leading to avoidable disorder

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<sup>1</sup> Total number of refugees registered by UNHCR as of 17 Dec, 2012.

<sup>2</sup> See Annex 6 for Kutupalong PPHIV Camp Fact Sheet 2011.

<sup>3</sup> See Annex 7 for Nayapara PPHIV Camp Fact Sheet 2011.

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and confusion in the distribution process. Moreover, it is leading to broader conflict and protection risks within the refugee community.

- Third, and more broadly speaking, the general food distribution modality is no longer fit for purpose. The current food basket does not respond to the nutritional requirements of refugees (in the sense of dietary diversity) or their taste preferences, nor does it represent value for money when compared to possible alternatives. It provides only a highly restricted food basket (that has remained largely unchanged for two decades) that requires an elaborate and expensive delivery structure. Furthermore, the practice of bi-weekly distributions and obliging refugees to queue for long periods in order to receive their entitlements no longer appears to be necessary, given the protracted nature of the situation and the existence of possible alternatives.
5. Looking forward, it is clear that issues related to the plight of the Rohingya will require efforts beyond Bangladesh and will include efforts inside Myanmar at building relations between communities as well as addressing root causes for displacement, notably statelessness. This will require a *regional* approach in developing a comprehensive durable solutions strategy for the Rohingya situation. Moreover - and within a regional solutions framework - the GoB and UNHCR in Bangladesh should engage in examining a comprehensive package of durable solutions for the refugees based in Kutupalong and Nayapara camps. This may require consideration to be given to non-classical durable solutions - in particular, where possible, increasing labour mobility for refugees as a means of enhancing self-reliance.
  6. Pending progress on the above, however, the situation in Kutupalong and Nayapara camps will require ongoing humanitarian intervention. This will necessitate some strengthening of the basic services currently offered to refugees in the camps. The JAM report makes a number of specific technical and sectorial recommendations as to how this can be achieved which are integrated into relevant sections of this report.
  7. However, more substantive reforms also need to be urgently made to the system for general food distributions. Three priority recommendations are made in this regard:
    - i. ***Final decision to be taken on the joint GoB/UNHCR “harmonization” exercise of 2011, so as to enable “on hold” registration cases to get access to the food assistance they need.***
    - ii. ***Use of the “family book” for the purposes of administering food assistance to be discontinued, and a food entitlement (ration) card that is linked to the de facto/nuclear family unit (defined as a group of persons who eat from the same pot) to be introduced. The food ration card should be in the name of both men and women (in households where both are present)***
    - iii. ***The existing modality of food assistance to be replaced with an alternative modality based on a combination of food vouchers and in-kind transfers. Under the alternative modality, food vouchers (redeemable exclusively for pre-agreed food commodities at pre-selected traders) should be introduced for the purposes of delivering those foods that can be delivered more efficiently through the local market as well as those locally available foods that have high***

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***nutritious value and are preferred by refugees. However, in-kind provision of food should be maintained for the purposes of delivering those foods that cannot be delivered more efficiently through the local market. The design of the alternative modality and its associated delivery mechanism should be conducted in a participatory and evidence-based manner involving representatives from government, UNHCR and WFP and the refugee community, and should take into account considerations related to nutrition, cost and protection.***

### b) Methodology

#### Time-frame

8. The JAM mission took place from 1<sup>st</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> December 2012.

#### Team composition

9. The JAM team comprised staff from UNHCR and WFP regional bureaux, the UNHCR and WFP country offices in Dhaka and the UNHCR and WFP field offices in Cox's Bazar. The team was selected in such a manner as to ensure that it had technical expertise in all areas relevant to the analysis – notably, vulnerability analysis, nutrition, health, transfer modalities and protection. A representative from the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief joined the mission from Dhaka and participated in some of the field work while the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC) in Cox's Bazar and his staff in the camps were consulted frequently during this mission<sup>4</sup>.

#### Team structure

10. The JAM team then divided itself into five thematic groups (each of which had an assigned agency lead). In establishing the thematic groups, the team took care to ensure that each thematic group had representation from both UNHCR and WFP and – to the extent possible – comprised a mixture of regional-, national- and field-level staff. Field-level staff also played a critical role in the translation of focus group discussions and interviews with the refugees and local groups.

**FIGURE 1**  
***Thematic groups and their respective agency leads***

Thematic group		Agency lead
1	Food distribution, logistics, markets, transfer modalities	WFP
2	Health, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)	UNHCR
3	Nutrition	WFP
4	Food security, livelihoods, resilience	WFP
5	Protection, community services, camp management	UNHCR

11. The Terms of Reference (TOR)<sup>5</sup> for the JAM was then divided between the different thematic groups, according to their areas of focus as seen in figure 1 above.<sup>6</sup> In instances

<sup>4</sup> The full list of JAM participants is contained in Annex 4

<sup>5</sup> See Annex 2, Terms of Reference

<sup>6</sup> See Annex 5, Table of JAM priorities

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where a particular component of the TOR involved issues of a cross-cutting nature, the component was allocated to more than one thematic group.

### Process

12. Prior to the start of the mission, the mission members reviewed a wealth of secondary information and data that had been compiled by the UNHCR and WFP country office staff. This formed the basis of the field investigation and informed the development of field work methodology and schedule.
13. The mission started by receiving a briefing on the refugee situation from WFP and UNHCR and introductory meetings were also held with Government officials in Cox's Bazar. Fieldwork was then conducted in the camps; two full days were spent in each camp (Kutupalong and Nayapara). Focus group discussions were conducted<sup>7</sup>, along with key informant interviews and visits to relevant sites and services (e.g. distribution sites and health centres) and refugee households. At the end of each day of fieldwork, the JAM team met to debrief and share their observations with each other.
14. Following the fieldwork, each thematic group compiled their observations and presented a summary of their observations to the entire JAM team for discussion. Then, each thematic group synthesised observations and triangulated with secondary data, in order to develop tentative findings and recommendations. These tentative findings and recommendations were then presented to the entire JAM team for discussion, as well as the Country Representatives of WFP and UNHCR.
15. Finally, the JAM report was written up with several rounds of comments having been made on the report by team members before the final version was arrived at.

## PART ONE Basic facts

### **c) Refugee numbers and demography**

#### Present numbers

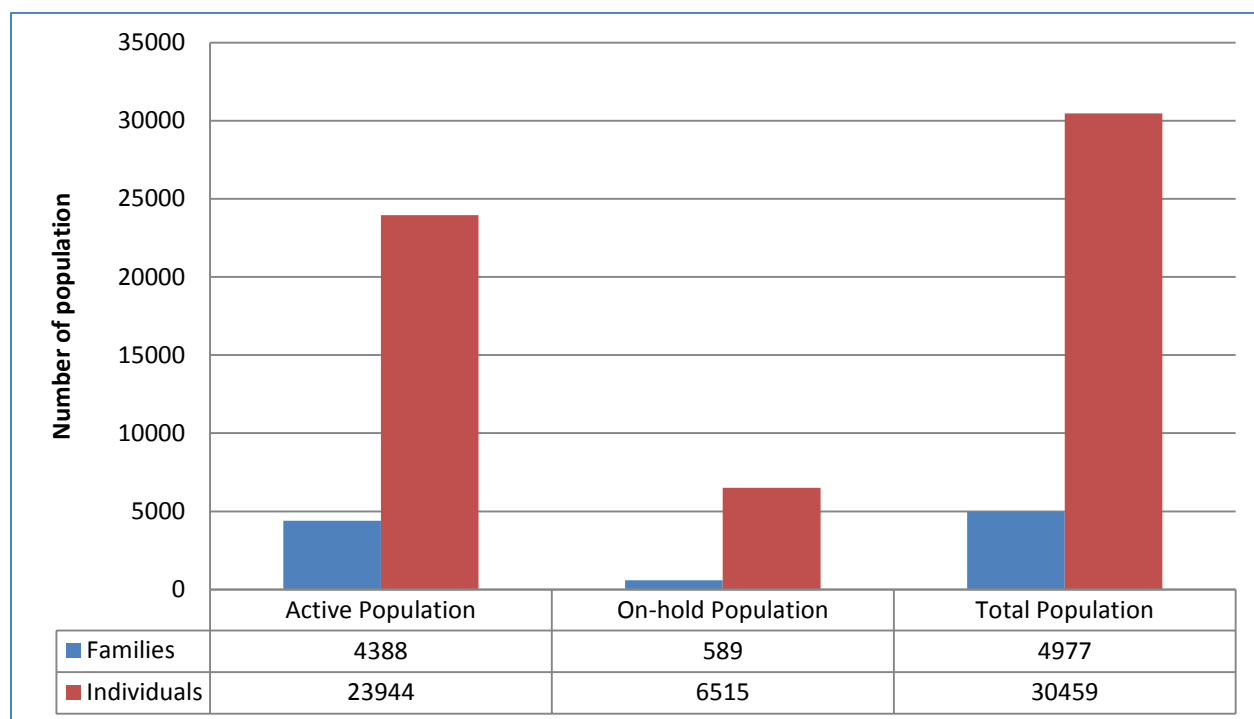
16. The refugee population covered by this assessment originates from influxes from Myanmar into Bangladesh that took place from late 1991 to early 1992 (at which point GoB ceased recognizing new arrivals). This means that the assessment is dealing with a *protracted* refugee situation, with more than 60 percent of the refugees having been born in Bangladesh<sup>8</sup>. The refugee population is comprised of a total of 4,977 families or 30,459 individuals. Out of this a total of 4,388 families or 23,944 individuals are considered to be "active" (defined herein as cases that are registered by UNHCR and recognized by the GoB) and a further 589 families or 6,515 individuals are considered to be "on hold" (defined herein as cases that are registered by UNHCR but whose formal recognition by the GoB is pending, following the completion of a joint GoB/UNHCR harmonization exercise in 2011)<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> Focus groups were constructed carefully in such a manner as to be representative in terms age, gender and other aspects of diversity

<sup>8</sup> States of Denial, UNHCR, page 8 paragraph 16

<sup>9</sup> From UNHCR's database as of 17th December 2012.

**FIGURE 2**  
**“Active” and “on hold” cases (Kutupalong and Nayapara camps)<sup>10</sup>**



Demographic trends

21 The Crude Birth Rate (CBR)<sup>11</sup> of the refugee group has declined since 2010. Whilst it used to be over 3.8/1,000 in previous years, the rate has reduced to below 2.9/1,000 in the last 3 years. A record low CBR at 2.3/1000 was observed in 2011, when families were expecting to be resettled to a third country. In 2012 a sharp rise in CBR has been observed to 3.0/1,000, and it is expected to stabilise at this level.

**d) General context**

Policy context

22 Since the time of the last JAM in 2010, the GoB has suspended the resettlement programme citing concerns that it was creating a ‘pull factor’. At the same time, the GoB remains opposed to local integration. The resulting restrictions placed on refugee movement have limited self-reliance within the camps which is further restricted to activities that are not perceived as competing with the local market. Furthermore, the GoB have increased restrictions of movement to the refugees outside the camp following the disturbances in Ramu, Cox’s Bazar district, of September/October 2012. The Government’s position remains that voluntary repatriation is the only viable durable solution for the refugee group.

<sup>10</sup> UNHCR

<sup>11</sup> UNHCR

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### Changing trends in the host community

23. Refugee-hosting areas in Cox's Bazar District remain among the most impoverished in Bangladesh. Cox's Bazar District was selected among the twenty priority districts of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for 2012-2016, on the basis that it lags behind the rest of the country on key social indicators in the following areas: poverty; education; health; nutrition; food security and; risks associated with the environment and climate change.

