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Oxfam in Bangladesh



OXFAM

RAPID NEEDS ASSESSMENT (RNA)

ON EASTERN FLASH FLOOD IN BANGLADESH

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Executive Summary

Since August 22, 2024, heavy rainfall has led to severe flooding in low-lying districts including Moulvibazar, Habiganj, Sylhet, Feni, Cumilla, Noakhali, Khagrachhari, Brahmanbaria, Chattogram, Lakshmipur, and Cox's Bazar. Among these areas, the flooding has significantly affected 58% of the total population in Noakhali (2.2 million out of 3.6 million) and 61% of the total population in Feni (1 million out of 1.6 million) districts (Source: NDRCC, as of 28 August, 3:00 PM).

To identify the shocks and vulnerabilities and determine the immediate and long-term rehabilitation needs of flood-affected communities in Feni and Noakhali, Oxfam in Bangladesh carried out a rapid needs assessment. Data were collected from four sub-districts in the respective two districts namely Senbag, Kabirhat, Fulgazi and Feni Sadar through mixed methods such as questionnaire surveys, focus group discussions (FGDs), key informant interviews (KIIs), and observations.

Major impact

95% of the total population in Fulgazi and Feni Sadar Upazillas in Feni and 90% of the total population in Senbag and Kabirhat Upazillas in Noakhali districts were severely affected by the flash flood. The most affected services include shelter, sanitation, drinking Water source, power, communication, kitchen room, source of income, communication, livestock, tree, crops and fish etc.

On average, 90% of the shelters were submerged in water, with depths ranging from 3 to 7 feet, resulting in 48% of the shelters were fully damaged and 52% partially damaged. Of them, 73% of the population sought shelter on the rooftops of their own or neighbors' houses, while 27% took refuge in government or public institutions.

100 % of sanitation facilities of the affected families have completely been damaged, leading to resorting to own damaged toilets, temporary toilets and practicing open defecation.

Similarly, 100% of water sources has been destroyed. They are obtaining drinking water from various relief sources, but it is not enough. None of the population has access to any hygiene kits, including those for menstrual hygiene. Waterborne diseases have just begun to emerge and are expected to spread widely in the impacted areas.

100% of the impacted population have not access to enough food due to lost job/livelihood and lost food stock and supplies, with 72% of people only able to eat twice a day, and still not getting enough.

"Due to deep water, many helpers are only assisting people at schools and centers, leaving many families stranded at home without support despite their hardships." -
Md Naim (Ward # 04, Kalidha Union, Feni Sadar)

The entire market has been significantly impacted and damaged. Various protection risks, such as physical violence, child protection issues, sexual violence, and safety concerns, have emerged. It is anticipated that child marriage, forced displacement, and trafficking may also increase in the future.

Flood-affected areas face heightened psychosocial distress, with increased risks of disease outbreaks, mental health issues, and disrupted services. 94% of respondents fear uncertainty, and 47% feel anxious about insecurity.

Major Need for the affected Community

Immediate Needs are Drinking water, Cash support., Food package support (rice, Oil, dal etc), Hygiene /Dignity Kits, Cooked Food, Candle, Lighter.

Mid-term needs are Cash support (multipurpose), House repair, Repair WASH facility, IGA Intervention, Hygiene /Dignity Kits, Food Packages and Agriculture Seeds

Long term needs are:-

- Construction sustainable WASH Facility (Toilet, Tube well, Bathing) in community
- Income Generating Activities (IGA)
- Construct Activity such as drainage system, community shelter
- Awareness training /session on Hygiene promotion, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), and Gender issue also.
- Women Empowerment activity (through leadership & livelihood)
- Enhance NGO/INGOs presence in this area.
- Construction Flood center/ Rebuild school place as a flood center.

