Afghanistan

Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) Report

Findings of PDM Rounds 1, 2 and 3

April 2020

REACH Informing
more effective
humanitarian action

SUMMARY

Afghanistan has been in protracted conflict for almost 40 years, which continues to take a heavy toll on its population. In 2019, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) recorded 463,104 newly internally displaced people due to conflict and 306,499 people affected by natural disaster.[1] With no immediate improvement in sight, the humanitarian community estimated 9.4 million people to be in need of humanitarian assistance in 2020, a fourth of Afghanistan's population.[2]

To ensure a rapid response to urgent humanitarian needs, the Emergency Response Mechanism (ERM) was established in 2011 and funded by the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Organisation (ECHO), providing Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in-kind assistance to recently displaced and/or shock-affected populations through a coordinated network of aid organisations across Afghanistan. In order to ensure accountability and maintain an evidence-driven response, the ERM requires consistent monitoring and evaluation throughout the project cycle. To this end, REACH joined the ERM as a non-implementing Information Management (IM) partner. As part of this role, REACH conducted three nation-wide post-distribution monitoring (PDM) rounds in 2019 and early 2020, aimed at assessing the quality and impact of the ERM MPCA, strengthening accountability to beneficiaries, and identifying aspects for future improvement in the response.

The PDM rounds relied on structured household surveys, with data collected across three rounds in September 2019, January 2020, and March 2020. The randomly assessed samples consisted of households that had received ERM MPCA in the 30 to 60 days prior to data collection. Interviews were conducted remotely and responses were recorded digitally on smartphones using the Kobo Toolbox application. The assessment was stratified for urban/rural households and findings are generalisable to the wider ERM beneficiary population, with a 95% level of confidence and 5% margin of error, per strata.

KEY FINDINGS:

Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance

- Across the three PDM rounds, between a quarter and half (20% - 50%) of the beneficiary households reported receiving the full MPCA amount of 18,000 AFN, with the most common mode of delivery being cash in hand (94% - 99%).

- Of the beneficiary households that received other assistance aside from the ERM-provided MPCA and in-kind WASH (39%-53%), the most common other assistance reported were food (31% - 82%) followed by other cash assistance (26% - 32%).

Socio-Economic Profile

- Throughout all three PDM rounds, the average semi-regular income of beneficiary households[3] was at least two times lower than the average of their reported monthly expenditures.

- Differences with regards to beneficiary households' expenditures could be observed across rounds, however, no correlation between beneficiary households' expenditures and beneficiary households receiving the full or partial amount of MPCA could be identified. In round 2 and 3, average expenditures were found to be higher for beneficiary households having received the full MPCA package, while it was the reverse in round 1. Nevertheless, for all beneficiary households, and in particular for beneficiary households that received the partial package, average expenditures across rounds exceeded the received amount of MPCA.[4]

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[1] Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. 2020. Afghanistan Overview of Natural Disasters (Interactive Dashboard). Available online. Afghanistan: Conflict Induced Displacements (Interactive Dashboard). Available online.

[2] Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. 2020. Afghanistan Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020. Available online.

[3] Sources of semi-regular income include: elderly or adult employment, pension, selling goods (produced to be sold), and/or small business.

[4] Assessed expenditures included: rent, food, healthcare and medicine, basic NFI items, children education, transportation, communication, fuel and electricity, debt repayment, and shelter maintenance.

Debt

- The primary reasons beneficiary households had acquired debt were expenditures on food and healthcare, with the majority of beneficiary households reportedly having accrued the majority of their current debt between the most recent impact of shock and the receipt of MPCA.
- Although more than 85% of beneficiary households were found to be in debt across all three PDM rounds, only around a quarter (19% - 28%) of beneficiary households reportedly spent any money on debt repayments in the 30 days prior to the interview.
- None of the PDM rounds findings indicate that receiving a higher amount of MPCA resulted in greater levels of debt repayment. The same proportion of beneficiary households reportedly paid some outstanding debt, irrespective of the MPCA amount received.
- While only around a quarter (19% - 28%) of beneficiary households reported debt repayment expenditures in the 30 days prior to the interview, for those that did the costs were commonly, next to food expenditures, their single highest amount of spending.

Use of MPCA: Expenditures

- Across all PDM rounds, the highest household expenditures in the 30 days before the interview were reportedly (in order of magnitude): food, healthcare and medicines, fuel and electricity, rent, and debt repayment.[5]
- Beneficiary households' highest expenditures reflected beneficiary households' most frequently reported primary needs; regardless of whether any in-kind assistance was also received.
- Expenses on fuel and electricity showcased strong season-related fluctuations, with significantly higher expenses in the winter months.

Impact of MPCA: FCS and rCSI

- Comparing beneficiary households' reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI) and Food Consumption Score (FCS) during beneficiary selection and PDM interview highlighted lower proportions of beneficiary households with high rCSI scores and poor FCS after the distribution of MPCA, indicating a likely positive impact of the assistance. However, it has to be noted that this improvement could also be related to other factors outside of the scope of the PDM assessment.
- While the MPCA likely reduced the proportion of beneficiary households with a poor FCS, it had lesser effect on increasing the proportion of beneficiary households with an acceptable FCS.[6]

Accountability to Affected Populations

- Across all three PDM rounds, the majority (66% - 94%) of beneficiary households reported the MPCA they received was 'moderately useful' or 'very useful' in meeting their primary needs to date, with the proportion of 'very satisfied' beneficiary households increasing each PDM round.
- The majority of MPCA beneficiary households reported to prefer cash over other forms of assistance modalities (95%-97%).[7]
- Consistently, only around half of the MPCA beneficiary households (42% - 54%) reported being aware of feedback and complaint mechanisms, highlighting an important area for improvement.

Rural versus urban beneficiary households

In general, there were almost no differences found between urban and rural beneficiary households. Some small differences were found in income, satisfaction and information distribution:

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[5] The order of magnitude between the expenses for a) fuel and electricity and b) rent varied with seasonality.

[6] This may highlight a limitation of the FCS indicator, which largely measures the variance of consumed food groups and not aspects like calorie intake. The unavailability and/or households' disregard of certain food groups may hence result in many remaining with a borderline FCS.

[7] Two qualifications are important to note: 1) The gender bias in having mostly male household heads reporting the preference for MPCA and 2) The majority of beneficiary households also received in-kind WASH assistance at the same time.

- Rural beneficiary households were found to have a slightly higher average income than urban beneficiary households (round 2: 7,251 AFN rural vs 4,898 AFN urban, round 3: 7,174 AFN rural vs 6,602 AFN urban).[8]

- A higher proportion of urban than rural beneficiary households reported being very satisfied with the ERM assistance (round 2: 78% urban vs 43% rural, round 3: 88% urban vs 69% rural).

- Rural beneficiary households reported more often that they had not received any information about registration prior to assistance, highlighting a rural/urban gap in information distribution, and an area of improvement for future MPCA (round 2: 47% rural vs 19% urban, round 3: 45% rural vs 25% urban).

The findings of the PDM rounds indicate that in the short-term, the MPCA helped beneficiary households cover their primary needs, improved their food security, and reduced the use of negative coping strategies. However, the findings also indicate that the amount of MPCA was often lower than average expenditures spent by beneficiary households in the 30 days prior data collection, regardless of whether the MPCA was full or partial, highlighting the short-term nature of the MPCA. Development-oriented aid such as livelihood programming is of vital importance, in order to generate long-term effects on beneficiary households' socio-economic status and increase their resilience to future shocks and disasters in Afghanistan.

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[8] 1 USD = 77.40 Afghan Afghani. XE Currency Converter. Accessed 18 June 2020.

CONTENTS

List of Acronyms

AAP	Accountability to Affected Populations
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
AoO	Area of Origin
ECHO	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Organization
ERM	Emergency Response Mechanism
FCS	Food Consumption Score
HEAT	Humanitarian Emergency Assessment Tool
HH	Households
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IM	Information Management
JMMI	Joint Market Monitoring Initiative
KII	Key Informant Interview
MPCA	Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance
MEB	Monthly Expenditure Basket
NFI	Non-Food Item
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PDM	Post Distribution Monitoring
QLS	Qualitative Longitudinal Study
rCSI	reduced Coping Strategies Index
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

Geographical Classifications

Province	The highest formal geographic boundary in Afghanistan below the national level.

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INTRODUCTION

Afghanistan has been in protracted conflict for almost forty years, which continues to take a heavy toll on its population. In 2019, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) recorded 463,104 newly internally displaced people due to conflict and 306,499 people affected by natural disaster.[9] With no immediate improvement in sight, the humanitarian community estimated 9.4 million people to be in humanitarian need in 2020, a fourth of Afghanistan's population.[10]

To ensure a rapid response to urgent humanitarian needs, the Emergency Response Mechanism (ERM) was established in 2011 and funded by the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Organisation (ECHO), providing Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in-kind assistance to recently displaced and/or shock-affected populations through a coordinated network of aid organisations across Afghanistan. Between May 2019 and April 2020, ERM was implemented nationwide in Afghanistan in 33 out of 34 provinces by 7 humanitarian actors, including: ACTED, Action Contre la Faim (ACF), Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees (DACAAR), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), International Rescue Committee (IRC), Premiere Urgence Internationale (PUI), and Relief International (RI).[11]

In order to ensure accountability and maintain an evidence-driven response, the ERM requires consistent monitoring and evaluation throughout the project cycle. To this end, REACH joined the ERM as a non-implementing Information Management (IM) partner. Under the ERM, after an initial alert of displacement, partners conducted an assessment in the area using the Household Emergency Assessment Tool (HEAT), and assigned scores to the respondent households based on core vulnerability and eligibility criteria, including inner vulnerabilities (such as chronic illness and disability), sex and age of the head of household, Food Consumption Score (FCS), reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI), debt, and household size. Those respondent households that were found eligible received the MPCA from the implementing partners. Beneficiary households were then contacted by the implementing partners 30 days after the distribution to conduct a caseload-based post-distribution monitoring (PDM). While under the ERM, MPCA is a one-off payment based on households' eligible vulnerability scores and households being affected/displaced by either a natural disaster or conflict in the three months prior to the cash assistance, it is possible that some households receive several MPCA if they are further displaced and affected by another shock at least three months after the first shock. MPCA can either consist of a full package (worth 18,000 AFN), or a partial package (worth 12,000 or 6,000 AFN).

