Context and Methodology

After 40 years of continued crisis, Afghanistan remains one of the world’s most complex humanitarian emergencies, driven by escalating conflict and devastating natural disasters. Depleted resilience to cope with the repeated shocks of displacement have made it difficult for households to withstand the harsh winter condition, where monthly temperatures can reach as low as -12.1 degrees celsius.

In response to the persistent need for winterization assistance, the Emergency Shelter and Non-Food Item (ES/NFI) Cluster, in coordination with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GoIRA) through the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR), released a Joint Winterization Strategy in July 2019 aimed to assist 95,350 vulnerable families with support for the winter season period from November 2019 to February 2020. The strategy prioritized a set of solutions, including adequate shelter, heating, NFIs, winter clothing, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), and medicine and health supplies, ultimately reaching 71,405 households during the 2019/2020 winter period. However, the overall impact of the response was unclear.

In order to address the impact of the Winterization Response, REACH conducted a household assessment across all 8 regions of Afghanistan, of which a total of 4,584 were sampled from host communities, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), and non-beneficiary households at a regional level, with 95% confidence and a 7% margin of error relative to the population. Data was stratified by impact of aid for beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, the modality of the aid received, and the region where aid was received. Data was collected from 27 May - 28 June 2020. This factsheet displays the data from host community, IDPs, and non-beneficiary households for the North Region, where 634 surveys were conducted.

Demographics

Proportion of households surveyed, by reported displacement status:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDPs Beneficiaries</th>
<th>Host Community Beneficiaries</th>
<th>Non-beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>77%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessed households, by age and gender of each household member:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2%</td>
<td>60+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>18-59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>5-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8%</td>
<td>1-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3%</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Female-headed households: 18%

Average household size: 7 members

18% of households reported having at least one member with a disability or chronic illness

28% of beneficiary households and 24% of non-beneficiary households were classified as vulnerable

7% of households were reportedly headed by an elderly (over 60 years old) head of household

% of households reporting the proportion of members in the household having a tazkera

1% None | 20% Some | 31% Only head of households | 49% All
Livelihoods

99% of households reported having at least one breadwinner. Of these households, the average reported household earnings for the 30 days prior to data collection was 4,852 AFG.

Of households reporting having only one breadwinner who is working in unskilled daily labour:

- Yes: 68%
- No: 32%

Of households reporting sources of money in the 30 days prior to data collection, the top three most commonly reported main sources were:

- Income through work/labour: 96%
- Borrow money / take on debt: 7%
- Remittances / gifts: 4%

Of households reporting that work was a source of earnings in the last 30 days, the top three most commonly reported types of work providing that income were:

- Unskilled daily labour: 81%
- Skilled daily labour: 9%
- Cash crop farming: 4%

Displaced Population

86% of IDP households reported that their current location was not the area of origin for the majority of the household members.

Most commonly reported main reasons for displaced households choosing to leave area of origin:

- Armed conflict / military operation: 87%
- Clashes among Armed Opposition Groups: 8%
- No work opportunities: 3%

Of displaced households by length of time living in current location, in months:

- <1 - 3 months: 39%
- 4 - 12 months: 61%
- > 1 year: 1%

Of households reporting living in different shelter types:

- Permanent: 85%
- Transitional: 6%
- Tent: 5%
- Unfinished house: 3%
- Damaged house: 1%
- Makeshift: 0%

Priorities Needs

Households’ most commonly reported first priority need during the November 2019 - March 2020 winter period:

1. Food: 51%
2. Heating materials / fuel: 38%
3. Shelter repair: 6%

Top 3 reported most critically needed shelter repairs / upgrades during the last winter period:

- Openings: 53%
- Foundation & Walling: 26%
- Plastic tarpaulin: 26%

Top 3 reported most critically needed NFIs during the last winter period:

- Firewood / charcoal / gas for heating: 95%
- Gas cylinder / bukhari: 52%
- Winter clothing: 51%

Debt Coping Strategies

Average amount of new debt reportedly acquired over the last winter, in AFN:

- Beneficiary households: 20,550 AFN
- Non-beneficiary households: 18,937 AFN

Ability of households to repay debt acquired over the last winter within the next year, in % of households:

- Beneficiaries: 23% (60%) of households
- Non-beneficiaries: 27% (49%) of households

Of households reporting not being able to repay debts, the most commonly reported coping strategies were:

- Adults work extra shifts/jobs or begging: 73%
- Reduction of food expenses: 36%
- Borrow money / take on debt: 33%

7. A breadwinner is any individual over the age of 16 who is providing the main source of income for the household through work.
8. Respondents could select multiple options.
9. Respondents could select up to three options.
Livelihoods Coping Strategies

Households’ most commonly reported coping strategies to meet gaps in livelihoods, during the last winter period:

- Take low paying jobs: 80%
- Take on debt: 51%
- Reduce money spent on food: 54%
- Reduce money spent on services: 38%
- Take children out of school to work: 9%
- Sell assets: 22%
- Send household members to beg: 4%
- Sell shelter/land: 2%

80% of households reported that if they were unable to find shelter for their household, they resorted to living in tents. 9% of households reported that they were living in an unsafe shelter.

Shelter Coping Strategies

Of households reporting not or only partially being able to get the items needed for shelter repairs, the most commonly reported coping strategies were:

- Nothing: 37%
- Borrow money / take on debt: 28%
- Reduction of food expenses: 25%

80% of households that received assistance, by aid modality:

- Unrestricted cash: 25% Completely, almost or mostly met
- Restricted cash: 75% Completely, almost or mostly met
- Unrestricted cash: 0% Partially met
- Restricted cash: 0% Partially met

% of households by reported ability to meet their three most critical shelter needs for the past winter of those households that received assistance, by aid modality:

- Restricted cash:
  - 50% Completely, almost or mostly met
  - 20% Partially met
  - 30% Not met

- Unrestricted cash:
  - 44% Completely, almost or mostly met
  - 28% Partially met
  - 28% Not met

NFI Coping Strategies

Households’ most commonly reported coping strategies when households could not or partially not meet NFI gaps:

- Borrow money / take on debt: 37%
- Reduction of food expenses: 31%
- Scavenge for materials: 19%

% of households by reported inability to meet their shelter winterization needs, by beneficiary status:

- Non-beneficiary households: 66%
- Beneficiary households: 40%

% of households reporting having been unable to heat their shelter sufficiently in the 5 months prior to data collection:

- Non-beneficiary households: 66%
- Beneficiary households: 40%

Heating Coping Strategies

Of all households reporting having been unable to heat their shelter (44%), the most commonly reported coping strategies were:

- Burn plastic or other harmful materials: 51%
- Send children to collect firewood: 20%
- Borrow money to buy fuel: 11%

% of households by reported inability to meet their NFI winterization needs, by beneficiary status:

- Non-beneficiary households: 64%
- Beneficiary households: 29%

10. Respondents could select multiple options.
Most commonly reported types of assistance received that were reported to mostly, almost or completely meet the households’ critical shelter repairs needs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plastic tarpaulin</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cement</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter insulation</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most commonly reported NFI items assistance received that were reported to mostly, almost or completely meet the households’ NFI winterization needs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buckets or other water containers</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerry cans</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firewood / charcoal / gas for heating</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% of beneficiary households by reported satisfaction with overall experience of receiving assistance, from being assessed to receiving assistance, by aid modality:

**Restricted cash:**
- 84% Very satisfied
- 16% Satisfied
- 0% Less satisfied
- 0% Not satisfied

**Unrestricted cash:**
- 80% Very satisfied
- 20% Satisfied
- 0% Less satisfied
- 0% Not satisfied

80% of beneficiary households reported having spent the restricted cash on something other than what the assistance provider required them to spend on.

Of these households, 96% reported having spent the restricted cash on food.