Chapter 1 Objective and Methodology of RNA

1.1 Introduction

In August 2024, relentless monsoon rains and rising river levels have caused severe flooding in Feni, Cumilla, and Noakhali districts, affecting thousands of people. The floods have caused extensive damage to homes, agricultural fields, and infrastructure, displacing thousands of families who are now seeking refuge in temporary shelters. Transport and communication networks are disrupted, isolating communities and complicating rescue operations. The situation is further exacerbated by the heightened risk of disease due to contaminated water. Agricultural losses, particularly to rice paddies, are significant, posing a threat to food security in the coming months.



Figure 1: Dead cows are floating in the water of Kalidha union, Feni Sadar

Since August 22, 2024, heavy rainfall has led to severe flooding in low-lying districts including Moulvibazar, Habiganj, Sylhet, Feni, Cumilla, Noakhali, Khagrachhari, Brahmanbaria, Chattogram, Lakshmipur, and Cox's Bazar. (Source: NDRCC, as of 28 August, 3:00 PM).

Aiming to identify level of shocks and vulnerabilities of the impacted community in Noakhali and Feni districts Oxfam in Bangladesh conducted Rapid Need Assessment (RNA). The audiences of this RNA report are Oxfam, Partner NGOs, INGO network, Donor, local government, community people and so on. Mainly the RNA report will be used for designing project and resource mobilization for the responses, recovery intervention and resilience.

1.2 Objective and Key Questions

The overall objective of the need assessment is to assess the shocks and vulnerabilities that people in disaster-prone areas experience and actual need for the disaster response initiative at HHs and community levels.

Specific Objective:

- To determine the multi-hazards, shocks, and vulnerabilities people in disaster-prone areas experience
- To describe the coping mechanism of the impacted community during disaster
- To identify actual needs of vulnerable communities to survive in emergency situation and protect their lives and assets and need for revitalizing their livelihoods.

Key questions:

- To what extent the people's shelter, sanitation, drinking Water source, power and communication are affected by the flood? How are there surviving?
- To what extent livelihood, productive and nonproductive assets are affected by the flood.
- What is the condition of daily food intake of the affected people? How are they managing daily food?
- What type of protection risks the targeted community facing? And to what extent these are impacted the people.

- To what extend flood are increase psychosocial distress of impacted the people
- To what extends women and children the challenges due to the flood
- What are the immediate, midterm and long need for affected HHs?

1.3 Study Design and Methodology

The study employed mixed approaches, combining qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis. Data and information were collected from both primary and secondary sources. The study purposively selected the four sub-districts (namely Senbag, Kbirhat from Noakhali and Fulgazi, Feni Sadar from Feni) based on vulnerability profiles, considering factors such as poverty levels, exposure to natural disasters, and access to basic services. A total 96 interview was conducted with respondent of different unions/villages. A representative sampling approach was considered at a 95% confidence level, with an accuracy rate or amount of admissible error margin of 9%.

Table 2: Area wise sample size determination			
District	Sub-district	Union/Pourosuva	Sample size (Quantitative)
Noakhali	Senbag	Senbag Pourosuva	19
	Kobirhat	Sunderpur	18
		Kadra	07
	Sub-total		44
Feni	Fulgazi	Fukgaji Sadar	19
		Anondupur Union	15
	Feni sadar	Kalidha	18
	Sub-total		52
Total			96

Qualitative methods included detailed observations, in-depth interviews and transect walks to explore community vulnerability and the effects of flash floods. Data was collected and computed by online based data collection application using SurveyCTO. Data editing, cleaning, query was done by using MS-excel.

Limitation of the study are: 1. **Access and Mobility Challenges:** Flash floods often severely damage infrastructure, such as roads and bridges, hindering survey teams to reach affected people as well as communities. 2. **Lack of Engagement:** Many respondents were primarily concerned with immediate relief needs like food and water, making it challenging to maintain their focus on survey. They frequently request to be added their name to relief distribution lists rather than engaging in discussions. 3. **Emotional and Psychological Effect:** The trauma and stress experienced by respondents due to the flooding can affect their willingness and ability to participate in surveys.