In addition to partners' internal PDM, REACH's activities included three rounds of nation-wide PDM conducted respectively in September 2019, January 2020, and March 2020. The nationwide PDM samples, as further explained in the methodology section, were based on the compiled list of partners PDM respondents interviewed over a specific period of time. The aim of the three assessments was to provide a third-party monitoring and evaluation perspective on the short-term effect of the MPCA on beneficiary households. The nation-wide PDM assessments aimed to help evaluate ERM programming based on a number of core criteria, namely: compliance in beneficiary selection and receipt of assistance; monitoring of distribution processes, including beneficiary awareness of communication and feedback mechanisms; profiling of beneficiary household expenditures and use of MPCA; quantifying the short-term impact of assistance on beneficiary households' economic vulnerability; and evaluating potential indirect consequences on social cohesion within areas of intervention. In short, the findings of the PDM rounds were an additional source for ERM partners to assess the quality and short-term outcome of the provided MPCA and were expected to facilitate improvements to future ERM response strategies.

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[9] United Nations Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Afghanistan Overview of Natural Disasters (Interactive Dashboard). Available online. Afghanistan: Conflict Induced Displacements (Interactive Dashboard). Available online. Consulted on 10-06-2020.
[10] United Nations Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Afghanistan Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020. Available online. 17 December 2019.
[11] Uruzgan province in southern Afghanistan was not covered by the ERM round 9 between May 2019 and April 2020.

Multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA), or otherwise called, multipurpose cash grants (MPCGs), are defined as unrestricted cash transfers that "place beneficiary choice and prioritisation of his/her needs at the forefront of the response".[12] With unrestricted, it is meant that beneficiaries may spend that money on whatever items, utilities, services (education/health) or other cash needs (e.g. debt, rent) that they deem most urgent. This PDM assessment report focuses solely on the MPCA aspect of the ERM assistance.

The PDM data collection was carried out between August 2019 and March 2020, and conducted in 15-18 provinces of Afghanistan (see the Methodology section for further details). The outline of the report is as follows. The first section covers a detailed overview of the methodology of the nation-wide PDM assessment. Subsequently, the main findings section covers demographics of the beneficiary households, movement intentions, socio-economic profiles, debt, MPCA expenditures, MPCA impact and beneficiaries' perception and satisfaction with regards to the MPCA. Lastly, a brief conclusion is shared.

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[12] Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP). Operational Guidance and Toolkit for Multipurpose Cash Grants. Enhanced Response Capacity Project 2014–2015. Available online. 2015.

METHODOLOGY

All three rounds of the nation-wide PDM assessment were based on a random sample of ERM beneficiary households in receipt of MPCA within a recall period of 30 days (minimum) and 60 days (maximum) of the cash-out phase of distribution. The overall aim of each round was to understand the immediate and short-term outcomes of MPCA. In total three rounds of PDMs were conducted in September 2019, January 2020, and March 2020. The research questions that the PDM aimed to answer were:

- What are the beneficiary household income and expenditure patterns and how is MPCA utilised?
- What, if any, negative consequences has MPCA had for beneficiary households in terms of social cohesion in the area of intervention?
- What is the prevalence of non-compliance in the distribution of MPC assistance by ERM partners?
- What issues have beneficiary households experienced concerning the distribution process of MPC?
- Compare differences across different groups of beneficiary households, such as urban/rural and full/partial MPCA package

Geographical scope

The geographical scope of the PDM was nationwide, but limited to the provinces in which ERM partners distributed MPCA between 30 and 60 days prior to each data collection round. Round 1 and round 2 covered beneficiary households in 15 provinces, whereas round 3 included households in 18 provinces. Table 1 below lists the provinces that were included in each round. Findings from this PDM assessment are representative at the national level (see also 'Sampling strategy' below).

Table 1: Geographical scope of the PDM assessment

Round 1:	Round 2:	Round 3:
Baghlan	Balkh	Badakhshan
Bhadghis	Faryab	Baghlan
Daykundi	Ghazni	Farah
Farah	Herat	Ghor
Faryab	Kabul	Helmand
Ghazni	Kapisa	Herat
Ghor	Khost	Jawzjan
Herat	Kunar	Kabul
Kapisa	Logar	Kandahar
Khost	Maidan Wardak	Kunar
Kunar	Nangarhar	Kunduz
Kunduz	Nimroz	Nangarhar
Nangarhar	Paktika	Nimroz
Parwan	Parwan	Nuristan
Takhar	Takhar	Paktika
		Samangan
		Sar-i-Pul
		Zabul
15	**15**	**18**

Sampling strategy and strata

For each round, REACH randomly sampled from partner-provided ERM beneficiary lists for the determined recall period. 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.[13] The first round involved 572 households, of which 59% (337) were rural beneficiary households and 41% (235) urban beneficiary households. The second round involved a total of 471 households, including 49% (229) rural, and 51% (242) urban beneficiary households. The third round included 590 households, with 44% (261) rural beneficiary households and 56% (329) urban beneficiary households.

Data collection methods

The data was collected through a household survey that was conducted remotely during work hours. The unit of assessment was beneficiary households; where possible, interviews were conducted with the household representatives (head of households) who were asked about their assistance as representative of their whole household. REACH used a call centre of REACH enumerators in Kabul who all received training and piloting under the supervision of the operations team, before each round. The interview followed a structured household survey (the survey of round 1 was slightly different from the surveys of rounds 2 and 3) that was conducted via a phone call by smartphone. To record households' answers, the mobile data collection Kobo Toolbox application was used. If households on the partner-provided ERM beneficiary lists did not pick up, the next household on the list would be contacted.

The dates and timeline of the three MCPA rounds, the number of beneficiary households, the dates of data collection and the number of the related sample sizes are outlined in detail in Table 2 below. In total, 1,633 beneficiary households that reported having received MPCA were interviewed across all three PDM rounds.

Table 2: Overview of the three different MPCA rounds in ERM 9

Round	ERM MCPA	Number of beneficiary households	Dates of data collection	Number of beneficiary HHs surveyed	Number of surveyed HHs that received the full MPCA	Number of surveyed HHs that received the partial MPCA
Round 1	June & July 2019	2,652 households	29 August – 12 September 2019	572 households	117 (20%)	455 (80%)
Round 2	October & November 2019	1,047 households	2 – 14 January 2020	471 households	133 (28%)	338 (72%)
Round 3	January & February 2020	5,236 households	15 – 26 March	590 households	293 (50%)	297 (50%)

Analysis

The data was downloaded and cleaned daily by the REACH database officer. The REACH Assessment Officer conducted statistical analysis on the cleaned data set. This was done following the data analysis framework/plan (DAP) produced during the research design phase in consultation with ERM partners, which outlined relevant indicators and corresponding survey questions. Analysis followed disaggregation of findings and was weighted where applicable. All analysis was reviewed by the IMPACT HQ Data Unit before output production.

In order to conduct an impact evaluation on certain key indicators, such as reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI) and Food Consumption Score (FCS). ERM partners were asked to provide the pre-assistance HEAT data for the corresponding caseloads included in the nationwide PDMs. Statistical analysis was run on these key indicators for all households found eligible during the HEAT, for comparison with PDM findings.

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[13] Rural areas were defined as areas outside district and province centers.

Challenges and Limitations

1. In Afghanistan, the head of household is commonly a male household member. Consequently, there is a potential gender-bias in the findings as the majority of respondents were male.
2. As a structured tool was used, nuances about types of needs and expenditures e.g. 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.
3. 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. However, beneficiary households were asked if they experienced any difficulties during the distribution process.
4. Differences in the results observed before and after receiving assistance (such as for the FCS and the rCSI), may be linked to external factors and not to the assistance received.

1. Details of Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA)

In rounds one and two of the PDM, around a quarter of beneficiary households reported receiving the full MPCA (round 1: 22%, round 2: 28%). In round three, beneficiary households who received full versus partial MPCA were equally represented in the sample, with 50% of beneficiary households reporting received the full MPCA amount, and 50% having received partial MPCA and in-kind assistance. The full MPCA package consists of 18,000 AFN whereas partial MPCA consists of either assistance of 12,000 AFN, or assistance worth 6,000 AFN.

The mode of delivery that was most common was via cash in hand (round 1: 94%, round 2: 99%, round 3: 99%). A much lesser reported mode of delivery was through hawalas, which can be either registered or un-registered money transfer systems (round 1: 6%, round 2: 0%, round 3: 1%).

The vast majority of beneficiary households reported that they had spent all of the MPCA at the time of the PDM data collection (approximately 30-60 days upon receiving the assistance) (round 1: 97%, round 2: 97%, round 3: 94%).

Other types of assistance

In addition to the MPCA, over two thirds of beneficiary households received ERM-provided WASH in-kind assistance (round 2: 68%, round 3: 86%).[14] The WASH assistance consisted mainly of hygiene kits (round 2: 87%, round 3: 99%). In round 2, after hygiene kits, beneficiary households most commonly reported having received something 'other' WASH assistance, followed by water (16%), and plastic chairs (15%). In round 3, in addition to hygiene kits, beneficiary households reported having received plastic chairs (15%), bio filters (13%) and water (9%).

In addition to the ERM-provided MPCA and WASH assistance, some beneficiary households also reported having received some other assistance in the three months preceding the assessment (round 2: 40%, round 3: 39%). The most commonly reported other assistance received by those households was food (2: 68%, round 3: 82%). This was followed by cash assistance other than the ERM MPCA (2: 32%, round 3: 30%).[15]

2. Demographics and Households Composition

The average beneficiary household consisted of approximately 8 members, indicating large household sizes, which is included in the vulnerability scoring criteria to measure household eligibility for assistance.[16] The majority of the head of beneficiary households interviewed were male, although exact proportions varied across rounds. In round 1, 8% of female head of households were reported, which increased to 33% female head of households in round 2, and decreased to only 7% reported female head of households in round 3. Overall, a higher proportion of female-headed households were reported in urban than in rural areas, reflecting similar findings from previous nation-wide assessments.[17]

Very low proportions of heads of households were elderly, only reportedly 1% in both round 2 and 3.[18] The average age of the head of household recorded in round 1 was 37 years old. Approximately a quarter of beneficiary households had at least one member with a disability (round 1: 23%, round 2: 27%, round 3: 24%). The proportion was higher for beneficiary households with at least one member with a chronical illness, which was reported by more than one third of beneficiary households (round 1: 40%, round 2: 38%, round 3: 35%).

