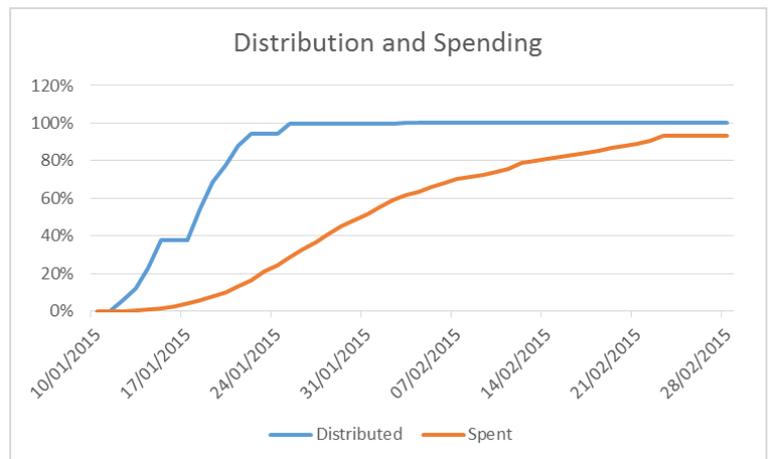


Za'atari Winter Contribution Vouchers Distribution and Initial Findings 24th February 2015

Background

At the request of and with funds provided by UNHCR, NRC has distributed cash-value vouchers to the entire camp population in Za'atari, and will continue to provide these vouchers to new arrivals until the middle of February. The vouchers are provided as a contribution to peoples' winter needs.

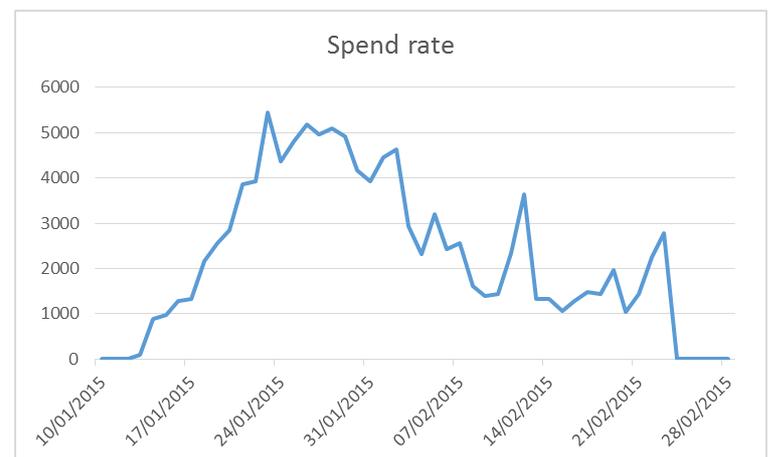
The vouchers are valid until February 28th and can be used to buy any items on sale by Safeway and Tazweed supermarkets (and their subcontractors) except tobacco products. Safeway and Tazweed have committed to make available gas heater sets, gas refills and new gas bottles (through subcontractors based on trucks) as part of their stock. Unlike some previous rounds of NRC vouchers, due to their higher value these vouchers are tied to beneficiaries' ration cards in order to mitigate against the risk of theft and abuse of vulnerable people, although this has not been reported to date.



Distribution

Single-persons received 3 10.25JD vouchers, families sized 2 and 3 received 5 vouchers and families sized 4 and above received 8 vouchers. Distribution started on Monday 12th January and continued until 25th January. 120,949 vouchers with a total value of 1,239,727 JD were distributed to 18,778 families.

Further details of the distribution, including day-by-day breakdowns and operational issues encountered, can be found in the accompanying Distribution Report.



Spending rate

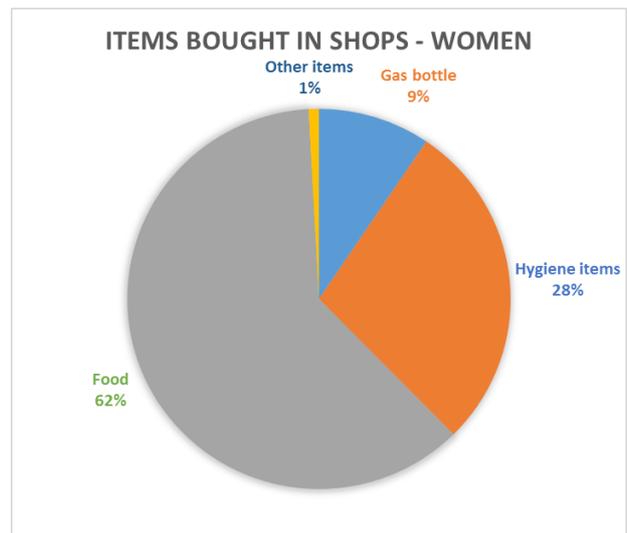
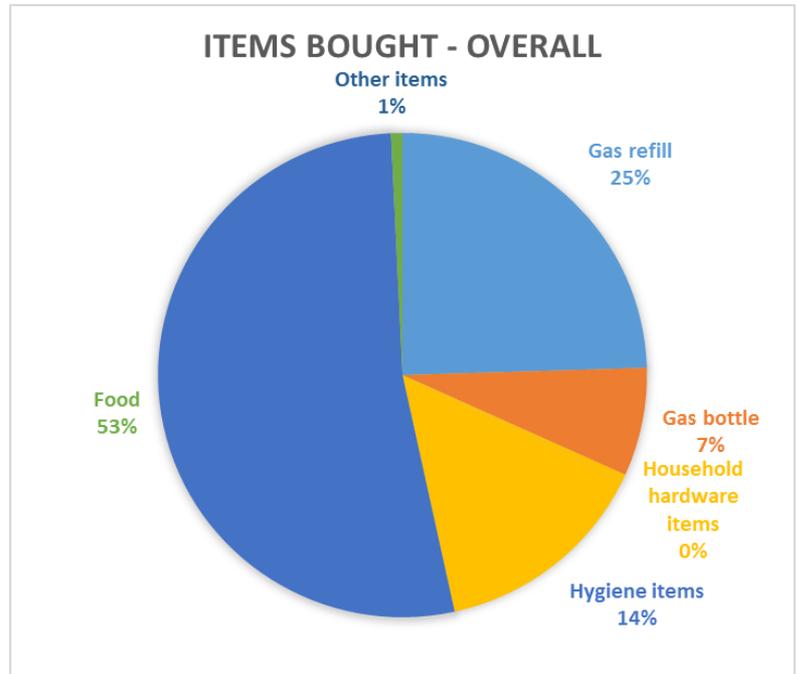
As vouchers are activated the evening after distribution, spending started on January 13th. After a slow start (connected possibly to the recent activation credit on the OneCard) spending accelerated rapidly and peaked at around 5500 vouchers per day, with 93% spent by the end of February 23rd. A peak was noted on February 12th coinciding with significant deliveries of new gas bottles to the camp, and again on February 23rd as the expiry date approached.