Chapter 2 : Finding and discussion

2.1 Affected population

More than 3 million people are affected in the Noakhali and Feni districts (Source: NDRCC, as of 28 Aug 2024, 3:00 PM; Needs Assessment Working Group). Among them, 52% are female and 48% are male. Additionally, 11% are under the age of 4, 33% are between 5 and 19 years old, 9% are elderly, and 1% have disabilities. The below table-2.1.1 shows flood affected situation in Noakhali and Feni districts.

Table 2.1.1: District wise flood affected population (Source: NDRCC)								
District Wise Affected Information			SADD Breakdown as Estimated from the Census 2022					
District	Total Population	Affected Population	Affected Male	Affected Female	Affected Children (0-04 Years)	Affected Children (05-19 Years)	Affected Elderly (60+)	Affected Persons with Disabilities
Feni	1,648,896	1,000,000	47%	53%	10%	32%	10%	1%
Noakhali	3,625,442	2,125,500	48%	52%	12%	33%	9%	1%
Total	5,274,338	3,125,500	48%	52%	11%	33%	9%	1%

2.1. Socio-demographic status

The RNA was carried out among the 96 HHs at four sub-districts namely Fulgazi and Feni sadar in Feni, and Senbag and Kabirhat in Noakhali. Of them, 56% of the respondents are male and 44% of the respondents are female. Average family member of HH is 5.52. 17% HH have a person with disability member and 5% female respondent are the household head in their family. 92% (n=96) family have only one earning member, 06% family have two earning members and others have three earning members in family.

Among the surveyed individuals, around half of the respondents were day labour (43%), followed by 34% of them were small business, 9% were agriculture farmer, 7% were regular job holders and 6% of them were in others occupation (Table: 2.1.1)

Table 2.1.1 Status of Main Earning Sources of Respondent				
1	Type of Occupation	Male	Female	Total
2	Agriculture-production	9%	0%	9%
3	Labour	40%	3%	43%
4	Small/Petty-business	33%	1%	34%
5	Regular-job	8%	0%	8%
6	Others	6%	0%	6%

2.2 Flood affected the population and their services

The study found that average 94% of the total population in four sub-districts were severely affected by the flood. The below table 2.2.1 depicts sub-district wise affected status. Flood affected ratio of male and female were same as all most all people were affected.

Table 2.2.1 : Sub-district wise flood affected population's ratio				
District	Upazilla	Affected population	Male	Female
Noakhali	Senbag	90%	90%	90%
	Kobirhat	94%	94%	94%
Feni	Fulgazi	94%	94%	94%
	Feni sadar	96%	96%	96%
Total		94%	94%	94%

The below figure-2 shows that the most affected services include shelter, sanitation, drinking Water source, power, communication, kitchen room, source of income, communication, livestock, tree, crops and fish etc.