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[14] The question was not asked in the PDM round 1.

[15] The question was asked differently in PDM round 1 (Select multiple: What other assistance have you received in the past three months? Answer options: Cash, In-kind assistance, Food distribution, WASH, None) vs PDM rounds 2 and 3 (Have you received other assistance in the past 3 months? - What other assistance have you received in the past three months? Answer options: Cash, Food distribution, Water, Shelter, Latrines, Hygiene assistance) making it difficult to compare subsets across rounds 1, 2 and 3. In total, 47% of beneficiary households reported having received no other assistance in round 1.

[16] The average household size was 7.7 in round 1, 8.5 in round 2 and 8.6 in round 3.

[17] REACH Initiative. 2018 and 2019. Whole of Afghanistan Assessment 2018 and 2019. Available online.

[18] According to the enumerator guidelines for the PDM assessment, 'elderly' was defined as people aged above 60 years old. The survey of round 1 did not include this indicator.

Displacement

Displacement was prevalent throughout all rounds. More than (or equal to) 90% of beneficiary households in all three rounds had reportedly been displaced (round 1: 92%, round 2: 99%, round 3: 90%). Of beneficiary households that have been displaced, the duration of their displacement differed. In round 1, most beneficiary households had been displaced between one and three months (44%), or between three and six months (34%). In rounds 2 and 3, the large majority of beneficiary households reported that their household had been displaced for more than two months.[19] In round 2, a larger proportion of urban beneficiary households had reportedly been displaced for more than two months compared to rural beneficiary households (94% of urban households vs 86% of rural households). This trend was also noted in round 3 (94% of urban households vs. 91% of rural households). This discrepancy may indicate multiple displacements or MPCA response delays potentially as a result of coordination issues in areas with a higher concentration of NGO and UN actors.

Figure 1: Round 1: Proportion of beneficiary households by duration of displacement
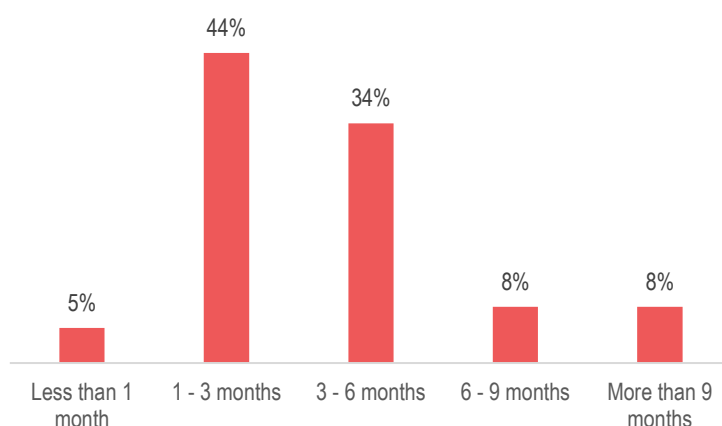
Figure 2: Rounds 2 and 3: Proportion of beneficiary households by duration of displacement
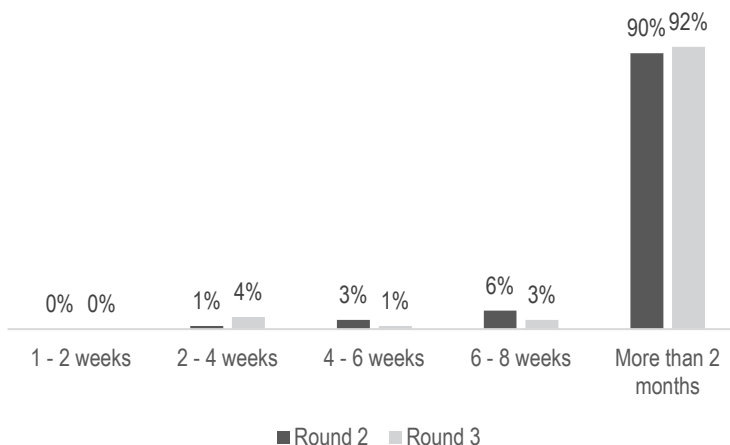
Movement intentions and integration

With regards to the movement intentions of beneficiary households for the 12 months following the interview, the majority of beneficiary households reported intending to remain where they were (round 1: 67%, round 2: 87%, round 3: 90%). If beneficiary households intended to move, they commonly aimed to return to their areas of origin (AoO). However, proportions of beneficiary households reporting intention to return to their AoO did vary across rounds (round 1: 30%, round 2: 7%, round 3: 5%).

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[19] The question in the PDM round 1,2,3 asked was 'If yes, how long has the household been displaced for?' with answer options differing between round 1 versus round 2 and 3 (see Figures 2 and 3).

The reasons for wanting to remain were mainly related to the security situation in the beneficiary household's AoO. Other commonly reported reasons for not wanting to return were presence of explosive hazards in the AoO, lack of livelihood opportunities and the beneficiary household's house/property being damaged or destroyed.

Figure 3: Rounds 1, 2, 3: Proportion of households by reasons for not intending to return (of households not intending to return in the 12 months following the interview)
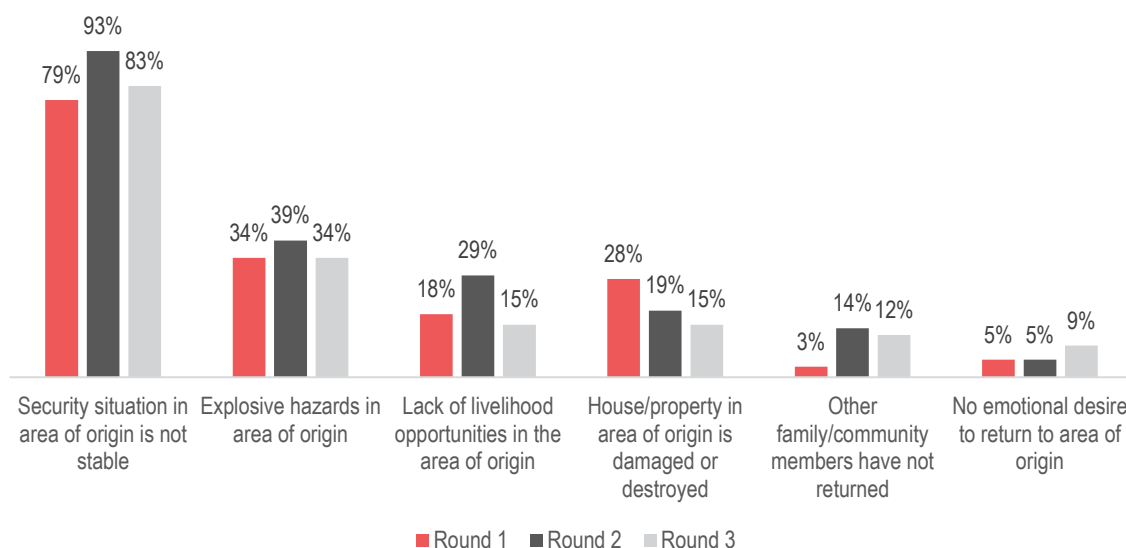
When asked if the MPCA changed relationships between beneficiary households and members of the community, almost none of the beneficiary households reported that relationships had worsened (round 1: 3%, round 2: 1%, round 3: 1%), indicating no negative consequences on social cohesion caused by the MPCA. Indeed, beneficiary households mainly reported that relationships had improved (round 1: 42%, round 2: 50%, round 3: 51%), or that no change was observed (round 1: 55%, round 2: 48%, round 3: 48%).

3. Household Socio-Economic Profile

In order to have a better idea of the beneficiary households' socio-economic profiles, the PDM assessment included key indicators around income and livelihoods, to eventually better understand the importance of the MPCA for these households.

Income

The average semi-regular income in the 30 days prior to data collection, ranged from 6,114 AFN (79 USD) (round 1), to 6,104 AFN (78 USD) (round 2) to 6,854 AFN (88 USD) (round 3).[20] In round 1, the two highest average income sources were employment of adults (4,482 AFN per month), followed by the activity of selling assets such as selling items from the household (2,548 AFN per month).[21] In round 2, the source of highest average income was adult employment (4,897 AFN per month), followed by elderly employment (909 AFN per month). In round 3, the highest average income came from adult employment (6,554 AFN per month). Rural beneficiary households were found to have a higher average semi-regular income than urban beneficiary households, in both round 2 (rural: 7,251 AFN vs urban: 4,898 AFN) and round 3 (rural: 7,174 AFN vs urban: 6,602 AFN).

Overall, the head of household was reported as the key decision maker for the households, with 94% of beneficiary households reporting that the head of household determined what the household budget was spent on in round 1. Only a small proportion of beneficiary households reported that female members of the household were not given any money to spend on household basic needs (round 1: 6%, round 2: 14%, round 3: 8%).

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[20] XE currency converter, accessed online. Accessed 15 June 2020. Semi-regular income includes: elderly or adult employment, pension, selling goods (produced to be sold), and/or small business.
[21] The amount reported for income sources represents the mean average across all households. Adult employment includes unskilled day labour. For more information, see Figure 4.

