ERM 10 Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) Nationwide Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM)
Afghanistan
October 2020

Overview

The **Emergency Response Mechanism (ERM)** is a rapid response facility funded by the Directorate-General for European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG-ECHO) to provide immediate and life-saving assistance to shock-affected populations by delivering MPCA of a maximum of 22,000 AFN, as well as protection and water, sanitation, hygiene (WASH) assistance. The ERM is implemented across 33 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces by the Danish Refugee Council (DRC)-led consortium including ACTED, DRC, International Rescue Committee (IRC), and REACH, in coordination with DACAAR.

During the tenth year of ERM implementation (ERM 10), REACH has provided information management (IM) support to ERM partners. In addition to partners conducting their own internal PDMs, REACH's activities include two rounds of nationwide PDM of MPCA, to provide impartial third-party monitoring and evaluation. This factsheet presents **key findings from the first round of the nationwide PDM**.

Methodology

A total of 1,525 households received ERM MPCA in July 2020. REACH surveyed a representative sample of all MPCA beneficiary households from this month. This included beneficiaries across the following provinces: Balkh, Faryab, Ghazni, Herat, Kabul, Kapisa, Khost, Kunar, Logar, Maidan Wardak, Nangarhar, Nimroz, Paktika, Parwan, and Takhar. Selected households were interviewed between 30-60 days after receipt of assistance.

A total of **659 household surveys with beneficiary households were conducted between September 21st and October 5th 2020**, by REACH enumerators remotely via telephone. The sample was stratified by urban/rural and sex of the head of household. The sample was 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, while the sample was stratified by male and female head of household, there is still a potential gender-bias in the findings as the majority of respondents were male.
- Due to protection concerns, certain questions about occurence of protection incidents were not answered by part of the sample (each sensitive question had a "*prefer not to answer*" option). This applied especially to those questions relating to the distribution process or impact of receipt of assistance, such as post-distribution taxation.

Beneficiary Caseload Profile

Demographics

Average household size:	**7.2**
% of female headed households sampled from the HEAT data collected in July	**26%**
% of elderly headed households	**6%**
% of households reporting at least one member with disabilities[1]	**22%**
% of households with at least one member reported in need of medical care	**40%**

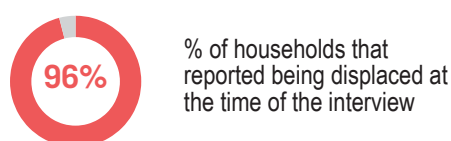### ERM MPCA

% of households by MPCA amount received (AFN):

Full (22,000 AFN)	40%
Partial (9,000 AFN)	**60%**
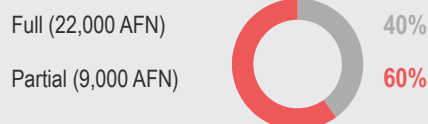
% of households by amount of MPCA spent at the time of data collection:

All	**69%**
Almost all	30%
More than half	1%

Displacement

% of households displaced:

96% % of households that reported being displaced at the time of the interview

% of displaced households reporting community tension upon arrival:

**2%** % of displaced households that reported community tension upon arrival
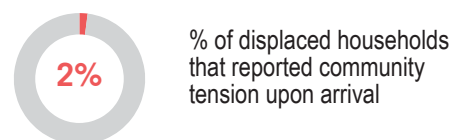
36% of households **reported being concerned about at least one possible community reaction to the displacement**. The most frequently reported issues around the community were:

❶ **22%** Fear of reactions due to possible COVID-19 outbreak
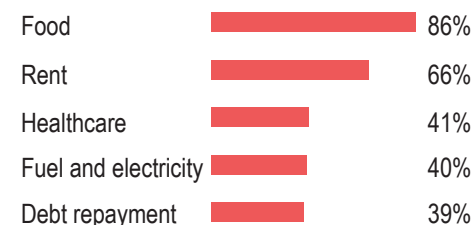
❷ **5%** Maiming

❸ **4%** Explosive hazards

% of households reporting being displaced for more than 3 months:

83% % of households that reported being displaced for more than 3 months at the time of the interview
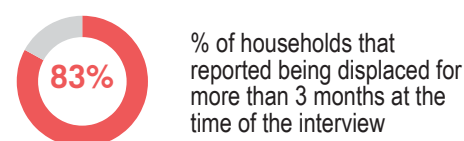
% of households reporting having attempted to return in the area of origin (AoO):