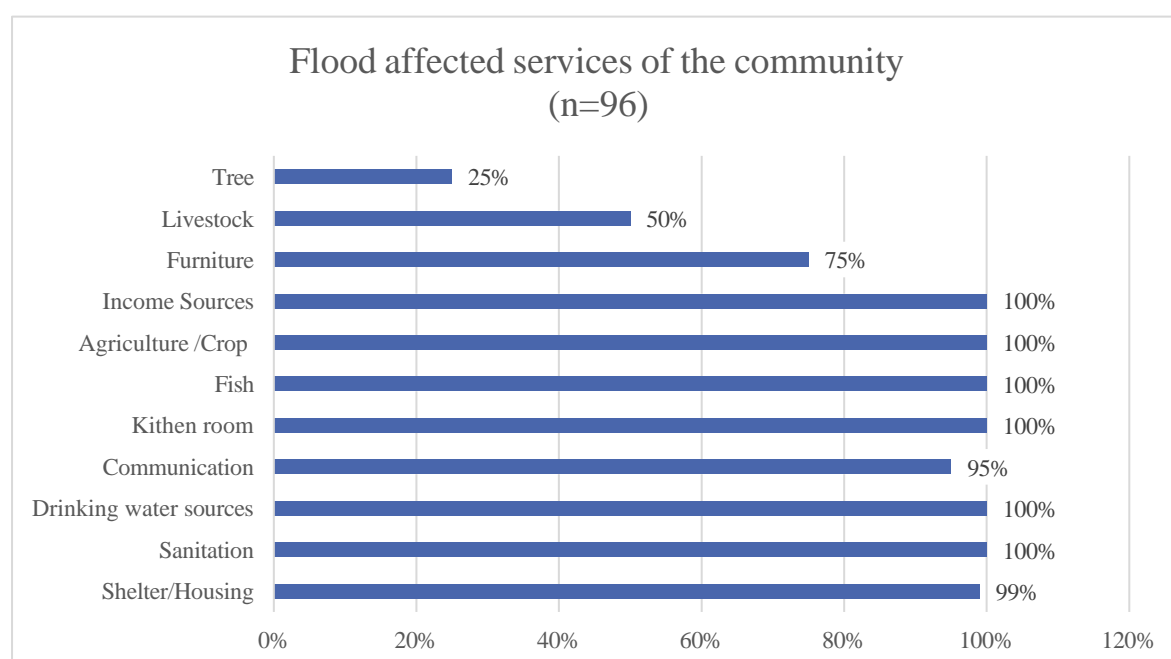


Figure 2: Flood affected services of the community

2.3 Flood damage Shelter of the HHs

The figure below shows that **48%** of the shelters of survey HHs were damaged fully while 52% of the shelter damaged partially. Of them, 73% of the population sought shelter on the rooftops of their own or neighbors' houses, while 27% took refuge in government or public institutions like schools.

And they are thinking how to repair their house after down the flood. At present, they demand various items for repairing their living house such as few cash support, Timber, bamboo, plastic sheet, roofing materials etc. But maximum demand is few cash support for immediate repair their house.. The impact of this damage extends

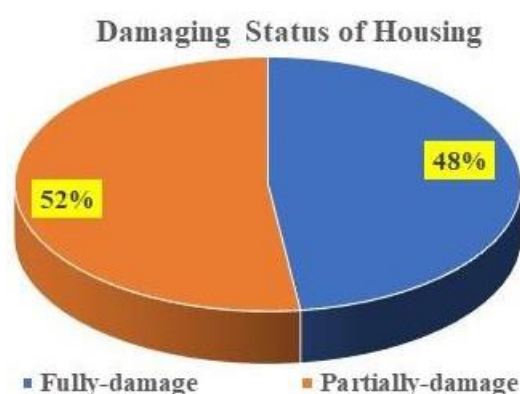


Figure 3: Shelter damaging status of survey HHs

beyond mere inconvenience, significantly affecting the quality of life and safety of the affected populations.

2.4 Food intake pattern of the survey HHs

During a flood, food consumption per day often decreases due to scarcity. People are forced to rely on non-perishable, emergency supplies, which are limited in variety. Their income sources have disrupted, and without sufficient food stock or adequate support, they endure significant hardship. The lack of adequate food and resources contributes to a dire situation, leaving many

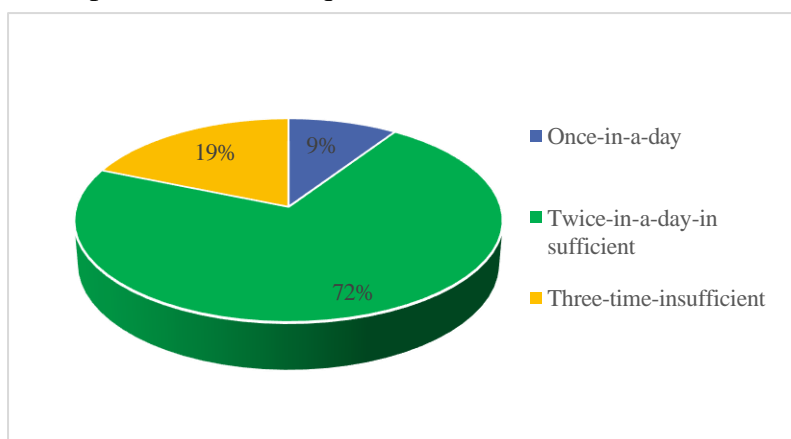


Figure 4: Food intake patterns.

in a state of severe distress and vulnerability.

