

EVALUATION OF 2018/2019

WINTERIZATION ASSISTANCE TO UNACCOMPANIED AND SEPARATED CHILDREN



1. Introduction

Winterization programmes are programmes implemented by the UN to support refugees to cope with the weather conditions during the coldest months of the winter. The winterization assistance 2018-2019 in Egypt was delivered based on a winter Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) of EGP 1000 (approximately USD 56) calculated to meet the basic additional needs for personal clothing, blankets, heating and electricity bills in the winter period. Within the programme, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency and UNICEF developed a joint initiative to assist 3,163 unaccompanied and separated children across the country, covering the majority of the UASC present in Egypt at the moment of the distribution. Following distribution, and with the objective of assessing the impact of the programme as well as informing the programme design for future collaborative interventions between the two organizations, a quantitative evaluation was conducted on the administration of cash and its utilization.

2. Programme Overview

2.1 Target and Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB)

Over the years, to meet the additional needs during the winter season of refugees and asylum-seekers in Egypt, of whom 40% is represented by children, UNHCR and UNICEF have developed a joint cash assistance programme.

For the winter 2018-2019 UNHCR and UNICEF developed a joint winterization programme which had initially foreseen to assist 3,800 unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) and 300 vulnerable refugee families with children with a cash grant of EGP 1,000 which is equivalent to the entire winter Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) for refugees in Egypt. The MEB has been calculated based on the initial price validation of winter items in accordance with the choices made by refugees followed by a pricing data collection. The market assessment resulted in computation of EGP 994 (approximately USD 56) required for refugees and asylum-seekers to meet additional needs for clothing, blankets, heating and electricity bills in the winter period. The target group was identified through UNHCR's ProGres database. All UASC registered by UNHCR as of November 2018 were included in the beneficiaries' list which resulted in an increase of the initial target of 3,800 children. At the time of identification and list generation, a total of 4,097 UASC (3,608 cases) were registered with UNHCR. In addition, a total of 300 families with children were also targeted for inclusion as part of the winterization programme. The below tables show nationality and geographical distribution of both target groups.

Table 1: Nationality and geographic distribution of the target UASC

	Eritrea	Ethiopia	Somalia	South Sudan	Sudan	Syria	Others	Total
Cairo	129	415	342	494	189	136	20	1,725
Giza	1,211	20	93	14	83	34	30	1,485
6 th October	25	3	5	7	109	169	6	324
Alexandria	1		5	18	9	119	5	157
Helwan	3	64	2	27	15		1	112
Qalyubia	2				6	95		103
Sharkia					1	54		55
Damietta						38		38
Suez	26		3		2		1	32
Dakahliya			2			17	1	20
Monofiya						14		14
Other						32		32
Grand Total	1,397	502	452	560	414	708	64	4,097

Table 2: Nationality and geographic distribution of the target families

	Eritrea	Ethiopia	Somalia	South Sudan	Sudan	Others	Total
Cairo		6	6	47	115	4	178
Giza	15			2	33	1	51
6 th October	5		3		37		45
Helwan	1	2		4	15	1	23
Other				1	2		3
Grand Total	21	8	9	54	202	6	300



“UNHCR and UNICEF developed a joint winterization programme which had initially foreseen to assist **3,800** unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) and **300** vulnerable refugee families with children with a cash grant of **EGP 1000**”



2.2 Information Campaign

A general communication message was jointly developed and, in parallel to the list generation process, an information campaign was launched on winterization assistance. Posters in Arabic, English, French, Oromo, Somali, and Tigrinya explaining what the assistance consists of, who is eligible, and how to collect it, were widely displayed in UNHCR and other partners' premises. Information was also posted on UNHCR Egypt social media pages (mainly Facebook). Partners and other stakeholders were also notified of the distribution plan through the Cash and Basic Needs and Communication with Communities Working Groups. UNHCR and partners' community outreach activities, information desks and call centres, where direct interaction with refugees and asylum-seekers occurs, were also platforms used to spread information on the winterization assistance for UASC.



2.3 Distribution Plan and Delivery mechanisms

The distribution of winterization assistance was conducted from 11 December 2018 to 31 January 2019. Two main delivery mechanisms were used to distribute the cash grant, either direct disbursement of cash to the individuals or ATM pre-paid cards for UASC who already receive UNHCR monthly cash assistance and therefore have previously been issued the card. Children received a text message notifying them that the grant had been deposited on their cards and advising them to cash it before the end of January 2019. This group of recipients could collect their assistance directly from over 425 ATM machines of the Bank of Alexandria across the country. The cards could also be used with other ATM machines but at an additional fee.

UASC who are not currently part of the monthly cash assistance programme and, as a result, did not possess ATM cards received their winterization cash assistance from Caritas offices in Cairo, Alexandria or Damietta. Children were notified via a text message (SMS) with the exact appointment date and time. A dedicated team of cashiers disbursed the grants to the UASC, supported by child protection caseworkers, social workers and finance assistants to respond to any additional questions or concerns from the children and their caregivers. For families, assistance was paid in cash through the Egypt Post Office from one of the over 4,200 branches of the Post Office spread across Egypt.

“For families, assistance was paid in cash through the Egypt Post Office from one of the over **4,200** branches of the Post Office spread across Egypt.”