20% % of households that reported having attempted to return to their AoO, and being displaced again since
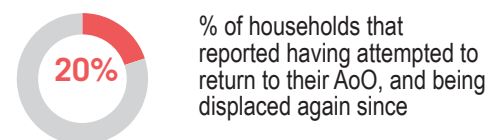
% of households by reported intentions in the 6 months following the interview:

Remain	**64%**
Return to Area of Origin	15%
Don't know	**20%**
Move to a new area	1%
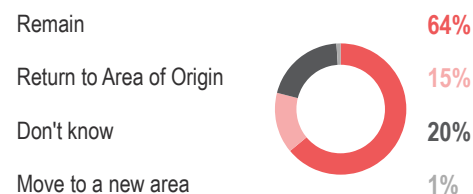
Of the 16% of households that reported intending to move, % of households by most frequently reported information needed prior to relocating:[2]

❶ **92%** Stable security context in the AoO

❷ **58%** Livelihood opportunities

❸ **41%** AoO cleared of exposives

Beneficiaries' Needs & Expenditures

Primary Needs

Top 5 primary needs reported by households (could select up to 3):[2]

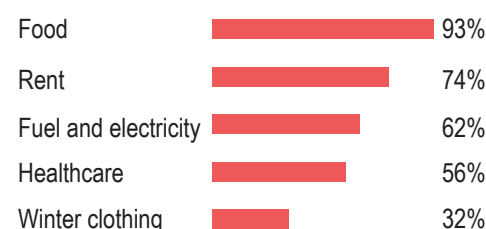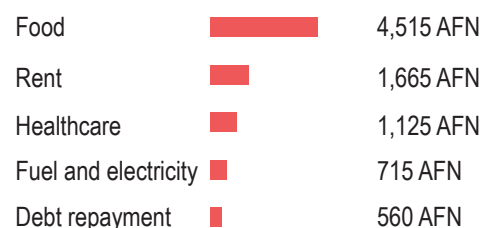| Need	%
Food	86%
Rent	66%
Healthcare	41%
Fuel and electricity	40%
Debt repayment	39%

Expenditure Type

Top 5 priority expenditures in the 30 days prior to data collection reported by households:[2]

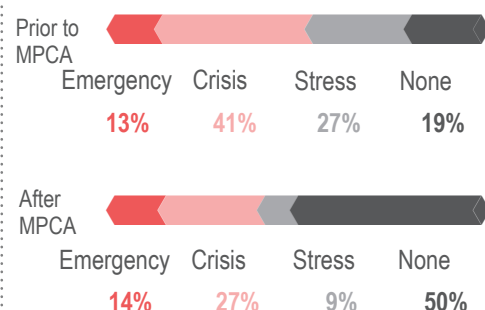| Expenditure	%
Food	93%
Rent	74%
Fuel and electricity	62%
Healthcare	56%
Winter clothing	32%

Key impact indicators

Key indicators were included in the Household Emergency Assessment Tool (HEAT) used to assess shock-affected households for eligibility to ERM MPCA. These indicators were included in the Nationwide PDM to allow for comparative analysis to provide an evaluation of the impact of assistance on the household. The key indicators include: Livelihood Coping Strategies Index (LCSI), Food Consumption Score (FCS), and reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI).
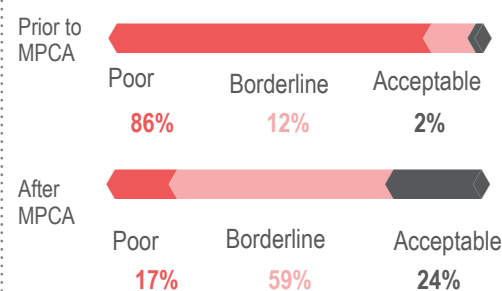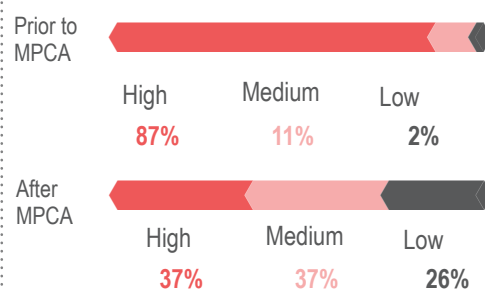
LCS

% of households by LCS Score:[3,4]

Prior to MPCA

Emergency	Crisis	Stress	None
13%	41%	27%	19%

After MPCA

Emergency	Crisis	Stress	None
14%	27%	9%	50%

Remaining needs

Top 5 primary needs reported by households (could select up to 3):[2]