The figure-4 shows that **72%** (n=96) respondent household eat food twice in a day but not enough. **19%** eat food three times but not sufficient. **09%** respondent only eat food once time in a day. At present, affected people are getting food (mainly dry food, few times they get cooked food) from different channel like receiving aids from rich Neighbour ,

community, NGOs, government and also local foundation etc. but not sufficient. However, they also reported before the flood they were able to eat three times in a day with sufficient .

2.5 Access to Water

In the villages of Feni and Noakhali, water sources primarily include ponds/river, shallow tube wells, deep tube wells, and taps-stand. Many households rely on these for drinking, cooking, with tube wells being the most common source in this region. But from our survey, found that-

- 100% water point are not functioning.
- 100% Toilet have damaged as well as not functioning.

As per respondent opinions, drinking water are not available. So, at present they are drinking less water. They are getting water from multiple sources, but not enough. Present water sources are-

- 35% said Rainwater harvesting.
- 53% respondent collect /receive water from NGO/relief institution.
- 24% are collecting from local community people.
- 08% said that sometimes they are buying drinking water.

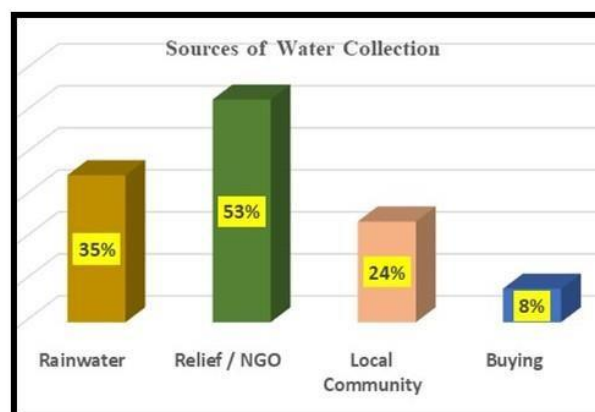


Figure 5: Source of water

2.6 Access to sanitation

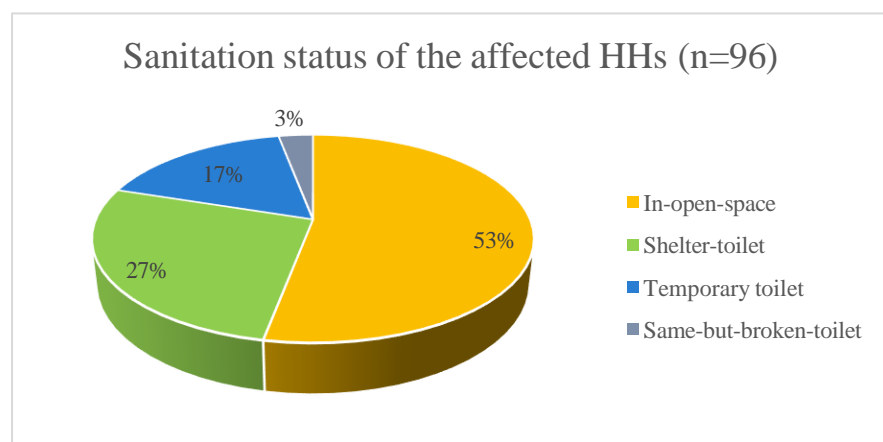


Figure 6: Sanitation status of the affected people

temporary toilet and 3% still using broken toilet.

