

Overview

The **Emergency Response Mechanism (ERM)** is a rapid response facility funded by ECHO to provide immediate and life-saving assistance to shock-affected populations by delivering multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA) of a maximum of 18,000 AFN, as well as protection and WASH assistance. The ERM is implemented across 33 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces by a coordinated alliance of seven humanitarian actors, including: ACF, ACTED, DACAAR, DRC, IRC, PUI, and RI.¹

During the ninth year of ERM implementation (ERM 9), REACH has provided information management (IM) support to ERM partners. In addition to partners conducting their own internal PDMs, REACH's activities include three rounds of nation-wide PDM of MPCA, to provide impartial third-party monitoring and evaluation. This fact sheet summarises **key indicators from round 3 of the nationwide PDM**, conducted in March 2020.

Methodology

A total of 1,195 households received ERM MPCA between January and mid-February 2020. REACH surveyed a representative sample of the MPCA beneficiary households in this caseload. The caseload covered the provinces of: Balkh, Faryab, Ghazni, Herat, Kabul, Kapisa, Khost, Kunar, Logar, Maidan Wardak, Nangarhar, Nimroz, Paktika, Parwan, and Takhar. Selected households were interviewed between 30 and 60 days after receipt of assistance.

A total of **590 household surveys with beneficiary households were conducted between 16 and 29 March 2020**, by REACH enumerators remotely via telephone. The sample was stratified by urban and rural households, and calculated to produce findings that were generalizable to the wider beneficiary population, with a 95% level of confidence and 5% margin of error, per strata.

Challenges & Limitations:

- Interviews were conducted with heads of household. In Afghanistan, the head of household is most commonly a male family member. Consequently, there is a potential gender-bias in the findings as the majority of respondents were male.
- As a closed-ended quantitative tool was used, nuances about types of needs and expenditures i.e. what exactly was purchased under 'healthcare', were not captured. However, REACH is currently conducting a Qualitative Longitudinal Survey (QLS) to explore and contextualise findings from PDMs and other assessments.
- Due to protection concerns, certain questions about occurrence of protection incidents or needs, especially those relating to the distribution process or impact of receipt of assistance, such as post-distribution taxation, could not be asked.

Beneficiary Caseload Profile

Demographics

Average household size: **8.6**

% of rural versus urban households:



Vulnerabilities

Average dependency ratio:² **0.7:1**

% of households with:

Female head of household:	7%
Elderly head of household:	1%
≥ 1 member with a disability:	24%
≥ 1 member with a chronic illness:	35%

Displacement

% of households displaced: **90%**

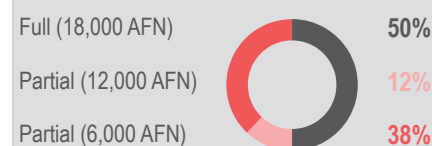
% of households by movement intentions in the next 12 months :



MPCA and Beneficiaries' Income, Expenditure, and Debt

ERM MPCA

% of households by MPCA amount received (AFN):³



94% of households reported having **spent all their assistance** at the time of interview (up to two months after distribution).

8% of households reported **receiving some form of assistance other than ERM MPCA** in the 3 months prior to the interview.

Of these, the top 3 other types of assistance received were: **food (69%)**, **cash (22%)**, and **hygiene assistance (17%)**.

Income & Expenditure

Amount of semi-regular income reported by households in the 30 days prior to interview:⁴

Maximum reported semi-regular income:	40,000 AFN
Average reported semi-regular income:	6,500 AFN

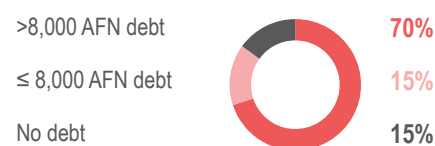
90% of households reported having a **semi-regular source of income** in the 30 days prior to interview.

Average household expenditure in the 30 days prior to the interview was **13,000 AFN**.

Average expenditure was roughly **3 times** average income; the **average household net-income was -6,500 AFN**.

Debt

% of households by reported amount of debt at the time of interview (AFN):



72% of households reported **accruing the majority of debt after experiencing shock** (and prior to assistance).

Average amount of reported debt by households was **39,000 AFN**.

22% of households reported **spending some of their assistance on debt repayment** in the 30 days prior to the interview.

¹ As part of ERM 9, MPCA is regularly complemented by in-kind water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) assistance provided by DACAAR. PDM findings here do not cover in-kind WASH assistance.

² The dependency ratio is calculated by dividing the total number of household members by the number of working-age household members (18 to 59).

³ Full MPCA was given when no other assistance was distributed at the same time; 12,000 AFN was given where in-kind NFIs were also distributed, and 6,000 AFN was given where in-kind food was also distributed.