Need	%
Debt repayment	79%
Fuel and electricity	72%
Winter clothing	70%
Food	60%
Rent	52%

Sectoral expenses

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

Expenditure	AFN
Food	4,515 AFN
Rent	1,665 AFN
Healthcare	1,125 AFN
Fuel and electricity	715 AFN
Debt repayment	560 AFN

FCS

% of households by FCS category:[5]

Prior to MPCA

Poor	Borderline	Acceptable
86%	12%	2%

After MPCA

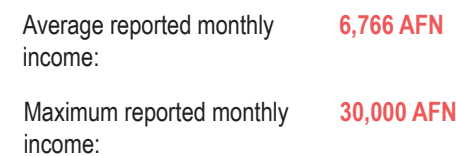| Poor	Borderline	Acceptable
17%	59%	24%

Livelihood, income, and debt

Income & Expenditure

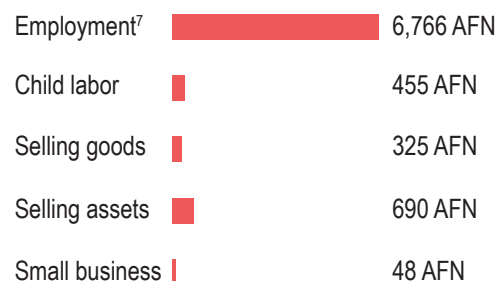**Amount of semi-regular income reported by households in the 30 days prior to the interview:**

Average reported monthly income: **6,766 AFN**

Maximum reported monthly income: **30,000 AFN**

3% of households reported **being unemployed** in the 30 days prior to the interview.

Average male headed households dependency ratio: **1:7**

Average female headed households dependency ratio: **1:4**

The average household income divided by the household size results in **926 AFN** per person, per month

Reported average income, by source:

Source	AFN
Employment[7]	6,766 AFN
Child labor	455 AFN
Selling goods	325 AFN
Selling assets	690 AFN
Small business	48 AFN

The average **household expenditure** in the 30 days prior to the interview was **9,527 AFN**.

The average expenditure was roughly **1.5 times** the reported average income; the **average household net-income was -2,761 AFN.**

rCSI

% of households by rCSI Score:[6]

Prior to MPCA

High	Medium	Low
87%	11%	2%

After MPCA

High	Medium	Low
37%	37%	26%

Income volatility and debt

% of households reporting being in debt:

In debt	**85%**
No debt	15%

Among households who reported being in debt, the most frequently reported reasons were:[2]

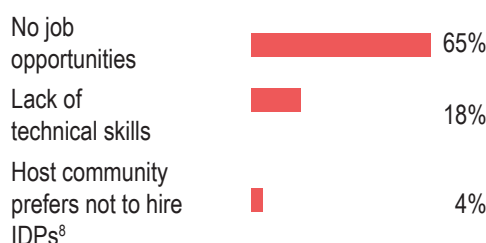|	
Food	**64%**
Healthcare	**40%**
Rent	**36%**

The average amount of debt reported by households was 27,736 AFN.

Among the households who reported being in debt, **76%** of households reported **accruing the majority of debt after experiencing a shock** and prior to the assistance.

Main sources of income reported since the shock:

Daily unskilled labour	68%
Agriculture and Livestock	12%
Daily skilled labour	10%
Small business	6%
Formal employment	2%
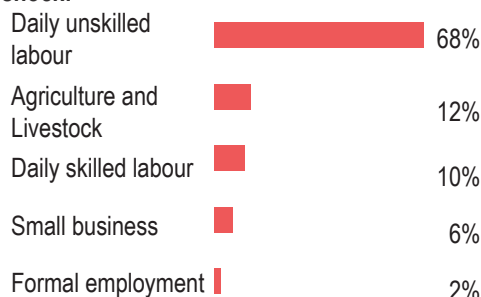
% of households by most frequently reported difficulties in accessing employment:

No job opportunities	65%
Lack of technical skills	18%
Host community prefers not to hire IDPs[8]	4%

% of households by reported income change in the 30 days prior to data collection:

Increased	**20%**
Stayed the same	36%
Decreased	**44%**

Most commonly reported reasons for households whose income decreased:[2]

1	**31%**	Displacement
2	**14%**	Lack of livelihood opportunities
3	**7%**	Seasonality

Sectoral needs

Shelter and Non Food Items (NFIs)

% of households by reported shelter type occupied at the time of the interview:

Brick house	48%
Mud house	40%
Damaged shelter	8%
Tent or makeshift	3%
Other	1%
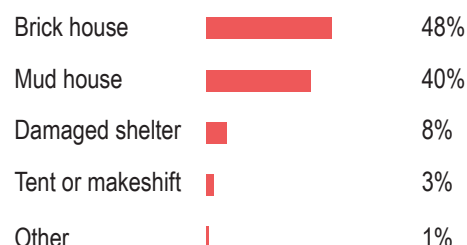
78% of **households reported to be renting** the shelter they occupied at the time of the interview.