The most commonly reported challenge faced when spending the money was that the assistance could not cover basic needs due to prices of goods (by 39% of households).

100% of beneficiary households reported preferring to be paid in AFN, instead of USD.

91% of beneficiary households reported that the most common reason for this preference was the poor exchange rate.

66% of beneficiary households reported having collected the cash assistance at an organization’s office or warehouse.

**Satisfaction**

**Cash**

- Preferred modality of assistance reported by beneficiary households: 11
  - Unrestricted cash: 97%
  - Restricted cash: 0%
  - Voucher: 2%
  - In kind: 1%

84% of beneficiary households reported that someone from the organization explained or suggested what they should spend the cash on, during or after the distribution.

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100% of beneficiary households reported preferring to be paid in AFN, instead of USD.

91% of beneficiary households reported that the most common reason for this preference was the poor exchange rate.

66% of beneficiary households reported having collected the cash assistance at an organization’s office or warehouse.

**In Kind Assistance and Voucher**

No representative sample of households reported receiving in kind or voucher assistance in North region.

11. Restricted cash was self-reported, and defined as: ‘The direct and restricted payment of cash to beneficiaries. Usually, this is in multiple payments with limitations where beneficiaries must show proof of purchase of particular winterization items which are related to the programme goals and the objectives of the cluster in order to receive subsequent payments.’ Unrestricted cash was self-reported, and defined as: ‘The direct and unrestricted payment of cash to beneficiaries, with no limitations on what the cash can be spent on.’
ACCOUNTABILITY

Most commonly reported forms of additional help that would help vulnerable households accessing assistance in the future, as reported by households with vulnerable individuals:

- Assistance delivered to shelter: 82%
- Separate spaces for women and men: 13%
- A private space for breastfeeding: 2%

10% of beneficiary households reported that the assistance received did not come early enough to be effective in preparing for the winter.

20% of beneficiary households reported that the assistance was provided later than the organisation’s advised timeframe.

14% of beneficiary households reported having faced challenges during the distribution of assistance. The most commonly reported challenge was: had to wait 2 hours or more to get the cash (84%).

2% of beneficiary households reported that someone from the household made a complaint to the organization providing assistance about the winterization assistance or its delivery.

Most commonly reported actions households would reportedly take if they had questions or a problem with the cash distribution or in-kind assistance, by % of beneficiary households:

- Nothing: 48%
- Tell community leader: 20%
- Tell organization staff face-to-face: 17%
- Call the organization by phone: 15%

Reported time it took travelling to collect the assistance (one way), by reported modality received, by % of households:

Restricted cash:

- 3% >1 hour
- 24% 30 min - 1 hour
- 73% <30 min

Unrestricted cash:

- 5% >1 hour
- 34% 30 min - 1 hour
- 61% <30 min

Community Relations

Reported impact of winterization assistance on community relations, by % of households:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Created tensions with community</th>
<th>No impact</th>
<th>Reduced tensions with community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-beneficiaries</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Market access

43% of households reported facing challenges accessing markets to buy NFIs, food or shelter materials over the last winter.

Of households reporting challenges, most commonly reported challenges when accessing markets:

- Increased prices: 79%
- Amount of cash was not adequate: 68%
- Long distance: 31%

% of households reporting changes in prices or availability of the following items since the last winter:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Increase</th>
<th>No change</th>
<th>Decrease</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timber for repairs</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass for windows</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking/kitchen items</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charcoal / Wood</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas Cylinder / stove</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blankets and quilts</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bukhari stove</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warm jacket</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas liquid</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reported time it takes travelling to reach the market (one way), by % of households:

- 1% >1 hour
- 14% 30 min - 1 hour
- 84% <30 min

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12. Respondents could select multiple options.
About REACH
REACH Initiative facilitates the development of information tools and products that enhance the capability of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery and development contexts. The methodologies used by REACH include primary data collection and in-depth analysis, and all activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. REACH is a joint initiative of IMPACT Initiatives and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research - Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT).