Afghanistan Research & Evaluation Unit (AREU)

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About the Study

Part of the Covid Collective Research in Afghanistan

The aim was to look at socio-economic impacts of COVID on local people’s livelihoods in two provinces Kandahar and Herat

Methods used for analysis included qualitative interviews and a quantitative survey of the Income, Expenditure, and Labour Force Survey

The time frame for the study was 2019- July 2021

Data analysis also included previous data sets from 2010 and 2015 on the same sites.
The poverty rate rose from 43.7% in Autumn of 2019 to 51% in Spring of 2021

October - March 2020-21 Income Losses:
- Market closure and disruption of transport due to Covid19
- Lockdowns
- Economic downturn
- Lack of demand for goods to the disrupted export market
- Higher cost of business
- Border Closures
# Health & Food security

## Directly effected by COVID19

## Treatment cost and transportation disruption impacted people seeking treatment

## Treatment Cost affected people’s food security

## Other reasons for food insecurity
- Protracted years of conflict
- Severe drought and
- Impact of COVID19

## Qualitative data indicates 69% HH (Oct 2019-Mar 2020) having no food to eat

This figure rose to 76% in April – Sept 2021
Figure 9: Food Insecurity, by COVID-19 Period

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1
“There is no work; the price of patrol has increased rapidly. The income that I have from my Rickshaw is not sufficient for my family. If I earn 300 AFN in a day, I must spend up to 200 AFN on the Rickshaw and only 100 AFN income I have. The price of food items has increased a lot. I am not able to buy cooking oil, it is very expensive, its prices have reached from 200 to 300 for a KG.”

[Interview with a young male IDP in Herat]
Concerns overlapping with COVID19

- High Dependency on Agriculture
- Fragile Environment,
- High Frequency of Natural Hazards

Climate Change

- Loss of family members in war
- Displacement due to conflict and drought
- Community relationship affected which results in limited access to services and loans

Political Instability and Insecurity

- Losing access to market & resources
“Since we have come here, our problems have increased. My husband doesn’t have a proper and regular job, my sons are going to the streets to collect plastics. If they could collect some, they can get at least 10 AFN per kg. Some people say not to send my sons on the streets, it is not good for their health. But, what can we do? If I don’t send them what to eat, we will die by poverty before dying by corona.”

[Interview with Female IDP in Herat]
Coping strategies

Figure 8: Primary Coping Strategies of Households to Negative Shocks, by COVID-19 Period

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1
Coping Strategies

- Loan and Long term debts
- Migration, Displacement and Remittance
- Support by Government
"However, when displaced to Herat province, everything has changed. I don’t know anyone in this place. Therefore, in the time of need, I cannot ask for help or a loan. In the last five or six months that we came here, I only knew the Malik of this village. Sometimes, when he finds a daily wage, they ask me to go and work. Apart from him, no one knows us in this area, and they are not aware of our financial situation".
First, there is a need for acknowledging the overlapping crisis and a collective crisis management and response to the issues, especially when dealing with humanitarian crises in the context of protracted violence and instability such as Afghanistan.

There is a strong need for multi-sectoral interventions including these sectors but also extending to access to education and health services, livelihoods support, and inclusive finance to counteract the high levels of debt that many households resort to as a negative coping strategy.

Relatedly, donors are encouraged to use the overlapping crises such as COVID, conflict and climate as a framework for analysis in commissioning poverty monitoring studies.

Secondly, looking at the evidence from this study in the current context, there is a clear need to further strengthen linkages between humanitarian and development response to the crisis.

The third area is to draw attention to and develop policy and programming responses to improve the welfare and inclusion of young adults. The findings from this study highlighted how youth-headed households had fewer assets and were more prone to food insecurity and poverty during COVID time.
Thank you
Q & A