% of households by most frequently reported concerns related to the shelter occupied:[2]

|		
1	**56%**	Eviction
2	**50%**	No insulation
3	**43%**	Size
4	**36%**	Damaged building
5	**9%**	Lack of repair material

Among those households reporting fearing eviction from the current shelter, **51%** reported the lack of resources to pay rent as reason behind it.

On average, households reported **9 persons to be living in the shelter** they occupied at the time of the interview.

% of households by reported energy sources used for heating:[2]

Wood	54%
Charcoal	22%
Animal	13%
Waste materials	6%
LPG[9]	3%
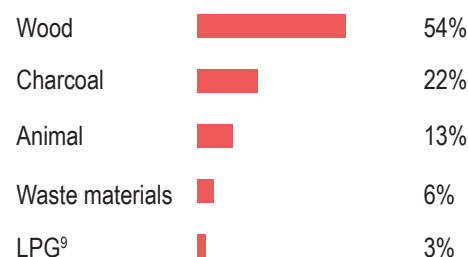
Reported barriers to access commodities
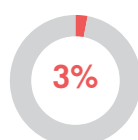
3% — % of households that reported not being able to access markets to buy goods after receiving assistance

% of households by most frequently reported barriers to access the marketplaces:[2]

1	**83%**	Unavailable transportation
2	**29%**	Unsafe roads
3	**5%**	Unsafe marketplace

% of households that reported to be in need of at least one key NFIs:

**100%** — % of households that reported being in need of at least one key NFI

Of the 100% of households that reported to be in need of at least one key NFI, proportion of households reporting the need for the following specific items:[2]

|		
	90%	Winter clothing
	87%	Heating device
	84%	Sleeping mats or matresses
	51%	Plastic tarpaulin
	50%	Cooking pots
	42%	Female sanitary items
	39%	Water storage containers
	23%	Stainless steel cups
	5%	Mobile or assistive device

Sectoral needs

WASH

% of households that reported using an unimproved water source as their main source for domestic use at the time of the interview:[10]
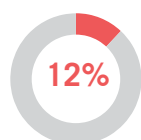
12% — % of households that reported using unimproved water sources for domestic use

% of households that reported not having enough water for drinking, cooking, or bathing:
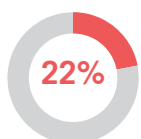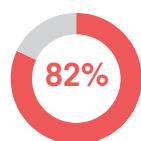
22% — % of households that reported not having enough water for drinking, cooking, or bathing at the time of the interview

% of households that reported the local water source not being safely accessible:

6% — % of households that reported the water source not being safely accessible

% of households that reported their **main water source to be further than 500 metres away:**

82% — % of households that reported their main water source to be further than 500m away

% of households using an unimproved latrine type at the time of the interview:[11]

13% — % of households that reported using an unimproved latrine type

Out of those who reported using an unimproved latrine type, **a quarter reported not having access to any form of latrine within the community**.
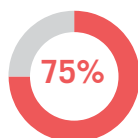
Health

8% of households reported no functional health facility within 2 hours

90% of households **reported facing at least one barrier to accessing healthcare**. The most frequently reported barriers were:[2]

1. **75%** Cost of medicines
2. **56%** Cost of healthcare
3. **34%** Cost of transports
4. **25%** Insufficient capacity
5. **24%** Distance and travel time

% of households reporting having spent money on healthcare for visits, prescriptions or treatments in the 30 days prior to data collection:

75% — % of households reporting spending on healthcare for visits, prescription, or treatments

70% of households reported that they had **delayed seeking medical care for critical health problems to save money** in the 30 days prior to data collection.[12]

Education

Of the **61%** of households **reporting that they had school aged children not attending school**, the most frequently reported reasons were:[2]

1. **31%** Security concerns
2. **28%** Costs
3. **8%** Need for children to engage in work activites

64% of households reported that they had **stopped sending children to school in order to engage them in working** for economic gain or productive activities as negative coping strategy to address limited income and resources.[12]