The MPCA was not reported to cause disagreement or increased tension in the beneficiary households.[22] When asked if there was any disagreement in their household regarding the spending of the cash assistance, almost all beneficiary households reported 'no' (round 1: 95%, round 2: 98%, round 3: 99%). When asked if the cash assistance caused increased tension in the beneficiary households, almost all beneficiary households reported that this was not the case (round 2: 99%, round 3: 99%).[23]

Livelihood

The most commonly reported source of employment in the three months prior to data collection, across all rounds, was unskilled labour, such as domestic work. This was followed by skilled labour, including professions such as carpenters, electricians, mechanics, drivers or jobs working in construction. Livestock production and formal employment were the third and fourth most commonly reported sources of employment (see Figure 4 below).[24]

Figure 4: Rounds 1, 2, 3: Proportion of households by the four most commonly reported sources of employment
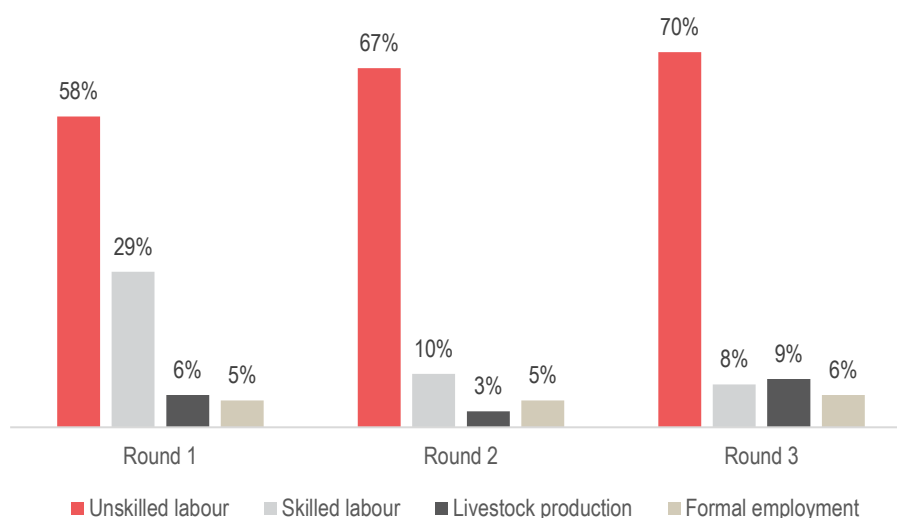
In total, 53% of beneficiary households in round 2 and 37% of beneficiary households in round 3 reported that there was a time where they did not have enough food or money to buy food in the 7 days prior to the interview. The most commonly reported coping strategy for a lack of food or money to buy food was borrowing money or food. In round 2, 90% of beneficiary households reported borrowing or relying on help from friends, relatives, or neighbours for staple food or borrowing money to spend on food or essential household needs; this proportion was 83% of beneficiary households in round 3. Another commonly reported coping strategy was seeking employment. More than half of beneficiary households (round 2: 54%, and round 3: 51%) reported that at least one additional member had to seek employment (including daily labour and street vending) or move away to obtain work, as a result of the beneficiary household not having enough food or money to buy food in the 7 days prior to the interview. This indicates that a significant proportion of beneficiary households were still struggling to meet their basic needs, which was largely driven by a lack of livelihood opportunities in their current area of displacement, and had forced household members to relocate. As mentioned in the REACH ERM Qualitative Longitudinal Study (QLS), incorporating development-oriented aid such as livelihood programming is of vital importance to the ERM, in order to generate long-term effects on beneficiary households' socio-economic status and increase their resilience to future shocks and disasters in Afghanistan.[26]

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[22] Please note an inherent bias, given that almost all PDM responses were provided by household heads and no interviews conducted with additional household members.

[23] The question of increased tension in the households/communities due to the cash assistance was not asked in the PDM round 1. It is important to note that responses to this question may be biased by the use of the head of household as the primary respondent.

[24] In the PDM round 1, 'farming' (or agriculture) was the third most commonly reported with 29% of beneficiary households reporting this. However, as this option was not included in the answer options in round 2 and 3, this finding was left out in Figure 4.

4. Debt

As reported in the REACH ERM Qualitative Longitudinal Study (QLS), the accrual of debt was frequently used as a coping strategy to cover beneficiary household needs.[25] The vast majority of beneficiary households reported being in debt (round 1: 93%, round 2: 85%, round 3: 85%). Of those reporting being in debt, the average total amount of reported debt fluctuated across the three rounds, from 70,760 AFN (904 USD) (round 1) to 54,896 AFN (703 USD) (round 2) to 38,908 AFN (498 USD) (round 3) but was always at least several months' of the average semi-regular beneficiary household income.[26] There was no significant difference regarding the proportion of beneficiary households in debt across urban versus rural households.

The majority of beneficiary households reported having accrued debt after the most recent impact of shock or disaster, but prior to the ERM MPCA assistance.[27]

Figure 5: Rounds 2 and 3: Proportion of beneficiary households by period of time when households reportedly accrued debt (of households reportedly in debt)
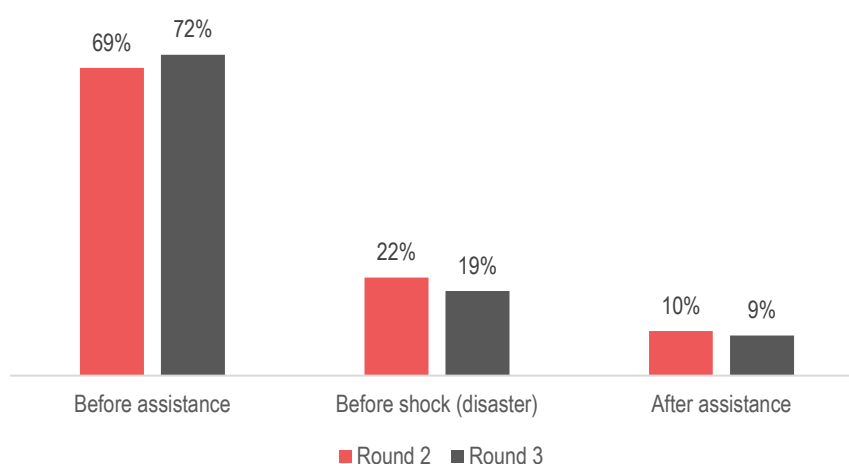
The most commonly reported reasons for accruing debt varied slightly between the different PDM rounds.[28] In round one, the majority of beneficiary households reported their debt mainly being due to purchase basic household items (76%), followed by having to purchase food items (75%), and lastly because they had to pay for medical expenses (50%). In rounds 2 and 3, the main expenditures for which beneficiary households contracted debt consisted of food (round 2: 44%, round 3: 45%), followed by healthcare (round 2: 21%, round 3: 27%). In addition, cost of the displacement itself, such as transportation, was reported as a reason for debt accrual by 13% and 9% of beneficiary households in rounds 2 and 3.

There were two remarkable findings out of the three PDM rounds concerning how ERM MPCA was used by households to address their debt burden. First, the data suggests that the amount of the MPCA received was not related to whether households chose to spend money on debt repayment, nor affected the average amount of money spent on debt repayment by those households that did. The data shows no significant difference in terms of debt repayment expenditures between those beneficiary households that received the full MPCA versus those that received only partial MPCA and in-kind assistance. This may indicate that beneficiary households only spent on debt repayment if they had to and not because they had cash available, instead of in-kind assistance. It may also indicate that households had to prioritise expenses to cover basic needs over debt repayment, as the MPCA amount did not allow them to do both. In general, the MPCA was considered to have minimal to no impact on reducing debt overall.

Second, the average debt repayment amount was only the fifth largest beneficiary household expenditure in the 30 days prior to data collection, if calculated across all beneficiary households (see Table 3 below). However, only around a quarter (round 1: 19%, round 2: 28%, round 3: 22%) of beneficiary households reported any debt

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[25] REACH Initiative. 2019. ERM Qualitative Longitudinal Study (QLS). Round 1 Preliminary Findings Report September 2019. Available online.

[26] XE currency converter, accessed online. Accessed 15 June 2020.

[27] This question was not asked in the PDM round 1.

[28] For this question, households could select multiple answers, therefore percentages may add up to more than 100%.

repayment expenditures in the 30 days prior to data collection. When only those beneficiary households that reported any debt repayment expenditures are taken into account, this assessment found that for those households debt repayment was either the highest or the second highest expenditure, following expenditure on food, in the 30 days prior to data collection. This suggests that while debt repayment was not prioritised by the majority of beneficiary households, for those that did, it was a major expenditure and likely diminished their ability to spend money on addressing their household members' basic needs.

5. Use of MPCA: Expenditures

The PDM asked beneficiary households key questions on expenditures, in order to understand what beneficiary household's primary needs were and how the MPCA was used.[29] In general, the average expenditures exceeded the received amount of MPCA. Average beneficiary household expenditures in the 30 days prior to the day of data collection, ranged from 22,067 AFN (282 USD) in round 1, to 18,725 AFN (293 USD) in round 2, to 12,794 AFN (163 USD) in round 3.[30] This is overall in line with findings from the Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI), which found that the median Monthly Expenditure Basket (MEB) (the minimum culturally adjusted group of items required to support a six-person Afghan household for one month) was worth 14,871 AFN in April/May 2020 in Afghanistan[31], with average expenditures in rounds 1 and 2 being higher than the median MEB and lower in round 3.[32] However, comparisons should be considered indicative only due to differences in coverage, time of data collection as well as households affected by a shock potentially facing additional expenditures.

Differences could also be observed across rounds and depending on the MPCA amount received[33]; however no correlation between beneficiary households' expenditures and beneficiary households receiving the full or partial amount of MPCA could be identified. In round 2 and 3, average expenditures were found to be higher for beneficiary households having received the full MPCA package, while it was the reverse in round 1. Nevertheless, as mentioned above, for all beneficiary households, and in particular for beneficiary households that received the partial package, average expenditures across rounds exceeded the received amount of MPCA.

Beneficiary households were also asked to report on their top three primary needs, the five most frequently reported are outlined in Figure 6 below.[34] Covering expenses for food, fuel and electricity, healthcare (including medicines), rent and repaying debt were most commonly reported as primary needs for beneficiary households.[35] The top five reported expenditures in the 30 days prior the interview were almost parallel to the ranking of the primary needs in the 30 days prior to the interview. This shows that the MPCA was mainly spent on beneficiary households' primary needs.

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[29] Assessed expenditures included: rent, food, healthcare and medicine, basic NFI items, children education, transportation, communication, fuel and electricity, debt repayment, and shelter maintenance.

[30] XE currency converter, accessed online. Accessed 15 June 2020.

[31] REACH Initiative. 2020. Joint Market Monitoring Initiative Pilot. Available online.

[32] The difference between the average beneficiary household expenditures across the three rounds (17,862 AFN) and the median MEB (14,871 AFN) is 2,991 AFN (39 USD)

[33] For beneficiary households who received a full package of MPCA, the average expenditures were 19,791 AFN (round 1), 20,907 AFN (round 2) and 14,376 AFN (round 3). For beneficiary households who received a partial package of MPCA, the average expenditures were 22,690 AFN (round 1), 17,867 AFN (round 2) and 11,236 AFN (round 3)

[34] For this question, households could select multiple answers, therefore percentages may add up to more than 100%.