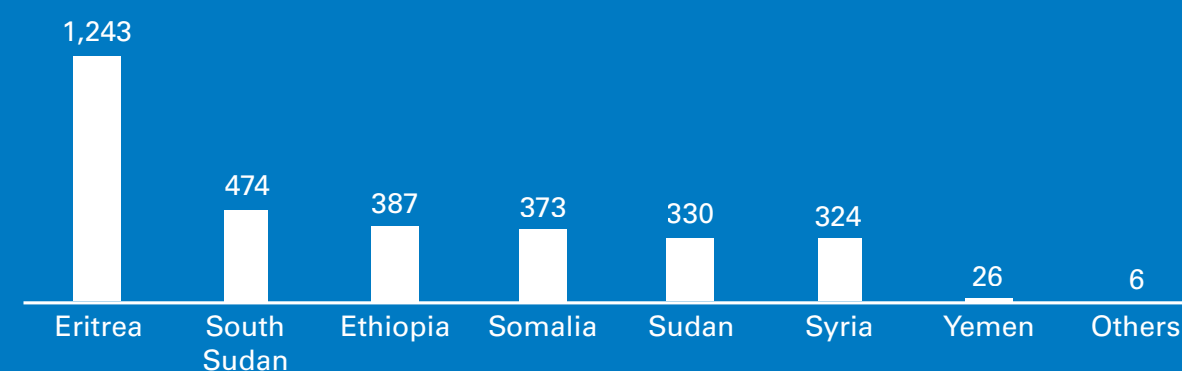


2.4 Programme results

By the end of the distribution period, a **total of 3,163 unaccompanied and separated children (2,780 cases)** were supported across the country which represented 77 percent of the targeted UASC. A review of the profiles of UASC which did not collect their assistance is planned during the year.

The majority of the supported UASC are between 12 and 17 years of age. In terms of nationality, 40 percent of the beneficiaries are Eritreans followed by South Sudanese (15 percent) and Ethiopians (12 percent).

Figure 1: Distribution of assisted UASC by country of origin



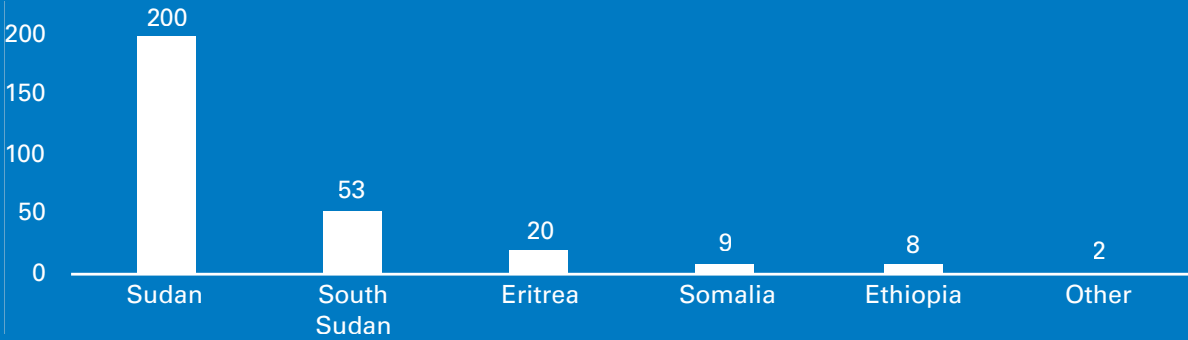
“After spending some time in Egypt, Dradatto received a “yellow card”, a legal identification document for asylum-seekers in Egypt issued by UNHCR that allows her and her family to legalize their stay in Egypt and receive a residence permit and enables her to access humanitarian assistance from different humanitarian partners. In time, Dradatto started meeting other Ethiopian refugees. Among them was 17-year old Magaratto. They instantly became friends.

One day, both Dradatto and Magaratto received an SMS carrying great news: the text was announcing that they will receive additional cash assistance to help protect them from the elements during the winter. In Egypt, the temperature during winter season can go as low as 5-11 °C, requiring more means to keep warm.”



Additionally, a total of **292 families** were supported out of the total target of **300 families**. The majority of the families were Sudanese (68 percent), followed by South Sudanese (18 percent).

Figure 2: Distribution of assisted families by country of origin



All supported families included children aged less than 18 years, and in total 1,707 children benefitted. The below table shows the age cohorts of the supported children

Table 3: Number of children in families assisted

	0-4	5-11	12-17	Total
Total number of children	325	733	649	1,707

Overall, 59 percent of the UASC received the winterization grant via ATM cards while the remaining identified beneficiaries (41 percent) received it via direct cash. As noted above, all supported families collected the winterization grants through Egypt Post Offices.



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3. Methodology

A two-step post-distribution monitoring process was utilized, including a process monitoring survey and a post-utilization survey.

Both surveys were conducted by data collectors with both casework and child sensitive interviewing expertise through UNHCR’s Child Protection Partner (Caritas) using UNHCR’s data collection platform on Kobo. The data collection for both phases were mainly office based (98.7 percent) except for few cases where children were surveyed via home-based interviews.

The process monitoring survey was conducted on a total of 167 UASC who were interviewed immediately after collecting their winter cash grant, while the post utilization survey was conducted on a total of 230 UASC four weeks after distribution.

This report provides the results of the two surveys with focus on the post utilization survey with the following being highlighted:

- Background characteristics of the UASC;
- Utilization of the winterization assistance;
- Risks and problems identified through the winterization assistance;

The report concludes with areas for improvement to be considered in developing future programmes and overall conclusion based on the survey findings.