Protection

% of households that reported experiencing or perceiving being at risk of at least one protection incident for either men, women, or children:
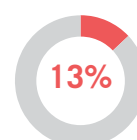
13% — % of households that reported at least one protection concern (experienced or perceived to be at risk of)

2% of households reported protection incidents or risks experienced by children, including:

**1%** Physical violence or harassment

1% Verbal harassment

7% of households reported protection incidents or risks experienced by men and boys, including:

2% Physical violence or harassment

2% Verbal harassment

0% Marriage earlier than otherwise planned

1% Denial of resources or access to services

2% Thefts and robberies

2% of households reported protection incidents or risks experienced by women and girls, including:

1% Physical violence or harassment

1% Verbal harassment

% of households who reported a member to have missing civil documentation
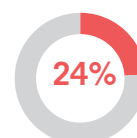
24% — At least one member reported to have lost, damaged, or expired documentation

Accountability to Affected Populations

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

Very useful	**24%**
Moderately useful	64%
Not useful	**12%**

% of households reporting being satisfied with the assistance received:

Very satisfied	**77%**
Satisfied	13%
Moderately satisfied	**10%**

% of households by reported information received regarding the distribution process:
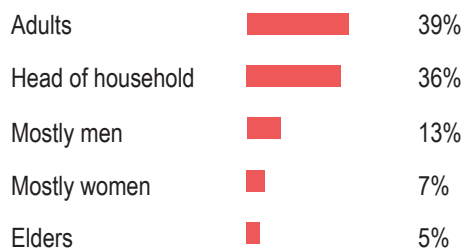
2% — % of households reporting not having received any information about the distribution process
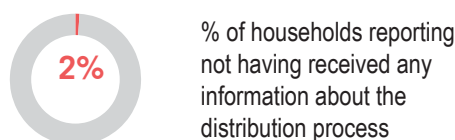
% of households, by member reported to be the primary decision-maker regarding household spendings:[2]

Adults	39%
Head of household	36%
Mostly men	13%
Mostly women	7%
Elders	5%

% of households reporting receiving additional forms of assistance with the MPCA:[2]

WASH	46%
NFIs	34%
Food distribution	32%
CVA[13]	19%
Feminine products	12%
Shelter	1%
None	38%

Tensions due to cash assistance

% of households that reported CVA caused increased tension within the household members:

1% — % of households reporting increased tension within the household due to cash assistance

% of households that reported CVA caused increased tension within the community:

2% — % of households reporting increased tension within the community due to cash assistance

Feedbacks and potential issues to follow up on:

5% of the households reported having experienced access challenges to the distribution location – all reported on very long distance as main challenge encountered.

67% of the households reported having to wait more than one hour in queue in order to receive the cash.

52% of the households reported not being aware of feedback mechanisms.

1 household reported having to pay cash (to a community neighbour) in order to receive assistance.

3 households reported not being treated well during distribution. They reported on violence, abusive language, and culturally inappropriate behaviour.

4 households reported not feeling safe at the distribution site, and reported on receiving intimidations.

1 household reported being asked for money after distribution.

END NOTES

1 Disability is counted as at least one member of the household reported as having a severe disability, based on Washington Group questions, where the individual either 'cannot do at all', or has 'a lot of difficulty doing' any of the following: seeing, hearing, walking, remembering, self care (such as washing or dressing), or communicating. For more information see here.
2 Respondents could report multiple options. Findings may therefore exceed 100%.
3 The Livelihoods Coping Strategy Index (LCSI) score is a measure of reliance on livelihood-based coping mechanisms to cope with lack of food. For more information see here.
4 In the month of July, data quality was particularly challenging. LCS findings from July were not sufficiently reliable to be reported. The "Prior to MPCA" component was taken from August data, when data quality significantly improved following extensive trainings.
5 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. For more information see here.
6 The Reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI) is based on the rate that households with food consumption problems relied on negative coping strategies during the 7 days before the survey. For more information see here.
7 Findings reported as "employment" correspond exclusively to adult employment, and income derived from the reported primary source.
8 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)
9 Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG)
10 Households were asked to report their main source of water for domestic use. Improved water sources include: hand pump/ bore well, piped water, protected spring, or purchased water. Unimproved sources include: dug well, stream/river, kandas, unprotected spring, pond/lake, or other. For more information see here.
11 Households were asked to report the type of latrine they had access to. Improved latrine types include family latrine, family VIP latrine. Unimproved latrine types include community latrine, no latrine, or other. For more information see here.
12 Indicator based on the negative coping strategies reported as components of the LCS.
13 Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA)