



Baseline Assessment Report

Livelihoods, Food Security, Natural Resource Management,
Disaster Risk Reduction, and Healthcare

Monitoring and Evaluation Unit

March 2024

 **Afghanistankomiteen**
Norwegian Afghanistan Committee
کمیته ناروی برای افغانستان
د افغانستان لپاره د ناروی کمیټه

The Norwegian Afghanistan Committee

Founded in 1980, the Norwegian Afghanistan Committee (NAC) is a member-based solidarity organization with activities in Norway and Afghanistan and an elected Board and Secretariat based in Norway.

The purpose of the organization is to work together with the Afghan people to contribute to the development of an independent, peaceful, and democratic Afghanistan; promote knowledge about Afghanistan in Norway; and promote friendship between the Norwegian and Afghan people.

Our Vision

NAC shall contribute to a peaceful Afghanistan, free from poverty, where rural communities are empowered and resilient, valuing equality and diversity.

Our Mission

NAC shall support the Afghan people in the development of a peaceful, just, and egalitarian society where universal human rights are respected. NAC shall be a nexus for knowledge of, interest in, and engagement with Afghanistan in Norway, promoting Afghan voices and perspectives in Norwegian public debate and advocating for informed and responsible policies towards Afghanistan.

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ACRONYMS

AFN	Afghani
AMA	Afghan Midwives Association
CBDMP	Community-based Disaster Management Plan
CCC	Continuum of Care Center (3Cs)
CCCC	Comprehensive Continuum of Care Center(4Cs)
CSA	Climate-smart Agriculture
DAIL	Directorate of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock
DDMC	District Disaster Management Committee
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ERA	Empowering Rural Afghanistan
EU	European Union
FCS	Food Consumption Score
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GIHS	Ghazanfar Institute of Health Sciences
HDDS	Household Dietary Diversity Score
IEC	Information, Education, and Communication
IHS	Institute of Health Sciences
INGO	International Non-government Organization
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IsDB	Islamic Development Bank
KG	Kilogram
KII	Key Informant Interview
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock
MSME	Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise
NAC	Norwegian Afghanistan Committee
NFI	Non-food Item
NGO	Non-government Organization
Norad	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NRM	Natural Resource Management
NSIA	National Statistics and Information Authority
ODK	Open Data Kit
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PDMC	Provincial Disaster Management Committee
PNC	Postnatal Care
RCSI	Reduced Coping Strategy Index
RMNCAH	Reproductive Maternal, Newborn, Child, and Adolescent Health
SHG	Self Help Group
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UNFAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
WHO	World Health Organization

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Special gratitude is extended to all households, farmers, herders, SHG members, female and male community members, and relevant stakeholders and partners for their patience, support, and cooperation during the surveys. And a heartfelt thanks is given to NAC leadership, regional management, and all our colleagues and enumerators for their great contributions in every stage of this study.

We also would like to convey our genuine thanks to Norad, EU, and IsDB for their generous funding to address the development and humanitarian needs of some of the most vulnerable rural communities in Afghanistan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This baseline assessment was conducted for the Empowering Rural Afghanistan (ERA) II program (Norad funded), the Empowering Afghan Civil Society in Mitigating the Negative Impacts of Climate Change in Rural Communities project (EU funded), and the Improving Food Security through Infrastructure Support in Rural Afghanistan project (IsDB funded). The baseline was designed to collect data in 236 partner communities in 28 targeted districts; to assess the situation before and at the beginning of the program and projects and determine the benchmarks and priorities for the implementation as well as provide reference data for the evaluation and the tracking of indicators over the life of the program and projects. We used multiple methods for data collection including household surveys, individual interviews with stakeholders and potential participants of the program and projects and focus group discussions with representatives from different groups such as smallholder farmers, shuras, and other community members. Given the nature of the data collected, we utilized both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis to establish the final assessment result patterns.

The assessment unveiled the following key findings on the current situation in the targeted communities:

- **Agricultural Productivity:** While the findings show an increased household dependency on agriculture as their primary source of income, a staggering 71% of smallholder farmers participating in this study reported decreased levels of their agricultural productivity compared to the previous year, largely due to a lack of rain (cited by 61%), the scarcity of irrigation water (53%), insufficient seeds (38%), and poor soil fertility (37%).
- **Livestock Productivity:** Livestock is an important (primary or secondary) source of income for 33.4% of surveyed households but overall, 64.5% of smallholder herders in this study reported decreased economic benefits from livestock compared to the previous year. A total of 71% of smallholder herders cited animal diseases, and 72% reported the lack of fodder/animal feed as a significant constraint for their livestock's productivity. Additionally, 70% of herders reported decreased prices for their animals and animal products.
- **Natural Resource Management:** Overall, 16.67% of the respondents exhibited the capacity to adopt sustainable NRM and environmental protection practices such as avoiding bush burning (30.8%), forest management (28.5%), protecting drinking water from pollution (21.7%), planting grass bands at the edge of fields (17.0%), tracing and contouring sloped lands (16.2%), managing human and organic waste (12.6%), controlling overgrazing (7.5%), rehabilitation of pastures (7.1%), construction and rehabilitation of NRM infrastructure (4.0%), and reducing usage of pesticides (4.0%).
- **Climate-Smart Agriculture:** The adoption of climate-smart Agriculture practices like crop rotation, planting drought-tolerant seeds, planting climate-adapted fruit saplings, usage of organic fertilizers, mulching, water-saving techniques, establishment of greenhouses, and adoption of IPM practices were limited to 27.7% of the surveyed smallholder households.
- **Resilience to the Impacts of Climate Change and Natural Disasters:** The findings revealed a concerning gap in community resilience and preparedness against the impacts of

climate change and natural disasters. While the surveyed households had consistently reported an increase in the level and frequency of natural disasters like floods, droughts, and landslides, only 12.93% had confirmed their preparedness to respond. Community initiatives like hazard mapping (12.8%), simulation exercises (10.6%), community-based disaster management plan (13.1%), and early warning systems (12.2%) were limited, and community disaster management committee existed in only 11.7% of surveyed communities. Overall, just 14.56% of surveyed communities demonstrated improved resilience against climate change and natural disasters based on indicators like institutional capacity, knowledge, economic assets, and preparedness measures.

- **Food Security and Coping Strategies:** Overall, 68.4% of households were assessed as having poor food consumption scores, followed by 28.7% as borderline, and only 2.9% as acceptable, indicating a lack of access to sufficient and nutritious food for an absolute majority of surveyed households. Female-headed households (81.6% poor) fared worse than male-headed ones (62.8% poor) in food consumption scores. Raghistan and Yaftal-e-Payan in Badakhshan exhibited the highest food insecurity levels, respectively, at 94% and 90% poor. Consequently, coping strategies like relying on less preferred foods (95% of households), borrowing food (80%), limiting portion sizes (63%), restricting consumption by adults to enable children to eat (57%), and reducing meals (39%) were widely adopted.
- **Access to Healthcare Facilities:** Access to quality healthcare services in the surveyed communities was found to be limited and challenging, especially for women and children. Overall, 46% of households had no access to public health facilities within one hour of travel time, 66% rated the quality of existing healthcare services as poor, 64.2% found maternal and child healthcare services unaffordable, and 68% indicated no or poor access to RMNCAH services in their communities.

INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings of our baseline study conducted in November 2023 in seven provinces of Afghanistan: Badakhshan, Daikundi, Faryab, Ghazni, Kapisa, Paktia, and Takhar. The study evaluated the livelihoods, food security, natural resource management (NRM), disaster risk reduction (DRR), impact of climate change and access to basic health services among vulnerable, rural households and communities to establish and measure baseline indicators for the Empowering Rural Afghanistan II program, Empowering Afghan Civil Society in Mitigating the Negative Impacts of Climate Change in Rural Communities project, and Improving Food Security through Infrastructure Support in Rural Afghanistan project.

2.1 Background

The current deteriorating situation is driven by decades of instability and exacerbated by the economic situation, ongoing drought and other natural hazards, international sanctions on the current government, and reduction of international aid to Afghanistan. According to a report released in December 2023 by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan has remained at 29.2 million, meaning more than two-thirds of the population requires assistance to survive. This is compounded by drought shocks across the provinces where at least 60% of the population relies on rain-fed agriculture. Today, 25 out of the 34 provinces in the country experience either severe or catastrophic drought conditions, affecting more than 50% of the population¹.

Through multi-donor projects and programs, NAC aims to support vulnerable rural households and communities to have improved food security, sustainable livelihoods, and resilience to the impact of climate change, by establishing livelihood opportunities, strengthening community level natural resource management, and improving community preparedness and response to natural hazards. The projects target smallholder farmers, smallholder herders, Shuras and civil society groups including self-help groups (SHGs), micro, small and medium enterprise (MSMEs), farmers associations, women, men, boys, and girls. The outcomes under the programs/projects include:

Outcome 1.1 (EU): *Improved civil society capacities for climate change adaptation, through climate-smart agriculture, livelihood diversification and efficient and sustainable NRM.*

Outcome 1.2 (EU): *Strengthened knowledgebase and improved capacities amongst civil-society actors on research related to climate change and natural resource management.*

Outcome 1.3 (EU): *Improved resilience to natural disasters and strengthened civil society emergency response mechanisms.*

Outcome 2.3 (ERA II): *Community members have improved access to quality healthcare services.*

Outcome 3.1 (ERA II and IsDB): *Improved nutrition, food security, resilience and food and livelihood diversification through agriculture and livestock.*

¹ FAO (2023). Cold wave assessment in livestock - Afghanistan.
<https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cc7193en>

Outcome 3.2 (ERA II): *Micro, small, and medium enterprise (MSME) groups supported through sustainable value chain development.*

Outcome 3.3 (ERA II): *Systems strengthening on climate-smart agriculture and natural resource management.*

Outcome 3.4 (ERA II): *Rural communities have improved resilience to natural disasters and emergency response mechanisms in place.*

2.2 Purpose of the baseline

This baseline assessment is intended to establish an understanding of the current life and livelihood situation of surveyed households with a focus on household food security and diversification status, household economic and livelihood activities including agriculture and livestock, natural resource management practices, vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters, and household access to basic health services in targeted communities (see Annex 01 for the list of districts and communities under this study). Overall, the purpose of the study was to:

- provide livelihood, NRM and DRR baseline/reference data/indicators from which to measure and evaluate the changes over the life of the project. The baseline study data will allow measurement of the impact of project interventions on household livelihoods, NRM, food security and community resilience to natural disasters.
- measure the baseline (pre-project) values of the outcome indicators in the project logical frameworks prior to implementation to allow for comparative outcome (post-project) evaluations.
- inform the NAC program team about the current livelihoods and food security situation of programs and projects beneficiaries as well as the needs and priorities from community perspectives to ensure the voice of community members are heard and reflected in project implementation design and planning phases.

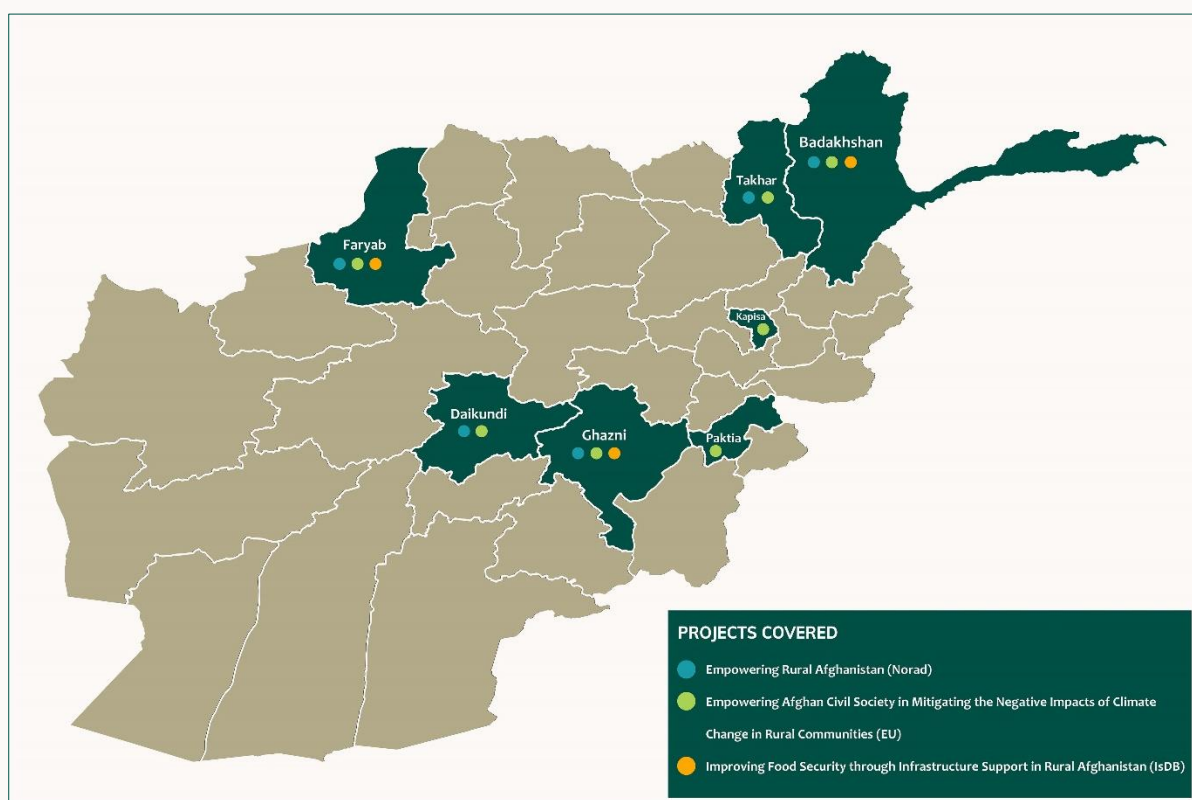
While we acknowledge the need for broader research studies that can thoroughly delve into the various aspects of household vulnerabilities and cover larger populations and communities, as mentioned, this study primarily focuses on assessing the pre-project conditions of potential program and project participants that have been identified based on specific beneficiary selection criteria, including vulnerability assessments. Therefore, it is essential to note that the findings of this study cannot be generalized or extrapolated to represent the entire district or province.

METHODOLOGY

In this baseline study, a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies was utilized. For the quantitative part of the study, a comprehensive baseline survey questionnaire was employed, while for the qualitative aspect, focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs) were developed and used to address the key indicators and thematic areas under livelihoods, food security, NRM, DRR, and health.

The geographical areas targeted in this study covered 236 communities in 28 districts (refer to Annex II for detailed list) across Badakhshan, Daikundi, Faryab, Ghazni, Kapisa, Paktia, and Takhar provinces.

Figure 1: Baseline Geographical Map



The participants in this study, including smallholder farmers, smallholder herders, NRM and DRR committee members, and community members, are potential beneficiaries of the ERA II, European Union (EU), and IsDB projects. They have been selected as potential participants for these projects based on the NAC project beneficiary selection criteria.

3.1 Sample Size

An estimated population of 12,000 direct beneficiaries (30% female) in the program / project documents, comprising smallholder farmers, smallholder herders, SHG members, NRM and DRR committee members, and other community members under the ERA II, EU, and IsDB projects, formed the basis for the quantitative sampling of this baseline. Using the sample size formula ($N = t^2 \times p(1-p) / m^2$) and considering a 98% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, a sample size of 520 was calculated.

The study sample was selected using the cluster random sampling method where the overall sample size was proportionally distributed between different potential beneficiary types and provinces. An additional 63 households were added to the calculated sample size to ensure representativeness of the small clusters in the assessment and their generalizability in the assessment findings. Overall, 583 households from clusters of gender (male and female), potential beneficiary types (smallholder farmers, smallholder herders, SHG members, and potential recipients of the NRM, DRR, and health interventions), and provinces (Badakhshan, Daikundi, Faryab, Ghazni, Kapisa, Paktia, and Takhar) were surveyed. Figure 2 below presents the distribution of study participants across the provinces:

Figure 2: Baseline survey participants – by province and gender

Province	District	Male	Female	Total
Badakhshan	Argo	14	8	22
	Baharak	13	6	19
	Keshem	15	7	22
	Kohistan	15	6	21
	Raghestan	15	2	17
	Shuhada	15	8	23
	Warduj	21	3	24
	Yaftal-e-Payan	13	7	20
	Yawan	13	6	19
	Zebak	13	7	20
Takhar	Kalafgan	13	7	20
Daikundi	Nili	12	7	19
	Pato	12	8	20
	Shahristan	11	10	21
Faryab	Almar	12	6	18
	Maimana	12	7	19
	Pashton Kot	12	7	19
	Qaisar	13	7	20
	Shirin Tagab	15	3	18
Ghazni	Ajristan	16	0	16
	Andar	15	4	19
	Deh yak	14	4	18
	Ghazni City	13	13	26
	Jaghori	21	8	29
	Malistan	11	13	24
Kapisa	Alasai	13	7	20
	Tagab	14	5	19
Paktya	Gardez	28	3	31
Total (#)		404	179	583
Total (%)		(69%)	(31%)	(100%)

Additionally, qualitative data were collected from 212 beneficiaries from the aforementioned clusters using FGDs and KIIs. Overall, 20 people were interviewed as key informants from the relevant government departments and stakeholder groups and 24 FGDs were conducted with

smallholder farmers, smallholder herders, SHG members, and other community members who were potentially recipients of the NRM, DRR, and health interventions.

Recognizing the importance of gender diversity in such a study, particular attention was given to ensure a representative and inclusive sample that accurately reflected the perspectives and experiences of both male and female participants. Overall, 31% of the respondents in this assessment were female – aligning with our anticipated level of women’s participation in the program activities. In addition, to ensure diversity regarding types/groups of participants, the sample size was determined from various groups of potential project beneficiaries, including smallholder farmers, smallholder herders, SHG members, and other community members who are potentially supporting NRM and DRR interventions in the targeted communities.

3.2 Data Collection

This study used a structured household survey questionnaire for quantitative data through digitalized data collection application (KoBO) and semi-structured FGD and KII guides for collecting qualitative data.

The structured household questionnaire was developed by the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) department and relevant technical program teams to collect the perceptions of the households potentially benefiting from the NRM, DRR, and health interventions on topics such as household demographics, income and spending patterns, food security, livelihood opportunities, climate-smart agriculture, DRR and climate change, and access to healthcare services at the community level. Upon a thorough review of the household survey tool by the M&E and program teams, the tool was reviewed and finalized by a team of international experts.