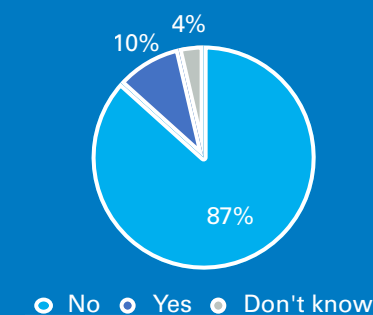
4. Process Monitoring

The first step focused on the monitoring of the process: UASC or their caregivers’ views were sought on the efficiency and safety of the process immediately after collecting their winter cash grant. A total of 167 UASC participated in this survey.

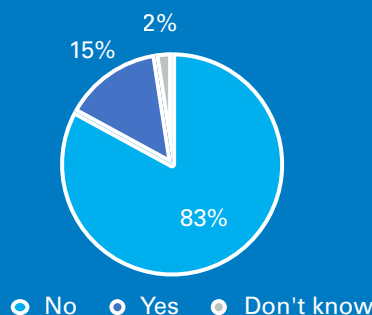
The findings indicate general satisfaction with the efficiency of the distribution process. The majority of the UASC did not report any safety concerns or risks while collecting, going back home or spending the winterization assistance. All the UASC reported that they did not pay money in order to receive the cash assistance.

Figure 3: Perceptions of safety: Did you feel insecure when

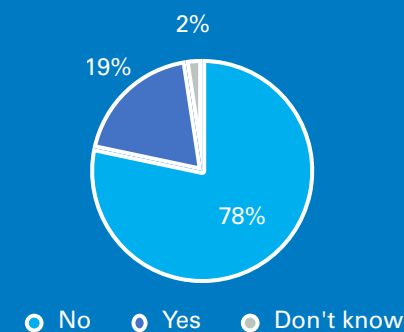
Coming to withdraw the money?



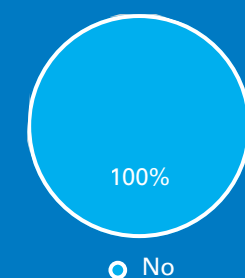
Going home with the money?



Going to spend the money?



Did you need to pay money or do favours in order to receive the cash?



5. The Post-Utilization Survey

5.1 Background Characteristics

5.1.1 Gender, Age and Nationality

Seventy-one percent of the surveyed UASC were males aged between 12 and 17 years. The UASC reside in several locations across Greater Cairo including: Haram, Bulaq El Dakrour, Qasr El-Nil, El-Dokki, and Ain Shams.

The survey covered refugees of different nationalities, majority of whom were Eritreans (51 percent) followed by Sudanese (21 percent), Somalis (18 percent), South Sudanese (5 percent), Ethiopians (4 percent), and Yemenis (1 percent).

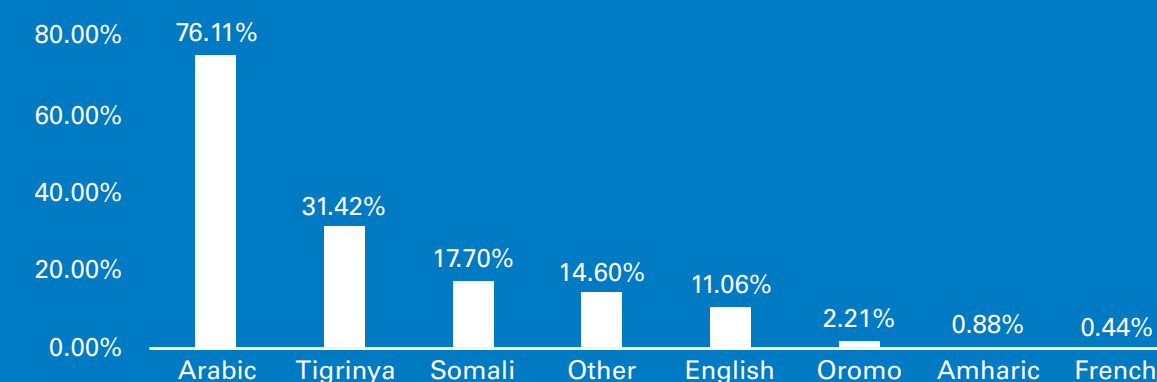


5.1.2 Literacy

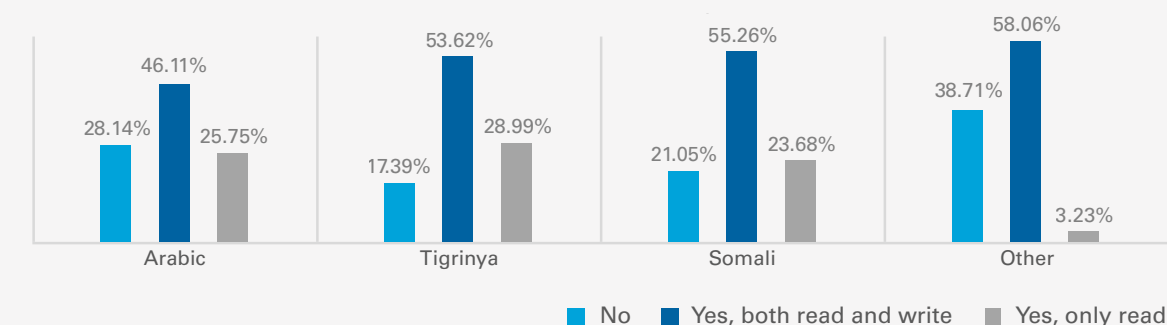
The majority of the surveyed UASC were Arabic speakers (76 percent) with 46 percent of them being able to read and write, followed by Tigrinya and Somali with more than half of them being able to read and write.