Spending choices

As experienced with Azraq Camp winter vouchers, food is the single biggest category of item bought at 53% of the total spend. PDM findings from Azraq indicated that people value being able to supplement their food purchasing and to select better quality lines. Some people may also be monetising food bought by re-selling in the souq, and this will be examined in the PDM to follow.

Of the items bought in shops (where shopper gender is captured), both women and men predominantly bought food, but women spent twice as much on hygiene items. The charts below do not include gas refill sales at the trucks and should be read accordingly.

Gas refills represent 25% of sales, and operational monitoring of the trucks indicates that they sell all the refills they are able to bring into the camp. The low proportion of new gas bottle sales reflects considerable difficulties on the part of the supermarkets to procure gas bottles, a situation consistent with market conditions in Jordan. They are continuing to work to secure additional stocks.



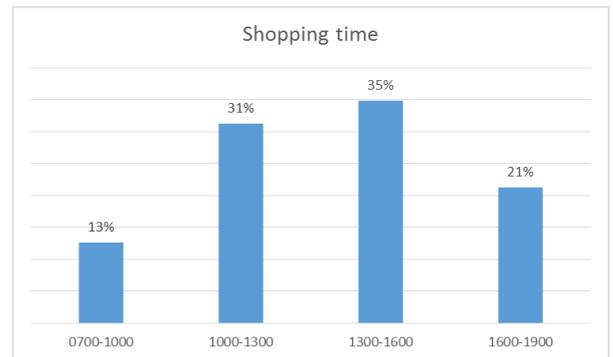
Spending patterns

Men do 68% of purchasing in stores and women less than one third. Looking at the project in two phases – the first half to February 7th and the second half after that – we can see that women began to return to the shops when the busiest period was over. This implies that further efforts should be made to phase the activation of vouchers and other entitlements over time.



This data does not include sales at the gas trucks, although those sales are expected also to be predominately to males. The overall imbalance is greater than in previous NRC voucher distributions in Za’atari, however it more accurately matches the gender of the voucher collector at the distribution site (60% male, 40% female).

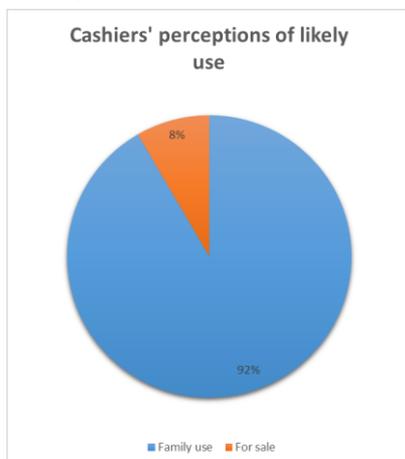
The most popular time of day for shopping was between 1pm and 4pm. By contrast the experience in Azraq was of most shopping taking place early in the morning. That was understood to be due to the regular stock outages in Azraq, which in turn indicates that stock availability is less of a concern in Za’atari.



60% of trade is being done by Safeway and its gas subcontractor, 40% by Tazweed and its gas subcontractor.

Monitoring voucher resale

Despite the linking of ration cards to vouchers, intended to ensure that only the intended beneficiary family can spend, resale of vouchers continues in the souq. Traders are ‘borrowing’ beneficiaries ration cards in order to spend the vouchers, which is easy as ration cards do not have photos embedded.



In order to attempt to capture the prevalence of resale, NRC on February 16th started collecting the cashiers’ opinions on whether a sale was for family use or for resale. The justification for collecting this subjective data is that identifying goods intended for resale is a ‘know it when you see it’ issue, difficult to capture with a more precise wording.

In the cashiers’ opinions 8% of goods bought in the shops (i.e. not including from the gas trucks) is probably intended for resale. This is considered lower than might have been expected and certainly lower than NRC’s understanding of resale patterns for in-kind items prior to



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the transfer to cash.

However it is certainly the case that, in attempting to address one protection risk (theft) by linking ration cards to vouchers, a second one (temporary relinquishment of ration cards) has emerged. Further information on this will be sought in a flash survey in the coming days and in the later PDM, but consideration will need to be given to whether a further design change is required.

This is however the first time good quantitative data on resale in Za'atari has been available for either in-kind distribution or vouchers from NRC. It betters agencies' understanding of the needs and preferences of the camp population and will be used to inform future project decisions.