[35] In the PDM round 1, 'shelter maintenance' was reported by 19% of beneficiary households, but as this was not equally reported in round 2 and 3, this finding was left out of Figure 6.

Figure 6: Rounds 1, 2, 3: Proportion of households by top five most frequently reported primary needs in the 30 days prior to the interview
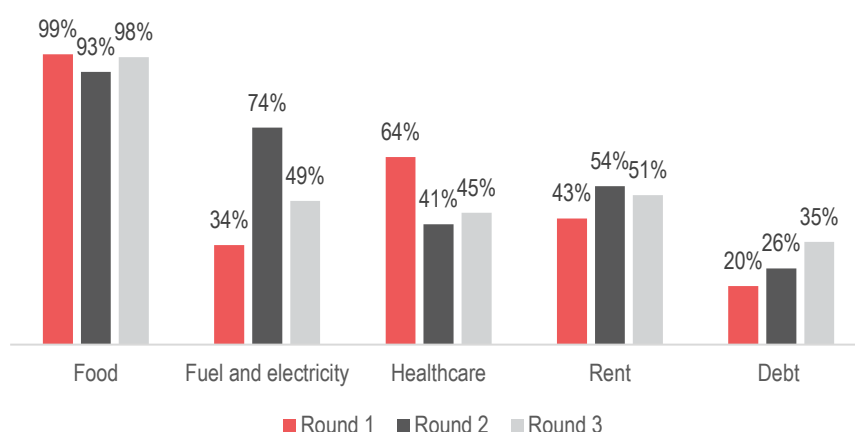
It should be noted that the findings across the PDM rounds in terms of most common expenditures and needs are likely affected by seasonality. Round 1 data was collected in summer, whereas data for rounds 2 and 3 was collected mid-winter and early spring, explaining why fuel and electricity were less frequently reported as a primary need in round 1.

The average amount of beneficiary household expenditures was recorded for each PDM round (see Table 3). Across all rounds, the highest amount of money was spent on food. In REACH's QLS of September 2019, shelter was a frequent priority area of expenditure, and in PDM round 1, shelter maintenance was the third biggest average expense. However, smaller average amounts were spent on shelter maintenance in rounds 2 and 3, which might indicate that beneficiary households were less able to conduct shelter maintenance in the winter months.

Table 3: Rounds 1, 2, 3: Average household expenditures in the 30 days before data collection, by each expenditure type in AFN/USD

Expenditure Type	Round 1		Round 2		Round 3	
	AFN	USD	AFN	USD	AFN	USD
Food	5,485	71	5,792	75	5,155	67
Healthcare	3,399	44	2,265	29	2,093	27
Shelter maintenance	3,301	43	545	7	300	4
Rent	1,881	24	1,917	25	1,277	17
Fuel & electricity	1,407	18	2,338	30	1,317	17
Debt repayment	1,322	17	1,663	22	1,093	14
NFIs	N/A	N/A	1,204	16	556	7
Transportation	1,388	18	719	9	650	8
Children's education	494	6	253	3	119	2
Communication	318	4	193	2	193	2

6. Impact of MPCA: rCSI and FCS

In order to understand the level of needs, and impact of MPCA on beneficiary household needs, a number of key indicators were incorporated into the PDM, including the rCSI and the FCS. Both indicators are also included in the HEAT, which is used to assess household eligibility for assistance, and thereby provide a point of comparison to measure needs prior to and after receipt of assistance.[36] Only the HEAT indicators on rCSI and FCS have been used in this PDM report, for comparison purposes (before / after receiving MPCA).

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[36] Due to changes to the PDM tool between the first and later rounds, this analysis is only possible for rounds 2 and 3.

Reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI)

The rCSI measures the extent to which beneficiary households with food insecurity had to rely on negative coping strategies during the seven days before the interview, such as having to rely on less preferred or less expensive food.[37] In both rounds 2 and 3, there was a significant reduction in the proportion of beneficiary households found to have a high rCSI score after receiving assistance. In round 2, the proportion of beneficiary households with a high rCSI score almost halved, from 80% to 46%. In round 3, the proportion of beneficiary households with a high rCSI score decreased from 93% to 41%. Simultaneously, the proportion of beneficiary households with a low rCSI score increased considerably. These findings indicate that the MPCA may have had a significant and positive impact on beneficiary households, in terms of reducing their use of negative coping strategies related to food consumption. However, there were still a considerable proportion of beneficiary households reporting using severe coping strategies after receiving assistance.

Figure 7: Round 2: Proportion of beneficiary households by rCSI score before and after receipt of assistance
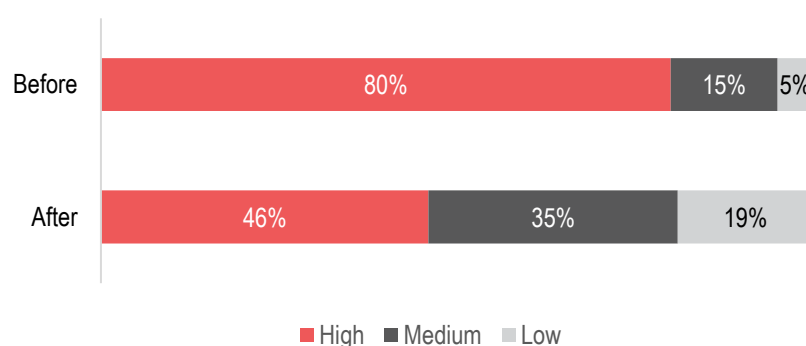
Figure 8: Round 3: Proportion of beneficiary households by rCSI score before and after receipt of assistance
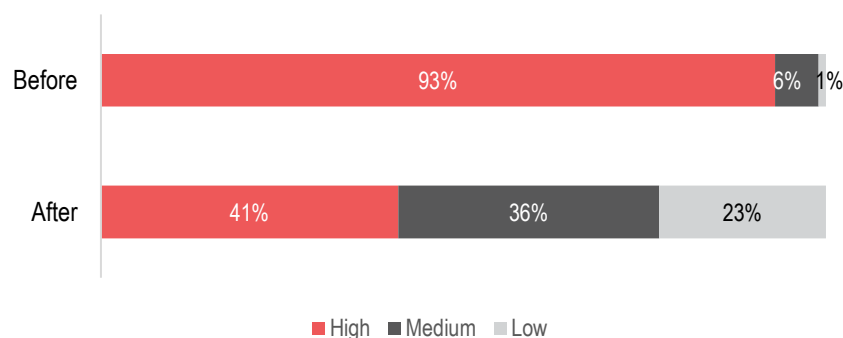
The reported use of each individual coping strategy also sheds light on how food insecurity and socio-economic needs intersect with other sectoral needs, and thereby flags the need for a cross-sectoral response. For example, if households indicated that in the 7 days prior to the interview, there was a time where they did not have enough food or money to buy food, one strategy as reported by households was to delay seeking medical attention for critical health problems due to a lack of financial resources, because of the need to prioritise expenditures on food.[38] In both rounds 2 and 3, around half of all beneficiary households reported relying on this strategy after receipt of assistance (54% and 51% respectively). Although less frequent, 15% and 16% of beneficiary households from rounds 2 and 3 also reported that they had stopped sending their children to school in order to engage them in working for economic gain or productive household activities, highlighting the impact shock and consequent food insecurity on both health and education needs.

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[37] Additional background information on the rCSI can be found here.
[38] In total, 249 households reported in round 2 and 217 households reported in round 3 that there was a time where they did not have enough food or money to buy food in the 7 days prior to the interview (but after receipt of assistance).

Food Consumption Score (FCS)

As with rCSI, the impact of MPCA on beneficiary household food insecurity can be measured through comparing the FCS prior to and after receipt of assistance. The FCS is calculated using the frequency of a household's consumption of different food groups during the seven days prior to the interview, which is then categorized into 'poor', 'borderline', and 'acceptable' scores.[39] Across rounds 2 and 3, MPCA was shown to likely have had a positive impact on beneficiary household food security. The proportion of beneficiary households that were found to have a poor FCS, reduced in both rounds. In addition, the proportion of beneficiary households with an acceptable FCS increased in both rounds. However, there were still a notable proportion of beneficiary households from both rounds with high levels of food insecurity even following receipt of MPCA (39% and 27% respectively with a poor FCS). This highlights that food insecurity remains a persistent issue for shock-affected households that will need to be addressed through longer-term assistance and resilience capacity building.[40]

Figure 9: Round 2: Proportion of beneficiary households by FCS before and after receipt of assistance

Before	87% — 11% — 2%
After	39% — 48% — 13%

■ Poor ■ Borderline ■ Acceptable
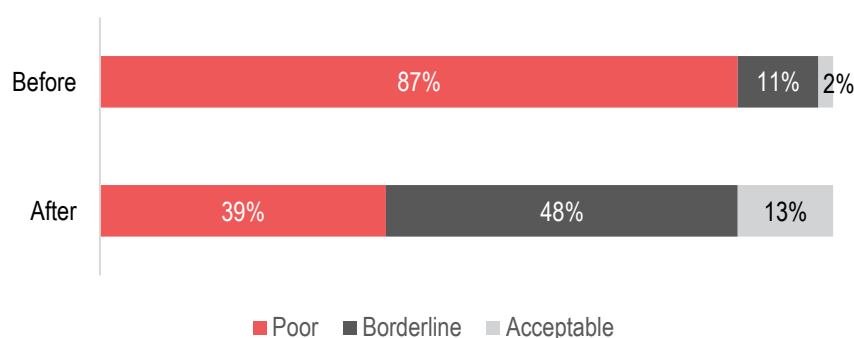
Figure 10: Round 3: Proportion of beneficiary households by FCS before and after receipt of assistance

Before	88% — 12%
After	27% — 60% — 13%

■ Poor ■ Borderline ■ Acceptable
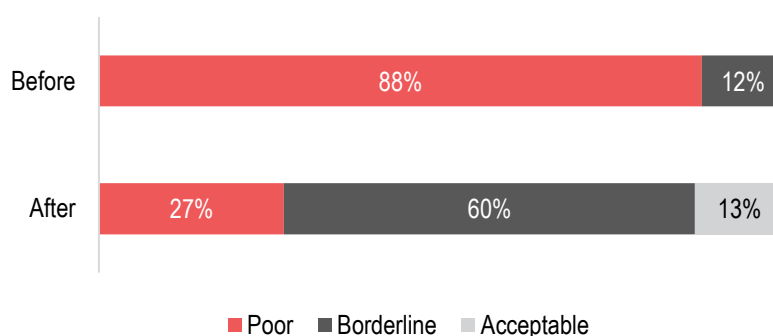
Furthermore, a higher proportion of urban than rural beneficiary households were found to have a poor FCS in round 2 (urban: 46% vs rural: 32% rural). However, a higher proportion of rural than urban beneficiary households were found to have a poor FCS in round 3 (rural: 32% vs urban: 23%). This suggests that food insecurity does not per se occur more often in rural or urban contexts. However, this finding could also be affected by the time period in which the data collection was conducted and fluctuate seasonally.