Figure 4: Languages spoken, read and written by UASC

Languages Spoken by the UASC



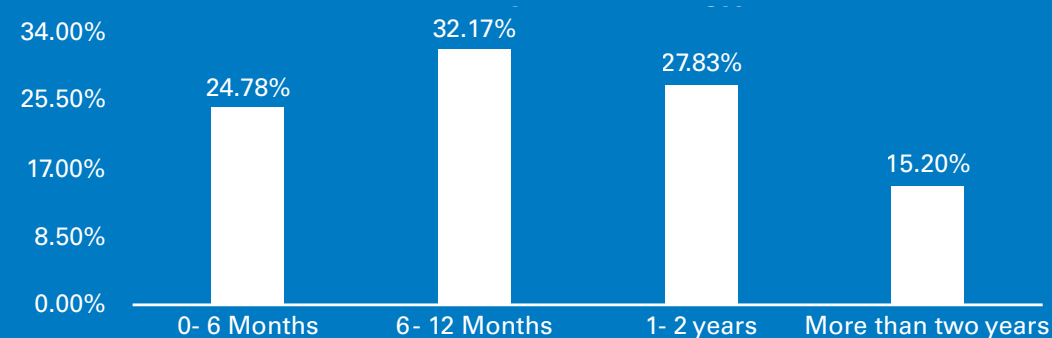
Languages read and written by the UASC



5.1.3 Duration in country of asylum

Most of the surveyed UASC have been in Egypt for less than two years.

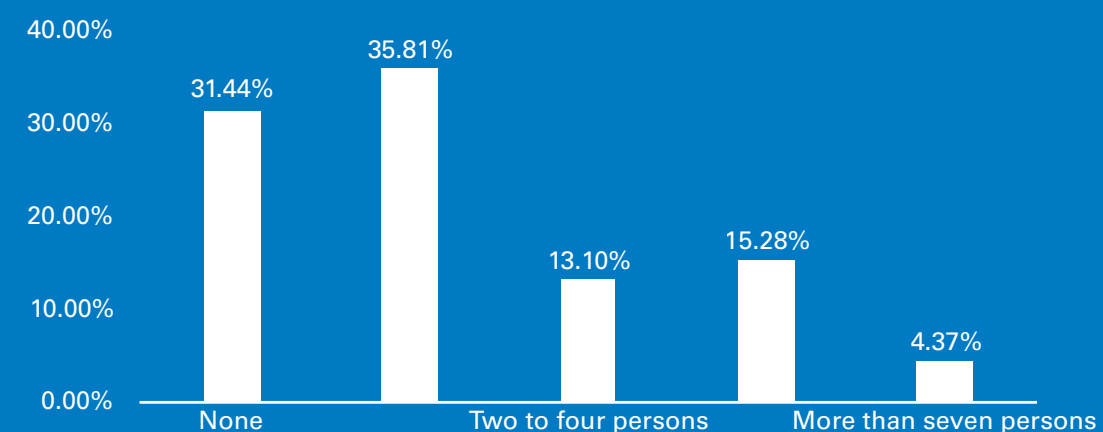
Figure 5: Monthly duration in Egypt



5.1.4 Typology of UASC households

The post utilization survey indicates that the majority of the UASC share residence with others as shown in the below figure:

Figure 6: Typology of UASC households



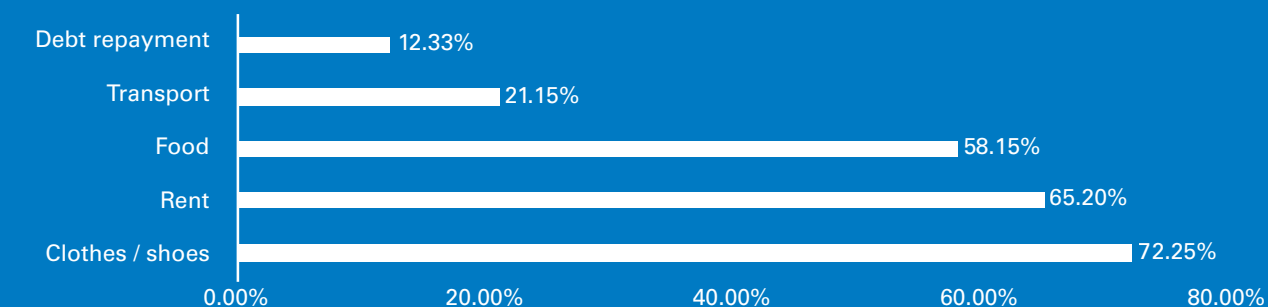
5.2 Utilization of the Winterization Assistance

5.2.1 Situation prior to assistance and post utilization outcome:

Expenditure Patterns (Use of Winterization Assistance)

After receiving the assistance, 77 percent of the respondents reported that they spent all of the winterization cash grant, with 72 percent of them reporting clothes and shoes were the top expenditure items. The expenditure pattern was similar for both genders.

Figure 7: Top 5 expenditures



Access to Markets

The surveyed UASC were also asked whether they could find the needed commodities in the market following the winterization assistance, and 91 percent of them reported that they were able to find them with 85 percent mentioning they found the right quality and 44 percent reporting a steep increase in the prices of the different items needed.

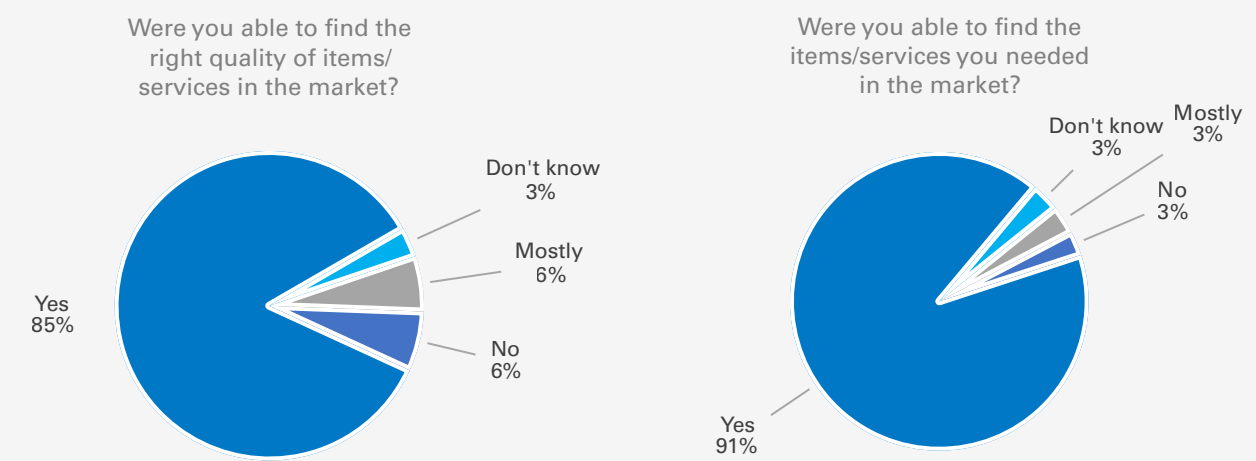
Coping Strategies (prior to winterization assistance)

Eighty-one percent of the surveyed UASC were resorting to multiple coping mechanisms before receiving the winterization assistance, 60 percent postponed the purchase of necessary clothing items, 53 percent reduced the expenditures on food, hygiene and water to meet shelter needs and 49 percent reduced these expenditures to meet food needs. Overall, female UASC were more likely to resort to negative coping mechanisms compared to males (88 percent vs. 77 percent).

Table 4: Coping strategy

Coping Strategy	Overall
Postponed the Purchase of Necessary Clothing Materials	60%
Reduce Expenditure on Food, Hygiene Items, Water, Baby Items, Health, or Education in Order to Meet Household Shelter Needs	53%
Reduce Expenditure on Hygiene Items, Water, Baby Items, Health, or Education in Order to Meet Household Food Needs	49%
Skip Paying Debt Repayments to Meet Other Needs	41%
Skip Paying Rent to Meet Other Needs	41%
Skip Paying Utility Payments to Meet Other Needs	40%
Take Out New Loans or Borrowed Money	38%
Postpone Seeing the Doctor After Someone Fell Ill	35%
Ask for Money from Strangers (Begging)	24%
Move to a Poorer Quality Shelter	23%
Someone Who Was Not Previously Working Started Searching for / Found Employment	18%
Sell Livelihood / Productive Assets in Order to Buy Food or Basic Goods	17%
Stopped a Child From / Stopped Attending School	15%
Other	24%

Figure 8: Purchasing power of UASC



The majority of the respondents, however, were not able to meet their pressing needs using the winterization assistance with 46 percent of them able to meet only half of the needs and 36 percent were able to meet even less than that.

The most reported unmet needs were: food (60 percent), rent (57 percent), clothes/shoes (39 percent), and transportation (17 percent).

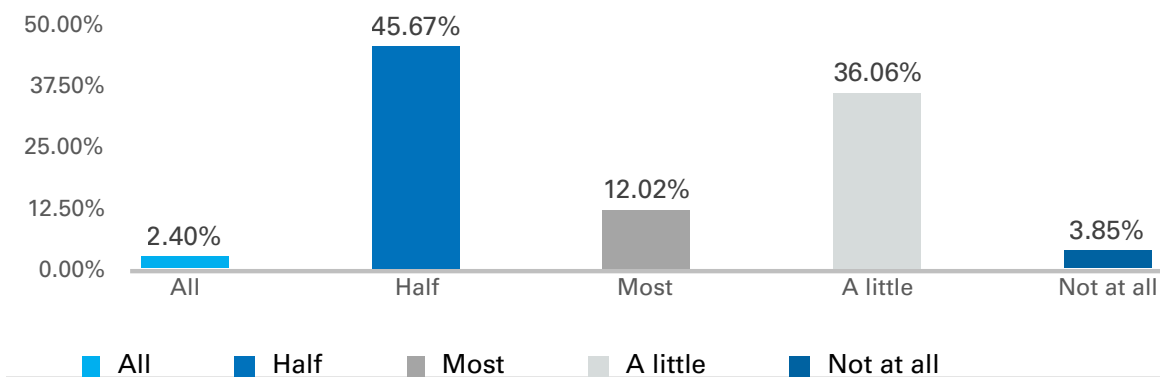


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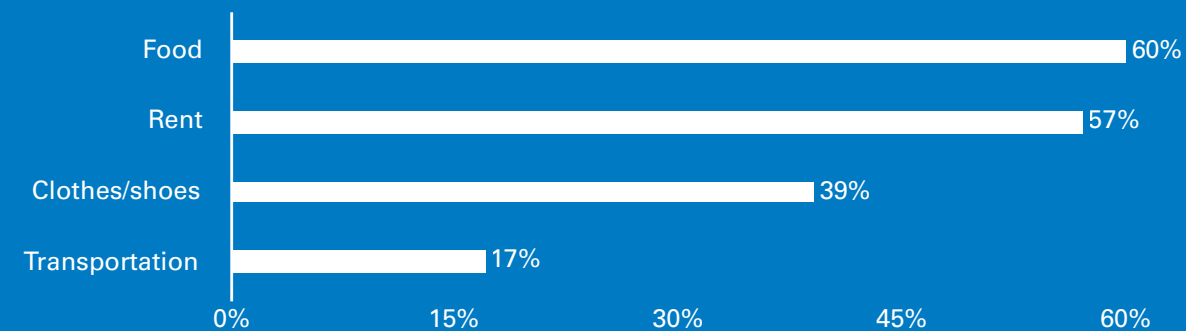
5.2.2 Outcomes of Winterization Assistance