### Changes in the host population's attitude towards the refugees

24. Relations between the refugees in the camps and the local host population are mixed. On the one hand, there are quite a number of mixed marriages between the host community and refugee population, many refugees are moving outside the camps (despite it being officially prohibited) to access markets and jobs and there are some inter-dependent economic relationships.
25. On the other hand, refugees' movement outside the camps comes at the cost of exposure to significant protection risks and refugees generally feel unsafe moving outside the camps, especially women. The local population competes with Rohingyas, whether from inside or outside the camps, for scarce resources or employment, which is a continual source of friction<sup>12</sup>.
26. Furthermore, the exclusive assistance received by refugees in the camps is another source of tension. The health care services in the camps, for example, are better in both quality and quantity than those which are available to undocumented Rohingyas and the host population in Cox's Bazar district. A recent evaluation that included interviews with the local community found that locals were more likely to be sympathetic to unregistered Rohingyas living outside who do not receive assistance. The same evaluation found that the majority of registered refugees inside the camps did not feel the relationship with local communities was positive and most felt it had always been this way<sup>13</sup>.
27. Additional events in 2012, and the associated negative media coverage in Bangladesh, have also arguably resulted in heightened tension with regard to the Rohingya situation (and consequently also increased the difficulties for Rohingyas' mobility in the area). These include new arrivals from Myanmar seeking refuge in Bangladesh following the violence in and after June, as well as the outbreak of inter-communal violence in Ramu, Cox's Bazar District, in September, 2012, both of which added to an overall situation of heightened sensitivity and tension in the area.
28. Another reason for the increased resentment is the current absence of adequate sludge management in Nayapara camp, which has created recent tensions between the local communities and the refugees. Several complaints have been made to the Camp in Charge (including by a local Member of Parliament) concerning the bad smell emanating from the sludge as the WASH facilities in this camp are under the responsibility of the government.

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<sup>12</sup> Rohingya refugees are compelled to take jobs at lower wages because they have limited bargaining power with employers

<sup>13</sup> <sup>13</sup> *The Contribution of Food Assistance to Durable Solutions in Protracted Refugee Situations; its Impact and Role in Bangladesh: a Mixed Method Impact Evaluation* (UNHCR/WFP, 2012).



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### Durable solutions

29. Since the last JAM in 2010, the prospects for durable solutions for this population group have reduced, and the protection space for Rohingya population in general has shrunk, a result of recent developments that have taken place in both Myanmar and in Bangladesh. In Cox's Bazar district, an attack occurred against Buddhist villages and temples in Ramu on 29<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> September 2012, which increased anti-Rohingya sentiments amongst the local populace.
30. *Voluntary Repatriation*: The Government's, UNHCR's and WFP's position remains that under the right conditions, voluntary repatriation would be the preferred durable solution for the Rohingya refugees. However, the outbreaks of violence which occurred in the Rakhine State in June and October 2012 have cast further doubt on the feasibility of this solution for the time being<sup>14</sup>. The deterioration of the situation in Rakhine State has dashed whatever confidence the refugee group had in the making, which would need to be rebuilt convincingly before the refugees would reconsider voluntary repatriation as a durable solution.
31. *Resettlement*: Since the last JAM, governmental policy vis-à-vis resettlement has shifted significantly. Citing concerns that the programme was creating an additional 'pull factor', the GoB suspended the programme entirely in late 2010<sup>15</sup> hinting that resettlement could resume as part of a forthcoming comprehensive refugee policy which has, however, still not been formulated or adopted.
32. *Local integration*: Governmental opposition to the prospect of local integration – as well as to any activities that might be construed as encouraging refugees to integrate - remains firm. In the latter part of 2010, a number of livelihood activities that were linking refugee camps to local markets (e.g. repairing of mobile phones, radios, and televisions) were suspended by the camp authorities. Later, in early 2011, a proposal for a UN Joint Initiative in Cox's Bazar district amounting to USD 31 million targeting Rohingya and host communities was rejected by the Government. Refugees are also prohibited from opening bank accounts and are subject to restrictions regarding their movement in and out of the camps and when they do leave the camps they report being informally taxed and harassed. These have hindered the attainment of self-reliance and higher levels of education for children within the refugee group and perpetuated dependence on humanitarian assistance, particularly food.
33. It is clear that issues related to the plight of the Rohingya will require efforts beyond Bangladesh and will include efforts inside Myanmar at building relations between communities as well as addressing root causes for displacement, notably statelessness. This will require a *regional* approach in developing a comprehensive durable solutions strategy for the Rohingya situation. Whilst the development of durable solutions remains critical, it is also important to implement urgent humanitarian reforms in the camps as an interim measure to improve the system of general food assistance to the refugees.

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<sup>14</sup> The violence resulted in attempts by thousands of additional Rohingya to seek refuge in Bangladesh. The GoB responded to these fresh influxes with a closed-border policy, citing concerns over national security.

<sup>15</sup> This durable solution had only become available in 2006 and, at the time of its suspension, only 926 individuals had managed to depart from Bangladesh.

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### e) Health and nutrition situation: environmental conditions

#### General health status of the refugee group

34. A quick review of the key health indicators reported into the Health Information System<sup>16</sup> does not provide evidence of any major health crisis in Kutupalong and Nayapara camps.

#### Immunization

35. Both the HIS and the 2012 Nutrition Survey<sup>17</sup> have confirmed that the immunization coverage in both camps is above standards. In fact, a recent outbreak of measles that occurred in the informal Kutupalong makeshift site did not spread over to the official camp. The JAM team noted that the community mobilization mechanism and system used by the community health workers to trace and remind mothers about immunisation of children is functioning well.

#### Birth spacing

36. As mentioned earlier, the Crude Birth Rate (CBR) in the camps has come down over recent years until 2012. This can be attributed in part to successful birth spacing promotion. For instance, the Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR) has increased from less than 20% back in 2009 to over 50% in 2011.

#### Mental health

37. An earlier report<sup>18</sup> indicated a high level of individual trauma in the camps yet limited psychosocial services being provided. During the mission the JAM team received many reports of depression and domestic violence amongst the refugees. Key informant interviews, group discussions, individual interviews all concur that the situation is being aggravated by the worsening prospects for durable solutions, as a result of the suspension of resettlement as well as the recent occurrence of violence across the border. The absence of durable solutions is a factor that may create more and more mental disorders in the years to come. This may have a negative impact on the population, especially on child caring practices and in turn on their nutritional status.

#### Food and water-borne diseases

38. A high prevalence of diarrhoea was recorded in the UNHCR-led nutrition survey of May 2012 (measured at 34% and 25% in Nayapara and Kutupalong camps respectively)<sup>19</sup>. However, this was attributed to heavy rains prior to the start of the survey.
39. In the Health Information System 2012, the incidence of watery diarrhoea among children under 5 in Kutupalong camp was reported at 51.7/1000/ month<sup>20</sup>. In Nayapara camp, on the other hand, the incidence of watery diarrhoea in the same age group is lower than expected (measured at 24.3/1000/month). This is surprising, given that one

<sup>16</sup> HIS, 2011, HIS, 2012

<sup>17</sup> UNHCR, SENS Nayapara and Kutupalong, May 2012

<sup>18</sup> Refugees Consultations, UNHCR, March 2007, p36

<sup>19</sup> UNHCR, SENS Nayapara and Kutupalong, May 2012

<sup>20</sup> HIS, 2012

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would actually expect a much worse figure (considering the comparatively worse water and sanitation situation in Nayapara compared to Kutupalong). The reason for this is not known and further investigation is necessary.

### Community care

40. Community care was highlighted in the 2010 JAM report as being something that was particularly weak, and – based on the assessment of the JAM team – it continues to be so. Despite the existence of many community volunteers, their role is largely under-utilized and much more could be done by them at the household level. Moreover, there is lack of coordination among the different sectors (e.g. nutrition, hygiene promotion, health, reproductive health). Also, Behavioural Change Communication materials used by community volunteers are mainly focused on improving knowledge, with comparatively very little emphasis on behavioural change.
41. The Government's on-going revitalization of the community clinic model (which is currently a top priority for the health sector) should be used as inspiration for improving primary health care strategies in the refugee camps as well.

### Public health risks

42. There are significant public health risks associated with both communicable diseases and mental health disorders in the refugee camps.<sup>21</sup>
43. The risks of communicable diseases are strongly associated with the general lack of space in the camps, which leads to a highly congested living environment. Furthermore, they are associated with the unsatisfactory sanitation infrastructure, especially in Nayapara. The close proximity of Kutupalong camp to makeshift camps of non-camp refugees also increases the likelihood of communicable diseases being easily spread amongst the refugee population. Should these issues not be properly managed and in the absence of durable solutions, it is possible that the burden created by the lack of space is only going to increase with natural population growth.

### Water

44. Water shortage is a serious refugee concern in Nayapara camp. This problem appears to be linked to a number of factors. First, there is not enough production. The 20 litres/per-person-per-day which people have access to *in theory* does not consider the additional 4,186 additional on-hold refugees living in the camp. Moreover 30,000 litres of the total production is used by camp services, and hence is not available for use by households. Second, there have been problems in the past associated with the functionality of the system itself. Only recently the water system has been upgraded including the construction of 7 tap stands as well as the reconstruction of the water treatment plant which has improved system functionality. Third, there seems to be a significant amount of water leakage.
45. As a result of the above, actual water consumption in Nayapara appears to be way below the theoretical 20 litres/per-person-per-day. However, despite the water system

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<sup>21</sup> Further information on the mortality rate can be found in Annex 7: Camp Mortality Rates 2012

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improvements recently undertaken, with the daily water consumption at 16/l/p/d in the camp, it is still below the desired level.

### Sanitation

46. While some improvements have been made in Kutupalong, lack of sanitation infrastructure remains a major problem in Nayapara camp where the absence of proper sludge management and its consequences on the environment is now harming the relationship between the refugees and host population.

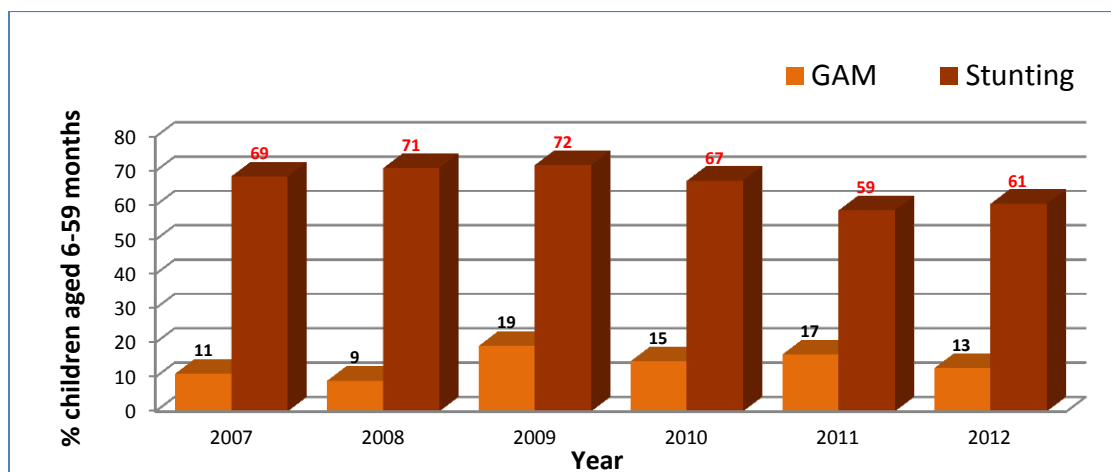
### Hygiene promotion

47. Hygiene promotion activities have been scaled up, but remain mainly focused on personal hygiene and environmental issues. There is a gap in terms of promoting hygienic food and safe cooking practices.