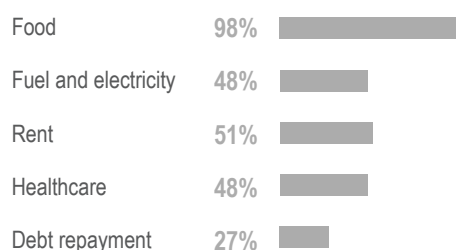
⁴ Semi-regular income includes: elderly or adult employment, pension, selling goods (produced to be sold), and/or small businesses.

Beneficiaries' Needs & Expenditures



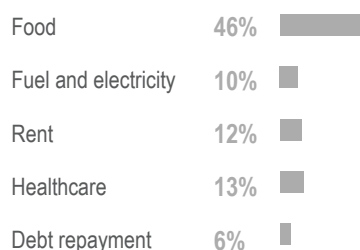
Primary Needs

Top 5 primary needs reported by households (could select up to 3):⁵



Expenditure Type

Top 5 expenditures in the last 30 days reported by households (% of total expenditure):



Amount Spent

Average amount spent on top 5 primary expenditures reported by households (AFN):⁶



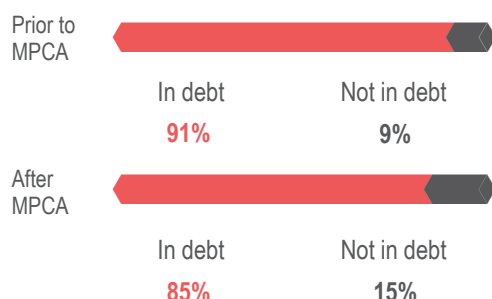
Impact of MPCA

A number of key indicators were included in the Household Emergency Assessment Tool (HEAT) used to assess shock-affected households for eligibility for ERM MPCA, and in the PDM assessment.⁷ Comparative analysis of beneficiary households prior to (HEAT) and after (PDM) MPCA, provides an evaluation of the impact of assistance on the household. The key indicators include: % of households in debt, Food Consumption Score (FCS), and reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI).⁸



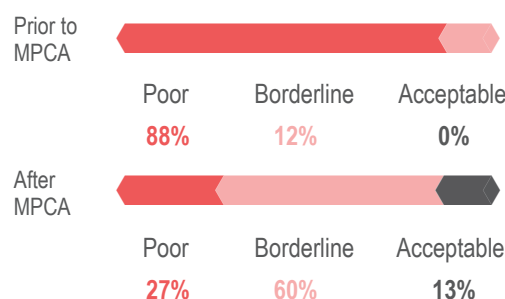
Debt

% of households by debt status:



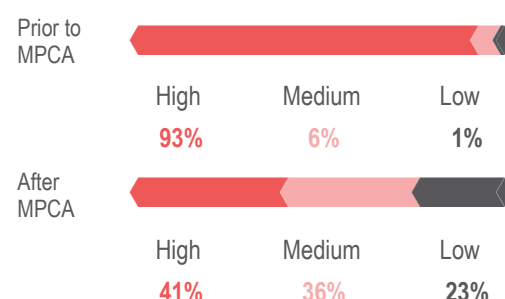
FCS

% of households by FCS category:



rCSI

% of households by rCSI Score:

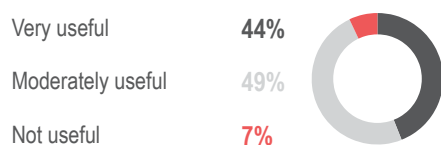


Accountability to Affected Populations



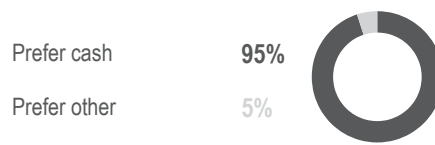
Perceived Impact

% of households reporting that assistance received helped to meet primary needs:



Preferred Modality

% of households by preferred modality of assistance:



Information & Feedback

66% of households reported receiving information about registration/ how to access assistance prior to distribution.

54% of households reported being aware of feedback mechanisms for assistance from implementing organizations.

0.5% of households reported needing to ask a question or make a complaint about the assistance.

⁵ Multiple options could be selected; findings may therefore exceed 100%.

⁶ Average expenditure covers all households in the sample, including those that reported spending nothing on the item. Averages will differ when looking only at households reporting to spend.

⁷ REACH conducts analysis of HEAT data, compiled on a monthly basis. Monthly HEAT factsheets can be downloaded from the ERM 9 dashboard, also showing monthly partner activity: erm-afg.org.

⁸ The Food Consumption Score (FCS) is calculated using the frequency of a household's consumption of different food groups during the 7 days before the survey. The reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI) is based on the rate that households with food insecurity relied on negative coping strategies during the 7 days before the survey. For more information see here.