In terms of medium term outcomes, 70 percent of the respondents mentioned that the assistance positively impacted their living conditions to a moderate degree and 24 percent mentioned that it had significantly improved their living conditions. As for the financial burden, 42 percent reported that the winterization assistance moderately reduced their financial burden and 24 percent reported that it has significantly reduced it. In addition, 62 percent reported a moderate improvement in their level of stress and 25 percent reported a significant improvement.

Figure 9: Ability of UASC to meet/unmeet the most pressing needs.
Overall, to what extent are you currently able to meet your most pressing needs?



Unmet needs among UASC



The inability to meet basic needs was generally higher for male UASC compared to their female counterparts. While 54 percent of the female UASC were unable to meet both food and rent needs, 66 percent of the male UASC were unable to meet food needs and 62 percent were unable to meet rent needs. Similarly, the inability to meet clothing needs was higher for male UASC (41 percent vs. 38 percent).

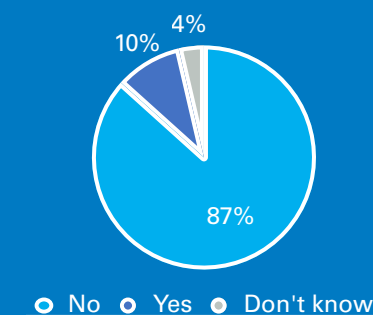
“We are five siblings living together with our aunt and her five children. We pay almost all the money we take on monthly basis from Caritas in the rent and our aunt is very poor, she cannot assist us with anything but sometimes food whenever she finds work”. The child and his younger siblings reported that the winterization assistance moderately improved their living conditions and moderately reduced their burden, but they said “We are most of the time hungry and don’t have enough clothes to wear. Also, we don’t go to school because we were exposed to harassment more than one time in school and in streets from strangers”.

5.3 Risks and Problems

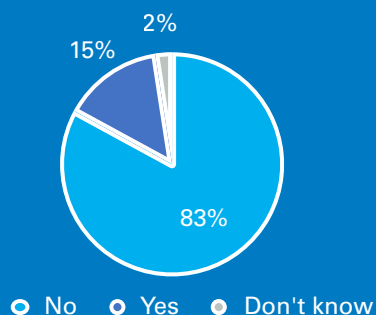
The majority of the UASC interviewed through the process monitoring survey did not report any safety concerns or risks while collecting, going back home or spending the winterization assistance.

Figure 10: Perceptions of safety: Did you feel insecure when

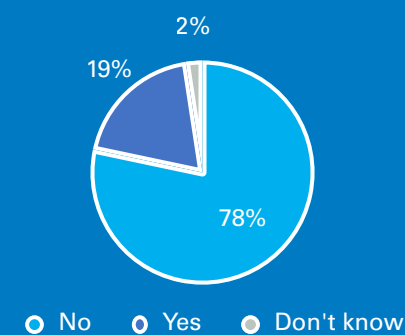
Coming to withdraw the money?



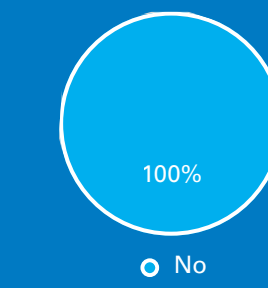
Going home with the money?



Going to spend the money?

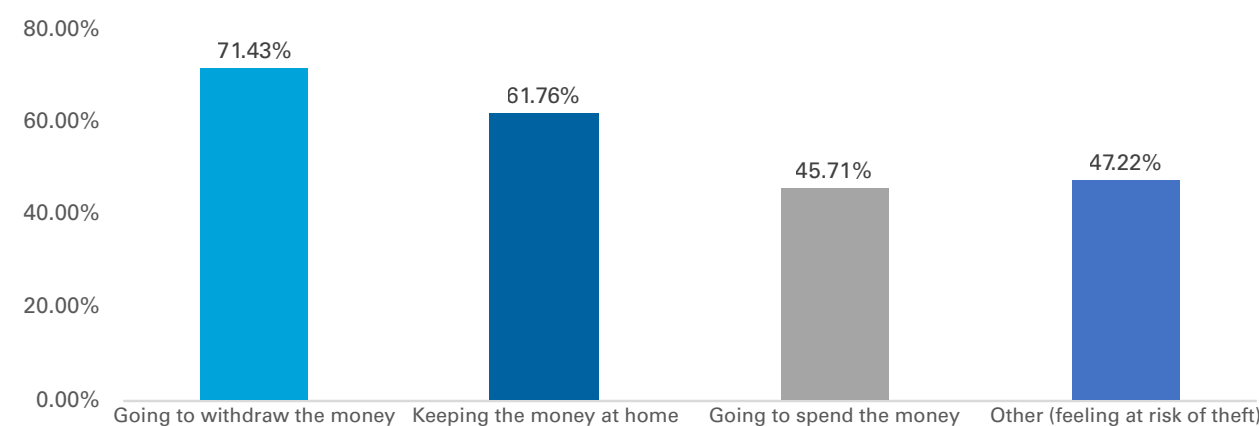


Did you need to pay money or do favours in order to receive the cash?



