

In The Loop

Refugee Voices Bulletin

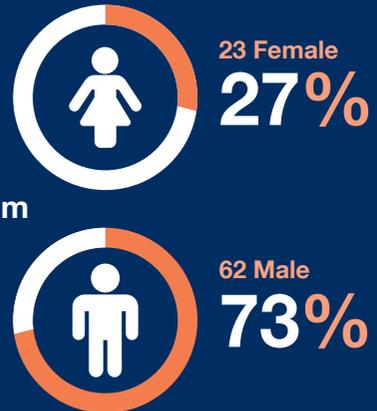
“In The Loop” is a bi-weekly data-driven humanitarian feedback newsletter, produced to inform organizations and local authorities delivering services to refugees, returnees, and host communities in Dadaab. Internews aims to achieve two-way humanitarian communications for closing feedback loops to support the humanitarian community’s effort to put the concerns and feedback of the affected populations at the forefront of their service delivery to enhance accountability. The Community feedback used in this report is sampled from recorded Vox pop interviews, social media platforms, virtual community roundtable discussions between partners and community leaders and other feedback collected from the weekly live radio call-in show (Bilan) broadcasted in Dadaab by Star FM’s Radio Gargaar 97.1FM. The topics of discussion were “The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on Ramadan” and “The rise of SGBV in the wake of COVID-19”.

A total of 85 comments were recorded in the week of April 27 - May 10, 2020.

Methods of data collection



Data collected from
85 persons



HEALTH & LIVELIHOOD

The disease has had a huge impact on the refugees, particularly the very poor who used to break their fast with other families. We need help.

Adult, Male, Hagadera Camp.

While the pandemic presents imminent dangers for everyone, here in Dadaab the lockdown measures are making people’s life depressing, compounding the refugees’ troubles. We profoundly rely on daily wages to earn a living, and work is hard to come by. May the Lord end this pandemic.

Adult, Male, Dagahaley Camp.

The whole world is struggling to combat COVID-19; consequently, the directives by the government are a good initiative to fight Coronavirus. Many people are unaware of how the virus outbreak has paralyzed the entire world.

Adult, Male, Ifo Camp.

The Coronavirus impact among the refugees is huge, particularly for the poor people who used to depend on breaking their fast with meals provided at the mosques. May the lord ease this catastrophe upon us.

Adult, Female, Dagahaley Camp.

The disease is having a major impact on transport services and trade movement. Businesses are losing because during the Ramadan season they used to peak.

Adult, Male, Dagahaley Camp.

Coronavirus has paralyzed Ramadan’s spirit and activities. We cannot share meals to break the fast with the poor due to the curfew, not to mention the lack of congregation prayers and praying in solitude at home. Since we are marking the holy month of Ramadan, let us pray to God for this pandemic to end. We request organizations to increase their assistance.

Adult, Male, Hagadera Camp.

The Coronavirus has entirely disrupted the worshipping acts observed during the month of Ramadan. The poor are also suffering due to the absence of organized meals to break their fast.

Adult, Female, Ifo Camp.

Coronavirus has affected our livelihood conditions. You see people saying I am fasting the whole day, and I do not have anything to break my fast with. May God protect us from this pandemic.

Adult, Male, Dagahaley Camp.

The disease has impacted our livelihoods. I am a madrassa teacher, and we remain closed following the directives by the government. There is tension in my household, I cannot provide, and my wife and the kids are on my case. I would appeal to humanitarian organizations to help us during this crisis. I would also request the government to revoke the directives.

Adult, Male, Dagahaley Camp.

Let us help the poor during this Ramadhan period because they need our support, we all know Ramadan is centered around helping the poor.

Adult, Male, Hagadera Camp.

We used to be heavily reliant on breaking our fast with meals provided at the Mosques. We also used to share meals with better-off families. The curfew and the closure of the mosque got us very vulnerable. Please, we need options replacing the communal meals.

Adult, Female, Dadaab.

The impact of the disease is great so much so that it has impoverished families who previously could at least afford meals.

Adult, Male, Dagahaley Camp.

Coronavirus and its ensuing measures to protect its transmission have affected everybody, but then nothing supersedes the health of a nation. Let us be patient and pray for the end of this pandemic. I would request organizations to double and triple whatever assistance they used to give to the refugees because they are very vulnerable and cannot withstand sudden shock.

Adult, Male, Dadaab.

Need for Mosquito Nets

We would like to be provided with mosquito nets because we are in the rainy season.

Block leaders, Hagadera Camp.

Lack of airtime for communication in awareness creation by community leaders

For us to convey information to agencies we need airtime to facilitate our communication.

Hagadera community leaders.

PROTECTION

It is very unfortunate that we subject women to violence and violate their rights. Our religion is against any kind of violence. We should train our children from an early age by taking them to religious schools, it will help shape their behavior, enabling them to stay away from violence and condemn it. I would request religious leaders and organizations to do awareness on the GBV to prevent it from escalation.

Adult, Male, Hagadera Camp.

It is sad to hear gender-based violence cases always. I think they are occurring because of the idleness of the youth following the closure of the learning institutions. I would ask everyone working in the protection sector and the public to share their solidarity in condemning and preventing violence and take legal action against the perpetrators.

Adult, Male, Dadaab

The refugee community is vulnerable to any situation. There is not enough food and medication. If Coronavirus hits them, it will be a disaster.

Adult, Male, Dadaab.

COVID-19 has disrupted social interactions, livelihoods, and the ability to earn a living triggering family breakdown due to stress and conflicts at the household level.

Adult Male, Dagahaley Camp.

It is an embarrassing and shameful thing to abuse girls and women at a time the world's focus is on combating the COVID_19 pandemic. I would call upon Kenya government and human rights organizations to intervene in the prevention and mitigation of these depressive situations that women and girls experience.

Adult, Male, Dadaab.

Domestic violence has increased since Coronavirus started. May God protect us from this disease.

Adult, Male, Dadaab

Girls are suffering; they are many girls who are raped but never reported to the concerned authorities. Families from both sides meet and resolve the matter at home without taking the victim for a check-up and medical care. At times, the victim can bleed to death.

Adult, Male, Dagahaley Camp.

Coronavirus has brought so many things that we could not have imagined, including violence against women. Abuses are more common than ever before. Besides, they are more cases than the reported ones.

Adult, Female, Dadaab.

Women encounter a lot of problems including bearing the brunt of increased care work during this pandemic period owing to schools' closure and presence of family members at home. Moreover, they also cope with the additional stress of economic and job losses. This allows women abusers to harass them. Some of the prevalent acts of violence are physical assault and female genital mutilation.

Adult, Female, Hagadera Camp.

As a result of the school's closure, youth are idling resorting to harassing girls. You cannot send out a girl to run an errand for you because boys would provoke them.

Adult, Female, Dagahaley Camp.

FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS

Ramadan support for the vulnerable!

Some people lack meals to break their fast. We did not get any support during this Ramadan. There used to be a lot of help during the Ramadan period, but we are yet to receive any assistance this time from agencies.

Block leaders, Hagadera Camp.

SHELTER

The rains are here, provide us with shelter!

The rains have started, and some community members' shelters have been swept by water, while others do not even have shelter.

SUGGESTIONS

How should UNHCR and partners respond to community feedback?

- Considering the pandemic circumstances, individuals and families who are already struggling to survive may be poised to suffer more than usual and face negative economic shocks. There is a need, therefore, to provide sustenance solutions such as bulk food and non-food solutions to see them through the pandemic.



What Partners are doing

Below are some of the activities, assistance, and initiatives carried out by partners in response to COVID-19 in Dadaab refugee camp.

- TDH conducts case management for children from separated, unaccompanied and vulnerable families, and supports them with cash payment voucher plan of KES 5,000 per month.
- Our community workers are still working for the community and managing cases. We do counselling on telephone, and if the case is sensitive and confidential, we do it on the ground, but we do social distancing measures by abiding to the 1.5-meter rule and wearing of masks.
- We have a weekly radio program on Radio Gargaar to convey COVID-19 messages developed and approved by protection partners to sensitize community members.

Abdi Ali | Child Protection BID Officer – TDH

- We conduct daily visits by health workers to households to do social mobilization in a bid to ensure consistent information sharing by community members on emerging trends to ensure continuity of services during COVID-19 emergency.
- Educating and advising communities on best behavior’s amid COVID-19 pandemic, and airing radio talk show and spots messaging on Coronavirus via Gargaar radio.

Patrick Omollo | Community Health Promotion Officer - IRC

- Coordination with MoH, County government, RAS, and partners to ‘stay and deliver’ for refugees and other persons of concern to ensure delivery and access to life-saving services including food, water, health, nutrition, and protection.
- UNHCR has provided PPE to the medical personnel and some have undergone training on preparedness and response to the pandemic. Working with the host community and refugee community on preparedness, prevention, and response mechanisms to mitigate the spread of the Coronavirus through provision and sensitization on hygiene promotion, handwashing with soap, use of hand sanitizers, and increased social distancing.
- On core Protection, protection services are ongoing, UNHCR is coordinating the remote case management of child protection, prevention, and response to SGBV and support to persons with specific needs (PWDs, elderly, etc). We are working with the SGBV partners to monitor the SGBV trends.
- Coordination with RAS to revamp and strengthen refugee community structures on ways of reporting and giving information related to the pandemic to the government and agencies. Refugee leaders have been urged to give information on people coming to the camps so that they can undergo medical screening before they interact with the community.

Nicholas O. Midiwo | Assistant Protection Officer - UNHCR