### Nutritional status of refugees

48. Over the course of the period 2007-12, the nutritional status of refugees has been below acceptable levels, and this trend continues. The prevalence of acute undernutrition - as measured by weight-for-height – has been hovering between Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) 10 and 20 percent and up until recently has constantly exceeded the WHO emergency threshold (19% in 2009, 15% in 2010, and 17% in 2011). In 2012 the rate has dropped to 13% however the situation is still defined as 'serious'. At the same time, chronic undernutrition - as measured through height-for-age (stunting) - has been consistently recorded above 60 percent. This is extremely high and points to the existence of an endemic and widespread problem of child undernutrition in the refugee camps. Finally, micronutrient deficiencies have, broadly speaking, been declining over the course of the same period. For instance, the prevalence of anaemia among children aged 6-59 months declined from 63 to 30 percent. However, these gains have proven to be very fragile (as suggested by a significant relapse that occurred in 2010) and have not affected all age groups equally (as demonstrated by the much higher prevalence of anaemia among children aged 6-23 months, which has remained consistently above 50 percent).

**FIGURE 3**  
**Nutritional status of refugees (Kutupalong/Nayapara camps, 2007-12)**



49. The nutritional status of refugees in Kutupalong and Nayapara camps is poor due to caring practices, sanitation, hygiene and food/nutrient intake. In this regard, the findings of the JAM confirmed the key findings of the 2011 Nutrition Causal Analysis by ACF<sup>22</sup> and the 2012 Annual Nutrition Survey by Helen Keller International<sup>23</sup>. Given the high prevalence of malnutrition in both camps, targeted nutrition programmes need to continue.

50. *Caring practices:* There is a high prevalence of psycho-social stress and depression among adults in the refugee camps which (among other things) is manifesting itself in the form of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV). These factors are known to have a bearing on child nutrition. For instance, consultations carried out with front line health service personnel working as part of this assessment revealed that ‘relapse cases’ on the supplementary and therapeutic feeding programmes often occur in families where issues of this nature are encountered. Furthermore, large family sizes and low birth spacing also affect child caring practices because – in such families - it is more difficult for a parent to ensure that a child receives the care it needs. All of the above can have an impact on child caring and, consequently, nutrition.

51. *Food/nutrient intake:* There are a number of challenges related to food/nutrient intake. As explained in detail in Part II below, a significant proportion of refugees in Kutupalong and Nayapara camps is being denied access to general food distributions, which is undermining food consumption and dietary diversity in many families. Moreover, there is an overall lack of certain food types – in particular, protein rich food – in the everyday diet of refugees. Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that the fortified food supplements provided are not always being used by the refugees as *supplements*. All these factors combined are affecting the nutritional status of refugees.

<sup>22</sup> Nutrition Causal Analysis, ACF, 2011

<sup>23</sup> Annual Nutrition Survey, HKI 2012

**PART TWO**  
***Food security and self-reliance***

**f) Food access and use**

52. On the whole, the refugees rely mainly on food assistance supplemented by small market purchases. A proportional piling carried out in a recent study, for example, indicated that 60 percent of the food in those households entitled to receive food assistance emanates from general distributions, while 35 percent comes from market purchases and 5 percent from own production<sup>24</sup>. However, the sources of food vary significantly between households. This is because “active” and “on hold” cases are receiving differential treatment with regard to access to food assistance, with the former group being granted full access and the latter group being granted no access at all.

Food sources and use

53. *Active households*: A significant proportion of the food consumed in “active” households stems directly from food assistance. Nevertheless, focus group discussions conducted as part of this assessment confirmed that “active” households also commonly access food through sale and exchange of food assistance and from the market. These findings correlate with those of a recent independent evaluation, commissioned by UNHCR/WFP Headquarters, which concluded that around half of the households receiving food assistance routinely share, sell or exchange a portion of their rations.

**FIGURE 4**  
***Use of food assistance***<sup>25</sup>

% households receiving food aid	Refugee camp	
	Nayapara	Kutupalong
Share part of their ration	1.7	13.8
Sell part of their ration	37.1	18.4
Exchange part of their ration	15.4	19.5
Consume all of their food aid	44	51.1

54. The major explanation for the high prevalence of selling and exchanging is that refugees are not being provided with what they consider to be an *appropriate* food basket. Hence, they sell or exchange a proportion of the less preferred commodities given to them in the form of food assistance in order to purchase additional preferred foods which are locally available in the markets<sup>26</sup>.

55. Another source of food is borrowing, which “active” households obtain using their “family book”<sup>27</sup> as collateral. Focus group discussions revealed that such borrowing normally takes place in the days immediately prior to the next food distribution, when household food stocks often run out. Those households which are most affected by such ‘food gaps’ (and hence most likely to resort to food borrowing) are the estimated one third of

<sup>24</sup> *Nutrition Causal Analysis*, ACF, 2011

<sup>25</sup> *The Contribution of Food Assistance to Durable Solutions in Protracted Refugee Situations; its Impact and Role in Bangladesh: a Mixed Method Impact Evaluation* (UNHCR/WFP, 2012).

<sup>26</sup> This point is elaborated further below

<sup>27</sup> The “family book” is the means currently used by the Government both for identifying beneficiaries and for administering food aid. This issue is discussed in greater detail below.

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all households in Nayapara and Kutupalong camps that have one or more “on hold” member<sup>28</sup>. This is because food sharing takes place within households between “active” members (whose needs are catered for by the food distribution system) and “on hold” members (whose needs are not).

56. It was also noted in focus group discussions that ‘food gaps’ are worse in those households in which a large proportion of family members are adults. This is because rations are calculated in such a manner to meet the daily energy needs of adults<sup>29</sup>. It follows that households in which a large proportion of family members are children will have some ‘slack’ in their entitlement which they can use to cover the consumption needs of “on hold” members.

57. “On hold” households: Unlike “active” households, “on hold” households do not currently have any access at all to food assistance. Therefore, they depend almost entirely on market purchases for food. The extent to which they are able to purchase food on the market depends, however, on their capacity to generate income. Moreover, since “on hold” households are not in possession of a “family book”<sup>30</sup> (and do not receive food assistance), they have no collateral with which to borrow food in times of crisis.

### Food habits and preferred food basket

58. Generally speaking, the food basket provided to “active” households through the food distribution system is not in accordance with their surveyed preferences. Focus group discussions indicated that - while the current food basket provides refugees with rice, pulses, vegetable oil, salt, sugar and blended food - the refugees nonetheless consider some basic food items to be missing, in particular: food of animal origin (e.g. dried fish), vegetables (e.g. onion, potatoes) and spices (e.g. chilli). The fact that these latter items are not being provided through the food assistance basket compels refugees to purchase them on local markets.

59. Two specific issues are to be noted in this regard. First, the refugees are particularly dissatisfied with the pulses provided in the food aid basket. Currently, refugees are being provided with yellow split peas (YSP), which is not in line with their food habits<sup>31</sup>. It also takes more time and fuel to cook this pulse. As a result, YSP is the commodity most often sold by refugees on local markets<sup>32</sup>. However the pulse preferred by the refugees is more expensive to procure. Second, it has also been observed that some “Super Cereal” (wheat soya blend+) is being sold on local markets and/or used as animal feed, though the extent to which this is happening and the reason for it remain unclear. This needs to be investigated further, since the purpose of this commodity is to provide much-needed micronutrients to the refugees. A WFP-led enquiry into this matter is due to be carried out soon, the results of which will inform future programming.

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<sup>28</sup> In a recent study, 37.8 percent of households in Kutupalong camp and 34.3 percent of households in Nayapara camp respectively reported that at least one member of the household was not receiving a ration. (*Nutrition Causal Analysis*, ACF, 2011)

<sup>29</sup> The need is defined as 2,100 k/cal per day, in accordance with SPHERE standards

<sup>30</sup> The “family book” system is discussed in greater detail below.

<sup>31</sup> Yellow split peas are procured by WFP internationally, whereas the taste preference of refugees appears to be for the lentils that are available on local markets, eg. musur dal.

<sup>32</sup> See also *The Contribution of Food Assistance to Durable Solutions in Protracted Refugee Situations; its Impact and Role in Bangladesh: a Mixed Method Impact Evaluation* (UNHCR/WFP, 2012).

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### Food expenditure

60. Broadly speaking, household expenditure on food among refugee households is very high, with over half of households spending more than 65 percent of their available resources (income derived from employment and the sale of WFP commodity items) on food<sup>33</sup>. Under such circumstances, the refugees remain highly vulnerable to food insecurity. Indicative household data that was collected as part of this assessment suggests that around 51 percent of a household's food budget is spent on rice, 11 percent on vegetables, 10 percent on dried fish, 9 percent on spices/chilli and 7 percent on potatoes<sup>34</sup>.

### Food markets

61. Vibrant food markets are found close to the refugee camps, in Ukhiya and Teknaf. A recent WFP-led market assessment<sup>35</sup> confirmed that these markets have a strong supply chain of major food commodities and have sufficient stock for the essential food items to respond to the food needs of the refugees if they fully participate in the markets to purchase their requirements. This is because the markets have a) a strong supply chain of major food commodities like rice, wheat, pulses, vegetables, edible oil, sugar and salt exists both in Teknaf and Ukhiya; b) price variation is minimal and is only seasonal and increased minimal demand from the refugees would not push the prices up hence affecting local population; and c) the markets are well integrated between the local and regional markets for rice and wheat flour (including Dhaka, Chittagong, Sylhet and Rajshahi), with price variations tending to be in line with national trends and d) refugees are already purchasing food items like vegetables, potatoes and spices from shops and bazars close to the camps and food vendors visiting camps except for rice, pulses, wheat and cooking oil which is provided by WFP.

62. The findings of the market assessment were reconfirmed by the JAM team, which visited both Ukhiya and Teknaf markets and took the opportunity to speak to local traders. Based on the results gathered from this assessment, it is clear that the local markets in Ukhiya and Teknaf would have the capacity to support a food voucher system which provides preferred and pre-agreed commodities to the refugees via pre-selected traders.

### Food consumption

63. Two recent studies have confirmed that food and nutrient intake is better in "active" households than in "on hold" households. A UNHCR-led study conducted in May 2012 found that "active" refugee households had a Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS) of about 7.2 while the corresponding figure for "on hold" households was 6.5<sup>36</sup>. Similarly, a joint UNHCR/WFP evaluation conducted shortly afterwards measured the HDDS for "active" households in Nayapara camp 4.91, compared to a HDDS for "on hold" households in the same camp of at 4.01<sup>37</sup>. In accordance with these findings, focus group discussions conducted as part of this assessment revealed that "on hold" families

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<sup>33</sup> *Nutrition Causal Analysis*, ACF, 2011

<sup>34</sup> A more detailed analysis of the food budget based on a representative sample needs to be conducted in order to have a better understanding of quantities consumed and the spread of expenditure across food items.

<sup>35</sup> See Annex 8 for the WFP Market Assessment

<sup>36</sup> UNHCR SENS Nayapara and Kutupalong, May 2012

<sup>37</sup> *The Contribution of Food Assistance to Durable Solutions in Protracted Refugee Situations; its Impact and Role in Bangladesh: a Mixed Method Impact Evaluation* (UNHCR/WFP, 2012).



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are eating on average 2 meals per day, only a quarter of which are considered to be 'full meals'<sup>38</sup>. Such results suggest that "on hold" households are more vulnerable to food insecurity than "active" households.

64. The food groups that are not widely consumed are meat, eggs and milk/milk-based products. Consumption of these products tends to be limited to households with relatively higher incomes. The fact that most refugees consume fish once or twice a week from the market indicates that the food ration entitlements are lacking in animal protein sources.

### **g) Food assistance targeting, distribution and monitoring**

#### Targeting arrangements

65. "Active" and "on hold" cases are receiving differential treatment with regards to access to food assistance, with the former group being granted full access and the latter group being granted no access at all. The reason for this happening is that – unlike all other forms of assistance offered to refugees in the camps, including non-food items (e.g. soap) and services (e.g. health), which are dispensed to a refugee conditional on him/her being formally registered by UNHCR - food assistance can only be dispensed to a refugee conditional on him/her being formally registered not only by UNHCR but also by the GoB. In practice, this leaves "on hold" cases (6000 refugees) in a state of *limbo* wherein they are unable to access food assistance until such time as the results of the 2010 joint GoB/UNHCR "harmonization" exercise are formally recognised by the GoB.
66. Given the fact that "on hold" cases apply to a fifth of all individuals in Kutupalong and Nayapara camps (see Figure 1), this constitutes a significant exclusion in the targeting of food humanitarian assistance. Some 28% of all households have at least one members of their family who is on-hold. About 12% of all households in the camps comprise of an entire households (all members of the family) which is on-hold.<sup>39</sup> This is at odds with the LOU between WFP and the Government, whereby all 31,000 refugees are expected to be provided with food assistance, as well as with the system of non-food assistance and service provision which is currently being provided to 'on-hold' refugees.

#### Distribution arrangements

67. Food is not currently being distributed in a manner that reflects the way the refugee household is structured. The reason for this is that– unlike non-food items (e.g. soap), which are dispensed to refugees by means of a UNHCR-entitlement card based on the real family compositions and nuclear families – food rations are distributed to holders of the "family book".
68. Whereas the family book system once accurately reflected the manner in which the refugee household was structured, a significant amount of time has passed since the books were first issued and many changes have occurred within the refugee household. For example, many children have grown up, married and had children of their own (thereby establishing an entirely new family unit). For women, the act of marrying

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<sup>38</sup> A 'full meal' is defined by refugees as having adequate quantities of rice, such that the household is able to eat until it is fully satisfied.

<sup>39</sup> *Nutrition Causal Analysis*, ACF, 2011

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means that they move from one family to another. By virtue of its administration, the family book does not capture such developments.

69. The continued use of the family book for the purpose of food distribution is, therefore, extremely problematic. As the family book does not contain photographs, the identification of the correct recipient of the family book becomes difficult. The books were issued in 1990 by the Bangladesh government and essential parts of the data which is all handwritten are not legible and can be tampered with easily. It also means that food is being distributed to family units within the refugee population that have – in effect – long changed into new ‘nuclear family’ units. This obliges refugees to organize themselves accordingly and *sub-divide* the rations distributed into smaller units themselves – a process that leads to disorder and confusion at the distribution site, as well as conflict<sup>40</sup> at the household/family level and even domestic violence.
70. Consultations carried out with the organization responsible for distributing the food – the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) – and also focus groups conducted with refugees revealed that there are a wide range of challenges associated with the continued use of the family book for the purpose of distributing food, as well as a receptiveness to switch to alternative means - most obviously, a ration card entrusted to the head of the *de facto* family unit<sup>41</sup>. It is also to be noted that WFP has a corporate commitment to put ration cards in the woman's name (or – at the very least – in the name of both man and woman)<sup>42</sup>.
71. It is to be noted that these recommendations have already been made in previous JAM assessments and a written agreement between the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief and UNHCR to replace the family books with ration cards has been made and is now pending implementation.

### **h) Selective feeding programmes**

72. Given the alarming nutritional situation in Kutupalong and Nayapara camps, selective feeding programmes continue to play an important role in terms of treating and preventing acute undernutrition, especially among the most vulnerable.
73. *Therapeutic and targeted supplementary feeding:* Both the treatment of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) – which is being addressed via therapeutic feeding in both out-patient and in-patient health services – and the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) – which is being addressed through targeted supplementary feeding – are being implemented in accordance with national protocols. However, follow-up visits to households should be increased in order to ensure the correct utilization of

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<sup>40</sup> Refugees have devised methods of their own for overcoming this challenge. One common method they use – which was revealed to the JAM team in the focus group discussions, as well as observed at a food distribution – is that representatives from every *de facto* family unit covered by a family book go to the food distribution together to collect their ration, and then sub-divide the ration at the distribution site. The benefit of this system is that it minimizes the risk of conflict between family units, because it maximizes transparency. However, this also exacerbates the crowding and general chaos at the distribution site. With no monitoring of the food re-distribution at the household level, there is also a high level of arbitrariness; especially vulnerable and marginalized refugees may not get their fair share or any food at all.

<sup>41</sup> In accordance with UNHCR/WFP standards, a family household unit is normally defined for the purpose of food distribution as a group of persons who eat from the same pot. WFP 2002, *Emergency Field Operations Pocketbook*.

<sup>42</sup> WFP 2008, *Enhanced commitments to women to ensure food security*, Full Report of the End-of-Term Evaluation of WFPs Gender Policy 2003-2007. UNHCR 2001, UNHCR's *Five commitments to refugee women*.

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supplementary foods. This would include additional effort to ensure that households are properly briefed on the purpose and nutrient content of the food products, as well as how to prepare them.

74. *Blanket supplementary feeding:* Alongside the therapeutic and targeted supplementary feeding programmes, a blanket supplementary feeding programme is also being conducted. This uses an entitlement-based programme/life-cycle approach, in which all pregnant and lactating women and children aged 6-24 months qualify for assistance, irrespective of their nutritional status. Whilst in 2012 there has been a slight reduction in the GAM rate, given the food security condition in the camps combined with alarming rates of chronic undernutrition, the nutritional situation in Kutupalong and Nayapara camps appears to justify the continued provision of blanket supplementary feeding for the time being. The rationale for providing this service nevertheless needs to be reconsidered over the longer term taking into account both the fact that a robust curative treatment programme for acute undernutrition exists (therapeutic and targeted supplementary feeding) and also the longer term need to transition towards a situation in which refugee and host communities are being provided with services that are more comparable.
75. At the time of the JAM, all beneficiaries of supplementary feeding (targeted and blanket) were receiving wheat soya blend+, sugar and oil through WFP channels, whereas dried skimmed milk was being provided through UNHCR channels. However, in line with WFP nutrition protocols planning was underway to provide children under the supplementary feeding programme which wheat soya blend++ (which has dried skimmed milk premixed into it). This is a welcome development. However, the JAM team notes the importance of conducting an acceptability trial of the new product and also carrying out a thorough sensitization of all stakeholders prior to launching it.
76. Growth Monitoring & Promotion (GMP) has been taking place at the centres. However, the JAM team observed that some children regularly attend the GMP alone. This is concerning, since it indicates inadequate buy-in to the process among parents/caregivers (who are ultimately responsible for their child's nutrition). Efforts should be made, therefore, to increase the involvement of parents/caregivers in the GMP process and to use it as a platform for promoting health & nutrition seeking behaviour.
77. Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) activities play an important role in the supplementary and therapeutic feeding programmes. The current BCC strategy could be strengthened in a number of ways. First, a broader range of tools could be used (including drama, role plays, videos, documentaries or other audio-visually). Second, the current heavy focus on increasing knowledge and awareness needs to be redressed, with increased emphasis on promoting appropriate *behavioural* practices. And third, more practical linkages could be established between different interventions, which would enable nutrition BCC to be integrated more into, for example, ante/post-natal services and mental health services.
78. *School feeding:* School feeding plays an important role in Kutupalong and Nayapara camps in terms of encouraging the education of refugee children as well as providing an

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additional nutritional safety net (especially, with regards to micronutrients)<sup>43</sup>. Currently, 21 primary schools and 21 pre-schools are being supported under the programme. The JAM recommends that support to school feeding in the camps be continued.

79. At the time of the JAM, discussions were underway to bolster the school feeding component with an 'essential learning package' that includes a range of complementary activities designed to improve the effectiveness of school feeding (including community mobilization, women participation in school management committees and conducting de-worming). This would be a welcome development.

80. Currently, all children – irrespective of whether they are attending a pre-school or a primary school – receive 50g of biscuit. However, the ration normally provided by WFP in Bangladesh under school feeding is 75g for children of primary age. The JAM team recommends that this situation be reviewed.

### i) Food supplies

#### Entitlement calculation

81. The entitlements for the general distribution are as presented in see Figure 4. Although the current food basket meets the recommended energy requirements of 2,100 kcal/person/day, it falls short in terms of the percentage of energy provided through protein (which should ideally be minimum 10%) and fat (which should ideally be minimum 17%). Given the fact that this is a protracted refugee situation, this situation cannot be overlooked and opportunities should be explored for increasing the protein and fat content in the diet of refugees as well as introducing more food from animal sources. The total amount distributed is compromised by sharing the food with “on-hold” members therefore diluting the entitlements and leading to food insecurity in the camps. Furthermore the basket does not meet the preferred food, leading to the selling off of part of the ration.

**FIGURE 5**  
**Refugee entitlements<sup>44</sup>**

<u>COMMODITY</u>	<u>DAILY RATION</u> <i>g/person/day</i>	<u>ENERGY</u> <i>k/calories</i>	<u>PROTEIN</u> <i>g/person/day</i>	<u>FAT</u> <i>g/person/day</i>
Rice	450	1,638	31.5	2.3
Blended foods	50	189	8.7	3.1
Vegetable oil	20	177	0	20
Pulses	40	135	11.2	0.4
Sugar	10	40	0	0
Salt	10	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>580</b>	<b>2,180</b>	<b>51.5</b>	<b>25.7</b>
<b>% energy provided through protein and fat</b>			<b>9.4</b>	<b>10.6</b>

<sup>43</sup> Under the school feeding programme, children are provided with 50g of high energy, micronutrient-fortified biscuit. This is equivalent to roughly 10 percent of the recommended daily allowance of energy for a child aged 6 years. However, it is also equivalent to roughly one-fourth of the recommended daily allowance of iron for a child of the same age.

<sup>44</sup> *Nutrition and Health Survey*, Helen Keller International, May 2012

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### Claims of missing entitlements

82. There is a widespread belief among the refugee population that they are not receiving their full entitlements. This was expressed at all focus group discussions carried out as part of this assessment. Were this to be the case, this would provide another explanation as to why “active” households are often running out of food before the next distribution cycle. However, the JAM team was unable to conduct a thorough investigation into these claims and recommends a joint investigation on the same.
83. Having said that, it is clear that more could be done to sensitize refugees to ensure they are aware of their entitlements and to demonstrate to them that they have received their correct entitlement

### **j) Self-reliance opportunities**

#### Livelihood activities

84. A significant proportion of the refugee population engages in some form of economic activity. However being subjected to restricted movements, the refugees are not permitted to engage in livelihood activities outside of the refugee camps. More recently, livelihood activities have also been restricted within the camp since 2010. However as “on-hold” refugees do not receive food assistance, they are more likely to be involved in economic activities which tend to be an act of desperation rather than of aspiration. Hence “active” households engage less in economic activities than “on hold” households. A recent UNHCR/WFP-led impact evaluation found, for example, that 53.2 percent of “active” males in Nayapara camp were engaged in an economic activity, whereas the corresponding figure for “on hold” males was a much higher 68.4 percent<sup>45</sup>.
85. Women’s participation in economic activities is much lower than it is for males, with 32.3 percent of “active” females and 34.3 percent of “on hold” females in Nayapara camp being engaged in an economic activity. Due to cultural norms and traditional gender roles, the burden of providing for the household predominantly rests on male members of the family. Labour restrictions, however, have affected the ability of men to provide for basic household needs, and this was cited as a contributory factor for domestic violence during focus group discussions.
86. Child labour of varying extents is also commonplace in the refugee camps, particularly amongst children from families with individuals who are ‘on hold’ status. Such children end up dropping out from school and are particularly vulnerable to neglect, abuse and exploitation.
87. The limited access to income opportunities leads to vulnerability to food insecurity especially for female headed households and “on hold” households.

#### Labour opportunities

88. Male refugees are engaging in various types of wage labour outside of the camps, including: salt making; brick making; fishing; agricultural work and; construction work.

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<sup>45</sup> *The Contribution of Food Assistance to Durable Solutions in Protracted Refugee Situations; its Impact and Role in Bangladesh: a Mixed Method Impact Evaluation* (UNHCR/WFP, 2012).

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Women refugees, on the other hand, tend to remain in and around the camps, engaging in activities such as: domestic work; tailoring; fishnet-making; embroidery; water collection and chilli grinding. Depending on the labour market and also on whether the refugee is a man or a woman, the refugee can normally expect to earn between BDT 100 to 300 per day.

89. Children engaged in child labour earn much less and are sometimes paid in kind or through the provision of food and temporary lodging. Instances of exploitation and violence (including sexual and gender based violence) committed against refugees (adult male/female and children) by the local villagers, were also reported. Many reported that those working illegally outside the camps often had no recourse in cases of abuse or exploitation due to the policy of restricting movement and their right to work outside the camps. Refugees also frequently complain that they have to pay 'fines' to law enforcement outside and in the camps when caught working 'illegally'.

### Own production

90. Own production practices are extremely limited in Kutupalong and Nayapara camps, due mainly to the lack of space. While the number of refugees engaging in kitchen gardening, for example, is quite significant, the amount of produce resulting from it is very minimal and – in most cases – is only sufficient to serve as a modest supplement to a household's diet<sup>46</sup>. To a lesser extent, refugees are also engaged in poultry production, raising pigeons and ducks and also fishing. Hence, own production cannot be considered as a sustainable solution to household self-reliance, meaning other viable solutions should be pursued.

### Remittances

91. Focus group discussions conducted under this assessment revealed that access to remittances is an important factor differentiating those households which are vulnerable to food insecurity from those that are not. The very small number of households receiving remittances from relatives working in Malaysia, the Middle East, Australia and elsewhere in Bangladesh, are generally better off<sup>47</sup>.

### Sale of rations

92. For the 40-50% of "active" households that engage in ration selling and/or exchange (see Table 2 above), food ration sales form an important part of their income. The food items that are sold tend to be those within the food basket that are valued least by the refugees – in particular, the YSP and also the wheat soya blend+. It is critical to highlight why this is happening, lest this phenomenon be misinterpreted. The widespread of selling of food aid could be misinterpreted, for instance, as meaning that the refugees do not really *need* it. And yet the JAM team observed that a large proportion of the income generated from food sales is channelled immediately back into food purchases – mainly into commodities that are not provided through food assistance (e.g. dried fish, vegetables, spices). This rather suggests that the refugees are not being

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<sup>46</sup> *Nutrition Causal Analysis*, ACF, 2011

<sup>47</sup> Based on focus group discussions, households with relatives living overseas are 1% or less of the total camp population. Transfers are normally done using a system called *hundi*, whereby money is sent through friends in Bangladesh (who charge a commission for handling).

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provided with *the type of food assistance they need*<sup>48</sup>. For example the YSP is being sold largely because it does not match beneficiary taste preferences. The team observed a general fatigue from beneficiaries (and key informants such as the RRRC and the CIC concerned with those issues) with the unchanged food basket in over 20 years.

93. It is also important to note that the widespread phenomenon of food selling constitutes a significant loss of efficiency in the food distribution system. In order to provide YSP to refugees, for example, the commodity has to be purchased internationally, shipped to Bangladesh and then delivered to the refugee camps at considerable cost. And yet, the refugee preference is for locally available lentils (“musur dal”) and dried fish. In such circumstances, it makes sense to explore the viability of providing refugees with the means to access locally available lentils and dried fish instead. This can be achieved by switching several commodities currently provided through in-kind assistance onto a food voucher. The benefits of doing this are potentially two-fold. From a nutritional perspective, it will help to introduce much needed food from animal sources while, from a cost perspective; it can reduce the overall cost of the programme<sup>49</sup>.

### Coping mechanisms

94. Focus group discussions revealed how refugee households deploy a range of different coping mechanisms to smoothen inadequate food consumption. These include: eating less; adults not eating and allowing children to eat; borrowing food; taking loans; engaging in casual work outside the camp; illegally collecting firewood in the forest and; begging. The type of coping strategies used by households tends to vary according to household characteristics. For example, the practice of begging tends to be restricted to the most vulnerable – in particular, single female-heads of households without the support of any male relatives. Furthermore, the severity and frequency of coping mechanisms deployed tends to be greater in “on hold” households than “active” households (because the latter are receiving food assistance, which provides a vital safety net). These coping mechanisms used result in loss of self-dignity for the refugees in addition to protection risks.

#### **k) Food and self-reliance strategies**

95. The current restrictions placed on refugee movement and access to education and livelihoods have led to limited self-reliance within the camps. Relaxation of these restrictions would certainly have a positive impact in terms of improving labour opportunities for the refugees which, in turn, would improve their food security and nutrition. Hence, relaxation on movement would not only increase self-reliance of the refugees but also allow them to contribute positively to the local economy.
96. Without this, food assistance will continue to play an important role in terms of safeguarding food security and nutrition for the foreseeable future. In such circumstances, it is essential to eliminate exclusion in the targeting of assistance, as well

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<sup>48</sup> It has been observed that some of the income generated from food selling is also used to meet other essential *non-food* needs (e.g. medicines, settling mediation cases). Again, however, this is not an indicator that refugees do not need the food assistance. Instead, it merely suggests that the refugees have other urgent needs that are not currently being catered for.

<sup>49</sup> See Annex 1: Food Voucher: A Business Case

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as ensuring that entitlements are disbursed into the right hands and that food assistance is providing a broad variety of preferred commodities to refugees.

### PART THREE

#### *Non-food items and other related concerns*

##### **l) Non-food items – requirements and distributions**

97. Refugees are regularly provided with Compressed Rice Husks (CRH) as a source of fuel. Focus groups conducted with refugees revealed complaints that they are not being distributed appropriately (i.e. they are often broken into pieces). This has led to suspicion on the part of refugees that they are not receiving their full entitlement.
98. Refugees complained in some focus group discussions that the reduction in the quantity of CRH distributed in 2010 had resulted in a shortfall in meeting their daily fuel needs. As a result of this, many have resorted to negative coping mechanisms including cutting firewood in the areas adjacent to the camp which have in turn exposed them to protection risks (including SGBV incidents). The UNHCR decision in February 2010 to reduce the quantity of CRH distributed to refugees were due to three reasons: budgetary limitations and the high costs of CRH, sale of CRH by refugees in the local markets, and the introduction of energy-saving stoves & cooking methods.

##### **m) Community services**

###### Access and use of health services

99. Despite the refugees' generally very poor appreciation of the health services, the health facility utilization rate (as measured by the number of new visits/refugee/year) is within standard in both Kutupalong and Nayapara camps. Improvements in service delivery have also been noticed, with there now being a sufficient number of clinicians for Out-Patients Department (OPD) consultations.
100. Nevertheless, a communication breakdown has been observed by the JAM team between the government-run health service provider and the refugees. Refugees in both Kutupalong as well as in Nayapara camps complain about the attitude of the staff towards them and had the same complaint in 2007<sup>50</sup>. At the same time, refugees' persistent demands for referrals to Cox's Bazar, Chittagong and even Dhaka hospitals cannot always be satisfied. Confidence building should, therefore, be sought as a way of improving the quality of care and rationalizing medical prescriptions. One strategy that would successfully address this issue and bridge the communication gap between the two groups would be to involve a few refugees who were trained "on the job" to assist government health staff and become part of the "health team".

###### Effectiveness of capacity building efforts amongst the refugees

101. The election of new Community Management Committees (CMCs)/Block Management Committees (BMCs) was carried out for the third time in 2011. Efforts were channelled into supporting and building capacity to replace the previous system – as per the JAM Recommendations of 2010. This included providing regular training,

<sup>50</sup> *Refugees Consultations 2007* page 34;



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consultation and support. The CMCs/BMCs played a vital role in resolving numerous disputes within the camps through mediation. However, some concerns were identified in the voting process (delegated votes) during focus group discussions which require further review.

### n) Gender and protection concerns

102. The JAM team held several focus groups and key informant interviews with women, men, girls and boys, as well as people with disabilities, and came to hear of a range of protection issues.

103. The shortcomings associated with the existing food distribution system are exacerbating general protection risks for refugees in Kutupalong and Nayapara camps. For example, the denial of food assistance to “on hold” refugees forces them to go outside of the camp in search of labour. Given that such movement is – in effect – illegal, it places them at considerable risk of exploitation by the host community. In focus group discussions conducted through this assessment, for example, stories were heard of refugees who had been exploited by their employer (e.g. through the non-payment of wages owed to them). Moreover, the continued use of the family book for the purposes of distributing food assistance is contributing to disorder at the distribution site, as well as tensions within the refugee community, e.g. over the *sub-dividing* of food.

104. At the same time, there are particular gender-related protection risks. Many women in the refugee camps, for example, do not tend to leave their homes, meaning that female-headed and especially all-female households are in a particularly difficult situation with regards to accessing food assistance. Any reform of the general food distribution system would, therefore, need to take into account the specific vulnerabilities of this particular demographic group.

105. While most participants in focus group discussions referred to increased awareness on sexual and gender based violence and a reduction in its prevalence in the camps, specific references were made by women on the increase of separation/divorce and forced and early marriages. Domestic violence is culturally tolerated and prevalent in the camps.

106. Due to the increasing number of adult males departing via irregular movements (smuggling/human trafficking), the women and children remaining behind have been subjected to increased hardship due to the absence of the main income-earner within their household, debts incurred in order to facilitate such movements, as well as demands made by smuggling syndicates in certain cases for additional payments. The uncertainty of the fate of their loved ones also adds to the psychological stress. Towards the end of 2012, women and children have been increasingly participating in such movements, risking their lives and being subjected to exploitation.

107. A more detailed description of protection issues is provided in the reports *Refugee Consultations*<sup>51</sup>, *Participatory Assessment 2012*<sup>52</sup> and *States of Denial*<sup>53</sup>.

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<sup>51</sup> Refugee Consultations Bangladesh, UNHCR, Centre for Refugee Research (UNSW), Foundation House, March 2007; there has been only limited change in the situation of the refugees in the camps between 2007 and 2012.

<sup>52</sup> Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming Participatory Assessment Report, UNHCR, March 2012

<sup>53</sup> States of Denial, UNHCR, page 13 paragraph 40

**PART FOUR**  
***Logistics***

**o) Logistics**

108. The JAM team conducted an inspection of the food pipeline, from the Local Supply Depot (LSD) level down to the distribution point as well as assessed the food distribution system in the camps.
109. The JAM team identified some concerns relating to the storage, management and transportation of food. WFP rice stocks are mixed with GoB stocks at the level of the LSD<sup>54</sup>. This is often leading to GOB rice stocks being distributed to refugees. This creates a problem in the sense that food which has not gone through WFP's own quality control mechanisms is being distributed to refugees in the name of WFP. The JAM team also discovered some evidence of losses and leakages along the food supply chain, though they were unable to ascertain the extent of this phenomenon. Another concern is the lack of turnover of staff working for food distribution and monitoring agencies in the refugee camps. This is perceived by refugees as being a contributing factor to corrupt practices in the handling of food. Consideration should be given, therefore, to rotating the staff who are working for food distribution and monitoring agencies on a regular basis, which is likely to improve neutrality and impartiality in the delivery of humanitarian assistance.
110. More broadly speaking, it was found that the process for providing in-kind food transfers to refugees was far more expensive than the price of many of the same commodities available on local markets. For example, calculations carried out by the JAM team revealed that it is costing WFP approximately USD 396 to purchase, transport and deliver a metric tonne of rice to refugees in the camps, whereas it would cost WFP approximately USD 293 to deliver the same amount of rice through food vouchers. Similarly, when beneficiaries exchange these commodities for other kinds of food, they are selling it at a lower price than the cost that WFP paid to delivery it, rendering it not only cost-inefficient but cost-ineffective.
111. At the same time, the JAM found an overall high level of complexity in the distribution arrangements – especially given the fact that the situation in Kutupalong and Nayapara camps is of a protracted nature. For instance, the practice of food scooping – which inevitably leads to leakages, as well as exacerbating distrust in the system – does not appear to be at all necessary under such settled conditions, where there is an opportunity to explore alternatives. Furthermore, the necessity for refugees to be assigned a particular day for receiving their entitlements and also to spend long periods queuing might be avoidable, should alternatives be considered.

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<sup>54</sup> The reason for this is the policy of 'first in, first out' at the level of the LSD, which is being applied irrespective of whether the food stocks are intended for the WFP programme or the GOB's own programmes.

**PART FIVE**

***Partnerships, planning and other issues***

**p) Partnerships and coordination**

112. As has already been highlighted above, there is an ongoing challenge in the refugee camps with respect to different agencies working without sufficient coordination. This is particularly evident in the work of the community volunteers. Efforts need to be scaled up, therefore, in order to rationalize the work being done more effectively and coordinate activities of agencies in the camps.

113. Opportunities should also be explored for involving refugees more in the coordination of services that are being delivered to them, e.g. health services. This is vital to improving the level of trust between the service providers and the refugee community, as well as improving the quality and utilization of the services themselves.

**PART SIX**

***Options and final recommendations***

**q) Programme options**

Durable solutions

114. The major priority for this refugee group remains the search for durable solutions. The durable solutions question is itself dependant on renewed policy dialogue taking place not only at the level of Bangladesh (involving, for example, the GoB, UNHCR, WFP and locally-based representatives of the international community) but also external stakeholders (including, for example, the Government of Myanmar, concerned States outside the region and regional institutions).

Transition strategy (Cox's Bazar district)

115. As part of the above-mentioned dialogue and as highlighted by the recent impact evaluation<sup>55</sup>, a viable 'transition strategy' needs to be identified for the situation in Cox's Bazar district. The purpose of the 'transition strategy' would be to move towards a situation in which the manner of dealing with the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar is more reflective of a *protracted* crisis and as well as minimizing the differential treatment provided to documented and undocumented official camp-based refugees on the one hand, and official camp-based refugees, as well as Rohingyas living outside the camps and host communities on the other.

116. Initially, those components of the food assistance system in Kutupalong and Nayapara camps that remain extremely relevant – most notably, therapeutic and targeted supplementary feeding, as well as school feeding – would be strengthened, while those components of the system that are no longer fit for purpose – most notably, the system for general food distributions – would be substantively reformed<sup>56</sup>. If such

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<sup>55</sup> UNHCR/WFP, 2012

<sup>56</sup> As far as reforming the system for general food distributions is concerned, the top priorities are to focus on: i) ensuring that all refugees – whether "active" or "on hold" – have equal and unhindered access to food assistance; ii)

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improvements are made, they will have an immediate positive impact on the health, nutritional status and protection of the refugees residing in the official camps. Meanwhile, outside Kutupalong and Nayapara camps, those components of the food assistance system that remain relevant – i.e. therapeutic and targeted supplementary feeding, blanket supplementary feeding and school feeding - would continue to be provided by WFP, given the fact that there is a strong need for such services among Rohingyas and host communities in Cox's Bazar district.

117. Assuming that this is successfully implemented, it will lead towards a situation in which there will be both a greater degree of resilience within the refugee group in Kutupalong and Nayapara camps and also more equity in terms of the level of access to quality social services afforded to registered refugees, unregistered Rohingyas and host communities.

### Time-line

118. Some actions as proposed above are already being implemented in Teknaf and Ukhia upazilas of Cox's Bazar district. This is especially true of those activities that need to be conducted in host communities. Most notably in this regard, WFP is operating a community-based management of acute undernutrition programme in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and is also covering all schools with a school feeding programme in partnership with the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education. Both of these activities are being conducted through WFP's Country Programme (2012-16).
119. Other actions required have not yet been implemented, but can be implemented with immediate effect. Thanks to the joint GoB/UNHCR "harmonization" exercise conducted in 2010/2011, a complete list of "active" and "on hold" households is available for approval. A suitable model for the ration card has already been identified, based on a tried-and-tested model that is already operational in Nayapara and Kutupalong camps<sup>57</sup>.
120. As far as the introduction of the food voucher is concerned, an intensive design phase should be initiated with immediate effect, involving technical-level interaction between the GoB, UNHCR and WFP taking into account not only different delivery mechanisms but also their related protection risks (including to the most vulnerable groups)<sup>58</sup>.
121. It is expected, however, that the design phase can only realistically be completed by the end of December 2013, enabling a voucher system to be implementing starting in January 2014. These actions would, therefore, be built into in a new Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO), commencing January 2014.

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directing food assistance towards the de facto/nuclear family unit (defined as a group of persons who eat from the same pot) and ensuring equal access to it by women and; iii) introducing a food voucher.

<sup>57</sup> The model in question is basically that which is being used by UNHCR in order to distribute NFIs to de facto/nuclear families (with food entitlements in the name of husband and wife).

<sup>58</sup> One such concern would be to ensure that the delivery mechanism does not exacerbate the existing level of impeded access to general food distributions that is experienced by the most vulnerable households, particularly female-headed households.

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**FIGURE 6**  
**Proposed time-line**

Location	Action required	Time-frame for implementation
Inside Kutupalong and Nayapara camps	"Hamonization" exercise approved	Immediate
	Ration card introduced	Immediate
	Food voucher introduced - <i>Planning phase</i>	Immediate
	- <i>Implementation</i>	Effective as of 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2014
In Teknaf and Ukhiya upazilas	Provision of targeted supplementary feeding/ therapeutic feeding and school feeding in communities	Ongoing

### The switch of food assistance modality: the business case

122. Analysis carried out by the JAM team has revealed that the most cost-effective modality for Kutupalong and Nayapara camps is likely to be a mixed transfer consisting of both:

- A voucher, which replaces those commodities currently provided in-kind but can be delivered more economically through local traders, and also nutritious foods that cannot be delivered in the form of in-kind (including proteins from animal sources) and;
- A food ration, which would consist of those commodities that are currently provided in-kind that cannot be delivered more economically through local traders or that are not available on local markets.

123. The business case for switching to this modality is included as an annex to this report<sup>59</sup>. As demonstrated in the business case, a switch to this mixed transfer (voucher/food) is likely to deliver both improved nutritional outcomes (for instance, by introducing food from animal sources into the refugee diet), whilst reducing the overall cost of the programme (most likely, by over USD 1 million over a three-year period). In addition, it would better meet beneficiary preferences and would represent a positive step towards refugees' self-management

124. Within this analysis, the strategy for providing refugees with access to micronutrients through the general ration needs to be reviewed. Currently, the strategy in this regard is to provide households with "Super Cereal" (wheat soya blend) within their food basket. However, as noted above, there are reports of widespread selling of the super cereal on local markets that are under investigation. Should the ongoing WFP-led study confirm that the phenomenon of food selling is of a significant magnitude and that it cannot be contained through improved sensitization on commodity utilization, then alternative means of providing micronutrients may need to be explored, i.e. either by providing micronutrient powders or including additional provision for micronutrient-rich foodstuffs (e.g. fruit, vegetables) on the food voucher.

<sup>59</sup> See Annex 1

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125. Theoretically speaking, a cash transfer would be another possible alternative modality to in-kind food transfers. However, discussions that have taken place with the GoB prior to and during the JAM mission have clearly indicated that there are strong objections to a cash-based modality within the national government based on concerns that it may lead to a 'pull factor' or exacerbate ill feeling towards the refugees within the host community. This being the case, the mixed voucher/food transfer constitutes the best compromise position to all concerned stakeholders, in the sense of respecting the concerns of government on the one hand, while delivering cost effective and nutrition sensitive reforms to the food distribution system on the other.

### r) Final recommendations

126. Based on the above analysis, the JAM team acknowledges the need for renewed policy dialogue on the Rohingya refugee situation, both within Bangladesh and regionally, with a view to making some headway in the identification of durable solutions. In the meantime, efforts in Kutupalong and Nayapara camps should be geared towards implementing those steps that are likely to have the biggest impact in terms of improving the food security, nutrition and protection situation within the camps.

127. The fact that "on hold" cases are not currently getting access to food assistance constitutes a significant exclusion in the targeting of humanitarian assistance, which is undermining the food security and nutritional status of both "on hold" and "active" cases alike. This issue has existed for some time now. Indeed, the JAM report in 2010 highlighted that: *"A critical issue that was identified in the profiling and continues to pre-occupy UNHCR and the Government as well as WFP is the fact that the Government and UNHCR do not work off the same list of registered refugees in the camps...The net effect of the discrepancy means that those not included on the GoB register and consequently not in possession of a family book or listed in one do not receive food rations. The exclusion of so many refugees from food rations has had a detrimental impact on food intake and availability in sufficient quantities. Refugees on the GoB register who receive food are compelled by circumstances to share it with those who do not. The mission is of the view that the malnutrition rate could be lowered if the data is reconciled and all refugees residing in the camps are supplied with food rations"*<sup>60</sup>.

128. The 2012 JAM reconfirms the findings of the 2010 JAM mission and in this regard considers the following to be priority recommendations:

#### **Priority recommendation # 1**

Final decision to be taken on the joint GoB/UNHCR "harmonization" exercise of 2011, so as to enable "on hold" registration cases to get access to the food assistance they need.

129. The family book is no longer an appropriate tool for administering food assistance. It hampers the identification of entitlement-units and holders and also contributes towards conflict and protection concerns within the refugee camps. This finding was already reported in the JAM report in 2010, which noted that: *"...family books which are used as the basis for food distribution are over 18 years old...are in poor condition with some reported to have been sold, bought and entries altered. Discontinuation of the family book system in*

<sup>60</sup> JAM, 2010

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*favour of issuance of standard ration cards would also ensure that better security features are incorporated.*<sup>61</sup>

130. The 2012 JAM reconfirms the findings of the 2010 JAM mission in this regard and considers the following to a priority recommendation:

### **Priority recommendation # 2**

Use of the “family book” for the purposes of administering food assistance be discontinued, a food entitlement (ration) card that is linked to the de facto/nuclear family unit (defined as a group of persons who eat from the same pot) be introduced. The ration card should be in the name of both men and women (in households where both are present).

131. The current food assistance modality is no longer fit for purpose. Improved nutritional outcomes, increased beneficiary choice and self-management, as well as better value for money could be obtained by providing refugees with a wider variety of food commodities than are delivered through the existing food distribution system and if the delivery of such commodities is carried out in partnership with local traders. In light of this, the JAM team recommends that:

### **Priority recommendation # 3**

The existing modality of food assistance to be replaced with an alternative modality based on a combination of a food vouchers and in-kind transfers. Under the alternative modality, food vouchers (redeemable exclusively for pre-agreed food commodities at pre-selected traders) should be introduced for the purposes of delivering those foods that can be delivered more efficiently through the local market as well as those locally available foods that have high nutritious value and are preferred by refugees. However, in-kind provision of food should be maintained for the purposes of delivering those foods that cannot be delivered more efficiently through the local market. The design of the alternative modality and its associated delivery mechanism should be conducted in a participatory and evidence-based manner involving representatives from government, UNHCR and WFP and the refugee community, and should take into account considerations related to nutrition, cost and protection.

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<sup>61</sup> JAM, 2010

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### Annexure Annex 1 Food vouchers: A Business Case

## SCENARIO 1 Food transfer only

Refugees receive a food transfer consisting of: rice (450g); yellow split peas (40g); wheat soya blend+ (50g); fortified vegetable oil (20g); sugar (10g) and; salt (10g)<sup>62</sup>.