An equal number of the post utilization survey respondents reported however feeling unsafe or at risk of harm related to the cash assistance, with 71 percent of them reporting feeling at risk/unsafe when going to withdraw the money, and 62 percent when keeping the money at home.

Figure 11: Did anything else make you feel unsafe or at risk of harm related to the cash assistance?

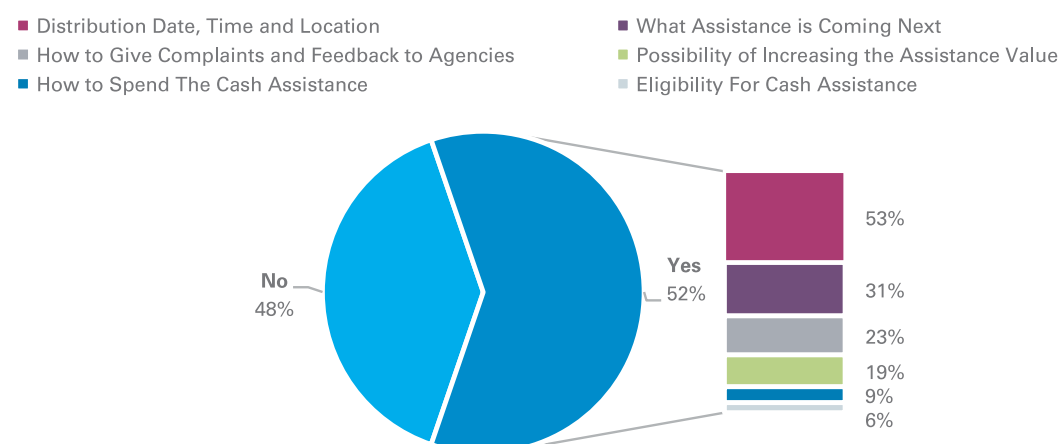


5.4 Accountability to Affected Populations

5.4.1 Access to Information

The post utilization survey shows that 52 percent of the UASC were interested in knowing more about the cash assistance, with 53 percent of them being interested to get more information on distribution date, time and location; and 31 percent of them willing to know what assistance was coming next.

Figure 12: Is there any other information you would like to know about the cash assistance?

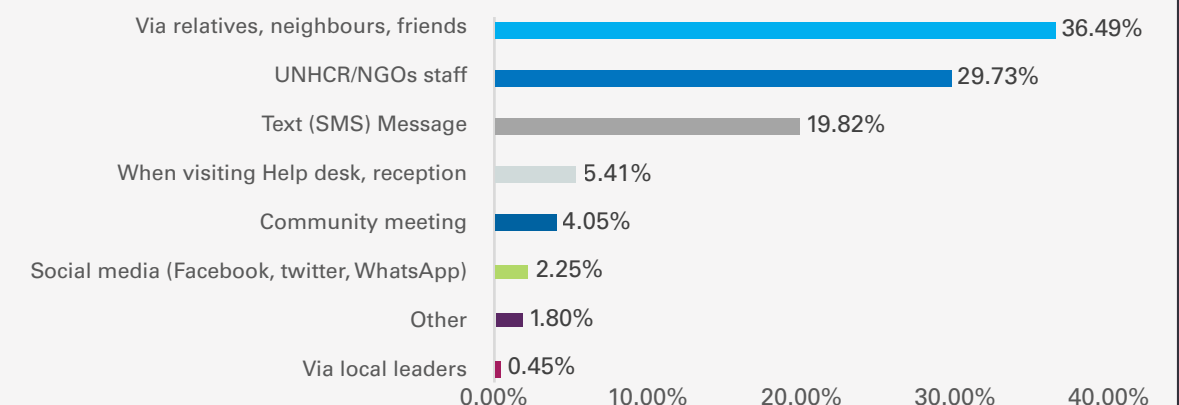


“Hossam, an 18-year old Syrian, came to Egypt a year and 3 months ago as a UASC. He entered the country through Sudan and stayed in the beginning with one of his friends for 15 days until he started working in sewing. He used to work in sewing in Syria as well and he left school because of the war, he gains very little money from his work in sewing and that money is not enough for his basic needs such as food or rent. His advice to any person who is planning to come to Egypt to contact UNHCR once s/he arrives to get the needed support.”

5.4.2 Winterization assistance campaign

The survey further indicates that 37 percent of the UASC heard about the winterization assistance via relatives, neighbours, friends, and almost 30 percent heard about it from UNHCR and other NGOs staff. Less than three percent heard about the assistance via social media.

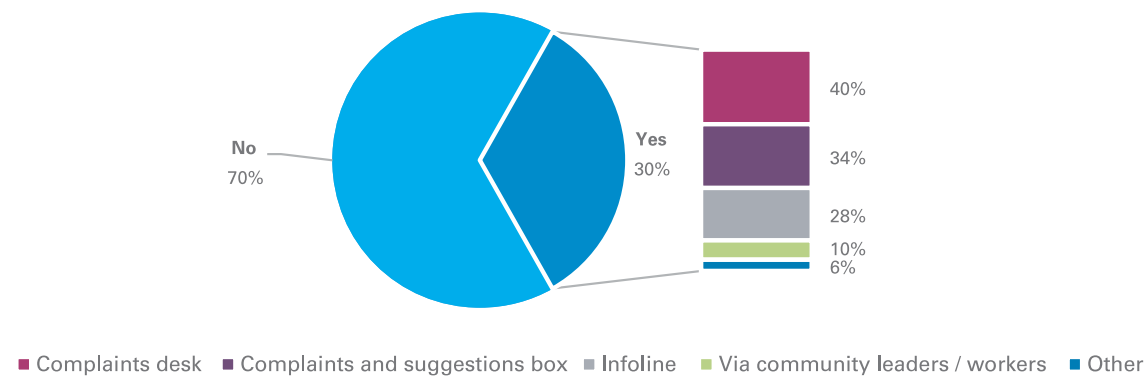
Figure 13: How did you hear about the cash assistance?



5.4.3 Reporting complaints and feedback

30 percent of the UASC know how to report complaints and feedback on cash assistance, the commonly used method was either a complaints desk or a complaints and suggestions box, the majority of them reported feeling comfortable and safe in reporting complaints and feedback on assistance to UNHCR.

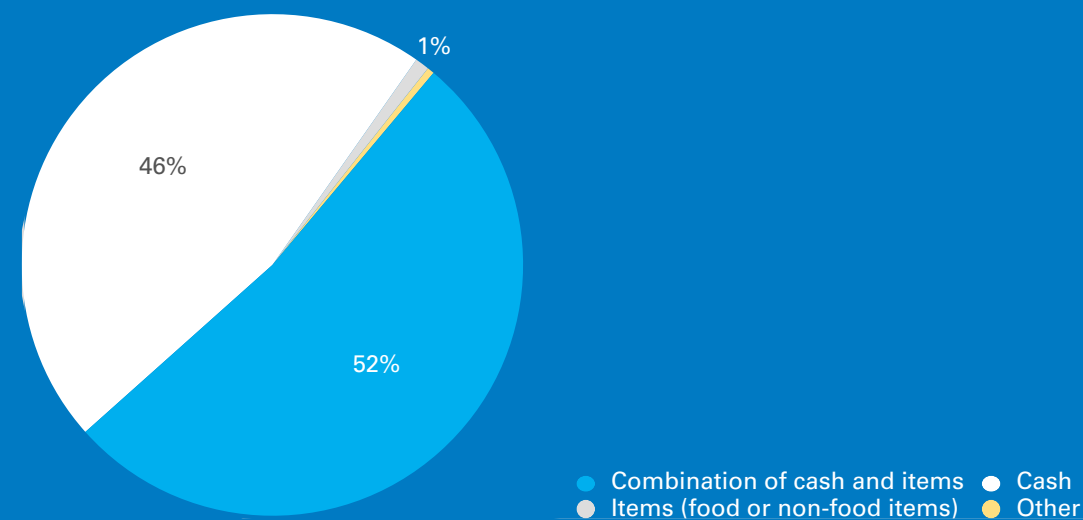
Figure 14: Do you know how you can report complaints and feedback on the cash assistance from UNHCR?



5.4.4 Preferred modality for winterization assistance programmes

More than half (52 percent) of the UASC reported that they would prefer a combination of cash and items if the assistance started again, while 46 percent of them reported that they would prefer cash only assistance. One percent only preferred items (food and non-food) assistance. Such preference pattern was quite different between male and female respondents as 63 percent of the females favour a combination of cash and items over cash assistance compared to 48 percent of the males.

Figure 15: If the assistance could be started again what would you prefer?



6. Major Findings, Recommendations and Conclusion

Based on a sample of 230 UASC who received the UNHCR-UNICEF winterization assistance grant, it was found that the winterization assistance was successful in achieving the programme's direct outcome as 72 percent of the UASC used the grant to purchase warm clothes, this is very likely to reduce UASC resorting to negative coping mechanisms given that 60 percent reported postponing the purchase of necessary clothing items prior to receiving such assistance.

The report also indicates the high accessibility of the Egyptian markets by the UASC where most of the items were found at a good quality despite higher prices observed across the different items.

The majority of the respondents were however not able to fully meet their pressing needs using the winterization assistance. The most reported unmet needs were: food (60 percent), rent (57 percent), clothes/shoes (39 percent), and transportation (17 percent). This possibly indicates the need to increase the value of the provided assistance to fully meet the UASC pressing needs during the winter season. Additionally, more than 50 percent of the UASC interviewed would prefer a combination of cash and items if the assistance started again.

In terms of distribution efficiency and accountability measures, none of the cases reported experiencing actual problems with the receiving, withdrawing or spending the winterization assistance. It is recommended however to conduct awareness raising sessions to further familiarize the UASC with the assistance and the cash collection processes. The sessions can further include information on the distribution date, time and location of the upcoming assistance as highlighted by a number of UASC. In addition, UASC need to be familiarized on the complaint and feedback mechanisms as only one third of the respondents were able to correctly identify the way of providing such complaints and feedback on assistance. The survey further indicates that 37 percent of the UASC heard about the winterization assistance via relatives, neighbours, and friend, and almost 30 percent heard about it from UNHCR and other NGOs staff. Less than three percent heard about the assistance via social media.

Overall winterization assistance remains a critical form of support to UASC in Egypt. The findings indicate that the winter cash assistance: (a) positively impacted UASC living conditions; (b) reduced their financial burden; and, (c) improved their levels of stress and (d) contributed to meeting needs that had otherwise been de-prioritized but crucial during the winter season – shelter, clothes and shoes.

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