In terms of markets, 100% of beneficiary households from round 2 reported that they were able to access markets to buy goods after they had received assistance. However, this was lower in round 3, where 81% of beneficiary households reported that they were able to access markets. This may have been somewhat affected by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in Afghanistan, which coincided with the third round of data collection, where government enforced public health restrictions on movements, may have influenced access to markets.

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[39] Elaborate background information on the FCS can be found here.

[40] The limited increase in households with an acceptable FCS may also highlight a limitation of the FCS indicator in general, which largely measures the variance of consumed food groups and not aspects like calorie intake. The unavailability and/or households' disregard of certain food groups may hence result in many households remaining with a borderline FCS. A household's food security must hence always be measured as a combination of indicators.

For both the findings across rounds 2 and 3 on the rCSI and the FCS, it should be taken into consideration that the difference in rCSI scores and FCSs may also have been affected by factors outside of the scope of this assessment.

7. Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)

Lastly, the PDM rounds included key indicators on beneficiary households' perspectives on and satisfaction with the assistance they received, and the distribution process overall.

Non-Compliance Issues

Almost all beneficiary households reported that they did not have to pay in cash or make any other form of payment in order to be put on the list to receive assistance (round 1: 99%, round 2: 98%, round 3: 100%). In addition, almost all beneficiary households reported that they did not have to pay someone in cash or make another form of payment to receive their assistance at the cash out location (round 1: 100%, round 2: 99%, round 3: 99%).[41] Furthermore, almost all beneficiary households also reported that they felt that they were respectfully treated (99% - 100%) and felt safe (99% - 100%) during the distribution process.

Difficulties Collecting Assistance

There were very few issues reported with the collection of the MPCA. Almost all of the beneficiary households reported that they did not face any issues or difficulties during the process of receiving their assistance (97% - 99%). The majority of beneficiary households reported being informed about their eligibility to receive assistance and the date and time of the distribution by phone call (87% - 97%).

The waiting times at the distribution location were generally reported to be more than one hour after the appointed collection time. This did not differ over the course of the three PDM rounds. This is an area of improvement for future MPCA, as protection issues are more likely to occur during long waiting times.

Figure 11: Rounds 1, 2, 3: Proportion of beneficiary households by waiting times for receiving the MPCA
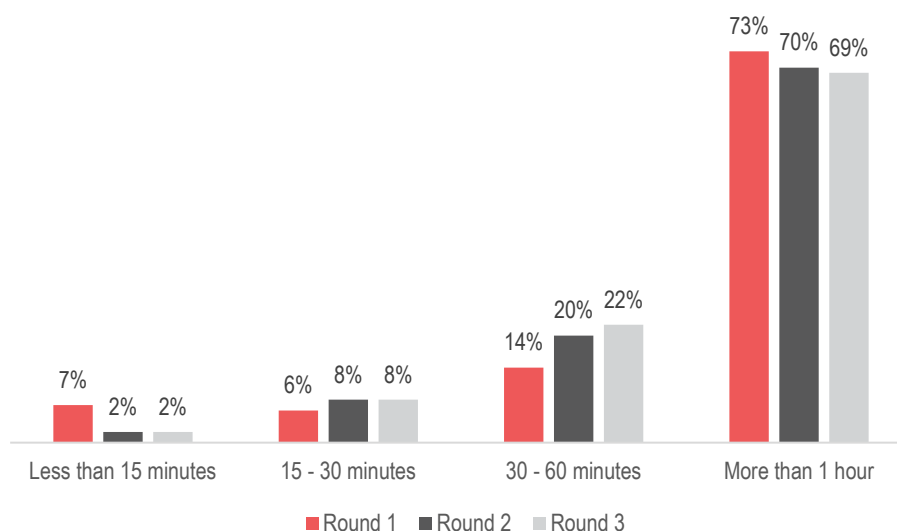
Information Sources and Beneficiary Feedback

Whilst there were minimal issues reported with the distribution process itself, findings on general communications and the reported awareness of beneficiary feedback or complaint mechanisms highlight an area for improvement in the delivery of ERMP MPCA. Approximately two thirds of beneficiary households in all three rounds reported that

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[41] A limitation of this question was the way the question was asked/phrased, which was 'Were you asked to pay someone to receive your cash assistance at the cash out location?' which in Dari translates as 'آیا از شما تقاضا شده که یک مقدار از پول که بعد از توزیع دریافت کرده اید را به کسی پرداخت کنید؟'. The phrasing of the question may have led to underreporting of this issue.

they had received information about registration prior to assistance (round 1: 61%, round 2: 67%, round 3: 66%). Rural beneficiary households in particular were more likely to report they had not received such information compared to urban beneficiary households, in both round 2 (rural: 47% vs urban: 19%), and in round 3 (rural: 45% vs urban: 25%).

Over the course of the three PDM rounds, the proportion of beneficiary households that reported being aware of feedback and complaints mechanisms did increase, from 42% in round one, to 53% and 54% in rounds 2 and 3 respectively.[42] While a low proportion of beneficiary households reported having had to make a complaint since the provision of MPCA (2% or less across the rounds), the notable proportion of beneficiary households that lacked awareness regarding feedback mechanisms remains an important accountability gap that needs to be addressed in any upcoming ERM assistance.[43]

Satisfaction (with modality)

The extent to which beneficiary households reported that the assistance they received helped in meeting their primary needs varied between the PDM rounds. Most beneficiary households in rounds 1, 2 and 3 reported the assistance to be 'moderately useful' to 'very useful' (see Figure 12). However, still 16% of beneficiary households in round 1 and 18% of beneficiary households in round 2 reported that the assistance was not useful at all. This could be linked to MPCA amounts received considered not enough compared to beneficiary households' needs or to a flaw in the selection process of beneficiaries, leading to the selection of less vulnerable households that may report lower levels of usefulness.[44] Further research would be needed to understand reasons for reported lack of usefulness of the MPCA received. Almost all beneficiary households reported to prefer cash over other forms of assistance (round 1: 95%, round 2: 97%, round 3: 95%).[45]

Figure 12: Rounds 1, 2, 3: Proportion of beneficiary households by reported usefulness of the MPCA in meeting primary needs
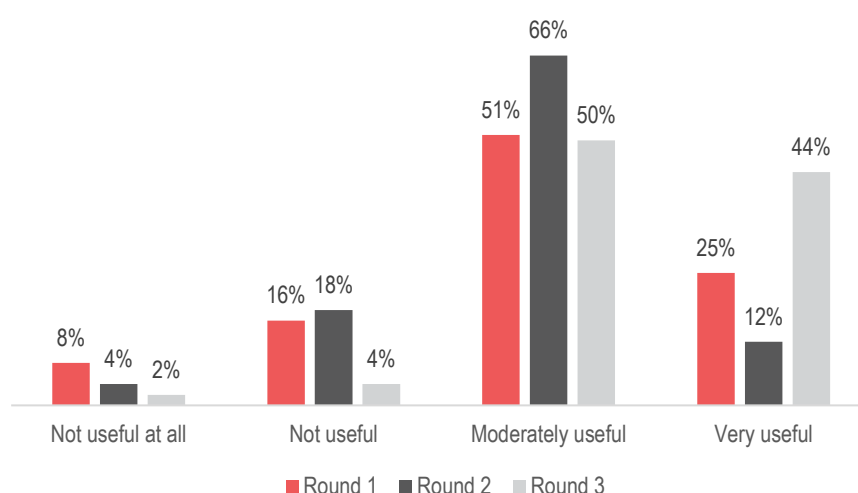
Regarding the extent to which beneficiary households were satisfied with the ERM assistance, the vast majority reported they were satisfied (47% - 37% - 19%), or very satisfied (50% - 60% - 79%), with the proportion of

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[42] The question in PDM round 1 was 'Are you aware of any complaints response mechanism for assistance given by the implementing organization?,' whereas the question in PDM rounds 2 and 3 was 'Are you aware of any feedback mechanism for assistance given by the implementing organization?'. This difference may have affected the findings.

[43] The question asked was: 'During the process, did you need to ask a question or make a complaint about the assistance?' with no follow-up question provided on the nature of the question or complaint, which is a limitation in the design of the questionnaire.

[44] The question asked was: 'To what extent did the assistance you received help in meeting your primary needs to date?' with no follow-up question provided if beneficiary households reported 'Not useful at all' or 'Not useful', which is a limitation in the design of the questionnaire.

[45] Two qualifications are important to note: 1) The gender bias in having mostly male household heads reporting the preference for MPCA and 2) The majority of beneficiary households also received in-kind WASH assistance at the same time.

households reporting to be very satisfied increasing per PDM round.[46] Reported dissatisfaction was low: in round 1, 3% of beneficiary households reported being somewhat satisfied or unsatisfied while in round 2 and round 3, 3% and 2% of beneficiary households, respectively, reported being moderately satisfied.

A difference in satisfaction between urban and rural beneficiary households was noticeable in round 2, where 43% of rural households reported being 'very satisfied', compared to 78% of urban households. This difference was seen again in round 3, where 69% of rural households reported being 'very satisfied', compared to 88% of urban households.

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[46] In the PDM round 1, the question was phrased 'To what extent were you satisfied with receiving the money through ${mode_delivery}?' whereas in the PDM round 2 and 3, it was phrased 'To what extent were you satisfied with the ERM assistance you received?'. In round 1, the answer options were 'unsatisfied – somewhat satisfied – satisfied – very satisfied', and in round 2 and 3, the options were 'moderately satisfied – satisfied – very satisfied'.