100 % of sanitation facilities of the affected families have completely been destroyed, leading to resorting to own damaged toilets and practicing open defecation. The figure below 6 shows that 53% of the HHs are defecating in open space. Following by 27% HHs are using shelter's toilet, 17% of the HHs prepare

2.7 Hygienic Facility:

Good hygiene is critical for preventing the spread of infectious diseases and healthy lives. So, Hygiene practices is very important. From data it is found that-

- The respondents mentioned that they are not serious to wash hands with soap due to flood and insufficient soap in family.
- All (100%) said that they did not receive any hygiene kit from government or NGOs. 85% respondent wash their hand only water.
- Only 15% wash hand with soap.

2.8 Protection, Gender, and Safety/security Issue:

Protection, gender, and safety/security issues involve ensuring the rights, dignity, and safety of individuals, particularly affected people are respected. This includes addressing gender-based violence, discrimination, and ensuring secure environments, especially in flood affected areas. Mainly women, girls face different challenged during or after disaster. Maximum toilet has got broken or is unusable in this community. They are still out of electricity and their housing is damage. So, girls/women are feeling insecure or feel challenges in following areas.

Sl #	Type of major Challenges	% (n=42)	Remarks
1	Accessibility of Toilet	80%	
2	Hygiene problem/Hygiene kits need	74%	
3	Bathing /Wash facility	76%	
4	Physical security/Sexual violence	45%	

10.0: Psychosocial Distress:

Flood-affected areas often experience heightened psychosocial distress, with vulnerable populations facing increased risks of disease outbreaks, mental health issues, and disrupted access to essential services. Below table found that 94% (n=96) respondent fear from uncertainty and 47% feel anxiety about insecurity during this time.

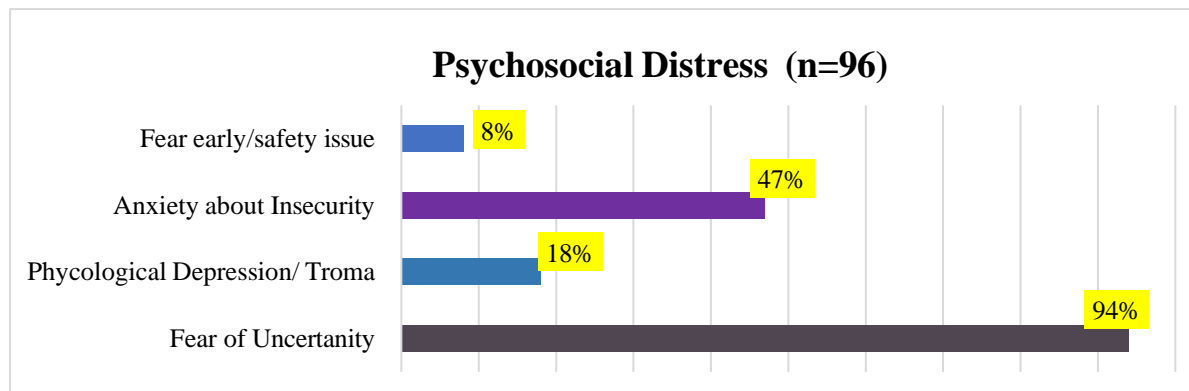


Figure 7: Psychosocial Distress

2.9 Health Issue:

Flood-affected areas face significant health challenges, including waterborne diseases, malnutrition, and inadequate access to healthcare services, exacerbating the vulnerability of affected populations. Now our respondent feels that after flood, community people will face different health challenges are as follows-

Table 2.9.1 : Type of diseases			
Sr #	Type of Disease	% (n=96)	Remarks
1	Diarrhea	71%	It is assumption of respondent. But skin disease (allergy) has found within few respondent
2	Skin Infection	81%	
3	Cholera	29%	
4	Fever	17%	
5	Dysentery	28%	

2.10 Opinions of one local elites:

Villagers of this areas are in a dire situation. For the past few days, maximum people in this villages haven't been able to have even two meals. Approx 99% of the village's houses, poultry, furniture, and crops have been damaged partially/fully. The road is overflowing with water. Every house has been under 3/4 feet of water. I've never seen so much water in my life. About 50-60% household are living in shelter/ relatives house and others are living in their own house within vulnerable condition. The scarcity of drinking water is becoming increasingly severe. Children are more vulnerable within this situation. The people collect rainwater for drinking. "Most people in our area have been damaged many things and they have become destitute", said Ehsanullah, Bank Manager (Sundarpur union, Kabirhat, Noakhali). It's also alarming that villagers may face various diseases following the receding of a flash flood.

Chapter 3 Actual need for the affected community

3.1 Immediate Support/Need:

Flood-affected villagers face immense challenges that evolve as they navigate through different phases of recovery. They urgently need clean water, food, shelter, and medical aid to survive and rebuild their lives. The devastation has disrupted access to necessities, making immediate assistance crucial for safeguarding their health and well-being. They need multiple support during this time. From our survey data, found that-

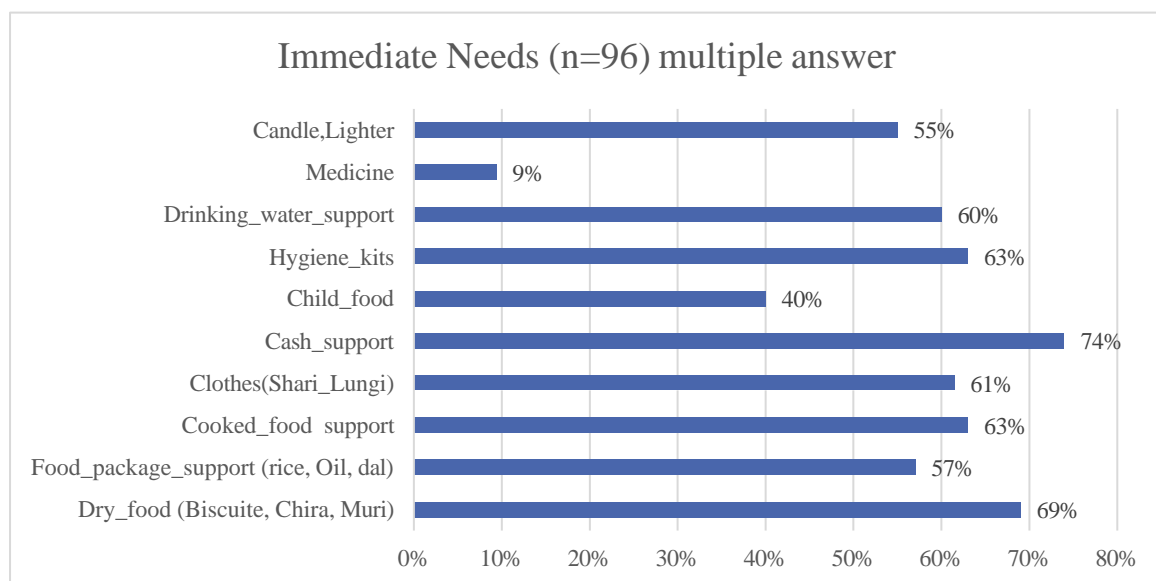


Figure 8: Immediate Needs

3.2 Midterm Need:

This time is very crucial for flood affected people. The midterm needs of flood-affected people include restoring livelihoods through agricultural support, rebuilding infrastructure, ensuring access to clean water and sanitation, etc.

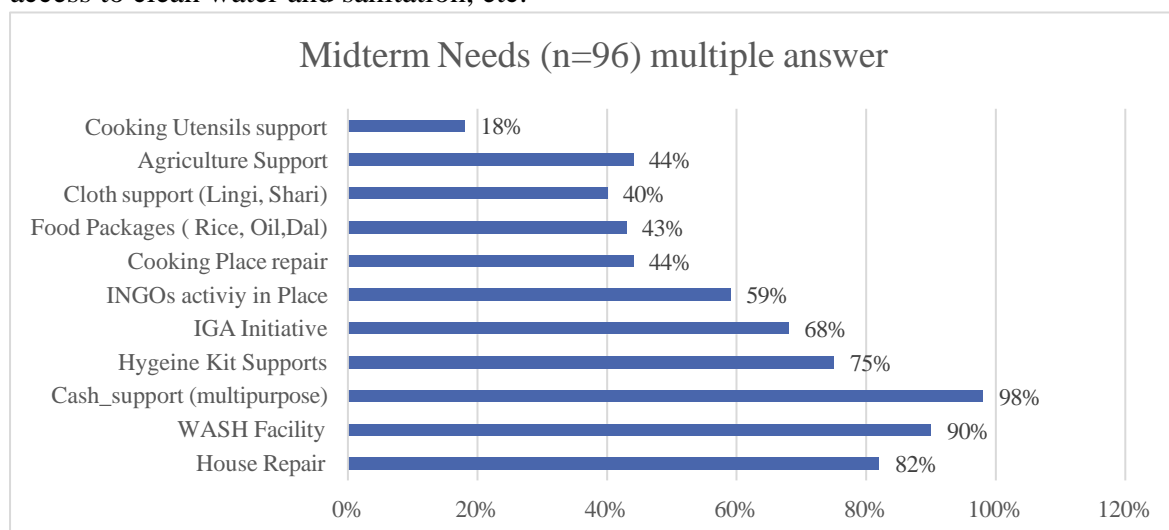


Figure 6: Mid term needs

3.3 Long Term Need through discussion:

This area has been severely damaged, so long-term programs are needed for rebuilding and sustainable. Flood-affected people need long-term solutions, reliable access to clean water, healthcare, and livelihood opportunities. As per discussion with local elites & few affected people, they have suggested few activities to rebuild and secure their futures as follows-

- Construction sustainable WASH Facility (Toilet, Tube well, Bathing) in community
- Income Generating Activities
- Construct Activity such as drainage system, community shelter, road maintained.
- Awareness training /session on Hygiene promotion, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), and Gender issue also.
- Women Empowerment activity) through leadership & livelihood)
- Enhance NGO/INGOs presence in this area.
- Construction Flood center/ Rebuild school place as a flood center.

Chapter 4: Conclusion and recommendation

The flash floods that struck Feni and Noakhali in 2024 have a profound impact on the affected communities. The unprecedented severity of the floods led to significant loss of property, displacement of families, and disruption of daily life. The immediate needs of the affected populations include access to safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, and emergency food. Essential infrastructure such as roads, WASH facility, schools, house, and healthcare facilities has been damaged. The floods have disrupted livelihoods, with many people losing their sources of income due to damage to agricultural lands, local businesses, and death of livestock assets. However, it is crucial to address the midterm needs of the affected people while also focusing on long-term recovery & resilience-building in this community.

To sum up it can be recommended that :-

- It may be provided multipurpose cash to meet a variety of essential needs, such as purchasing food, paying for healthcare, and securing shelter etc
- It may priorities to construct sustainable WASH Facility (Toilet, Tube well, Bathing) in community.
- It may activate the of disaster management and WASH committee and ensure awareness session /training on Hygiene promotion, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), and Gender issue also.
- Provide IGA & leadership related training and support cash as a small scale to empowerment of women.
- It is needed to distribute hygiene kits/dignity (Shari, Lungi, Brush, Balti, MHM pad etc)
- Support provides to affected families in rebuilding their homes with flood-resistant materials and techniques.
- It should be provided financial assistance, along with seeds, to affected communities, particularly in agriculture and small businesses for restoring their livelihoods.
- Take initiative to construct activity such as drainage system, community shelter, road maintained.
- Introduce and promote farming techniques that are resilient to floods, such as raised beds and flood-tolerant crops.

Rapid Need Assessment (RNA) on Eastern Flash Flood in Bangladesh

RNA report, Dated: 8 July 2024

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Secondary sources of information:

- Emergency Alert and Warning Message. NDRRMC
- Key Immediate Needs and Situation Analysis, Eastern Flash Floods 2024, NAWG

-----THE END-----