FOOD BASKET		NUTRITIONAL VALUE			OPERATIONAL COSTS (USD/MT)					TOTAL	
Commodity	Ration g/p/day	Energy k/cal	Protein g/p/day	Fat g/p/day	WFP food purchase	Transport costs		Food distribution	Total	Tonnage (MT)	Cost (USD)
						External	Internal				
Rice	450	1,638	31.5	2.3	375	0	0	21	396	14,783	5,853,870
Yellow split peas	40	134	8.8	0.6	478	80	7.58	21	587	1,314	770,766
What soya blend+	50	185	10.0	3.0	675	79	7.58	21	783	1,643	1,285,388
Fortified vegetable oil	20	177	0.0	20.0	925	40	7.58	21	994	657	652,782
Sugar	10	40	0.0	0.0	665	50	7.58	21	744	329	244,266
Salt	10	0	0.0	0.0	250	0	0	21	271	329	89,024
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>580</b>	<b>2,174</b>	<b>50.3</b>	<b>25.9</b>							<b>8,896,095</b>
<b>Minimum daily requirements</b>		<b>2,100</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>40</b>							
<b>Recommended daily allowance (%)</b>		<b>104</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>65</b>							

The overall cost of the programme is **USD 8,896,095**<sup>63</sup>. The transfer provides refugees with 104 percent, 96 percent and 65 percent of their recommended daily allowance for energy, protein and fat respectively. However, it contains no food from animal sources.

<sup>62</sup> Food basket currently being given to refugees in Kutupalong and Nayapara camps. Scenario 1 constitutes a continuation of the *status quo*.

<sup>63</sup> Assuming a caseload of 30,000 refugees and a programme duration of 3 years

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**SCENARIO 2**  
*Mixed transfer (Voucher/Food)*

VOUCHER							
VALUE VOUCHER		Transport costs (USD)		VOUCHER DISTRIBUTION & MONITORING (USD)		TOTAL (USD)	
USD/person /day	TOTAL						
0.20	6,363,205	0		354,583			6,717,788
<b>SUB-TOTAL (VOUCHER)</b>						<b>6,671,788</b>	
FOOD							
FOOD BASKET		OPERATIONAL COSTS (USD/MT)				TOTAL	
Commodity	Ration g/p/day	WFP food purchase	Transport costs		Food distribution	Tonnage (MT)	Cost (USD)
			External	Internal			
Fortified vegetable oil	30	925	40	7.58	21	993.58	1,114
<b>SUB-TOTAL (FOOD)</b>							<b>979,173</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL (VOUCHER/FOOD)</b>							<b>7,696,961</b>

Refugees receive: 1) a **voucher** equivalent to USD 0.19 per person per day and; 2) a **food transfer** consisting of: fortified vegetable oil (30g)

The overall cost of the programme is **USD 7,696,961**<sup>64</sup>.

CONVERSION (VOUCHER → FOOD)			NUTRITIONAL VALUE		
USD	Commodity	g/person/day	Energy k/cal	Protein g/person/day	Fat g/person/day
0.12	Rice	450	1,638	32	2
0.02	Lentils	40	135	11	0
0.00	Salt	5	-	-	-
0.04	Dried fish	10	37	8	1
0.01	Sugar	9	40	-	-
<b>0.19</b>	<b>Recommended daily allowance (%)</b>		<b>88</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>8</b>

Nutritionally speaking, the voucher can provide refugees with an adequate and nutritionally balanced diet. The value of the voucher (USD 0.20/person/day) can be converted on local markets into: rice (450g); lentils (40g); salt (5g); dried fish (10g) and; sugar (9g). This constitutes 88 percent, 93 percent and 8 percent of the recommended daily allowance for energy, protein and fat respectively.

Considering the fact the refugees receiving the mixed transfer *would also be provided with a food transfer of fortified vegetable oil (30g)*, the overall nutritional value of the mixed transfer would be *100 percent, 93 percent and 83 percent for energy, protein and fat respectively.*

<sup>64</sup> Assuming a caseload of 30,000 refugees and a programme duration of 3 years

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### COMPARISON

	PARAMETER	
	<i>Programme cost (USD)</i>	<i>Nutritional value (RDA)</i>
<b>SCENARIO 1</b> <i>Food transfer only</i>	8,896,095	104% (energy), 96% (protein) and 65% (fat)
<b>SCENARIO 2</b> <i>Mixed transfer (voucher/food)</i>	7,696,961	100% (energy), 93% (protein) and 83% (fat) <i>(some of which comes from animal sources)</i>

### CONCLUSION

Based on the above analysis, we see that that Scenario 2 (Mixed transfer) is more cost-efficient than Scenario 1 (Food transfer only).

This is because the mixed transfer (voucher/food):

- provides overall cost savings of over USD 1 million
- provides comparable amounts of energy, protein and fat, while introducing food from animal sources into the diet



## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Joint Assessment Mission: Myanmar refugees in Bangladesh December 2012

United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)  
United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)



#### a. Background

The Rohingya are an ethnic, linguistic Muslim minority from Northern Rakhine State (NRS) of Myanmar that are *de jure* stateless in accordance with Myanmar's restrictive 1982 citizenship legislation. The systematic and continuous persecution of the Rohingya has resulted in them frequently seeking safety in Bangladesh over the past five decades. The most recent *large* influx of the Rohingya took place from late 1991 to early 1992 when around 250,000 Rohingya sought refuge in Cox's Bazar District, Bangladesh, as a consequence of a campaign of religious and ethnic persecution against their community.

A process of repatriation began in September 1992 and by mid-1997 about 230,000 refugees had returned to Myanmar, leaving a residual group of around 20,000. Repatriation peaked again in 2003 but there has been no repatriation since 2005 and there is currently no willingness to repatriate among the Rohingya population in Bangladesh. This has been due to the ongoing human rights abuses in NRS such as restricted freedom of movement, lack of religious freedom, discriminatory practices on marriage and birth registration, extortion, land confiscation, forced labour – all in effect linked to the lack of recognition as citizens of Myanmar. More recently safe and voluntary return became a dimmer prospect with the outbreak of inter-ethnic violence in NRS in June 2012.

Bangladesh continues to host large numbers of Rohingya that can be divided into three groups:

- *Registered refugees living in official camps:* As of 30 September 2012, 30,260 Rohingya refugees living in Kutupalong and Nayapara camps who are registered with UNHCR,<sup>65</sup> most of them from families who did not repatriate during the large-scale returns of the late 1970s and early 1990s. Of these, only 24,190 are registered as refugees with the Government of Bangladesh (GoB)<sup>66</sup> and entitled to receive the general food ration provided by the World Food Programme, as per GoB policy. All camp refugees regardless of their registration status receive non-food items, shelter assistance and have access to the basic primary education and health facilities in the camps.
- *Unregistered refugees living in makeshift camps:* An estimated 22,000 unrecognized refugees who have congregated since April 2008 in a makeshift camp on the fringes of Kutupalong camp, as well as another 14,000 who in July 2008 were relocated to Leda site, seven kilometres from Nayapara camp.<sup>67</sup> Limited humanitarian assistance to this group of refugees is provided
- *Unregistered refugees living in host communities:* Numbering 150,000, they are also considered to be of concern to UNHCR as stateless persons in a refugee-like situation<sup>68</sup> and in need of international protection and assistance. While the majority of them are concentrated in the areas

<sup>65</sup> UNHCR Camp Population Report, September 2012.

<sup>66</sup> BDRCS distribution report

<sup>67</sup> UNHCR PDES Evaluation "States of Denial", 2011

<sup>68</sup> UNHCR Estimate of Undocumented Refugees in Bangladesh, August 2012

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of Ukhiya and Teknaf (both south of Cox's Bazar), considerable numbers can also be found in Cox's Bazar town itself as well as all other parts of the district. They only have sporadic access to services and are rarely benefiting directly from humanitarian assistance, food or services.

The GoB maintains that repatriation is the only solution for the refugees and is opposed to the concept of local integration. To encourage repatriation and discourage a further influx, the GoB has placed restrictions on the refugees' access to incomes and livelihoods. Policies such as the prohibition of refugees possessing cash or opening bank accounts, limited access to higher education and the restriction of movement in and out of the camps hinder the attainment of refugee self-reliance and perpetuate refugee dependence on humanitarian assistance.

There have been several major changes in the overall situation since the 2010 JAM. These include:

- *The UN Joint Initiative (UNJI)*: recognizing the high level of vulnerability in Teknaf and Ukhiya in Cox's Bazar District, the UNJI was a joint proposal from UN agencies to coordinate their planning and bring improved assistance and services to the most vulnerable communities in the area, whether they be Bangladeshi or Rohingya. Donor countries made tentative pledges of \$33 million. The UNJI was, however, ultimately rejected by the GoB in 2011.
- *New violence in NRS (Myanmar) in 2012*: A new outbreak of inter-ethnic violence between Muslim and Rakhine Buddhist communities in NRS (Myanmar) occurred in June 2012, resulting in at least 88 deaths and the displacement of an estimated 90,000 people. More recently, further outbreaks of violence in October/November 2012 have resulted in further deaths and the displacement of yet more people. These events have led to a new wave of border-crossing attempts by Rohingya from Myanmar to Bangladesh in the latter half of 2012. Nevertheless, the GoB policy has remained the same and attempted influxes have been pushed back by Bangladesh border authorities.

The proposed Joint Assessment Mission (JAM) is very timely, not only because it is standard practice for UNHCR and WFP to conduct periodic review of their operations, but also due to several issues of concern related to the food security and nutrition status of the Rohingya refugees. These include the continuance of high levels of malnutrition (acute and chronic) in the official camps and the ongoing search for durable solutions by UNHCR and WFP, in partnership with the Government of Bangladesh.

### **b. Purpose**

The purpose of the JAM is to contribute to a better understanding of the vulnerabilities and capacities of the refugees with regards to their food and nutritional status and the most cost-effective means of safeguarding their food security and nutrition. It will also assess the potential and risks for self-reliance (pending a durable solution). On the basis of the above, it will provide recommendations for future programming,

### **c. Objectives**

The JAM has three over-arching objectives:

1. Assess the food security and nutrition situation;
2. Assess the potential and risks for self-reliance;
3. Provide recommendations for future programming.

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### **d. Over-arching Objectives**

Under each over-arching objective, there are a number of specific objectives, namely:

#### **OBJECTIVE ONE**

##### ***Assess the food security and nutrition situation***

#### ***Health/Nutrition/Food Security***

- i. Review the food security and nutritional status of the refugees and the immediate and underlying causes of food insecurity and undernutrition in the camps; Identify households at particularly high risk of food insecurity and undernutrition and provide recommendations on how their nutrition and food security situation can be strengthened;
- ii. Assess the adequacy (quantity and quality) and acceptability (preferred commodities, sale) of the food basket ration, including current sources of micronutrient fortification and feasible alternatives;
- iii. Review the current food assistance and distribution system, explore alternative options and provide recommendations on options that would best promote food security and nutrition;
- iv. Assess the therapeutic, supplementary and school feeding programs, including the quality of the monitoring system, and provide recommendations on how the quality of these programs can be enhanced;
- v. Assess the public health situation and access to health services, and WASH facilities with particular reference to the impact on health, nutrition and food security;
- vi. Explore options for better management of health and nutrition services by shifting from camp-focused support to local area facilities that can be accessed by both the local and refugee population ;
- vii. Review the behavioural change communication (BCC) interventions for nutrition, food security/general food ration and related objectives and provide recommendations to enhance these programs.

#### ***Protection/Community Services***

- i. Assess factors that inhibit the receipt of entitlements by vulnerable/at risk individuals, and their impact on food security and nutrition;
- ii. Review the current arrangements for identifying food recipients to see if they are adequate;;
- iii. Review the inter-relation between the provision of food assistance and the enhancement of protection among refugees;

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- iv. Assess current mechanisms for refugee participation in camp activities, management and coordination and provide recommendations on how these can be strengthened to achieve better food security and nutrition outcomes;

### **OBJECTIVE TWO**

#### ***Assess the potential and risks for self-reliance***

- i. Assess refugees' current livelihood practices and coping mechanisms and assess their impact on self-reliance;
- ii. Re-assess possibilities for the creation and expansion of livelihood opportunities for the refugees in and outside of the camps;
- iii. Present the pros, cons and implications of new measures and assistance interventions that could improve the self-reliance of the refugees in the next three years, pending a durable solution, including re-assessing the possibilities for livelihood opportunities for the refugees;

### **OBJECTIVE THREE**

#### ***Provide recommendations for future programming***

- i. describe the extent to which recommendations of previous JAMs and other related operational reviews have been implemented, the outcomes of those actions and/or the reasons for incomplete action;
- ii. review the efficiency and effectiveness of the existing transfer modality for food assistance and provide recommendations;
- iii. describe the prospects for durable solutions and the probable scenarios for the next three years;

#### ***Distribution/Logistics***

- iv. Assess the food distribution system with particular reference to efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and the promotion of protection objectives and refugee participation, particularly women;
- v. Assess the logistical aspects of the current food assistance system including: logistics management, adequacy of storage facilities and handling practices, timeliness and regularity of deliveries, food basket monitoring system, cost-effectiveness, losses, and possibilities to reduce constraints and increase efficiency;

#### **e. Cross-cutting issues**

In addition to the above, the JAM should bear in mind the following cross-cutting issues:

- Protection
- Age, gender and diversity mainstreaming
- Public health

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### **f. Methodology**

Information will be collected and compiled using a combination of methods including: i) Literature review; ii) Consultation and; iii) Direct observation in the official refugee camps.

#### *i. Literature review*

The JAM will carry out a thorough analysis of existing studies and surveys that have already been conducted with relation to the refugee caseload. A comprehensive list of the studies and the surveys will be circulated within the JAM team one week prior to the commencement of the mission.

#### *ii. Consultation*

The JAM will carry out consultations with the following stakeholders:

- Representatives of government at central level and also in the area in question (e.g. local and camp authorities);
- Representatives of UNHCR and WFP (both headquarter- and field-based staff), as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which have a presence in the area;
- Refugee community leaders;
- Refugees (using participatory approaches such as focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews with refugee women, men, young /adolescent females and young / adolescent males separately );
- Food traders working on markets inside and outside the camps;
- local community leaders, health officials and education officers

#### *iii. Direct observation*

The JAM will make direct observations in the official refugee camps of the following:

- refugees' general living conditions, e.g. households, cooking areas, around water sources, toilets/defecation areas and storage areas);
- food and water availability and cooking arrangements in a sample of households, and informal discussions with women, men and children in the household;
- food distribution operations, selective feeding programmes, school feeding activities and skills training activities;
- clinics, schools and other community services; discussions with health workers, teachers and community service workers;
- local supply depots and camp warehouses.

When the analysis is complete – and before finalizing the report – the JAM team will convene a specially-convened wrap-up meeting, whereupon the provisional findings and recommendations of the assessment will be presented to the host Government, other concerned agencies of the United Nations (UN), the major donors and relevant NGOs. The purpose of the meeting will be to endeavor to receive the endorsement of the findings by parties and their support for the recommendations.



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The draft report will be prepared in the standard format, and will be submitted to the UNHCR Representative and the WFP Representative upon the completion of the mission.

### g. Deliverables

The deliverable of the JAM mission will be a **concise report** (in the standard format) which:

- Summaries the findings and analysis;
- Highlights the changes that have occurred in the general situation since the last joint assessment;
- Describes the extent to which previous recommendations have been implemented, the outcomes of those actions and/or the reasons for no action;
- Presents the implications of various possible measures that could improve the food security, nutritional status and self-reliance of the refugees;
- Describes any logistic constraints and proposes measures to increase capacity and efficiency, where possible, and provides cost estimates for those measures;
- Provides (in light of all the above) recommendations for specific objectives and a strategic plan for food security and self-reliance for the next three years, and the corresponding actions to be taken by the government, WFP, UNHCR and other partners.

### h. Team composition

Duty station	Agency	Designation	Name
Regional Bureaux (Bangkok)	UNHCR	Senior Regional HIV Coordinator	Herve Isambert
	WFP	Programme Officer Regional Programme Adviser Regional Programme Adviser Regional Protection Adviser	Carla Lacerda Elliot Vhurumuku Olivia Wellesley-Cole
Country Office (Dhaka)	UNHCR	Senior Protection Officer	Pia Paguio
	WFP	Head of Programme Programme Officer Programme Officer	Jimi Richardson Monira Parveen Kayenat Kabir
Sub-Offices (Cox's Bazaar)	UNHCR	Senior Field Coordinator Assistant Public Health Officer Senior Programme Assistant ( Nutrition) Protection Officer	Kazuhiro Kaneko M.M Taimur Hasan Md. Mezanur Rahman Lorett Jesudoss
	WFP	Head of Sub-Office	Min Wah Voon

### i. Time-frame

The JAM mission will take place during the period from 1<sup>st</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> December 2012. The report will be finalized and submitted before the end of 2012.

### *Previous Joint Assessment Missions*

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- 1993** First joint food assessment mission (JFAM) was undertaken- Food basket and ration scale amounting to 2,221 kcal for general distribution proposed
- 1996** Second JFAM
- Ration scale adjusted to reflect changes in the demographic composition of the populations with a higher percentage of women and children
- 1998** Third joint JFAM
- Ration scale was further revised to 2,007 kcal's per day per person to match the demographic profile and activity level of the refugees
  - Blended food introduced
- 1999** Household Food Security Study carried out
- 2001** Household Food Security Study carried out – no JFAM during this period
- As a result of these studies, the basic food ration of WFP provided 2,160 kcal per person/day, including 49g protein and 29g fat
- 2002** Fourth JFAM - no change in food basket
- 2004** Fifth JFAM - no change in food basket
- 2006** Joint Assessment Mission (JAM) carried out
- Dried skimmed milk removed from selective feeding programmes because of issues related to food safety and leakage
  - Food For Work (FFW) activities stopped as was not meeting objective of improving relations with host community
- 2008** Joint Assessment Mission (JAM) took place in June
- No change in food basket, increased emphasis on self-reliance
- 2010** Joint Assessment Mission (JAM) took place in May-June
- No change in food basket
  - Emphasis was on joint verification and harmonization of the list of refugees living in the camps
  - Proposed UN joint initiative for interventions for undocumented refugees living outside the camps

**JOINT ASSESSMENT MISSION***Myanmar Refugees in Cox's Bazar District, Bangladesh (December 2012)***Annex 3 List of JAM participants**

<b>TEAM</b>	<b>MEMBERS</b>
Team 1 <b>Distribution/Logistics/Markets/Vouchers</b>	Jimi Richardson Carla La Cerda Kayenet Kabir Kazuhiro Kaneko
Team 2 <b>Health/WASH</b>	Herve Isambert M.M Taimur Hasan
Team 3 <b>Nutrition</b>	Monira Parveen Md. Mezanur Rahman
Team 4 <b>Food Security/Livelihoods /Self-Reliance</b>	Elliot Vhurumuku Min Wah Voon Masing Newar
Team 5 <b>Protection/Community Services/Camp Management and Coordination</b>	Olivia Wellesley-Cole Lorett Jesudoss

## JOINT ASSESSMENT MISSION

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### Annex 4 JAM Assessment Objectives

Assessment areas	Responsible teams				
	1	2	3	4	5
<b>OBJECTIVE ONE: Assess the food security and nutrition situation</b>					
Review the food security and nutritional status of the refugees and the immediate and underlying causes of food insecurity and undernutrition in the camps; Identify households at particularly high risk of food insecurity and undernutrition and provide recommendations on how their nutrition and food security situation can be strengthened;					
Assess the adequacy (quantity and quality) and acceptability (preferred commodities, sale) of the food basket ration, including current sources of micronutrient fortification and feasible alternatives;					
Review the current food assistance and distribution system, explore alternative options and provide recommendations on options that would best promote food security and nutrition;					
Assess the therapeutic, supplementary and school feeding programs, including the quality of the monitoring system, and provide recommendations on how the quality of these programs can be enhanced;					
Assess the public health situation and access to health services, and WASH facilities with particular reference to the impact on health, nutrition and food security;					
Explore options for better management of health and nutrition services by shifting from camp-focused support to local area facilities that can be accessed by both the local and refugee population ;					
Review the behavioural change communication (BCC) interventions for nutrition, food security/general food ration and related objectives and provide recommendations to enhance these programs.					
Assess factors that inhibit the receipt of entitlements by vulnerable/at risk individuals, and their impact on food security and nutrition					
Review the current arrangements for identifying food recipients to see if they are adequate					
Review the inter-relation between the provision of food assistance and the enhancement of protection among refugees;					
Assess current mechanisms for refugee participation in camp activities, management and coordination and provide recommendations on how these can be strengthened to achieve better food security and nutrition outcomes;					
<b>OBJECTIVE TWO: Assess the potential and risks for self-reliance</b>					
Assess refugees' current livelihood practices and coping mechanisms and assess their impact on self-reliance;					
Re-assess possibilities for the creation and expansion of livelihood opportunities for the refugees in/outside the camps;					
Present the pros, cons and implications of new measures and assistance interventions that could improve the self-reliance of the refugees in the next three years, pending a durable solution,					

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including re-assessing the possibilities for livelihood opportunities for the refugees;					
<b>OBJECTIVE THREE: Provide recommendations for future programming</b>					
describe the extent to which recommendations of previous JAMs and other related operational reviews have been implemented, the outcomes of those actions and/or the reasons for incomplete action;					
review the efficiency and effectiveness of the existing transfer modality for food assistance and provide recommendations; ( <i>efficiency = team 1, effectiveness = everyone</i> )					
describe the prospects for durable solutions and the probable scenarios for the next three years;					
Assess the food distribution system with particular reference to efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and the promotion of protection objectives and refugee participation, particularly women;					
Assess the logistical aspects of the current food assistance system including: logistics management, adequacy of storage facilities and handling practices, timeliness and regularity of deliveries, food basket monitoring system, cost-effectiveness, losses, and possibilities to reduce constraints and increase efficiency;					

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**Annex 5: Camp Mortality Rates 2012**

Home [Global](#) > Asia and the Pacific 2012

Location Time Emergencies

- Central Asia
- East Asia and the Pacific
- South Asia
- South East Asia
- 



## Asia and the Pacific

You are viewing the Regional Dashboard for Asia and the Pacific

**Key facts**

<a href="#">General</a> <a href="#">Staffing (UNHCR)</a> <a href="#">Staffing (partners)</a>	
Population	1,666,271
Operation	Protracted
Countries	11
Locations	95
Camps	90
Urban	5
HIS in use	Yes
Locations using HIS	20
Source: UNHCR Online Statistical Database; UNHCR HIS	

**Indicators by location**

<a href="#">Public Health</a> <a href="#">Outbreaks</a> <a href="#">Nutrition</a> <a href="#">Reproductive Health</a> <a href="#">SGBV</a> <a href="#">HIV/AIDS</a> <a href="#">Water</a>	
<a href="#">Sanitation</a> <a href="#">HIS Performance</a>	
	<b>CMR</b> <b>U5MR</b> <b>IMR</b> <b>NNMR</b> <b>Number of maternal deaths</b>
Bangladesh	0.4      0.4      7.1      0      1
Nepal	0.4      0.5      20.2      20.2      0
Thailand	0.4      0.3      8.3      0      0
Source: UNHCR HIS	

***Annex 6: Kutapalong PPHIV Camp Fact Sheet 2011***

See attached

***Annex 7: Nayapara PPHIV Camp Fact Sheet 2011***

See attached

***Annex 8: WFP Market Assessment***

See attached