CONCLUSION

This report analysed and compared the findings of the three rounds of nation-wide post-distribution monitoring (PDM) that were conducted following three rounds of distribution of MPCA, with data being collected between August 2019 and March 2020. The objective of the assessment was to evaluate ERM programming based on a number of key indicators, strengthen accountability to beneficiaries, and identify aspects to improve in future rounds of the ERM response.

Overall, the PDM findings suggest that the MPCA reached mainly highly vulnerable households whose recent experience of shock and unsustainable socio-economic profile forced them to rely on negative coping strategies to ensure their survival and physical well-being. Comparing indicators across the HEAT used for beneficiary selection and the PDM suggests a positive impact of the assistance that temporarily reduced beneficiary households' food insecurity and the reliance on severe negative coping strategies, although this improvement may also be due to factors outside the scope of this assessment.

The sampling for this assessment was stratified by urban and rural beneficiary households. In general, there were almost no differences found between urban and rural beneficiary households. Some small differences were found in income, satisfaction and information distribution. Firstly, rural beneficiary households were found to have a slightly higher average income than urban beneficiary households. Secondly, a higher proportion of urban than rural beneficiary households were reportedly very satisfied with the ERM assistance. Thirdly and lastly, rural beneficiary households reported more often that they had not received any information about registration prior to assistance, highlighting a rural/urban gap in information distribution, and an area of improvement for future MPCA.

While debt was found a prominent concern and coping strategy used by almost all households, only around a quarter (19% - 28%) of beneficiary households reported debt repayment expenditures in the 30 days prior to the interview. However, for those that did, the costs were commonly their single highest amount of spending, next to food expenditures. Importantly, neither the proportion of households spending on debt repayments, nor the average amount of money spent, was found to be influenced by the amount of MPCA households received. It may indicate that households only spent on debt repayment if they had to and not as a result of having non-earmarked cash available, or that beneficiary households were unable to cover both basic needs and debt repayment.

However, the PDM report also showed that, whilst the ERM MPCA was able to address a number of humanitarian needs, it was not able to meet all sectoral needs, nor was it likely to do so in the longer term. Thirty to sixty days after the reception of MPCA, more than a third of the beneficiary households (round 2: 46%, round 3: 41%) were still found to have a high rCSI score and a slightly lower proportion still a poor FCS (round 2: 39%, round 3: 27%). In addition, expenditures in the 30 days prior the interview were generally found to exceeded the amount of MPCA received, regardless of whether beneficiary households had received a full or partial MPCA package.

While it is important to note that the MPCA was not intended to make a lasting change on beneficiary households' livelihoods, the above factors highlight the importance to identify the most vulnerable households and ensure the assistance provided allows them to meet their most basic well-being needs. To this end, it remains important to closely monitor the distribution and impact of MPCA and to further triangulate findings on expenditure patterns, reliance on coping mechanisms, reasons for accrual of debt, and basic need indicators.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Questionnaire (PDM round 1)

Data collection method	Indicator / Variable	Questionnaire Question	Questionnaire Responses	Instructions
Secondary Data	Enumerator ID	Enumerator ID:	Integer	Enumerator enters this
Secondary Data	Implementing Organisation	What is the implementing organization?	List of implementing partners	Select one (drop down)
Secondary Data	Beneficiary tazkira number	Beneficiary tazkira number:	Text	Enumerator enters this
Secondary Data	Beneficiary phone number	What is the beneficiary phone number?	Telephone number	Enumerator enters this
Secondary Data	Location of distribution	Province where distribution was located:	Drop down list of locations	Enumerator enters this
Secondary Data	Location of distribution	District where distribution was located:	Drop down list of locations	Enumerator enters this
Secondary Data	Date of distribution	Date of distribution:	Date (as per partner beneficiary list)	Enumerator enters this
Household Distribution Frequency				
HH Interview	Received cash	Have you received cash assistance in the past 3 months from ${implementing_org}?	Yes; No; Prefer not to answer	If answered no or prefer not to answer end interview
HH Interview	Head of Household	Are you the head of household?	Yes; No	
HH Interview	Respondent age	What is the age of the respondent?	Integer	Integer
HH Interview	Respondent gender	What is the gender of the respondent?	Male; Female	Select one
HH Interview	Head of household age	What is the age of the head of household?	Integer	Integer
HH Interview	Head of household gender	What is the gender of head of household?	Male; Female	Select one
HH Interview	Head of household marital status	What is the marital status of the head of household?		Single; Married; Separated; Divorced; Widowed
HH Interview	Household composition	How many females below the age of 18 are in the household?	Integer	Integer
HH Interview	Household composition	How many males below the age of 18 are in the household?	Integer	Integer
HH Interview	Household composition	How many females 18 or older are in the household?	Integer	Integer
HH Interview	Household composition	How many males 18 and older are in the household?	Integer	Integer
HH Interview	Date of HEAT assessment	When was your household last interviewed by ${implementing_org}?	Enter date	Text
HH Interview	Vulnerability status (additional vulnerability criteria)	Does your household have members with any of the following vulnerabilities?		Household with a member with a disability; household member with a chronic illness; cases of unaccompanied and separated children under 18; children emotionally stressed, sad or displaying behaviour different to normal; women and children who are prevented from accessing services; household members experiencing violence; prefer not to say; specify other
HH Interview	Displacement status	Is your household displaced?	Yes;No	Select one
HH Interview	Length of displacement	If yes, how long has the household been displaced for?	1-2 weeks; 2-4 weeks; 4-6 weeks; 6-8 weeks; more than 2 months	
HH Interview	Current location of beneficiary household	Current province location of beneficiary household:	Province list	

HH Interview	Current location of beneficiary household	Current district location of beneficiary household:	District list
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households received cash assistance	Did you receive cash on ${date_distribution}?	Yes; No
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households received cash assistance	If no, around when did you receive cash?	Date
HH Interview	Mode of delivery of cash assistance	Mode of delivery through which beneficiary received cash:	Hawala, cash in hand delivery
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households received full assistance	How much did you receive in Afghani?	Integer
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households who received other assistance in past 3 months	What other assistance have you received in the past three months?	Cash, In-Kind Assistance, food Distribution, Water, Sanitation, hygiene assistance, none
		Non-Compliance Issues	
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households asked to pay for their assistance at registration for assistance	Were you asked to pay someone to be selected for the cash assistance from ${implementing_org}?	Yes; No
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households asked to pay for their assistance at registration for assistance by person paid	If yes, who did you have to pay?	Implementing partner staff member, Malik/community leader, Other community member/neighbor, Fee to government official, Non-official fee to registration staff, Prefer not to say, Other
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households asked to pay for their assistance at registration by amount paid	How much did you have to pay, in Afghani? Specify range.	less than 500 AFN, between 501-1000 AFN, between 1001-2000 AFN, more than 2001 AFN
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households asked to pay for their assistance at cash out location	Were you asked to pay someone to receive your cash assistance at the cash out location?	Yes; No
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households asked to pay for their assistance at cash out location by person paid	If yes, who did you have to pay?	Implementing partner staff member, Malik/community leader, Other community member/neighbor, Fee to government official, Non-official fee to registration staff, Prefer not to say, Other
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households asked to pay for their assistance at cash out location by amount paid	How much did you have to pay, in Afghani? Specify range.	less than 500 AFN, between 501-1000 AFN, between 1001-2000 AFN, more than 2001 AFN
HH Interview	% of beneficiaries treated respectfully at distribution location	Do you feel you were treated respectfully at the distribution location?	Yes; No
HH Interview	Reasons beneficiaries felt they weren't treated respectfully at distribution location	Can you describe how you were treated/what happened?	Violent behavior, Abusive language, discrimination, culturally inappropriate behaviours, other
HH Interview	Reasons beneficiaries experienced discrimination at distribution location	Can you explain why you felt discrimination? (if answered discrimination to treatment at distribution location)	Text
HH Interview	% of beneficiaries that felt safe at distribution location	Did you feel safe at the distribution location?	Yes; No
HH Interview	Reasons beneficiaries didn't feel safe at distribution location	What was the reason you felt unsafe?	intimidation at distribution location, fear of illegal hawala agent, threat of violence, untrustworthy distribution agent, traveled a long distance to distribution location
HH Interview	Beneficiaries providing consent to implementing organisation follow up of non-compliance issues	If you are having problems with your cash distribution, do you consent to ${implementing_org} following up with you via a phone call?	Yes; No
HH Interview	Beneficiaries providing consent to share cashing out for distribution location for implementing	Do you give us permission to share with ${implementing_org} the location where you cashed out your	Yes; No

	organisation follow up on non-compliance issues	assistance so they can follow up on the issue?	
HH Interview		What is the name of the agent where you cashed out the assistance?	Text
HH Interview	Beneficiary cashing out for distribution location for implementing organisation follow up	If known, what is the name of the address where you cashed out the assistance?	Text
	Satisfaction with Modality		
HH Interview	% of beneficiaries satisfied with payment modality through which assistance was received	To what extent were you satisfied with receiving the money through ${mode_delivery}?	Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Moderately satisfied, but could have been better, Unsatisfied, Very Unsatisfied
HH Interview	% of beneficiaries not satisfied with the distribution modality by reason	What were the reasons you were not satisfied?	I had difficulties registering, I had to travel a long distance to cash out, I spent a lot of money travelling to cash out, I had to pay to collect my assistance, corruption, treated disrespectfully by registration or cash out location staff
HH Interview	% of beneficiaries that would prefer another type of assistance than cash	Would you have preferred other forms of assistance, rather than the cash you received, to support your basic needs?	No, prefer cash, Yes, in-kind, Yes, other
HH Interview	% beneficiaries that would prefer another type of assistance than cash by reason	What is the reason you prefer that type of assistance?	Text
	Information Sources		
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households reported receiving information about the cash assistance prior to cashing out for distribution	Did you receive any information about registration and cashing out before receiving the cash assistance?	Yes; No
HH Interview	% of beneficiaries reported receiving explanation or guidance on the purpose of the assistance, by source	What was the source of this information?	Implementing Organization, Hawala Agent, Other
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households that had difficulty understanding information	Did you have any difficulty understanding the information given?	Yes; No
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households that had difficulty understanding information by type of issue	What kind of difficulties did you have understanding the information given?	information received was not clear, information not in local language, information not specific for people with hearing/visual disabilities, Other
	Difficulties Collecting Assistance		
HH Interview	% of beneficiaries that faced issues or difficulties during the cashing out for distribution process	Did you face any issues or difficulties during the process of cashing out your assistance?	Yes; No
HH Interview	% of beneficiaries that faced isues or difficulties during the cashing out for distribution process, by type of issue	What kind of issues did you face during the process of cashing out your assistance?	Long distance to travel, expensive to travel, difficult to identify location/ cash out agent, I didn't understand SMS or phone call instructions, safety concerns, did not have necessary documentation, difficulties at cash out location with staff, cash not available at cash out location, crowded cash out location, Other
HH Interview	% of beneficiaries that were informed about distribution, by type	How were you informed about your eligibility and the date and time of the distribution?	SMS, Phone call, Flyer or pamphlet, Community Member, Other
HH Interview	% of beneficiaries reporting challenges accessing distribution location	Did you experience challenges accessing the distribution location?	Yes; No

HH Interview	% of beneficiaries reporting challenges accessing distribution location by reason	if yes, why?	Long distance to travel to distribution location, insecurity on the way to distribution location, lack of transport to access distribution location, irregular/unreliable transport to access, other
HH Interview	% beneficiaries by wait time at distribution location	How long did you wait at the distribution location before receiving your assistance?	less than 15 minutes, 15-30 minutes, 30-60 minutes, more than 1 hour
	Beneficiary Feedback		
HH Interview	% of beneficiaries aware of complaints response mechanism	Are you aware of any complaints response mechanism for assistance given by ${implementing_org}?	Yes; No
HH Interview	% of beneficiaries that had a question or complaint regarding the process or assistance	During the process, did you need to ask a question or make a complaint about the assistance?	Yes; No
HH Interview	% of beneficiaries had a question or complaint regarding the process or assistance and were able to report it, by complaint mechanism	Were you able to contact anyone for assistance about your question or complaint?	Yes; No
HH Interview	% of beneficiaries had a question or complaint regarding the process or assistance and were able to report it, by person/org contacted	Who did you contact for assistance?	Mobile money provider hotline numbers, Implementing organisation call centre, Implementing organisation field staff, different implementing organisation call centre (not directly received from), different implementing organisation field staff (not directly received from), Other
HH Interview	% beneficiaries satisfied with complaint mechanism	How satisfied were you with the response you received to your question or complaint?	Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Moderately satisfied, but could have been better, Unsatisfied, Very Unsatisfied
HH Interview	Reasons beneficiaries dissatisfied with complaint mechanism	What were the reasons you were not satisfied?	Could not get in touch, Got in touch but they could not answer my question or respond to complaint, other
HH Interview	Reasons beneficiaries were unable to make complaint	Why were you not able to contact anyone to ask your question or make a complaint?	no phone number provided, phone was off, provided phone number was wrong, don't know how to write, Other
	Beneficiary Expenditures		
HH Interview	% of beneficiaries have spent all of their assistance	How much of the cash assistance have you spent?	All, Approximately two thirds, Approximately half, Approximately one third, None
HH Interview	% of beneficiaries have spent all of their assistance	Approximately how much have you spent (in Afghani)?	integer
		We will now ask questions on household expenditures for the past month. How much was spent in the last 30 days, in AFN, on the following items/costs:	Note
HH Interview	Average HH monthly expenditure in the last 30 days on essentials	Rent	integer
HH Interview	Average HH monthly expenditure in the last 30 days on essentials	Food	integer
HH Interview	Average HH monthly expenditure in the last 30 days on essentials	Healthcare and medicines	integer
HH Interview	Average HH monthly expenditure in the last 30 days on essentials	Children's education	integer
HH Interview	Average HH monthly expenditure in the last 30 days on essentials	Transportation	integer
HH Interview	Average HH monthly expenditure in the last 30 days on essentials	Communication	integer
HH Interview	Average HH monthly expenditure in the last 30 days on essentials	Water (drinking)	integer

HH Interview	Average HH monthly expenditure in the last 30 days on essentials	Fuel and electricity	integer	
HH Interview	Average HH monthly expenditure in the last 30 days on essentials	Debt repayment	integer	
HH Interview	Average HH monthly expenditure in the last 30 days on essentials	Shelter maintenance	integer	
HH Interview	Main priority needs cash assistance was spent on	What are the three priority household needs that the cash assistance you received from ${implementing_org} was spent on?	Rent, Food, Healthcare and medicines, Children's education, Transportation, Communication, Water (drinking), Fuel and electricity, Debt repayment, Shelter maintenance	
	HH decision making dynamics			
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households reporting female access to and decision- making over household expenditure	Who in your household decides what the household budget is spent on?		Head of Household, Female members of household, Male members of household, Other
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households reporting female access to and decision- making over household expenditure	Are female members of household given any money to spend on household basic needs?	Yes, No, Don't know	
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households reporting disagreements regarding the spending of cash assistance	Is there any disagreement in your HH regarding the spending of the cash assistance?	Yes, No, Prefer not to say	
HH Interview		**HH Income Sources and Debt**		
		How many of the following household members worked for income in the past 3 months?	Note	
HH Interview	% households are economically active	Female under 18 working in the past 3 months?	Integer	
HH Interview	% households are economically active	Male under 18 working in the past 3 months?	Integer	
HH Interview	% households are economically active	Female 18 and over working in the past 3 months?	Integer	
HH Interview	% households are economically active	Male 18 and over working in the past 3 months?	Integer	
HH Interview	Primary source of employment	In the last 3 months, what were the main sources of employment for your household?		Farming/Agriculture, Livestock production, Formal employment: private or public sector employee, Small business / sales / rent, Skilled labour: Carpenter, electrician, mechanic, driver, construction, Unskilled labour: domestic work, manual labor, Borrowing / loans / humanitarian assistance, Other
		In the past 30 days, how much income did your household earn from the following, in Afghani:	Note	
HH Interview	Average household income in the last 30 days	Employment (adults)	Integer	
HH Interview	Average household income in the last 30 days	Employment (children)	Integer	
HH Interview	Average household income in the last 30 days	Cash assistance (government)	Integer	
HH Interview	Average household income in the last 30 days	Cash assistance (humanitarian organisation)	Integer	
HH Interview	Average household income in the last 30 days	Pension	Integer	

HH Interview	Average household income in the last 30 days	Selling goods (producing goods to be sold)	Integer
HH Interview	Average household income in the last 30 days	Selling assets (selling items from the household)	Integer
HH Interview	Average household income in the last 30 days	Small Business	Integer
HH Interview	% of households currently in debt	Is your household currently in debt?	Yes, No, Prefer not to say
HH Interview	Average amount of household debt	What is your households total amount of debt (AFN)?	integer
HH Interview	Reasons for household debt	What is the reason for your households debt?	To purchase basic household items, to pay for rent, to pay for food, to pay for education, to pay for medical expenses, to pay for other debt, Other
HH Interview		**Perception of Assistance**	
HH Interview	Frequency of beneficiary households by priority needs in the last 30 days	Over the last 30 days, what were your household's top three primary needs?	Rent, Food, Healthcare and medicines, Children's education, Transportation, Communication, Water (drinking), Fuel and electricity, Debt repayment, Shelter maintenance
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households by extent assistance received help meet primary needs	To what extent did the assistance you received help in meeting your primary needs to date?	Not useful at all (it didn't help meet any of my priority needs), Not useful (only slightly helped meet my priority needs), Moderately useful (it helped me meet around half of my priority needs), Very useful (it helped me meet all my priority needs)
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households by coping strategy index score after receiving assistance	In the past 7 days, if there have been times when you did not have enough food or money to buy food, how often has your household had to:	Note
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households by coping strategy index score after receiving assistance	In the last 7 days, how often has your household had to rely on less preferred food and less expensive food?	integer
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households by coping strategy index score after receiving assistance	In the last 7 days, how often has your household had to borrow food, or rely on help from friends and relatives?	integer
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households by coping strategy index score after receiving assistance	In the last 7 days, how often has your household had to limit portion size at mealtimes?	integer
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households by coping strategy index score after receiving assistance	In the last 7 days, how often has your household had to restrict consumption by adults in order for small children to eat?	integer
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households by coping strategy index score after receiving assistance	In the last 7 days, how often has your household had to reduce number of meals eaten in a day?	integer
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households by coping strategy index score after receiving assistance	In the last 7 days, how often has your household had to send male children to work?	integer
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households by coping strategy index score after receiving assistance	In the last 7 days, how often has your household had to send female children to work?	integer
HH Interview		**Movement Intentions**	
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households by movement intentions	What are your household's current movement intentions for the next 12 months?	Remain in current location, Return to area of origin, Move to another location inside Afghanistan, Move to another location outside Afghanistan, Do not know
HH Interview	Reasons beneficiary households do intend to return to area of origin	What are the main reasons why you currently intend to return to your area of origin?	Security situation in area of origin is now stable, Area of origin is now cleared of explosive hazards, Other family/community members had returned, Livelihood options is available in the area of origin, Basic services (water, electricity, education, etc.) are available in the area of origin, Emotional desire to return to area of origin, Is necessary to secure personal housing, land, or property in area of return, Other

HH Interview	Reasons beneficiary households do not intend to return to area of origin	If not intending to return within the next year, why not?		Security situation in area of origin is not stable, Explosive hazards in area of origin, Other family/community members have not returned, Lack of livelihood opportunities in the area of origin, Basic services (water, electricity, education, etc.) not available in the area of origin, No emotional desire to return to area of origin, House/property in area of origin is damaged or destroyed, Other
HH Interview	% of beneficiaries who intend to move by area intend to move to	Where do you intend to move?	Text	
HH Interview	Reasons beneficiary households intend to move to new location	What are the main reasons why you intend to move to this area?		Reunite with family/community members, Seek better services, Seek better security situation, Seek better livelihood opportunities, Not feeling welcome in current location, Facing eviction in current location, Other
HH Interview	% of beneficiary households reporting their relationship with the local community has changed since receiving cash assistance	In what way has your relationship with members of your community changed since you received cash assistance?	Yes, better, Yes, worse, No change	