We utilized a digitized data collection system - Kobo Toolbox via ODK Collect app in tablets - to collect household data. To ensure consistency in responses of households and accuracy of the collected data, a high level of ‘skip logics’ and ‘validation criteria’ were applied in the questionnaire in Kobo Toolbox.

Prior to data collection in the field, a three-day online orientation training, using Microsoft Teams, was conducted for field researchers. The orientation training, including theoretical and practical sessions, was facilitated by the M&E department, and supported by the technical program staff to ensure that the field researchers were well equipped and knowledgeable of the objectives of the study, key topics and technical terms, the programs’ participants and geographical coverage, usage of Kobo Toolbox, and research ethics and protocols.

Overall, 34 field researchers including M&E and program staff were engaged to collect household data in the seven provinces. In each region / province, the field researchers were supervised by a site supervisor (M&E staff member) to ensure the necessary coordination in the field and regular review of the daily submissions in Kobo Toolbox to avoid inconsistencies.

It is worth mentioning that in some communities in Badakhshan, Kapisa, and Paktia provinces where female researchers were not allowed to travel to the field to collect household survey data, the team adopted an online data collection method through mobile phones.

For the qualitative part of the study, a set of semi-structured FGD and KII guides were developed by the M&E and relevant program teams on agriculture and NRM, MSMEs including SHGs, DRR, and health education programs. The FGDs were conducted with the potential participants of the

targeted projects such as smallholder farmers, smallholder herders, SHG members, health education students, and other community members. However, the KIIs were conducted with the key informants of the programs from the Directorates of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (DAIL), agriculture universities, Provincial Disaster Management Committees (PDMCs), and Institutes of Health Sciences (IHSSs).

To ensure an in-depth review of the key topics of the assessment, technical program staff and the M&E team were assigned to conduct FGDs and KIIs. The FGD and KII facilitators were provided with a one-day orientation session on the thematic study areas. The team started conducting FGDs and KIIs a week later than the start of the household survey, where the initial findings from the household survey from each region and thematic area were provided daily for the facilitators to have key trends on each thematic area before conducting the KIIs and FGDs.

In addition, the assessment team reviewed a wide range of secondary data sources such as baseline, midline, and endline review reports, and other relevant reports on food security, agriculture, NRM, DRR, and health from other donors and implementors in Afghanistan.

3.3 Data Management and Analysis

Upon completion of the household survey data collection, inconsistency checks, re-verification, and data cleaning were performed on the data retrieved from Kobo Toolbox to prepare the data for further data analysis processes into relevant packages. Given the nature of the data collected, both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis were performed to produce the results. For the qualitative data analysis, we largely utilized MS Excel, SPSS, and Power BI software for various frequency distributions, cross-tabulations, statistically significant tests, and univariate and bi-variate tables with different types of variables (i.e., nominal, dichotomous, interval, and ratio) on the projects' indicators. For qualitative data analysis, a deductive thematic analysis was utilized, categorizing the findings in relation to relevant indicators to provide in-depth analysis of the situations in the targeted communities reported by targeted household members.

3.4 Limitations

It is evident that every study has limitations, and this study is no exception. However, the study team has made every effort at various stages of the study to minimize these limitations and prevent errors and bias to the best of their ability. This section outlines some of the limitations experienced in this study.

One of the primary limitations of the study was the restriction in a few districts on female researchers traveling to the field to collect household data. Thus, to ensure female participation in these districts, the research team partially adopted an online survey method for women alongside our face-to-face data collection.

Another main limitation of the study was the response bias to the household survey, interviews, and FGDs in general, that may have affected the accuracy and validity of the study findings. Due to social desirability bias, which occurs when people give answers that are deemed desirable and acceptable by society, or other factors like the moderator's influence, some of the respondents may have given answers that they felt were expected of them rather than giving true or accurate responses. However, during the orientation session, the research team was specifically informed

about these challenges and trained on how to prevent such types of biases during the data collection.

One last limitation of the study worth mentioning is that respondents rarely keep records of their annual income, spending, debts, and the exact amount of food consumed during the last 7 days – the key areas covered in the household survey. Consequently, the reported results in such areas are based on estimates, with minor over- or underestimations being probable.

KEY FINDINGS

This section of the report presents the key findings of our baseline study, addressing the key indicators reflected in the relevant project log-frames and other program documents. In particular, the findings will be discussed in relation to the following programmatic themes:

- **Household Demographic Information** – Demographics and vulnerability indicators such as gender, age, education, and disability status of heads of households, and household size and composition.
- **Livelihoods** – Household income and spending patterns, and economic benefits from agriculture, livestock, and MSMEs.
- **Sustainable Natural Resource Management** – Sustainable NRM, environmental protection practices and climate-smart agriculture.
- **Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction** – Resilience to the impact of climate change and natural disasters, and communities' preparedness and responsiveness to natural disasters.
- **Food Security** – Food Consumption Score (FCS), Reduced Coping Strategy Index (RCSI), and Household Dietary Diversity.
- **Access to Healthcare Services** – Community health infrastructure and accessibility for households.

4.1 Demographic Information

Referring to our previous studies, it becomes evident that the demographic profile of households plays a crucial role in understanding the situation and factors shaping household livelihoods. Thus, in this baseline, we specifically incorporated questions related to different characteristics such as household size, gender and age composition of household members, and household heads' gender, educational level, disability status, and employment patterns. The subsequent section presents the key findings under each household characteristic.

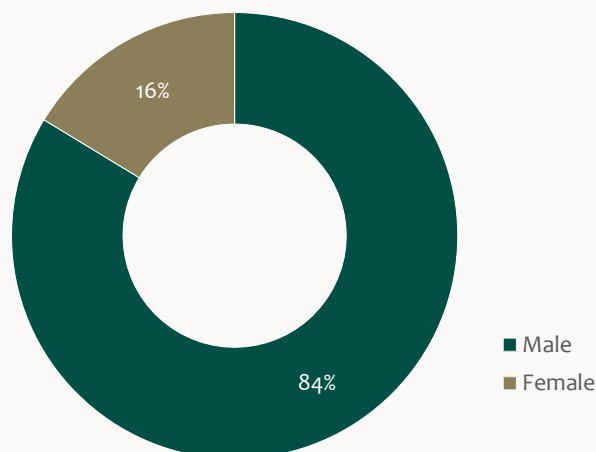
4.1.1 Gender and Age of Heads of Household

This study primarily targeted community members who were heads of households or household members with an income contributing to household income and traditionally engaged in major decision making in the household. Of 583 respondents, 466 (80%) were confirmed as heads of the households. Of the other 20% (117 respondents) who are not heads of households, 13% (77 respondents) are female household members with an income that contributes to their households' income.

The study findings show that 84% of the households (390 out of 466 households) were male headed and 16% (76 out of 466 households) were headed by female household members. Considering the Afghanistan context where the head of the household traditionally goes under the responsibility of an elderly male member, this is a relatively higher ratio of female headed households who are included in this study. Interestingly, despite the restrictions imposed on women's work outside the home (as a variable in the heads of household) in Afghanistan, it seems that the number of women who head the household has relatively increased compared to past years. Our figures from late 2021 show that this number was 11%, while this number was only 9.5% at the end of 2020. Various factors may have played a role in changing this pattern, including

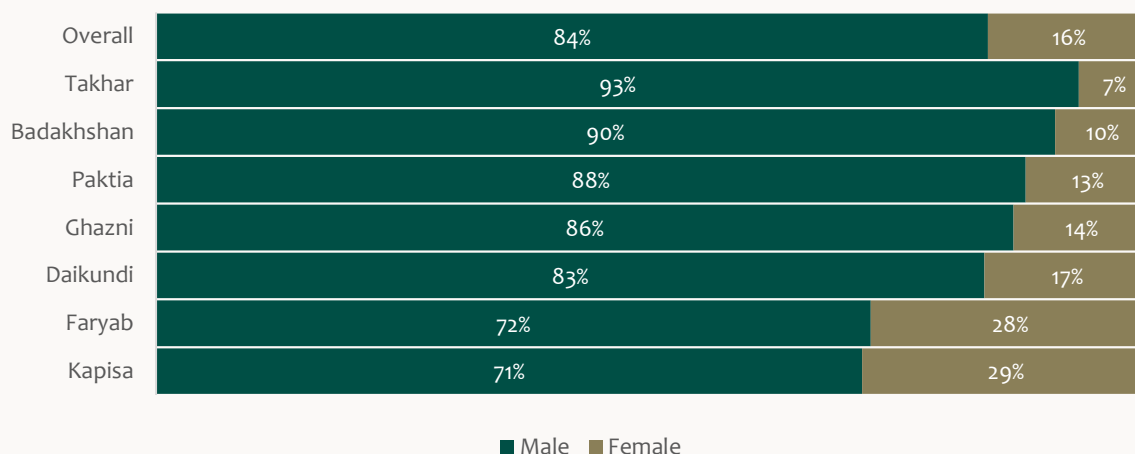
the migration of the male member heads to outside the province and even the country due to reduced employment opportunities in their communities. Nevertheless, this finding also means that the selection of our potential program participants has considered this dynamic and will include more female headed households in the upcoming years.

Figure 3: Gender of heads of households (n = 466)



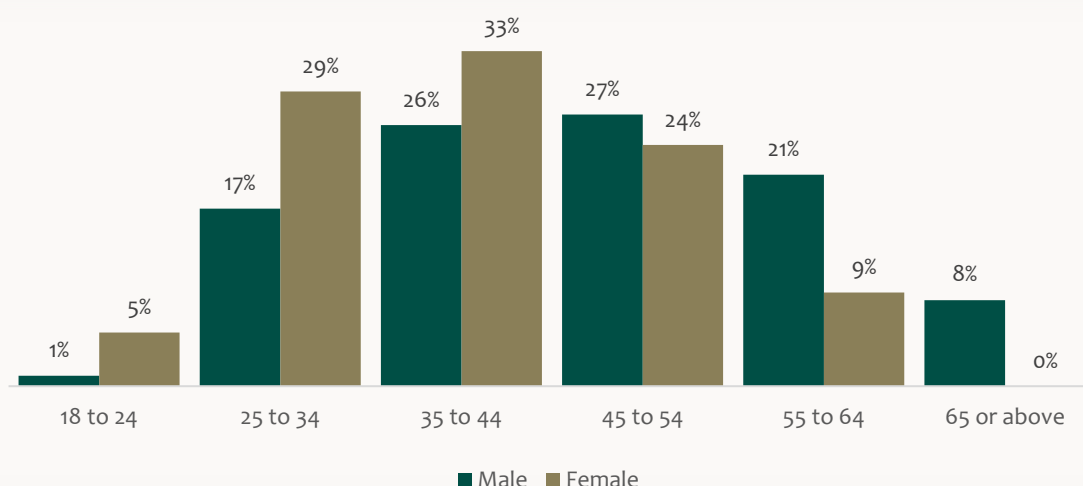
The geographic representation of assessed households is more evenly spread throughout different regions. As shown in Figure 4 below, the data regarding female-headed households reveal the following percentages: 29% in Kapisa, 28% in Faryab, 17% in Daikundi, 14% in Ghazni, 13% in Paktia, and 10% in Badakhshan. Nevertheless, in Takhar, the gender distribution of household heads shows little variation, with only 7% of surveyed households being headed by women.

Figure 4: Gender of heads of households – by province (n = 466)



The average head of household age varies little between provinces, with the overall average being 45 years of age. Depending on the head of household age, households were categorized as either ‘young adult’ (head of household aged between 18 – 34), ‘adult’ (head of household aged between 35 – 54), or ‘older adult’ (head of household aged over 55); 21 percent are adult households, 53 percent are older adult households and 26 percent are young adult households.

Figure 5: Gender and age of heads of household (n = 466)



Interestingly, female headed households were found to be younger than the male headed households. As depicted in the chart above, the percentage of female headed households on the left side (below 45 years of age) is higher than the male headed households. On the contrary, there is a relatively higher percentage of male headed households on the right side of the chart (45 years of age and above) compared to the female-headed households. Based on the survey data, an average female head of household is 39 years old, and an average male head of household is 46 years old.

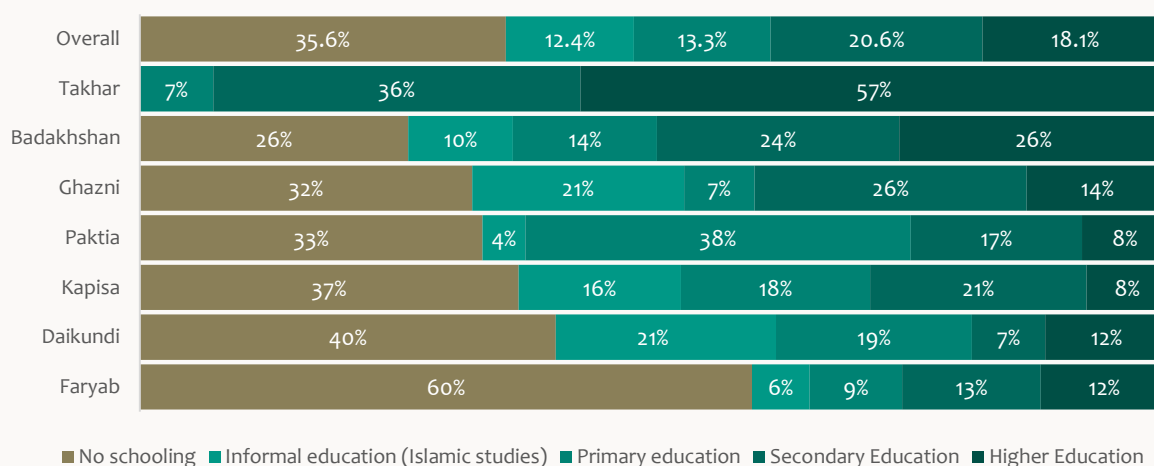
This could indicate more female heads of households due to increased unemployment in the provinces that force young male adults to leave the provinces and even the country to seek employment opportunities outside the provinces and in the neighboring countries such as Iran and Turkey. As such, their female counterparts automatically take over as heads of the households in the absence of male adult members and contribute to the household income using the household assets such as agricultural land and livestock.

4.1.2 Education Level of Heads of Households

Understanding the education level and background of household heads is an essential part of the demographic study in this baseline. It not only aligns with our program objectives and the nature of our activities which emphasize the inclusion of vulnerable households, but also is important because of the priorities we can draw for our capacity building and skill development programs as well as the approach and tools we need to employ to engage communities in the planning, implementation, and evaluation processes. For example, it helps us determine which communities need literacy and numeracy programs and what types of materials - whether written or visual - to use to effectively involve community members. Thus, as part of the assessment, we included questions about the education levels of household heads to facilitate these considerations.

The overall results reveal varied educational backgrounds among respondents. Notably, 35.6% indicated 'no schooling', while 12.4% mentioned undergoing 'informal education' (Madrasas). Furthermore, 13.3% of household heads attained education at the 'primary school' level, with 20.6% reaching 'secondary school' education, and an intriguing 18.1% reporting higher education qualifications.

Figure 6: Education level of heads of households – by province (n = 466)



When comparing the educational levels of household heads across provinces, Faryab has a notably higher proportion of household heads reporting no schooling (60%), followed by Daikundi (40%), Kapisa (37%), Paktia (33%), Ghazni (32%), and Badakhshan (26%). The ratios of primary, secondary, and higher education do not vary too widely between provinces, or among female- and male-headed households, nor different groups of respondents. The notable rates are in Takhar, which exhibited the highest rates of higher education completion (57%). Further statistical insights are provided in the chart above, offering detailed breakdowns of education levels for each province.

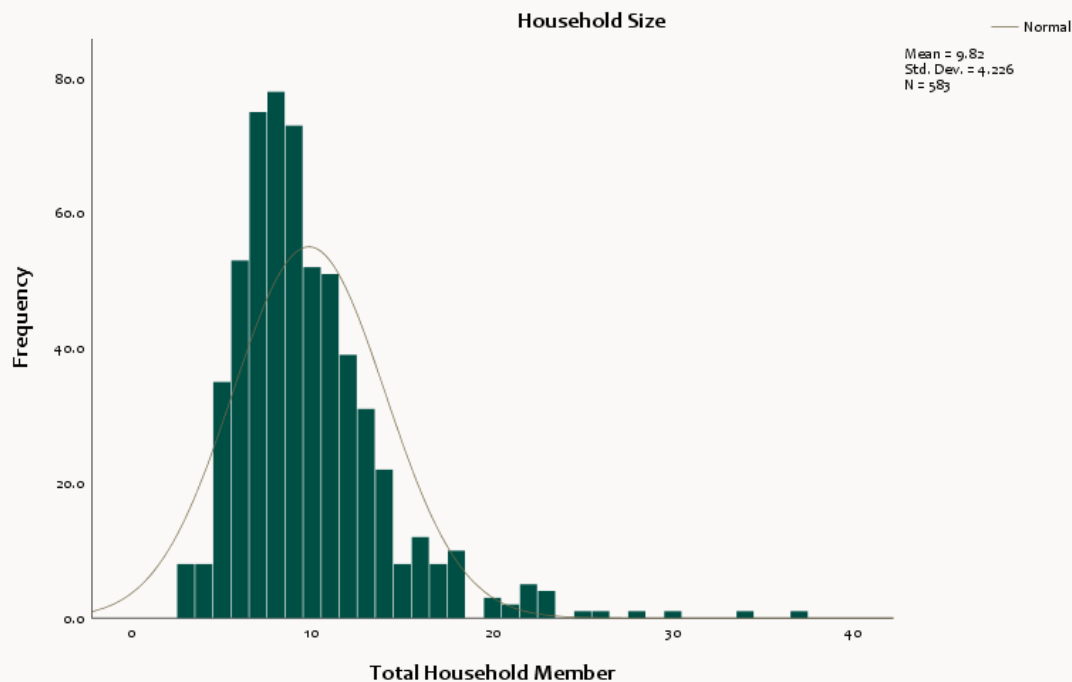
Overall, 61.3% of the household heads are at or below the primary education level and suggest the importance of considering the educational backgrounds of the targeted community members when implementing project activities, particularly in terms of their capacity building and engagement. For instance, it suggests the need to use tools and materials (e.g., IEC materials) that are appropriate to their education levels to ensure effective engagement and participation.

4.1.3 Household Size and Composition

Household size and composition have been identified as key determinants influencing the overall economic and livelihood condition of households and families. The findings reveal that the average (mean) size of assessed households in this baseline is 9.82 members, with a standard deviation of 4.23, which largely consists with figures obtained from our previous studies in these provinces. However, it does not fully align with the national average household size of 7.7, reported by the Afghanistan Living Condition Survey 2016-17² or the UNFAO calculation in its modality of 7. The variation in findings could be explained by the fact that the national survey was carried out many years ago and also encompasses urban households, which often have fewer members, whereas the current study reflects a greater proportion of rural household sizes and compositions. Figure 7 below shows how household size is distributed across the baseline dataset.

² Central Statistics Organization (2017). Afghanistan Living Condition Survey 2016-17. <https://washdata.org/sites/default/files/documents/reports/2018-07/Afghanistan%20ALCS%202016-17%20Analysis%20report.pdf>

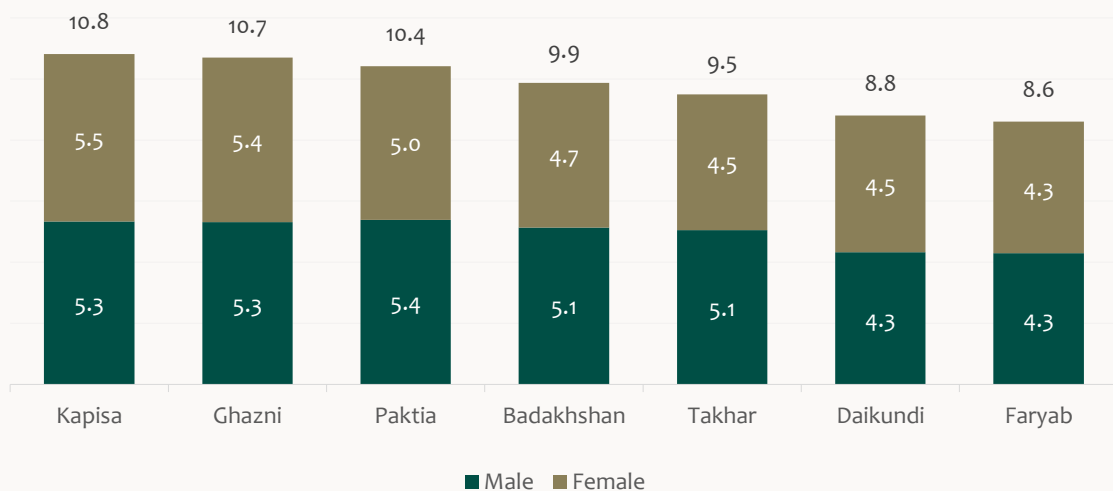
Figure 7: Simple histogram of household size (n = 583)



In total, 9% of the households have less than six members, 48% have between 6 and 9 members, and 43% have 10 or more members. The large data distribution area (65%) has between 6 to 11 members.

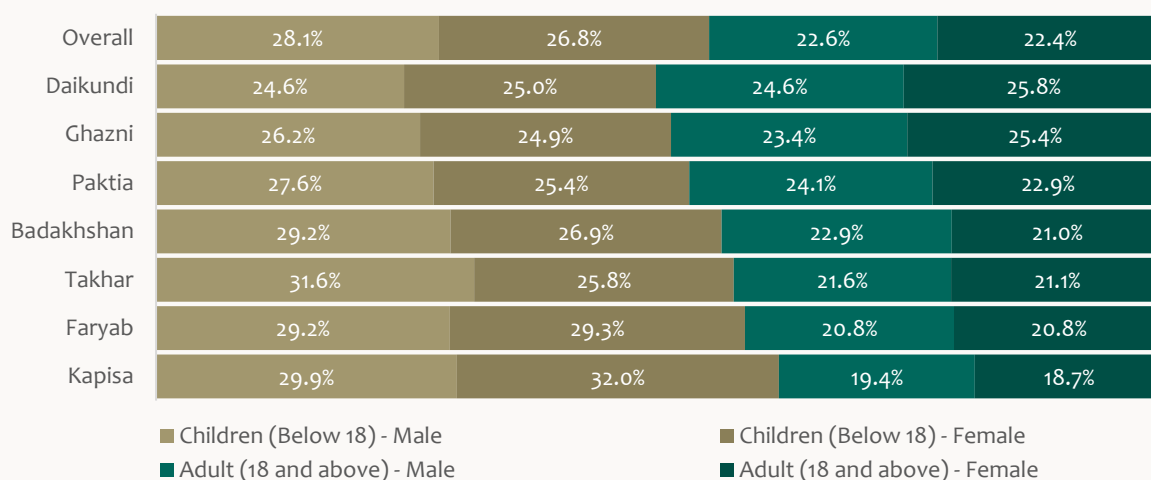
The ratios of household size and composition do not vary too widely between provinces, districts, or communities. The notable rates are in Kapisa, Ghazni, and Paktia with average sizes of 10.8, 10.7, and 10.4 members respectively, while Daikundi and Faryab have 8.8 and 8.6 members per household, respectively.

Figure 8: Average household size – by province (n = 583)



Similarly, there are no significant variation between the number of male and female members within the surveyed households, with 49% being female and 51% male. The data reveal a substantial proportion of children below 18 years old (28.1% of household members are boys and 26.8% are girls), while 22.6% of males and 22.4% of females are above 18 years old.

Figure 9: Gender and age composition of household members – by province (n = 583)



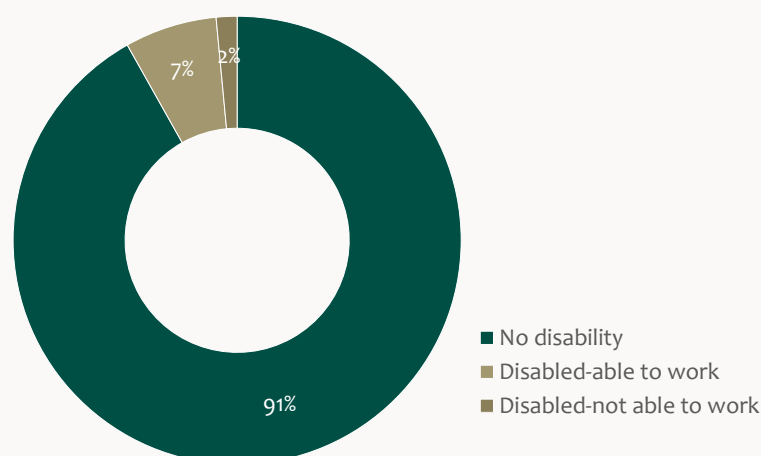
The findings on household composition indicate a significantly high number of children under 18, which again has profound implications for livelihoods, food security, education, and health in the targeted households and communities. Meeting the needs of households with a larger number of members is challenging and exacerbates economic hardship, limiting access to education and basic healthcare services, and thereby intensifies existing vulnerabilities and perpetuates the cycle of poverty within these households.

4.1.4 Disability Status of Household Heads

In this baseline assessment, 9% of surveyed household heads reported having members with some form of disability. Among this group, 2% reported being ‘unable to work and earn income’ due to their disability. Arguably, such percentages might be significantly higher than reported due to the harsh existence of contributing factors to disability in the country. However, the complexity of the concept of disability and societal stigmas associated with disability often deter families from openly reporting and acknowledging it or avoiding the disclosure of particularly severe cases of physical or mental impairment. Nevertheless, empirical evidence from disability studies conducted earlier in Afghanistan suggests that approximately 80% of adults and 17.3% of children live with some form of disability³. Figure 10 below shows the report of disability status of the heads of households across surveyed provinces.

³ Asia Foundation (2019), Model Disability Survey of Afghanistan. <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/model-disability-survey-afghanistan>.

Figure 10: Disability status of heads of households (n = 466)



It suggests that NAC's efforts will reach at least 9% of people with a disability through various activities under ERA and other projects as the surveyed households are the potential participants of the programs in the next three years. As such, NAC stays committed to the "leave no one behind" (LNOB) principle by ensuring gender balance among project participants and as well as people with disabilities to eradicate poverty, reduce inequalities, and end discrimination.

4.2 Livelihoods

Objective / Outcome Indicator (ERA II and EU): % of supported community members demonstrate improved livelihood opportunities - disaggregated by gender. **(14.75%; 14.53% female and 14.85% male)**

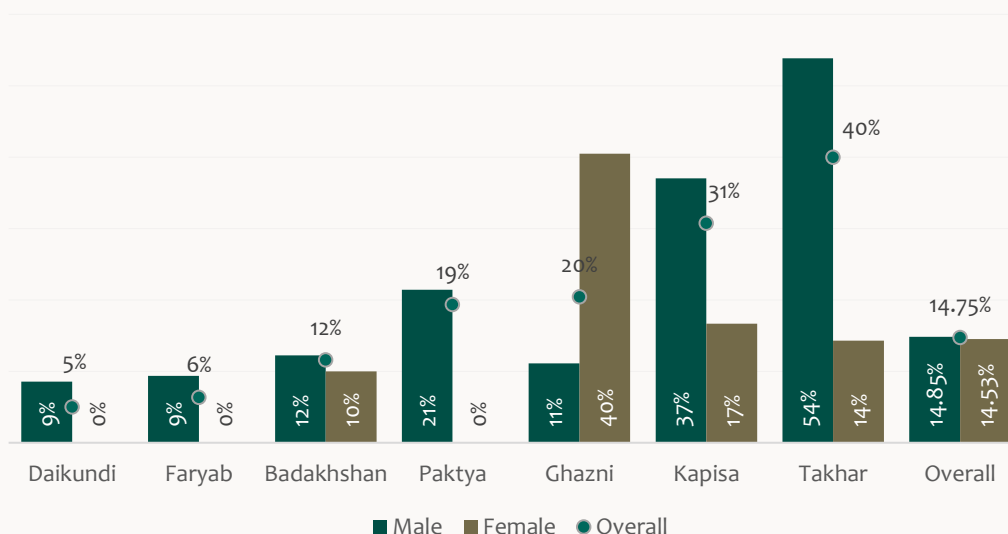
Afghanistan has endured severe and multiple shocks for over four decades, heavily damaging the economic and livelihood opportunities of its people. Most provinces have been experiencing either severe or catastrophic drought conditions. This, coupled with the economic collapse and decline in development aid in recent years, has devastated livelihoods across the country, leading to widespread unemployment, extreme poverty, and hunger. In the communities where the baseline study was conducted, the monthly income of households (with an average size of 9.82 members) is only AFN 7,570 with 53.9% relying solely on farming production as their only source of income, while only 0.9% receive aid from NGOs.

This section presents the baseline findings on the livelihood conditions (challenges and opportunities) of surveyed households in relation to our key program indicators. The assessment specifically focused on assessing certain livelihood assets and activities by exploring household income and expenditure patterns, economic outputs of agriculture, horticulture, and livestock, productivity, resilience, and livelihood opportunities (for example, through Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in Badakhshan, Daikundi, Faryab, Ghazni, Kapisa, Paktia, and Takhar provinces). We acknowledge that assessing certain assets from several households per community might not comprehensively reflect all elements of livelihoods within the entire community. Nonetheless, it can shed light on the ongoing livelihoods situation of potential participants in the program over the coming years.

To learn about the overall livelihood opportunities, households were asked whether they had experienced any improvement in their livelihood opportunities over the last three years. The responses show that out of all respondents only 14.75% of the community members reported

experiencing some levels of improvement in their livelihood opportunities. The Figure below displays male and female members reporting improved livelihood opportunities.

Figure 11: Community members reporting improved livelihood opportunities (n = 583)



No major differences between male and female respondents. The findings reveal that 14.85% of male respondents and 14.53% of female respondents demonstrated an improvement in their livelihoods, however there are huge disparities in responses of male and female respondents in different provinces. For instance, in Daikundi, Faryab, and Paktia none of the female respondents reported increased livelihood opportunities compared to 9%, 9%, and 21% male respondents respectively in these provinces. Unlike other provinces, in Ghazni the rate of female respondents reporting improved livelihood opportunities are significantly higher than male respondents.

4.2.1 Household Income, Expenses, and Economic Benefit

Outcome Indicator (IsDB): % of supported community members reported increased household income. (10.98%)

Income is arguably one of the most important indicators for understanding the livelihood situation and outcomes of a household. Yet, interpreting income and expenditure dynamics, especially within the rural setting of Afghanistan, can be challenging. Here, traditional forms of bartering and exchanging goods are still common, which often leads to ambiguity regarding what should be defined as income and how to measure expenditures. Additionally, the prevalence of the agriculture and livestock-based economy adds layers of complexity. However, while acknowledging this complexity, the study sought to gain an overall understanding of these dynamics by asking survey respondents about their average annual income and expenditure of their households.

The results reveal that the average yearly income of the surveyed household is approximately AFN 90,838, while the average yearly expenses amount to AFN 131,686. As such, there is a deficit of AFN 40,848 annually, demonstrating the financial strains and vulnerabilities that are experienced by the surveyed households. Overall, 94% of the households reported that their income is 'insufficient' (50%) or 'very insufficient' (44%), mainly due to increased unemployment rates, drought, and crop diseases. To cope with the situation, households resorted to borrowing money and food from relatives, relying on NGOs' support, selling household assets such as

livestock, relying on less expensive food, and reducing the number of meals eaten per day (refer to page 52 (Figure 51 – coping strategies adopted by households) as common coping strategies. Participants in our FGDs and KIIs shared their hardships and challenges in meeting their households’ basic needs.

“Animal products like dairy milk provide us with most day-to-day life necessities such as sugar, oil and fuel, which we often exchange in our local bazaar. However, when it comes to securing larger quantities of household necessities for winter, we need to find other sources. Sadly, last year, I had to sell two of my sheep to cover our winter living expenses because we did not have enough money to purchase what we needed for winter”.

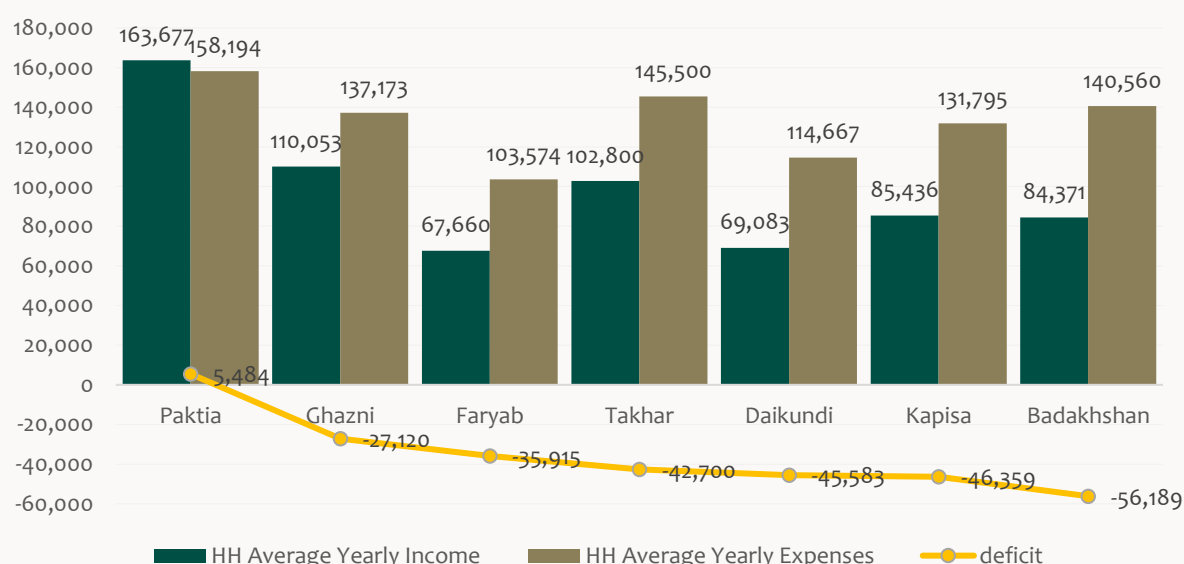
Female head of household, Shahrstan, Daikundi

“Some farmers in our area have to borrow money from others just to buy seeds and fertilizer, or to pay for the plowing of their land. It is a tough situation. Sometimes we have to sell our animals just to get enough money to buy the seeds and fertilizer we need to plant our crops”.

Smallholder farmer, Keshem, Badakhshan

As shown in Figure 11 below, the income and expenditure dynamics reported by households slightly differ across the targeted provinces, but generally the data show that except for Paktia, in all other provinces respondents reported a lower income level than their expenditures. This discrepancy can be somewhat attributed to the large portion of participants from Paktia in this study coming from Gardez (the center of the province).

Figure 12: Average household yearly income and expenses – by province (n = 583)



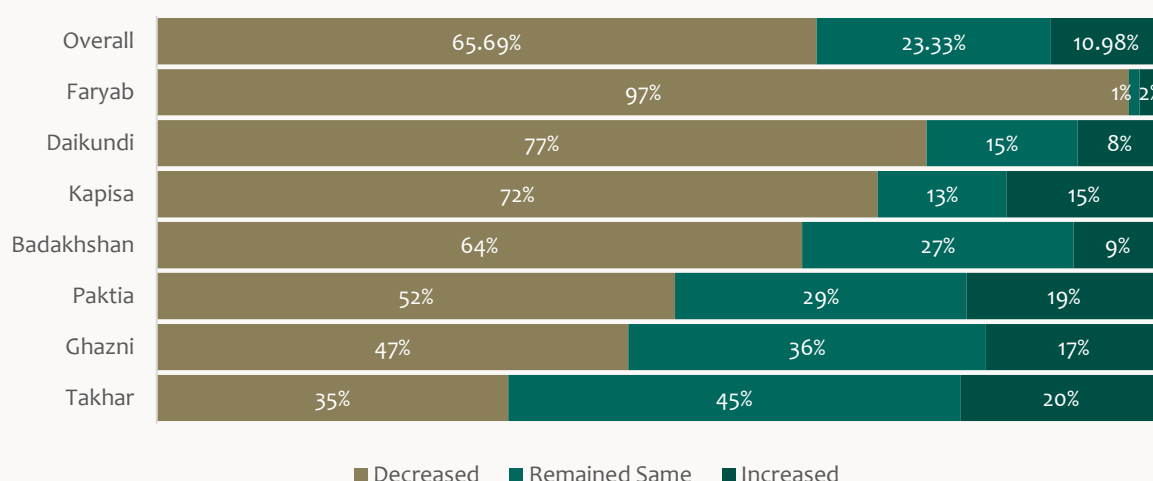
Overall, the data demonstrates an average of a 31% deficit of income across the provinces to meet the households’ expenses. Comparing the status with the results of one of our livelihood studies in late 2022, a notable increase in the deficit (10%) is evident, with income decreasing from

approximately AFN 137,489 in November 2022 to AFN 90,838 in November 2023 and proportionately household expenditure decreasing from AFN 173,608 in 2022 to AFN 131,686 in 2023, indicating that households had to adopt more coping strategies to meet their needs. It is important to note that this study was conducted in new communities where the NAC just initiated support, unlike the 2022 study which involved communities with previously NAC support with livelihood opportunities. As such, this deficit might not accurately reflect the situation in the communities where households have benefited from livelihood support.

Nevertheless, looking at household size (9.82 members) obtained in this assessment, the current income of households per capita per year would be AFN 9,250 (around USD 130) only.

The decrease in household income was further corroborated in this baseline by asking households about ‘any changes in income status since last year’. Overall, 65.69% reported that it ‘decreased’, 23.33% indicated it ‘remained the same’, while only 10.98% reported some increase in their income.

Figure 13: Change in household income since last year – by province (n = 583)



Faryab, Daikundi, Kapisa, and Badakhshan stand out as the top four provinces experiencing notably higher levels of decreasing income, with reductions of 97%, 77%, 72% and 64%, respectively. Consequently, these provinces also exhibited the lowest average incomes per household, at AFN 67,660, AFN 69,083, 85,436, and AFN 84,371, respectively.

Despite significant similarities between responses on contributing factors gathered from different provinces, there are also slight differences between provinces. In Faryab and Daikundi, for instance, the respondents attributed the income reduction to drought, while in Badakhshan, respondents cited natural disasters, particularly floods, as a primary reason for the decrease.

“In our village (Imam Sahib), nearly all the farmers own more than 10 Jeribs of agricultural land. However, because of water shortages, approximately 80% of this land remains unused... there are no other opportunities available, and I can confidently say that the majority of farmers are now jobless!”.

Smallholder farmer, Pashton Kot, Faryab

“Previously, I used to get a yield of over 1,800 KGs of wheat from my farmland, but this year due to drought my yield reduced to only 63 KGs of wheat”.

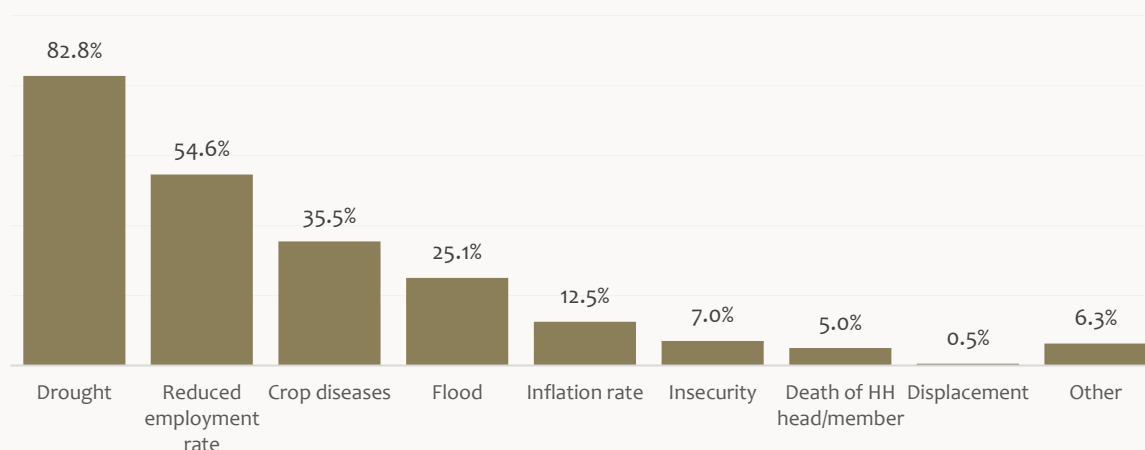
Smallholder farmer - FGD participant, Daikundi

“Last year, a massive natural disaster, a rockslide, struck the upper part of our village. Two women from our community lost their lives, and all the agricultural fields in that area were completely destroyed”.

Community member, Warduj, Badakhshan

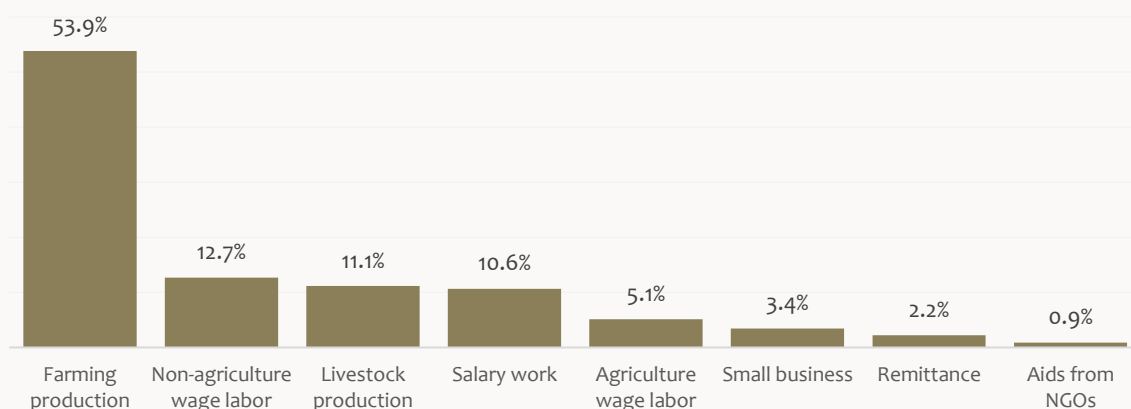
The findings from the household survey data further highlight the following categories as the main reasons for the household income reductions. As illustrated in the graph below, drought (82.8%), reduced employment rates (54.6%), and crop diseases (35.5%) were reported as the three main reasons for reduced income by the surveyed households, followed by floods, inflation rates, insecurity, death, and displacement, which were reported by less than 30% of the respondents.

Figure 14: Main reasons for reduced household income (n = 583)



Looking back at our previous study, the 2019 ERA I baseline, households in provinces such as Badakhshan and Ghazni pointed to the war and conflict, along with its resultant displacement, as the primary drivers of reduced household incomes. However, the landscape has shifted. Now, the pattern has changed to climate change-related factors, notably drought, as the main challenges the households and communities are facing. On the other hand, it also presents a return to agriculture as the primary source of income. In 2019, for example, only 40.8% of surveyed households identified agriculture as the main source of household income. While, as depicted in Figure 15 below, this percentage has risen to overall 59% in the current study.

Figure 15: Household main sources of income (n = 583)



Farming production, wage labor including agriculture wage labor, and livestock production emerged as main sources, followed by work salary, small businesses, remittances, and aid from NGOs.

4.2.2 Agriculture Productivity

Outcome Indicator (EU): % of supported communities reporting improved agriculture productivity or resilience to natural disasters as a result of productive and protective infrastructure. (13.34%; 11.5 protectiveness and 15.2% productiveness)

Agriculture accounts for 25% of the national GDP in Afghanistan (NSIA, 2020) and employs about 45% of the national workforce (MAIL, 2019). More than 80% of the country's population, and nearly 90% of the economic poor families, live in rural areas, and agriculture plays an important role in their livelihoods.⁴ The country's economy is largely agrarian where agricultural production significantly contributes to economic growth, job creation, reduced poverty, and food security.

Despite its significance, the sector is currently grappling with numerous challenges and constraints that hinder productivity and development. Decades of political unrest have inflicted devastating damage on rural infrastructure and agricultural production. Moreover, natural disasters such as droughts, floods, and landslides have further reduced agricultural productivity. Additionally, weak institutional support in providing agricultural extension services has left farmers with limited access to required knowledge and capacity, forcing them to rely on traditional farming methods, thereby impeding agricultural productivity. This study particularly concentrated on the key challenges that smallholder farmers are facing in the targeted rural communities while considering key interventions areas for NAC's projects focused on improved agricultural productivity in the next few years.

The findings of this study reveal that 59% of households are earning the main source of their income from agriculture, while 80% are reportedly generating income from this sector as their first, second, or third primary source of income. Despite such a role, the productivity rates in this sector were reported as significantly low, affected by multiple factors such as a lack of access to

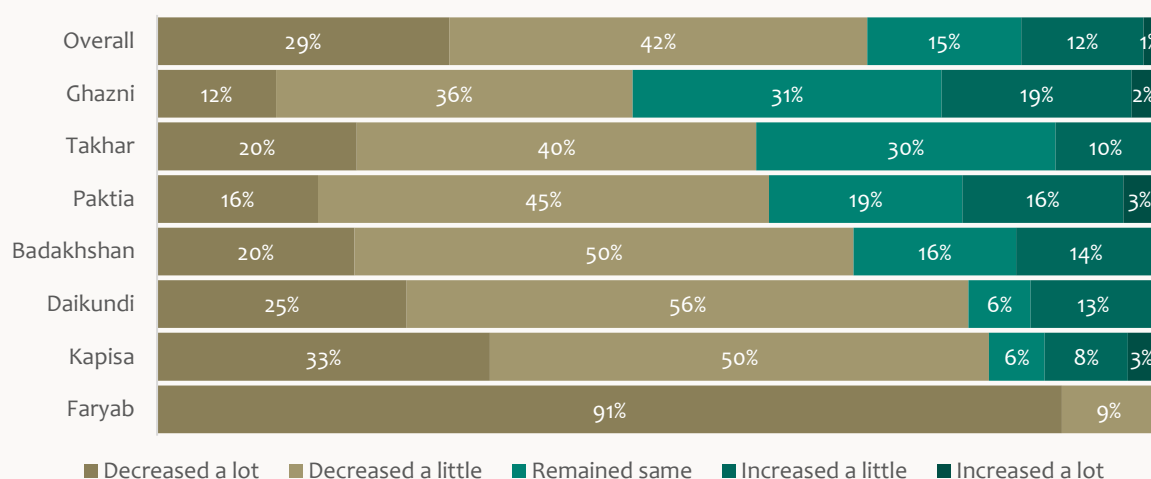
⁴ World Bank Group (2014). Afghanistan - Agricultural sector review: revitalizing agriculture for economic growth, job creation, and food security. <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/24554146797323146/afghanistanagriculturalsector-review-revitalizing-agriculture-for-economic-growth-job-creation-and-food>

irrigation water, availability of assets such as agro-based infrastructure, seed accessibility, cultivation methods and technology, and market access.

Yield increase is an obvious means to measure agricultural productivity, although harvest yields are generally erratic within the provinces. In this survey, the average estimated harvest stood at 0.27 MT/Jerib. While in the districts where farmers received support in recent years, the average harvest (wheat) per Jerib is considerably higher. For instance, in a previous study conducted in 2022, we documented a harvest of 0.45 MT/Jerib in areas where NAC provided farmers with agricultural inputs and training.

In this assessment, smallholder farmers were specifically asked to report any changes in their agricultural productivity compared to the previous year. Figure 16 below illustrates the findings: 71% of respondents reported decreased levels, 15% indicated no change, and only 13% confirmed an increase.

Figure 16: Changes in agricultural productivity since last year (n = 253)



Given that agriculture as the primary source of livelihoods and considering the significant shift back to agriculture as the main source of income since 2021 (refer to page 18, Figure 15 – households main source of income), the decline in productivity raises concerns about the further deterioration of livelihood situations, especially in districts with limited external support. To delve deeper into the variables and contributing factors, we further explored additional segments of productivity in agriculture, including land access, the gap between actual and potential yields, and the reasons for leaving land uncultivated.

Smallholder farmers were asked about the amount of land they owned or had access to during the last year. They were also asked about how much of the land they owned or had access to was cultivated last year. The table below shows the average amount of irrigated and rain-fed land the farmers owned or had access to and the amount of land they had cultivated last year (in Jeribs).

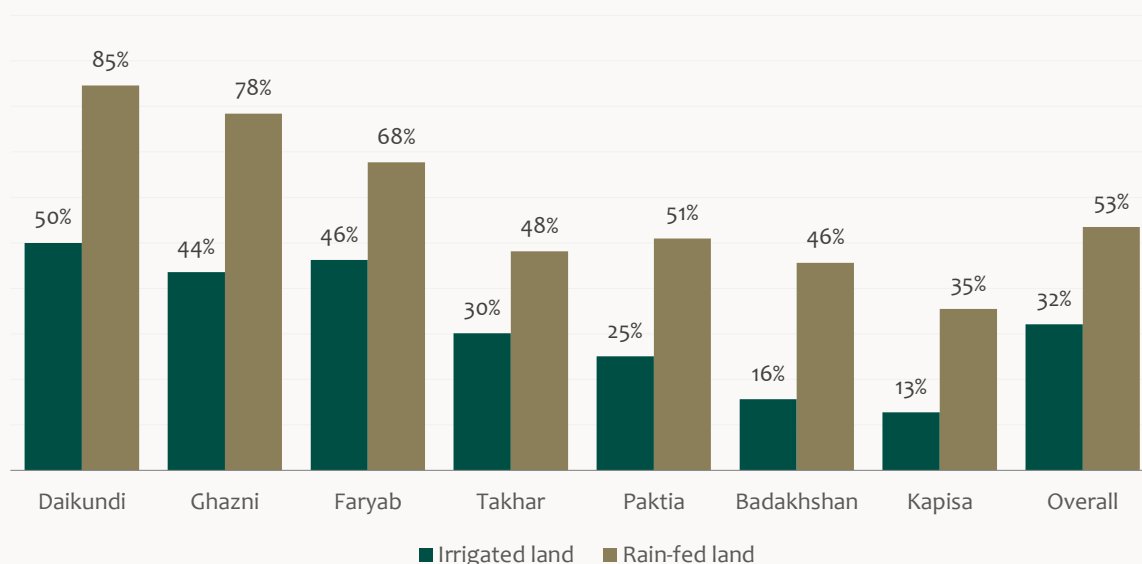
Figure 17: Amount of land smallholder farmers have access to and cultivated land last year (n = 253)

Province	Irrigated Land		Rain-fed Land	
	Access / Own	Cultivated	Access / Own	Cultivated
Badakhshan	1.49	1.26	2.33	1.27

Daikundi	4.38	2.19	0.81	0.13
Faryab	1.66	0.89	2.91	0.94
Ghazni	4.10	2.31	0.61	0.13
Kapisa	1.63	1.43	0.26	0.17
Paktia	3.03	2.27	2.53	1.24
Takhar	3.15	2.20	8.00	4.15
Overall	2.40	1.63	1.98	0.92

Farmers on average have access to 2.4 Jeribs of irrigated land and 1.98 Jeribs of rain-fed land. However, there are statistical variations between different regions. Farmers in the southern and central regions are found to have less access to rain-fed land compared to those in the northeast and northwest regions. The data further show that households on average cultivate 1.63 Jeribs of irrigated land and 0.92 Jeribs of rain-fed land. This means that overall, 32% of irrigated land and 53% of rain-fed land remained uncultivated. Figure 18 below displays the percentage of arable land that remained uncultivated during the last year.

Figure 18: % of Land remained uncultivated – by province (n = 253)

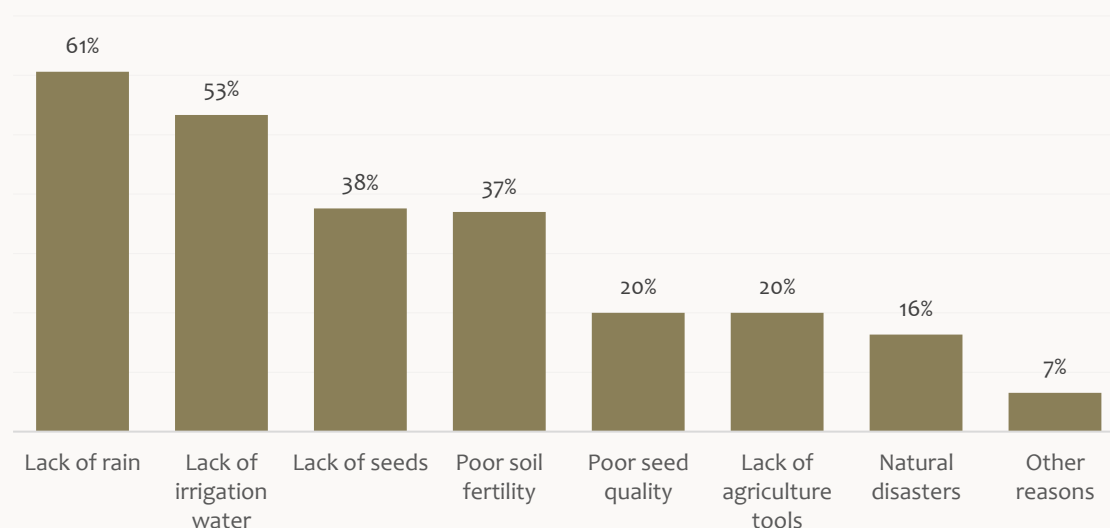


Daikundi, Ghazni, and Faryab stand out for having the highest amounts of uncultivated land and simultaneously according to national statistics they are amongst the provinces most profoundly impacted by drought over the past years.

This factor was further investigated by asking the respondents about the reasons for leaving their cultivatable land uncultivated. The responses respectively mentioned the lack of rain (61%), the scarcity of irrigation water (53%) largely due to irrigation system inefficiency (lose of water), insufficient seeds (38%), and poor soil fertility (37%) as the primary hindrances preventing farmers from cultivating some or all of their land.

Figure 19 below shows the main reasons reported by farmers for not cultivating their irrigated and rain-fed land.

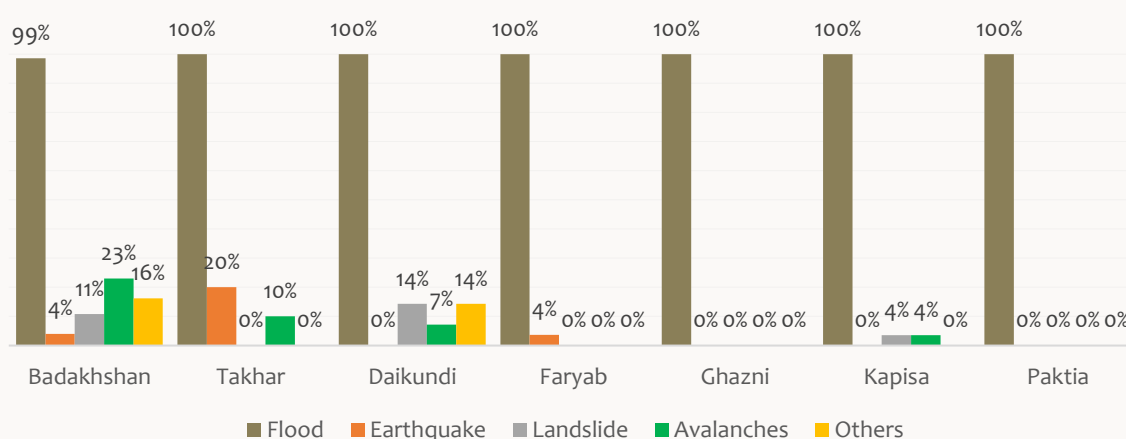
Figure 19: Main reasons for keeping land uncultivated (n = 165)



These areas can serve as intervention points for any project aiming to enhance agriculture productivity in these communities. It evidently suggests that NAC should support the targeted communities by introducing more water efficient farming methods, improving irrigation systems and management, constructing agro-based infrastructure, and establishing community-based water management committees. Furthermore, addressing poor soil fertility largely hinges on farmers' awareness of modern farming techniques and practices for effective natural resource management. Capacity-building programs targeting smallholder farmers can play a crucial role in this regard, focusing on practices like crop rotation and the utilization of organic fertilizers, for example. Moreover, distributing fertilizers such as DAP and Urea can effectively meet the needs of farmers in the targeted communities, contributing significantly to their agricultural endeavors and productivity.

Agricultural productivity can also be threatened by natural disasters such as floods, avalanches, and landslides. Overall, 89% of the smallholder farmers reported that their land is vulnerable to the effects of natural disasters. As shown in Figure 20 below, among the hazards identified by farmers, floods are by far the biggest threat, followed by avalanches, landslides, and earthquakes.

Figure 20: Types of natural disasters threatening agricultural land (n = 226)



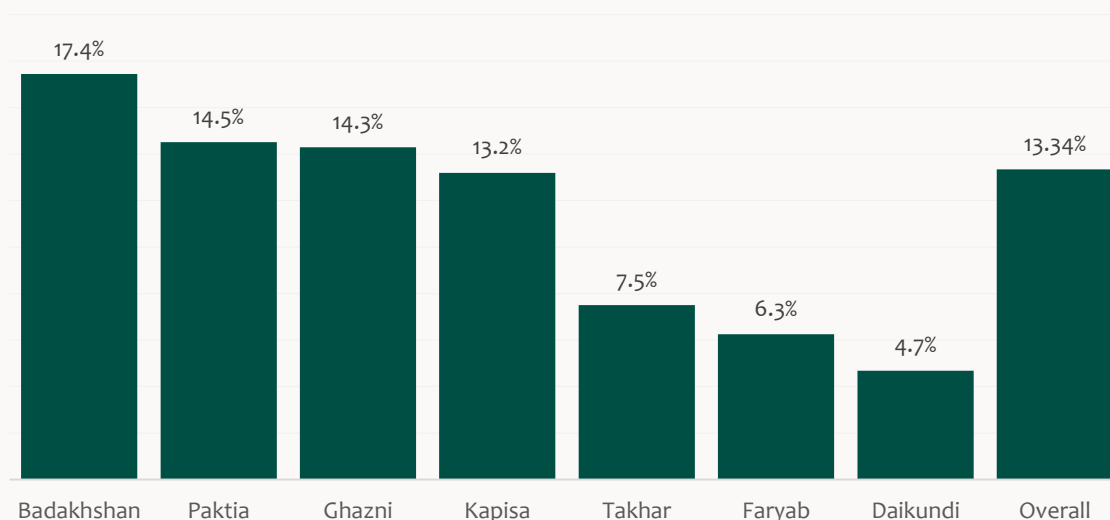
Notably, Badakhshan stands at the forefront, grappling with a multitude of hazards, followed by Takhar and Daikundi, which are predominantly affected by flooding.

“The resilience of our community against natural disasters is severely limited, and poverty is a constant challenge. Last year, we endured several flash floods that devastated our crops, leaving us with minimal harvests as we lost the majority of our plants to these disasters”.

Male smallholder farmer, Kohistan, Badakhshan

This factor damages agricultural land and impacts agricultural growth and productivity in the communities, especially when there are insufficient prevention and protection measures in place. According to smallholder farmers, the existing infrastructure within their communities is not sufficiently protective against natural disasters. As illustrated in Figure 21 below, out of all smallholder respondents, 86.6% reported that the infrastructures in their communities do not sufficiently protect agricultural land from natural disasters and increase their agricultural productivity. Only 13.3% reported that the existing infrastructures have improved agricultural productivity at certain levels. Figure 21 below displays the protectivity rate or resilience to natural disasters reported by smallholder farmers as result of the existing agro-based infrastructures in their communities.

Figure 21: Improved agriculture productivity or resilience as a result of productive and protective infrastructure reported – by province (n = 253)



Comparing different provinces, Badakhshan (17.4%) and Paktia (14.5%) stand out with the highest percentages of smallholder farmers reporting agricultural productivity and resilience to natural disasters as results of their community agro-based infrastructure, compared to farmers in other provinces. However, a deeper examination of the dataset for these two provinces reveals that this is not uniformly the case across all areas or types of projects. For instance, the data indicate that 87.8% of surveyed farmers in Badakhshan reported that the existing infrastructures have not improved their resilience to natural disasters. Similarly, 95.2% of respondents in Paktia reported that such infrastructure has not enhanced agricultural productivity in their communities.

Although further technical studies, including yield productivity and harvest measures, are necessary to fully assess the impact of protective and productive agro-based infrastructure on improving productivity and resilience to natural disasters, our baseline data reveal clear

dissatisfaction among community members about the effectiveness of the infrastructures. This dissatisfaction can be attributed to several factors, including the misallocation of infrastructure, a lack of community ownership, and the projects' inadequate alignment with community needs. For instance, a smallholder farmer in Badakhshan criticized the infrastructure projects implemented by the Citizen Charter program in his community. He pointed out that these projects did not meet the community's needs and were carried out by an external company with limited engagement from the community Shura.

This observation suggests a positive correlation between the effectiveness of such projects and the consideration of the community role and engagement in improving agricultural productivity as underscored by FGD participants. It further highlights the significance of adopting a community-driven design, such as the utilization of the community contracting approach⁵, which NAC has applied in its operations in rural communities. This approach has demonstrated its efficacy in enhancing community resilience and empowerment by ensuring that projects align closely with local needs and priorities while fostering community ownership and participation in the development process.

To fulfill the gap and the requirements for protecting land from natural disasters and, ultimately, improving agricultural productivity and yields, community members were further asked if there was a need for further construction of agro-based infrastructure projects in their communities. Based on the assessment findings, overall, 83% of the smallholder farmers reported a need for the construction of these infrastructure projects.

Furthermore, to establish a baseline for the focus of our activities from the community perspective, smallholder farmers were asked about the type of infrastructure needed in their communities to support land protection and agricultural productivity. Smallholder farmers suggested the construction and rehabilitation of irrigation systems such as irrigation canals (63%), check dams (47%), water reservoirs (41%), upper catchments (27%), and trenches (26%) as necessary measures to improve yields.

This aligns with our findings regarding the reasons for keeping land uncultivated, where most smallholder farmers cited 'Lack of Rain' and 'Lack of Irrigation System' as the primary reasons. It is advisable that our NRM and DRR teams take this into account when planning the construction of agro-based infrastructure, particularly the irrigation systems, retaining walls, gabion walls, check dams and water reservoirs which according to community members significantly support agricultural productivity and their food security.

⁵ NAC community contracting approach aims to "ensure local leadership and ownership from the planning to implementation and post-project sustainability, this form of participatory activity management ensures communities and/or groups collaborate/lead community-level interventions, especially infrastructure rehabilitation and construction. Adopting low-technology approaches reliant on locally available skills and materials underwritten by additional community contributions such as land (where applicable), locally available human resource materials, has allowed local communities to manage, coordinate and monitor infrastructure projects and play a part in more complex interventions from a position of empowered decision-making and ownership" (ERA II).

Figure 22: Types of agro-based infrastructure communities need (n = 253)

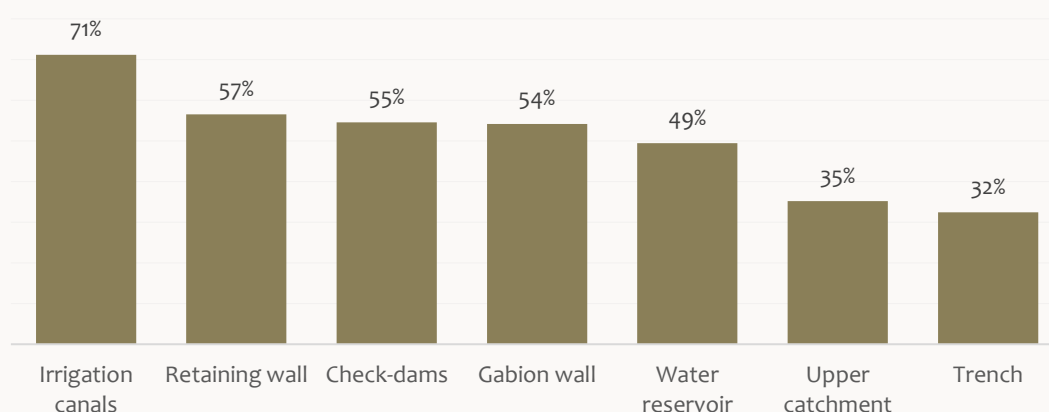


Figure 23 above displays the need and different types of agro-based infrastructure projects such as irrigation canals, retaining walls, check-dams, gabion walls, reservoirs, upper catchments, and trenches that smallholder farmers reported as having the most potential for improving agricultural productivity and land protection against natural disasters.

In addition, farmers suggested support for educating them on new farming methods, including the use of appropriate seeds and fertilizers, line cultivation, and effective irrigation methods to enhance their harvests. Our data indicate that seeds and fertilizers are among the agricultural inputs that farmers largely reported receiving over the last three years. Specifically, in Kapisa (64%), Badakhshan (59%), Daikundi (53%), Ghazni (49%), Paktia (47%), Takhar (40%), and Faryab (23%), farmers reportedly received certified seeds and fertilizers, while less than 10% of the smallholder farmers reported receiving other types of support such as training on new farming methods, agricultural tools and equipment, and fruit and non-fruit saplings. This indicates a need to move beyond the typical agricultural support of seed and fertilizer distribution and focus on improving smallholders' knowledge and skills across various topics. If this is done, overall agricultural productivity can be effectively elevated in the targeted communities, aligning efforts with the suggested requirements of smallholder farmers and community members, and improving smallholders' overall livelihood situation.

4.2.3 Livestock Productivity

Outcome Indicator (ERA II): % of supported community members reporting increased economic benefits from livestock - disaggregated by gender, disabilities and other vulnerable groups (e.g., women and elderly-headed households). (6.63%; 4.17% female and 7.63% male)

Livestock is one of the most important sectors and contributes significantly to households' income and livelihoods in rural Afghan communities⁶. Our findings indicate that for 33.4% of targeted households, livestock is a primary or secondary source of income. This baseline study

⁶ According to FAO (2023), livestock accounts for 15% of the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP), having a good catch-up potential that could contribute much to growth and employment, substitute for imports, and exploit more export opportunities. The sedentary farming system is practiced by the vast majority of farmers that mostly keep sheep, goats, and cattle in small agricultural holdings. The intensity of livestock farming on sedentary farms is conditioned mainly by the availability of irrigation for producing fodder, forage, and other feeds (crop by-products, such as wheat- and barley-straw). Low productivity breeds, diseases, poor feeding, drought, and the difficulties of marketing perishable commodities are the main constraints on the livestock sector.

specifically examined productivity and economic benefits from livestock in the targeted communities by exploring the means of earning from livestock, livestock markets and prices, sources of animal feed, access to veterinary services, key challenges that smallholder herders had encountered in raising animals, and types of support they had received or were in need of to increase livestock productivity.

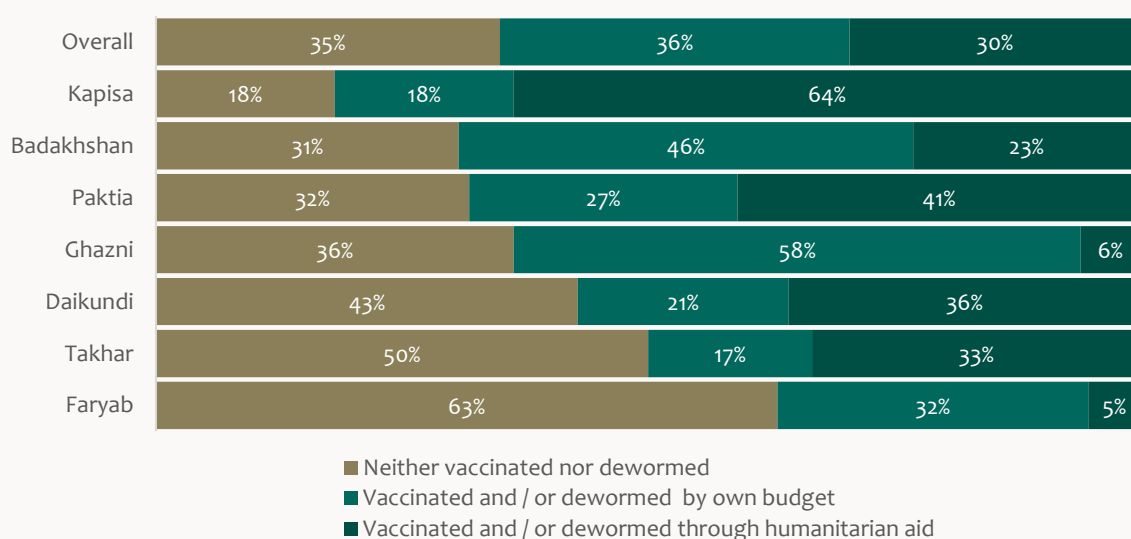
Based on the findings, a smallholder herder on average owns eight sheep / goats and two cattle / yak. These animals, including sheep, goats, cattle, and yaks, are commonly raised by smallholder herders as a means of income generation – either by selling the animals or their milk products. In addition, smallholder herders also reported owning buffalo, horses, and mules which are mainly used as a means of plowing agricultural land and transportation.

In the Afghanistan context, the livestock sector is particularly important to women, whose farming work is often focused on livestock rearing, while having mixed levels of control over household resources and decision-making. Overall, 65% of female herders reported that their income through their livestock activities have decreased.

In such a context, livestock productivity is therefore of utmost importance as income for both male and female smallholder herders, their livelihoods, and ultimately the survival of households and communities rely on animal production. Numerous factors affect livestock productivity, and these factors were one of the primary areas we focused on in this baseline to explore.

Although animal diseases and parasites are among the most severe factors that affect smallholder herders, many do not invest in veterinary services for a variety of reasons. A total of 71% of the smallholder herders reported animal diseases as the main constraint in this sector and some respondents cited this as their ‘main economic problem’ in the community. Such a high percentage indicates the lack of drugs, vaccines, diagnostic services, and deworming programs in rural communities. Overall, 35% of assessed smallholder herders reported that they neither vaccinated nor dewormed their livestock in the last year, and 36% of those who reported vaccinating or deworming their livestock also mentioned that they did this with their own funds; only 29% of the smallholder herders confirmed that their livestock were vaccinated and/or dewormed with the support of NAC or other humanitarian organizations.

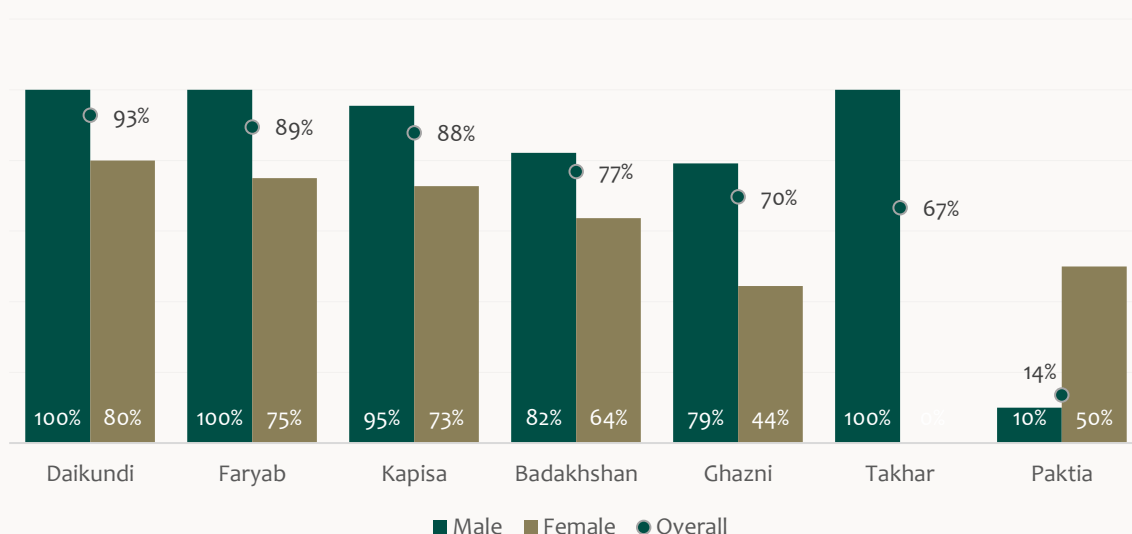
Figure 23: Smallholder herders' animals vaccinated and / or dewormed (n = 166)



It is important to mention that in 2023, NAC provided livestock support such as animal feed, vaccination and deworming, and awareness raising campaigns to 68,209 smallholder herders in Badakhshan, Daikundi, Faryab, Ghazni, Kapisa, Paktia and Takhar provinces through its humanitarian projects. Through these efforts, approximately 531,291 sheep / goats, 117,106 cattle / yak, 6,574 buffalos, and 17,258 horses / mule / donkeys were fed and made safe from diseases and parasites.

Another factor that influences livestock production and productivity is animal feeding practices and resources. The gap in this area can cause direct losses (e.g., deaths, stunting, reduced fertility, and changes in herd structure) and indirect losses such as additional costs for drugs and vaccines and can ultimately impact livestock productivity. A total of 72% of the smallholder herders in this assessment reported the ‘lack of fodder / animal feed’ as the main constraint.

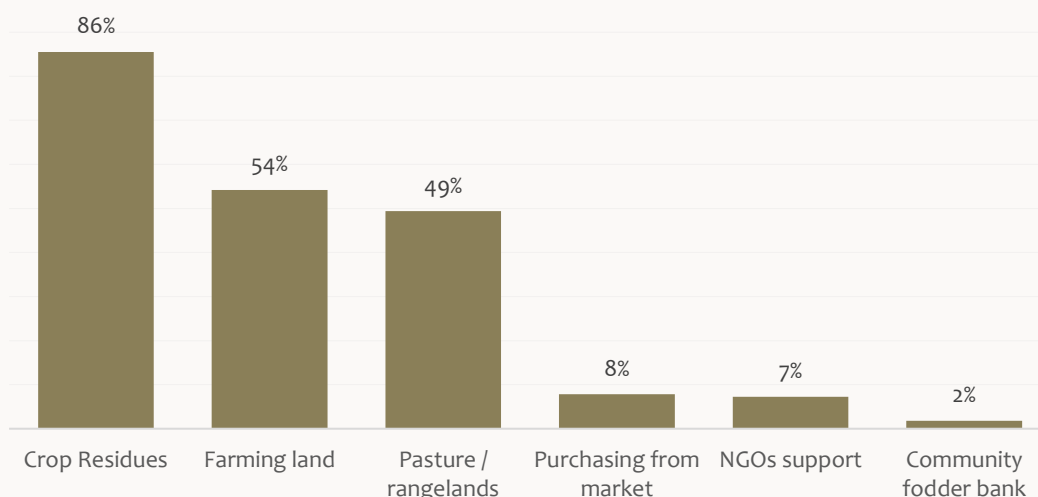
Figure 24: Smallholder herders reporting lack of fodder / animal feed (n = 166)



The data from the different provinces show that 93% of smallholder herders in Daikundi, 89% in Faryab, 88% in Kapisa, 77% in Badakhshan, 70% in Ghazni, 67% in Takhar, and 14% in Paktia reported such shortages.

Access to sufficient and sustainable resources for animal feeding is essential for livestock productivity. Crop residues, farming land, and pastures or rangelands are reportedly the main sources of animal feed in these communities. The vast majority of smallholder herders (86%) identified ‘crop residues’ as their primary source of feed. However, respondents frequently expressed challenges in accessing supplements, especially during winter, to enhance the nutritional value of these residues.

Figure 25: Main sources of animal feed reported (n = 166)

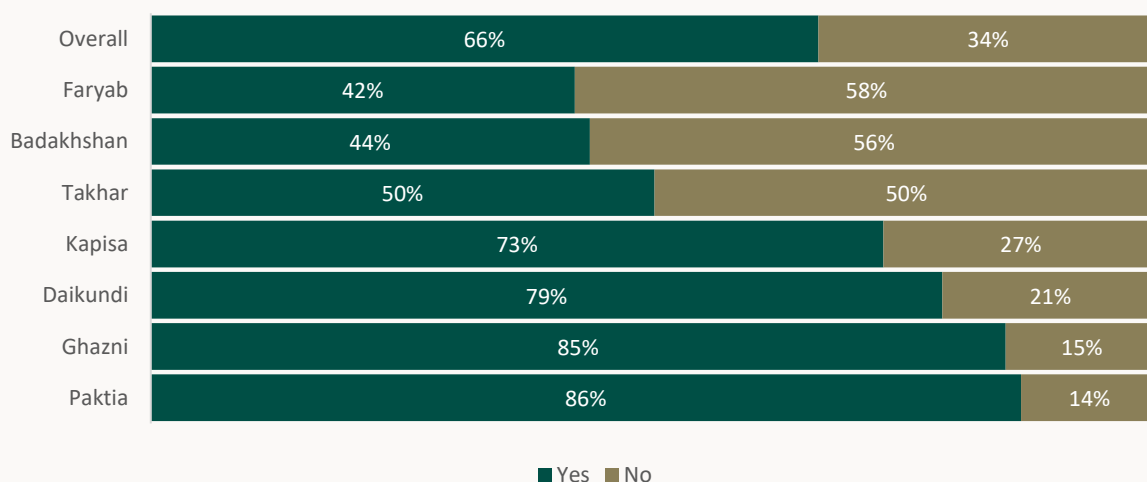


Considering such limitations, we also examined the average land allocation for planting fodder crops among smallholder herders. The data revealed a largely consistent figure across provinces, with an average of 0.6 Jeribs dedicated to cultivating fodder crops. However, compared to the households' average land access of 4.38 Jeribs of irrigated and rain-fed land (refer to page 19, Figure 17 – land owned and cultivated by farmers), as well as the average number of animals per households (7.8 goats / sheep and 1.7 cattle / yak), this allocation falls significantly short and highlights a substantial gap in the arable land designated by smallholder herders for planting fodder crops to meet the needs of animal consumption. In response to our question about the reasons and access to land for planting fodder crops, 66% of the respondents confirmed that they have enough arable land but at the same time cited the lack of irrigation water for irrigated land and a shortage of rain for rain-fed land as the primary reasons preventing them from allocating sufficient land for fodder crop cultivation.

“On one hand, we are facing severe drought, and on the other hand, we do not have a proper irrigation canal, causing us to lose a considerable amount of water before it reaches our agricultural land”.

Smallholder farmer, Jaghori, Ghazni

Figure 26: Access to arable land for cultivating fodder crops (n = 166)



Among all factors influencing livestock productivity, smallholder herders are mainly concerned about the price of livestock production and live animals in the local market. It is undoubtedly a significant factor, particularly for those herders with livestock as their only or main source of income. Overall, 70% of smallholder herders reported a decrease (a lot - 31% and little - 39%) in their livestock price and animal prices in general in the assessed communities. A total of 21% reported that the price remained the same since last year and only 7% in a few districts confirmed some levels of higher prices.

Further insights from the FGDs and KIIs suggest that the significant decline in livestock product prices is the result of a complex interplay of value-chain constraints and poverty. These constraints include a lack of access to markets, even district centers, reduced household purchasing power due to severe poverty, and insufficient support from the government and private companies to promote local production. This interplay of factors inhibits smallholder herders from enhancing the commercial aspects of their animal husbandry and livestock, thus limiting their ability to capitalize on their local products and sustain prices. Here are some quotes from smallholder herders that shed light on the challenges they face:

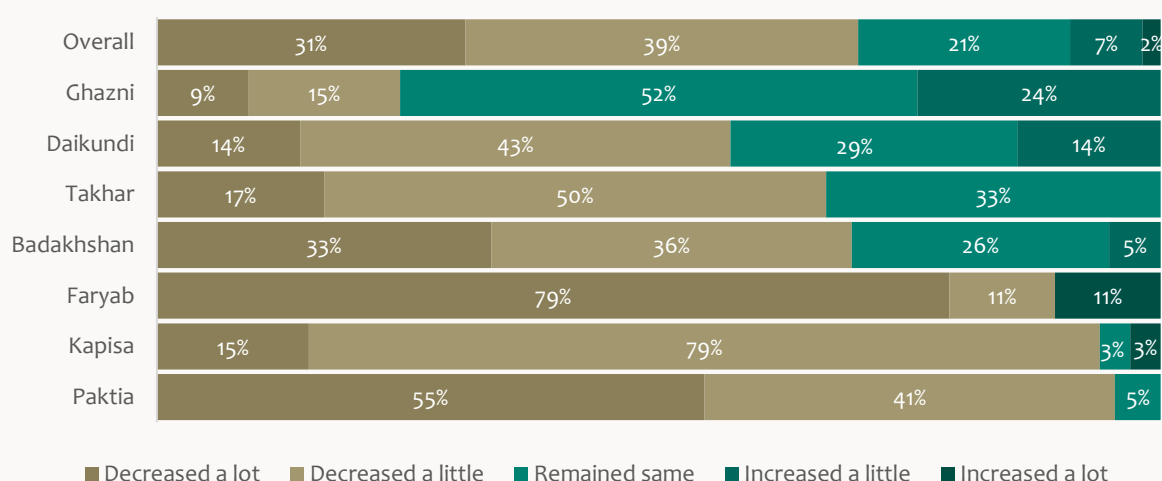
“In the past, a significant portion of our livestock products, such as wool and hides, were exported by local suppliers to Kabul and even beyond the country, fetching good prices. Through this business, we could generate sufficient income. However, nowadays, we are deprived of this opportunity entirely”.

Smallholder herder, Shuhada, Badakhshan

“Today, local bazaars are inundated with frozen chicken and imported eggs from Iran and Pakistan. These imported products are considerably cheaper, and as a result, families prefer them over ours”.

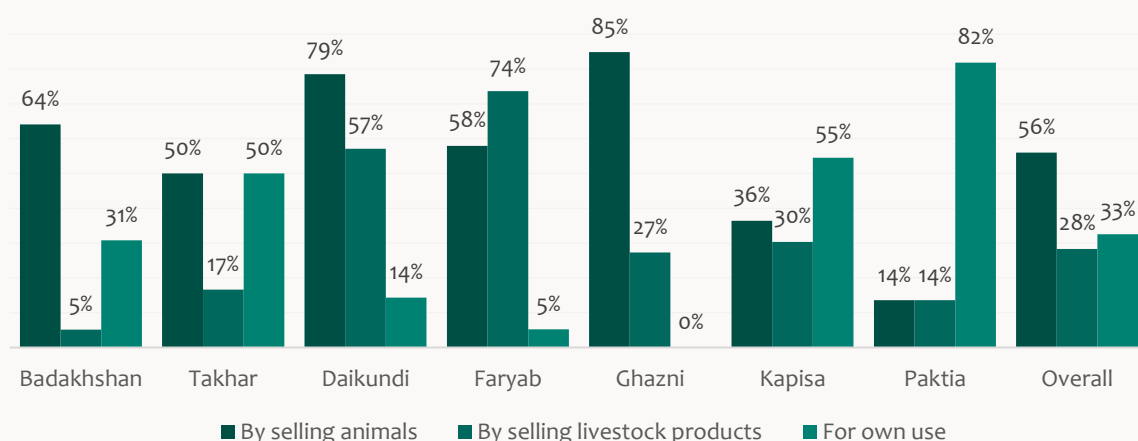
Smallholder herder, Pashton Kot, Faryab

Figure 27: Changes in prices of animal and livestock products (n = 166)



The primary source of earnings for the smallholder herder respondents remains the sale of live animals. As demonstrated in Figure 29 below, 56% of respondents earn income from selling animals, whereas only 28% reported earnings from livestock products, such as dairy products, hides, and wool. Another 33% stated that they use livestock for their own consumption.

Figure 28: Means of earning from livestock (n = 166)

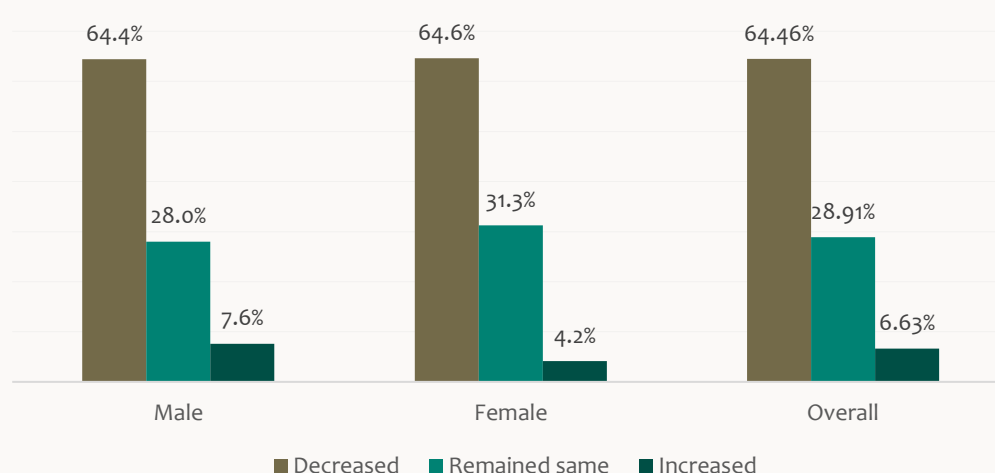


In the context of the preceding discussions, distinct patterns emerge among regions. In Paktia, the predominant practice is to use livestock for personal use only, with 80% of respondents reporting this, while only 14% earn income from the sale of live animals or products. Conversely, in Badakhshan, smallholder herders primarily earn by selling live animals, with 64% of respondents generating income this way, and far fewer making money from selling livestock products. However, in Faryab, the dynamics differ somewhat. Here, there is a greater emphasis on earning from products, with less income generated from selling live animals or for personal use.

In this assessment smallholder herders were asked how their economic benefit from livestock has changed since last year. Figure 30 below displays the findings in this regard which show a remarkably decreased economic benefit gained by targeted smallholder herders. Overall, 64.46% of the smallholder herders reported a decrease, 28.91% reported no changes, and 6.63% reported an increase in their economic benefits from livestock.

Comparing male and female smallholder herders, a slight difference can be observed in the economic benefits gained by female herders compared to male ones. For instance, there was more of an increase in economic benefits among male herders (7.6%) than female herders (4.2%).

Figure 29: Change in economic benefit from livestock (n = 166)

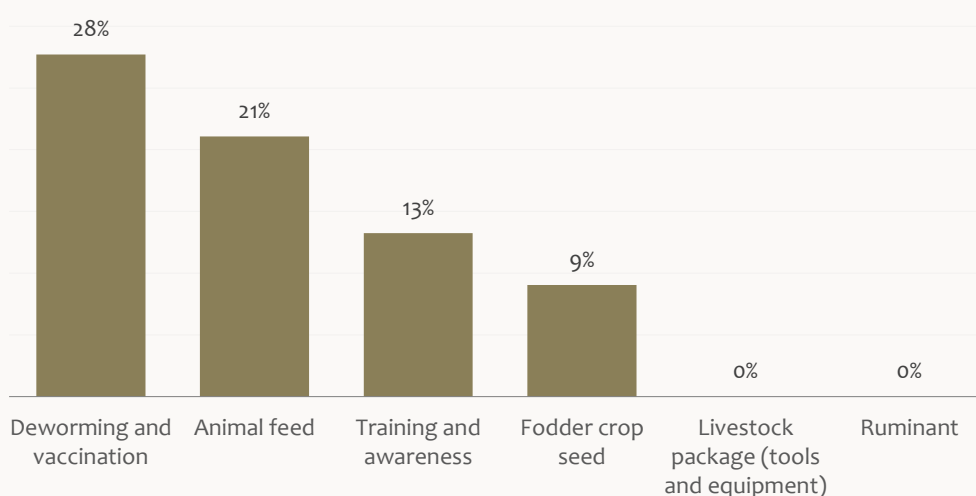


The livestock sector holds exceptional potential for empowering women and increasing household incomes. As found in this study, women provide most of the labor and the

management for livestock in small scale and mixed farming systems. This was also noted in our previous studies of our SHGs and MSME activities, which target women for establishing small enterprises in this sector. Providing additional support such as training, marketing and additional grant support for livestock enterprise development would ensure women’s empowerment and as well as livestock productivity at the village level.

This study further investigated the types of support that smallholder herders had received in the previous years to identify the gaps and particular areas where NAC should concentrate its livestock support. The results show that a very limited number of these livestock holders were supported through humanitarian aid. Based on the findings, 28% received vaccination and deworming services, 21% received animal feed, 13% received livestock trainings, and 9% received crop seeds. However, none of the targeted smallholder herders reported receiving ruminant or livestock packages (which include tools and equipment).

Figure 30: Livestock support received by smallholder herders (n = 166)

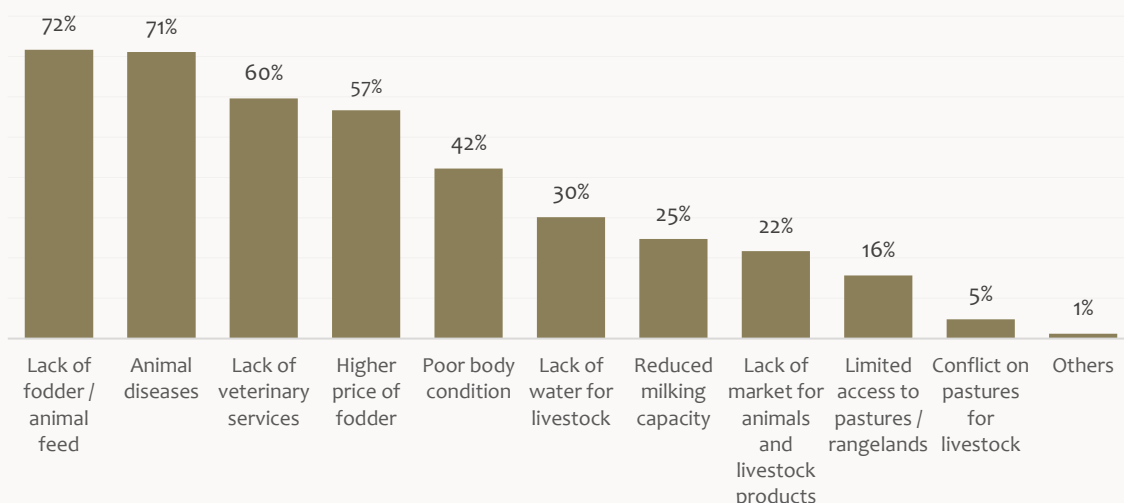


The data indicates that smallholder herders are using basic tools and equipment in raising livestock and producing and processing livestock products. It is evident that the lack of proper livestock packages (including tools and equipment) contributes to a reduction in livestock productivity.

The data further show that there is a significant gap in the capacity of smallholder herders in raising livestock. Only 10% of the smallholder herders reportedly received training on deworming and vaccination, and nearly none of them had been properly trained on livestock hygiene, livestock farming, marketing for livestock products, and dairy processing.

The study further explored the constraints in livestock productivity by asking questions about the key challenges that smallholder herders had encountered in raising animals. Figure 32 below displays the key challenges highlighted by smallholder herders.

Figure 31: Main challenges in raising livestock (n = 166)



The lack of access to animal feed / fodder, animal diseases, the lack of veterinary services at the community level, and increased prices of fodder are reportedly the major key constraints that smallholder herders face in keeping livestock. In addition, lack of water, reduced milking capacity, lack of market for animal and animal products, community level conflicts are found in this study to be other major reasons contributing to decreased livestock productivity, which in turn according to smallholder herder demotivate them to rely on livestock and livestock production as a main income making in the community. Therefore, to ensure improve livestock productivity, increasing the capacity of smallholder herders on filling the reported gaps including animal feeding and access to veterinary services, and enabling them to commercialize their animal products are essential.

4.3 Sustainable Natural Resources Management

Decades of unrest and natural and human-made disasters have profoundly affected the natural, physical, social, human, and financial resources in Afghan communities. This has been further devastated by severe poverty and a scarcity of assets and knowledge. In such a context, a holistic approach that addresses major aspects simultaneously and integrates the multiple human and natural factors is required. Through multi-donor programs and projects, NAC aims to support communities in adopting integrated natural resource management and enhancing knowledge for the sustainable utilization of these resources. This baseline assessment particularly focused on assessing the targeted communities in adopting NRM and environmental protection practices and climate-smart agriculture (CSA). This section of the report presents the key findings of the baseline assessment in relation to NRM, environmental protection and CSA.

4.3.1 NRM & Environmental Protection Practices

Objective Indicator (EU): % of supported communities adopting sustainable, integrated natural resources management practices (16.67%)

Sustainable natural resource management at the community level requires building adaptive capacities that enable communities as a system (social and ecological) to collectively work for change and effectively respond to potential disturbances. Adaptive capacity, as an aspect of resilience, reflects learning, flexibility to experiment and adopt novel solutions, and development of generalized responses to broad classes of challenges. These outcomes can be achieved by

building relevant capacities at the community level, such as resilience to natural disasters and climate change, CSA, environmental protection practices, livelihood opportunities, and dialogue and conflict transformation.

Through these projects, under this baseline assessment, NAC aims to establish such capacity by supporting NRM and DRR committees, lead farmer associations, follow farmer clusters, SHGs and other civil society groups at the community level to effectively use learned knowledge and maintain opportunities for the self-organization of social, institutional, and ecological systems in the direction of sustainability. Communities targeted under the current program and projects were selected based on vulnerability criteria with a particular focus on the most marginalized and vulnerable communities that had received minimal support in the past few years. These communities reportedly have the least adaptive capacity towards resilience to natural disasters and climate change, sustainable management of natural resources (e.g., water conservation, waste management, and forest management), CSA, food security and livelihoods, and conflict management.

To learn about the existing adaptive capacities and ongoing NRM practices in the targeted communities, this assessment particularly identified and investigated a set of predictive environmentally friendly and sustainable NRM practices as a means to measure their existing capacity and provide an overall understanding of sustainable natural resource management in the communities. These practices include the following:

- Forest management
- Avoiding bush burning
- Managing waste (e.g., human waste, organic waste)
- Protecting drinking water from pollution
- Planting grass bands at the edge of fields
- Controlling overgrazing
- Tracing and contouring sloped land
- Rehabilitation of pastures
- Construction and rehabilitation of community-based productive and protective infrastructure
- Reducing usage of pesticides

Based on the assessment findings, overall, 16.67% of the respondents exhibited the capacity to adopt sustainable NRM and environmental protection practices. Delving into the data, we noticed that 60% of the smallholder farmers reported the adoption of none of the abovementioned practices, while only 40% have adopted an average of two to three practices. Figure 33 below displays the rate of adoption of sustainable NRM and environmental protection practices.

Figure 32: Rate of adoption of sustainable NRM and environmental protection practices (n = 253)

Sustainable NRM and Environmental Protection Practices	Rate
Avoiding bush burning	30.8%
Forest management	28.5%
Protecting drinking water from pollution	21.7%
Planting grass bands at the edge of fields	17.0%

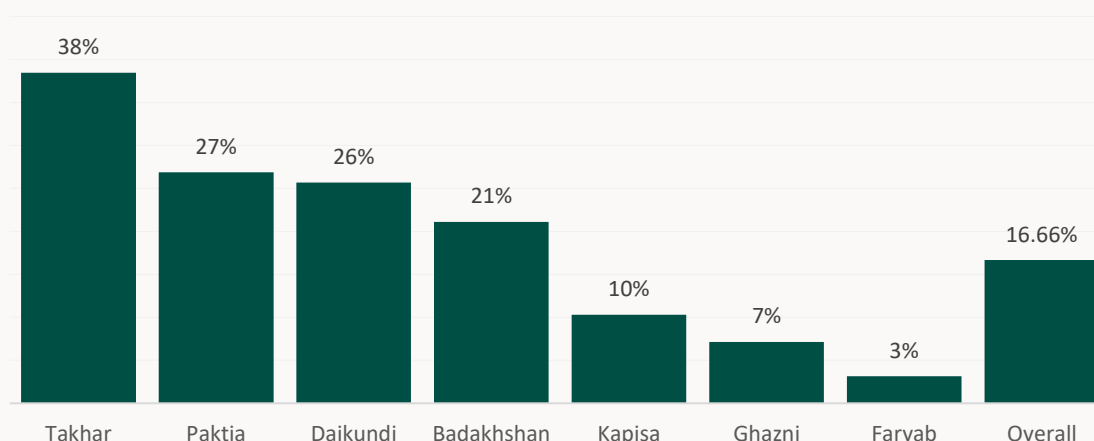
Tracing and contouring sloped lands	16.2%
Managing waste (human waste, organic waste)	12.6%
Controlling overgrazing	7.5%
Rehabilitation of pastures	7.1%
Construction and rehabilitation of NRM infrastructure	4.0%
Reducing usage of pesticides	4.0%
Average Rate	16.67%

Specific to forest management as a key sustainable NRM and environmental protection practice, the findings reveal that the majority of surveyed community members (83.33%) lack the adaptation of such practice in their communities. Referring to the DRR findings in this assessment, it is evident that the lack of this practice has had devastating outcomes for the community members. As reported, the flash flood is among the outcomes, resulting from severe wide deforestation and poor management. The findings suggested forest management as one of the key areas for interventions in improving environmental protection, natural resource management and resilience to natural disasters. The significance of this variable has been evidenced in most of the communities where the community members prioritized forest management as a measure. For instance, in our 2022 program review in Badakhshan and Ghazni, it was revealed that there is a significant correlation between forest management and resilience to natural disasters. The resilience of the communities to natural disasters was found to be significantly higher in communities where forest management had been prioritized, compared to districts where such practices were limited. It is important to mention that to promote forest management, NAC has been supporting NRM committees and running four sapling production farms in Badakhshan and Ghazni provinces where we produce and distribute between 50,000 to 100,000 saplings a year. In 2023 alone, NAC distributed 66,516 saplings to communities through NAC farms and foster mom programs to not only improve resilience and the environment, but also motivate communities towards community-based forest management.

Similarly, construction of NRM infrastructure is another factor empowering communities towards sustainable NRM and environmental protection. The data reveal that only 4% of the surveyed communities reported having such infrastructure. As highlighted by FGD participants, due to severe poverty and poor local economic conditions, the community members are unable to construct and rehabilitate the needed agro-based protective and productive infrastructure which limits the community level capacity for effective environmental protection and also negatively impacts their agricultural productivity and income. As illustrated in the Livelihoods section, overall, 83% of the smallholder farmers reported a need for the construction of these infrastructure projects.

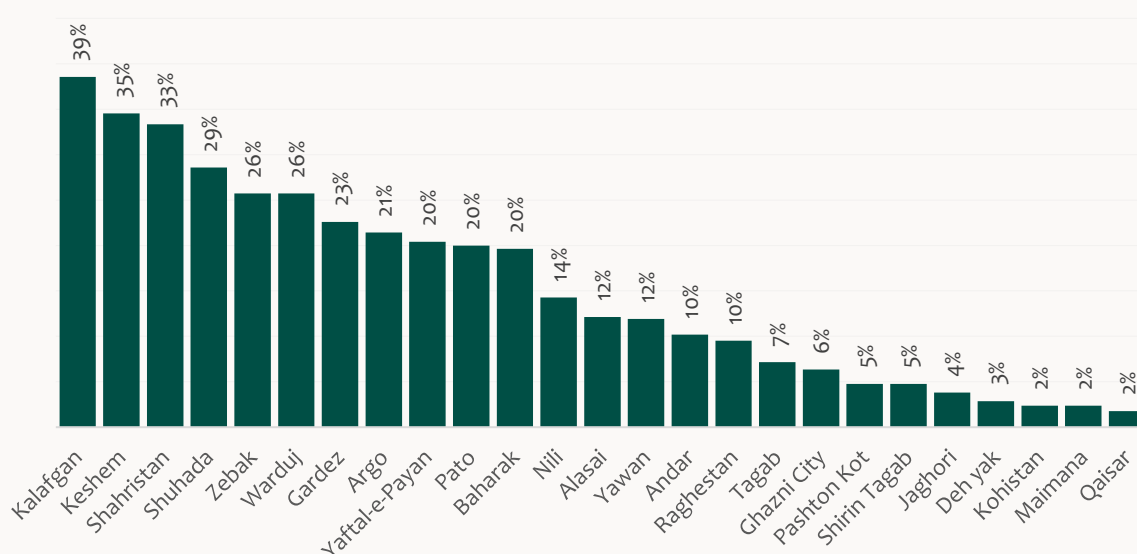
However, comparing provinces under this assessment reveals that there is a significant level of variations in the rate of adoption of sustainable NRM and environmental protection practices. Takhar Province is on the top with a rate of 38%, followed by Paktia (27%), Daikundi (26%), and Badakhshan (21%) that have relatively higher rates of adopting sustainable NRM practices. However, communities in Kapisa, Ghazni, and Faryab, with rates of 10%, 7%, and 3% respectively, are ranked as the least supported communities adopting sustainable NRM and environmental protection practices. Figure 34 below displays the rate of adoption of sustainable NRM and environmental protection practices disaggregated by province.

Figure 33: Sustainable NRM and environmental protection practices - by province (n = 253)



The assessment further analyzed the comparative rate of adoption of these practices between districts. Figure 35 below displays the rates of adoption of sustainable NRM and environmental protection practices among districts.

Figure 34: Sustainable NRM and environmental protection practices by district (n = 253)



Overall, the lower rate of adoption of sustainable NRM and environmental protection practices can be attributed to 1) the lack of community-based associations and civil society organizations such as NRM and DRR committees, Lead Farmer Associations (LFA), Follow Farmer Clusters (FFCs), and Self-Help Groups to take ownership at the community level towards building resilience to the impact of natural disasters and climate change, sustainable livelihoods and food security, and CSA) limited decision making powers and authority of communities and community-based organizations over natural resources, and 3) the lack of capacities to adapt to change and respond to disturbances. For instance, with 95% of respondents stating no to the existence of an active CDMC in their communities, the rate of disaster preparedness is only 12.93% (Figure 40 further elaborates the correlation between the existence of an active CDMC and communities' preparedness to natural disasters).

4.3.2 Climate-Smart Agriculture

Outcome Indicator (ERA II and EU): % of smallholder farmers supported implement innovative climate-smart agriculture practices - disaggregated by gender. (27.72%)

Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) provides an appropriate response to harsh challenges stemming from climate change and environmental mismanagement, aiming not only to reduce the impacts of such processes including GHG emissions, but also improve the agricultural productivity and resilience of communities.

Based on FAO's definition, CSA increases productivity and resilience (adaptation), reduces/removes GHGs (mitigation), and enhances achievement of national food security and development goals. This highlights the following three main pillars/objectives of CSA:

- higher agricultural productivity and income generation, done in a sustainable way;
- higher (adapted and built) resilience to climate change;
- efforts towards GHG reduction.

The successful implementation of these objectives accomplishes a triple-win situation resulting in higher yields, climate change mitigation, and lower GHG emissions. In light of these objectives, CSA has been the cornerstone of NAC agriculture interventions in supported communities to improve agricultural productivity and household income and increase community resilience to the impact of climate change and natural disasters.

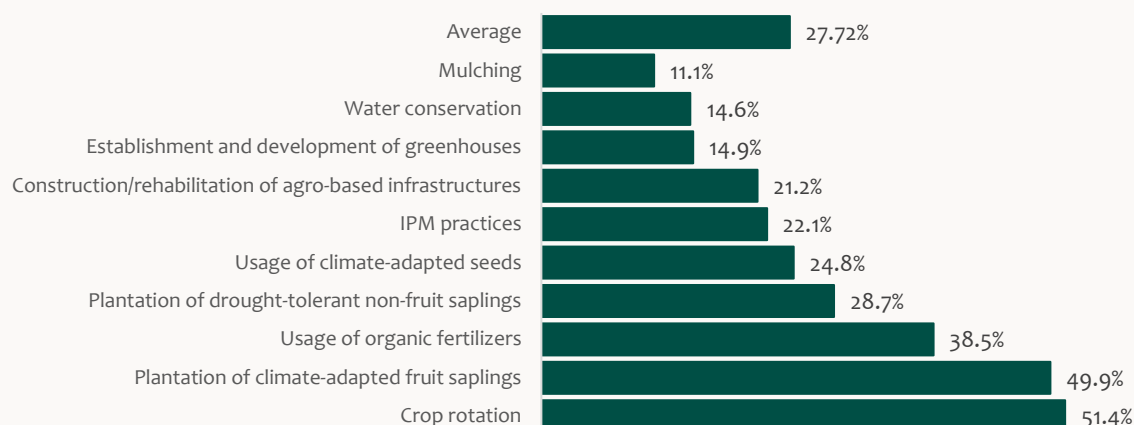
To do so, we pay particular attention to critical factors for adopting CSA that include 1) improving access to needed resources and inputs including infrastructure; and 2) required knowledge and skills and improved climate smart agriculture methods. In this assessment we explore the adaptation of CSA by measuring a set of CSA practices/indicators identified by NAC agriculture specialists. These indicators are as follows:

- Plantation of drought-tolerant non-fruit saplings,
- Plantation of climate-adapted fruit saplings,
- Construction and rehabilitating agro-based infrastructure (e.g., irrigation canals, intake, super passage),
- Water conservation (e.g., drip irrigation),
- Usage of IPM practices,
- Usage of climate-adapted seeds,
- Usage of organic fertilizers,
- Establishment and development of greenhouses,
- Mulching, and
- Crop rotation.

Overall, the assessment findings revealed a 27.72% rate of adoption of CSA practices among the smallholder farmers in the targeted communities. Among these practices, crop rotation, planting climate-adapted fruit saplings, and usage of organic fertilizers are reportedly the practices rated as 'medium' (respectively 51.4%, 49.9%, and 38.5%) and have the highest adoption rates. Other practices such as mulching (11.1%), water conservation (14.6%), establishment of greenhouses (14.9%), construction of agro-based infrastructure (21.2%), adoption of IPM practices (22.1%), usage of climate-adapted seeds (24.8%), and planting drought-tolerant non-fruit saplings (28.7%) were

identified as ‘poor’ (i.e., low adoption rates) by smallholder farmers in their communities. Figure 36 below displays the adoption rates of CSA practices reported by smallholder farmers.

Figure 35: Climate-smart agriculture practices adopted by smallholder farmers (n = 253)



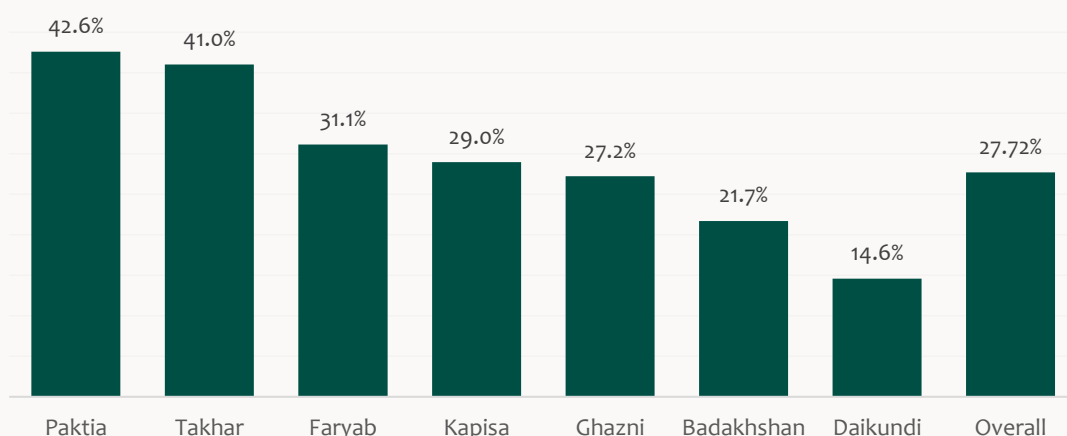
This highlights a significant need to support smallholder farmers to improve their capacities in the adoption of these practices. In this way, the NAC Lead Farmer Extension (LFE) approach in which communities and smallholder farmers are provided with new and innovative CSA methods and technologies to replace conventional farming methods is vital. The significance can be seen by comparing current reports by smallholder farmers with the data from farmers who previously received support through NAC’s LFE services. The average rate of adoption of CSA practices by smallholder farmers who received such support stood at 66.4%.

Looking into the contributing factors to the low rates of these practices, the two main reasons were drought and a lack of rain (reported by 61%) and limited access to irrigation water (reported by 53%). To address this, farmers and other community members consistently requested the construction or rehabilitation of agro-based infrastructure such as irrigation canals in their communities.

Comparing the different provinces targeted under this assessment, it turns out that Daikundi, Badakhshan, Ghazni, Kapisa, and Faryab are among the provinces where smallholder farmers increasingly depend on traditional farming methods. Over 70% of smallholder farmers in these provinces are reportedly not adopting CSA practices. On the other hand, Paktia and Takhar provinces are the top two provinces with a relatively higher rate of 42.6% and 41% of smallholder farmers adopting CSA practices.

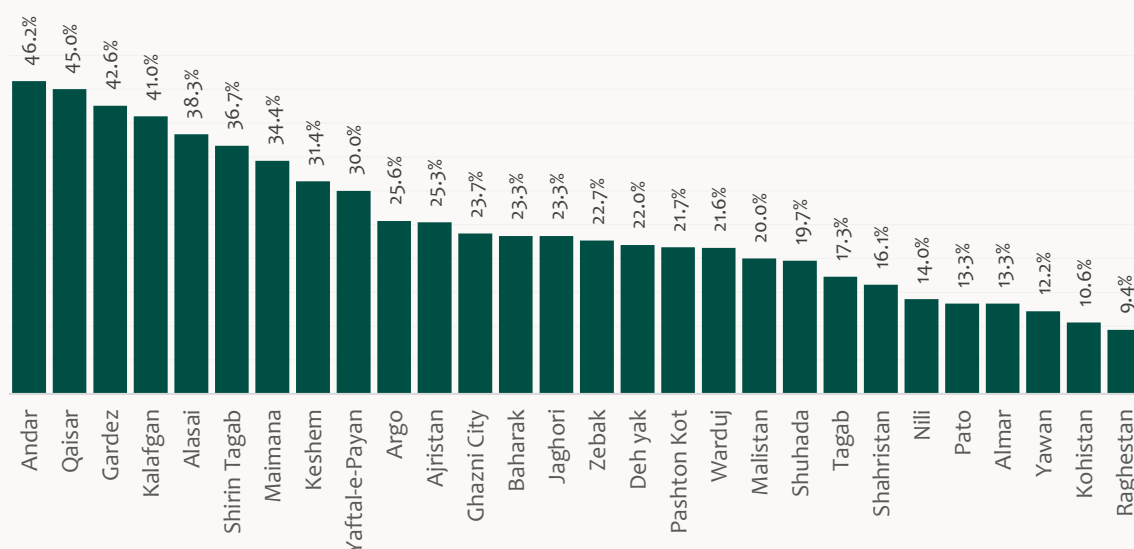
Figure 37 below displays the rate of adopting CSA practices by smallholder farmers by province.

Figure 36: Climate-smart agriculture practices adopted by farmers – by province (n = 253)



We have further investigated the implementation of innovative CSA practices at the district level. Figure 38 below displays the rate of adoption of CSA practices at the district level.

Figure 37: Climate-smart agriculture practices adopted by farmers – by district (n = 253)



Based on the assessment findings, there is a generally low rate of adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices in all districts. However, Andar, Qaisar, Gardez, Kalafgan, Alasai, Shirin Tagab, Maimana, Keshem, and Yaftal-e-Payan are on top of the list with a relatively higher percentage of smallholder farmers adopting these practices. Like other findings in this report, it is important to note that comparisons between different provinces or districts merely reflect the practices reported by selected project or program beneficiaries in this study and do not represent the overall situation in the discussed districts or provinces.

As mentioned earlier, poor access to inputs, a lack of knowledge and skills, and insufficient infrastructure were found to be the main challenges to adopting CSA in all surveyed districts. These challenges are also barriers to improving yields and agricultural productivity. As reported, 38% of smallholder farmers left their land uncultivated due to a lack of access to seeds and fertilizers, 79% of smallholder farmers reported they lack knowledge of new vegetable cultivation methods, and 89% of smallholder farmers reported that their lands are threatened by floods.

4.4 Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction

Afghanistan is prone to seasonal flooding, landslides, heavy snowfall, avalanches, and droughts, as well as other extreme weather events, as well as earthquakes, causing the loss of lives, livelihoods and properties and leaving hundreds of thousands vulnerable to displacement. This vulnerability is compounded by the recent effects of climate change. In 2021, Afghanistan was ranked as one of the sixth most vulnerable country to climate change⁷, exacerbating the frequency and intensity of natural disasters. The World Bank estimates that, on average, 200,000 people are affected by climate-related disasters every year across the country.

Through the multi-component projects assessed herein and by employing the triple-nexus approach⁸, NAC aims to continue its support to rural communities to improve their resilience to the impacts of climate change and natural disasters. NAC has a longstanding presence in this domain, particularly in Badakhshan and Ghazni, and pursues an integrated approach, combining health, education, food security, natural resource management, DRR, dialogue and conflict transformation, and women's empowerment activities while engaging with civil society organizations and sub-national governance institutions. However, for the purposes of this baseline assessment, our study focused on communities where NAC intends to intervene in the forthcoming years. This baseline is established to delineate project indicators pertaining to climate change and DRR, serving as a benchmark against which to gauge and assess changes throughout the project lifecycle. The following sections present the primary findings derived from our baseline study.

4.4.1 Resilience to the Impact of Climate Change and Natural Disasters

Objective Indicator (ERA II and EU): % of supported communities demonstrate improved resilience to the impact of natural disasters. (14.56%)

Outcome Indicator (IsDB): % of supported community members reporting improved resilience to climate change. (14.56%)

Outcome Indicator (ERA II): % of supported communities have improved access to DRR infrastructure. (23.72%)

Community resilience in the domain of climate change and DRR is multi-dimensional and involves various factors. As such, there is no single framework or benchmark for assessing community resilience to natural disasters. Adopting the Sendai Framework for DRR 2015-2030, in this study we have examined essential assets, capacities, and variables relevant to our primary program

⁷ Global Climate Risk Index (2021). who suffers most from extreme weather events?

https://www.germanwatch.org/sites/default/files/Global%20Climate%20Risk%20Index%202021_2.pdf

⁸ The triple nexus concept refers to the interlinkages between humanitarian, development, and peace building initiatives and actors in countries and communities affected by protracted and repeated crises. In practice for NAC, this means that our humanitarian work is tethered to our development work through the continuity of long-term engagement with national, provincial, district and community actors and institutions. We do this by addressing immediate humanitarian needs, such as through temporary job creation and food-for-work initiatives, while at the same time seeding long-term development, such as through community contracting which creates temporary jobs for un- and under-employed community members in the construction of local small- and medium-scale infrastructure projects which will have long-term positive impacts for communities. Finally, the third peace building element of the nexus is done through our 'dialogue skill' training and support for communities towards better relationships within and between families and communities, and ultimately fairer and more equitable resource management.

indicators to learn about key community resilience factors. The table provided below outlines the variables, indicators, resilience criteria and scores resulting from this study.

Figure 38: Disaster Resilience Index

No	variables	Indicators	Rate
1	Governance	Community has an active CDMC	11.7%
		An active DDMC supports CDMC	14.2%
		Community is linked with INGOs / Government	24.5%
		Community initiated resource mobilizations	13.5%
2	Community knowledge, aspirations, and capacity	Community has trained and equipped CDMC	10.9%
		Community has a CBDMP	13.1%
		Community hazard maps are developed	12.8%
		Community received DRR training and First Aid Kits	11.5%
		Community learned and initiates planting saplings and drought-resilient seeds	22.3%
		Community members are aware of effective preparation and response mechanism to disasters	17.9%
		Community is aware of DRR messages	16.2%
3	Economic and Physical Assets	Disaster Protective infrastructures are constructed / rehabilitated	23.7%
		Community has DRR tools and packages	11.3%
		Safe zones are identified in the community	15.1%
		Community has access to temporary shelters	10.9%
4	Disaster Preparedness	Disaster simulation exercises are conducted	10.6%
		Community is trained and provide First Aid Services	11.5%
		Early warning systems are established	12.2%
		Community has access to temporary shelters	10.9%
		Community has stockpiles of food and NFI	9.7%
		Community has savings for emergency responses	11.1%
		Community is in contact with INGOs / Government to inform disasters	24.5%
Resilience to Climate Change and Natural Disasters			14.56%

Community resilience to climate change and natural disasters requires institutional capacity and effective governance. It is widely acknowledged that effective climate change adaptation and natural disaster management cannot be achieved without good governance and collective community efforts. Governance is about much more than government and involves power distribution and participation in the much broader sense in which it is exercised by various actors, including community level structures such as Shuras, committees and other forms of civil society and government institutions. Improving resilience may mean engaging and empowering grassroots level governance and institutions so that they collectively work together on climate change adaptation and DRR and support their communities for mitigation, adaptation and effective recovery. This study specifically examines the existence of DRR committees, such as Community Disaster Management Committees (CDMCs) and District Disaster Management

Committees (DDMCs), as grassroots-level ‘governance’ entities responsible for DRR at the community and district levels.

Our baseline data indicate that out of 98 communities surveyed on DRR, only 11.7% reportedly have a CDMC. Those with no such structures acknowledged their vulnerability and recognized the necessity for having a CDMC. For such a gap, they cited the absence of government support and community sensitization and mobilization mechanisms as reasons for not having established one yet. Respondents across all surveyed communities have expressed their willingness and aspiration to form such structures, emphasizing the collective need for action, as they believe that individual efforts alone are insufficient to mitigate disasters and enhance community resilience against natural calamities.

However, the data regarding the existence of DRR committees at the district level are promising. Among 28 districts surveyed, at least eight districts (28.6%) reported having active DDMCs. It’s notable that the districts reporting the existence of such structures are those that NAC has previously supported through our DRR and CBDRM interventions.

Overall, the data clearly indicate a significant correlation between the existence of DRR committees and community preparedness, with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.645$. The communities with active DRR committees demonstrate a notably higher preparedness score (46.8%). Conversely, communities lacking such structures have a lower preparedness score (25.4%) in effectively responding to natural disasters. Highlighting this interplay on one hand and identifying community gaps on the other suggests the need to establish and support such structures both at the community level (as the frontline entity for response) and at the district level (as the structure supporting community-level initiatives and building linkages with provincial levels) for long-term community resilience. Particularly at the community level, respondents consistently expressed requests for establishing CDMCs during our data collection across all surveyed districts. Figure 40 below displays the correlation between the mean disaster preparedness levels and the existence of active CDMCs in the communities.

Figure 39: Correlations between Disaster Preparedness and Responsiveness and Active CDMC (n = 137)

		Disaster Preparedness and Responsiveness	Active CDMC
Disaster Preparedness and Responsiveness	Pearson Correlation	1	.645**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	137	137
Active CDMC	Pearson Correlation	.645**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	137	137

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

“When a disaster like a flash flood happens, everyone in the community comes together to help each other. However, without a trained responsible team or leadership, our individual efforts were not always effective and sometimes even added further risks. Last year, we lost 120 sheep and goats due to flash floods. We firmly believe that if we had a responsible team in the community, the loss would have been much less”.

Head of household, Shahristan, Daikundi

“We don't have anyone trained in managing natural resources or handling disasters, and there's no active group looking out for our environment. Every year, floods and droughts wreak havoc on our land and crops. Most farmers are struggling because of this. We really need a team to help us tackle these problems in our village”.

Smallholder Farmer, Ajristan, Ghazni

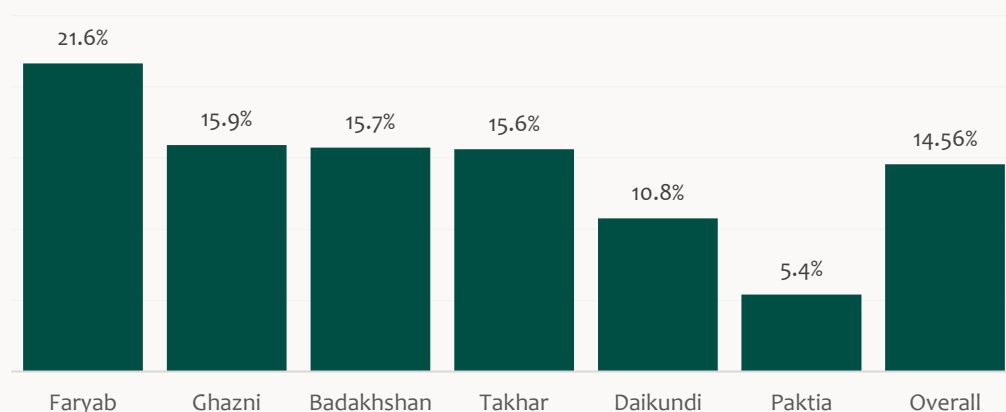
However, this does not suggest that communities with established DRR committees inherently mature and become self-sufficient. We asked members whether they had received any training on climate change adaptation and DRR in previous years. Overall, 58.3% of current DRR committee members reported that they had not received any training. Upon further investigation through FGDs, we found that a majority of those without training were the new CDMC members, as previous members had left the community and members had been replaced.

To further assess the local capacity to mitigate the impact, we asked community members if they have Community-based Disaster Management Plans (CBDMPs) and community hazard maps. Around 13% demonstrated the capacity to develop their community CBDMP and hazard map. In addition to support for developing VDMPs and hazard maps, they suggested NAC provide them with training and inputs on climate-smart agricultural practices. The datasets suggest training on nutrition and modern farming techniques such as composting, fertilizer application, gardening, orchard layout, pruning, grafting, and soil and water conservation.

Climate adaptation and resilience involves putting in place local structures and protective infrastructure that can not only ensure community protection from hazards, but also contribute to saving water, replenishing ground water and mitigating erosion to improve agricultural harvests in rural communities. Despite the significance of such infrastructure, 83% of the participants reported the need for construction and rehabilitation of agro-based protective and productive infrastructure such as irrigation canals, retention walls, check dams, gabion walls, water reservoirs, upper catchments, trenches, and the rehabilitation of rangelands.

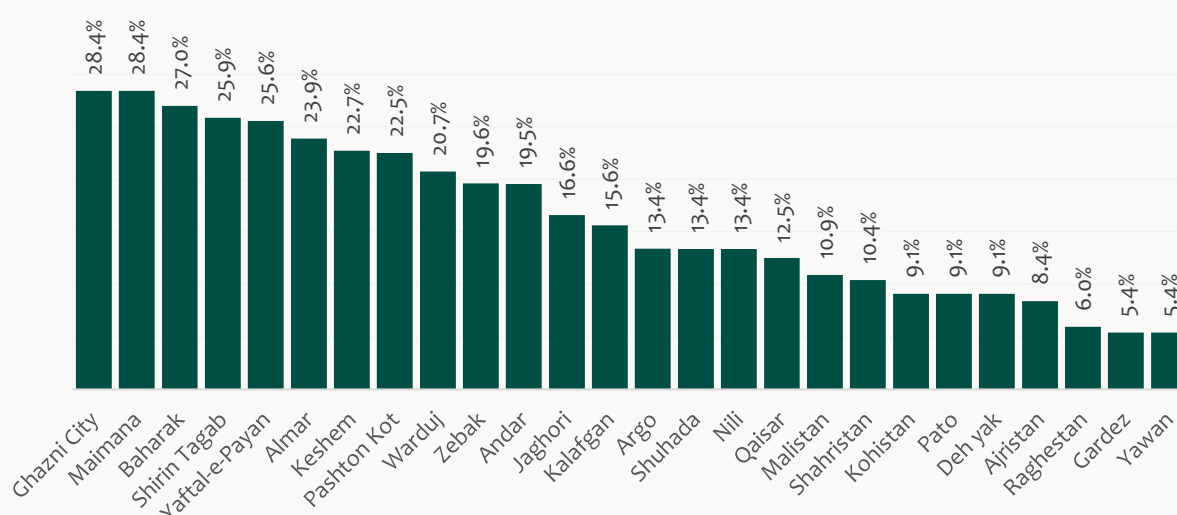
Comparing rates of resilience to climate change and natural disasters between provinces, the findings reveal that Faryab is relatively better off with a disaster resilience rate of 21.6%, followed by Ghazni, Badakhshan, and Takhar with rates of 15.9%, 15.7%, and 15.6%, respectively. However, targeted communities in Paktia Province have the lowest rate of resilience to the impact of climate change and natural disasters, with a rate of 5.4%, indicating higher vulnerability to the effects of climate change and natural disasters (mainly floods). Figure 41 below displays the rate of resilience to climate change and natural disasters by province.

Figure 40: Resilience to climate change and natural disasters demonstrated - by province (n = 137)



Comparing the districts, our findings reveal significant variance in the levels of disaster resilience between different districts. Figure 42 below displays the rate resilience to the impact of climate change and natural disasters at the district level.

Figure 41: Resilience to climate change and natural disasters demonstrated – by district (n = 137)



Based on the findings displayed in Figure 42 above, Ghazni City, Maimana, Baharak, Shirin Tagab, and Yaftal-e-Payan districts stand out as the districts with the levels of resilience to climate change and natural disasters, with rates of 28.4%, 28.4%, 27.0%, 25.9%, and 25.6%, respectively. On the other hand, Yawan, Gardez, and Raghestan have the lowest rates of resilience to climate change and natural disasters. However, it is important to note that comparisons between different districts merely reflect the situation reported by selected project or program beneficiaries in this study and do not represent the overall situation in the discussed districts or provinces.

It is noted that farmers, due to extreme poverty and the collapse of rural economies, face challenges to constructing protective infrastructure against erosion caused by seasonal floods, and there is very limited external support in this regard. Only a small percentage, 13.5 in some areas, reported being able to mobilize resources for necessary protective infrastructure within

their community. The two major projects consistently suggested by farmers to protect their agricultural land are retaining walls and gabion walls. Access to irrigation water is also reported as a critical issue, as farmers cannot afford to invest in such structures. Consequently, there is a substantial demand for infrastructure projects to improve access to irrigation water and protect agricultural land from floods and erosion.

4.4.2 Preparedness and Responsiveness to Natural Disasters

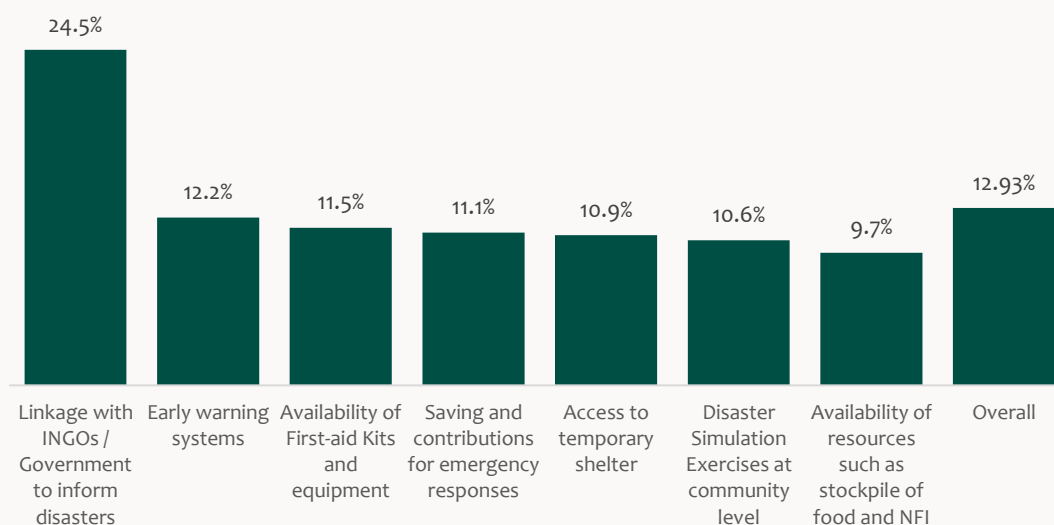
Outcome Indicator (ERA II and EU): % of supported communities enabled to effectively prepare for and respond to natural disasters. (12.93%)

Community preparedness to effectively respond to natural disasters is a key indicator for overall community resilience. In this context, we evaluated the targeted communities on how they are able to prepare for and respond to natural disasters. We also aimed to identify the priorities and assess the needs for support and input such as training, tools, and equipment that enable them to effectively respond to natural hazards. To measure preparedness of the targeted communities, this study looked at the following seven variables for disaster preparedness in consideration of the primary focus of the upcoming interventions.

- Disaster simulation exercises at the community level
- Availability of first-aid kits and equipment
- Access to temporary shelter
- Availability of resources such as stockpiles, food and NFI
- Community has saving for contributions to emergency responses
- Contact number of stakeholders
- Early warning system

These items were identified as the indicators for measuring how prepared the targeted communities are in line with NAC's DRR interventions to respond to natural disasters. Overall, around 7% of the supported communities are moderately or highly enabled to prepare and respond effectively to natural disasters. Figure 43 below displays communities' preparedness and responsiveness to natural disasters on each preparedness and responsiveness indicator.

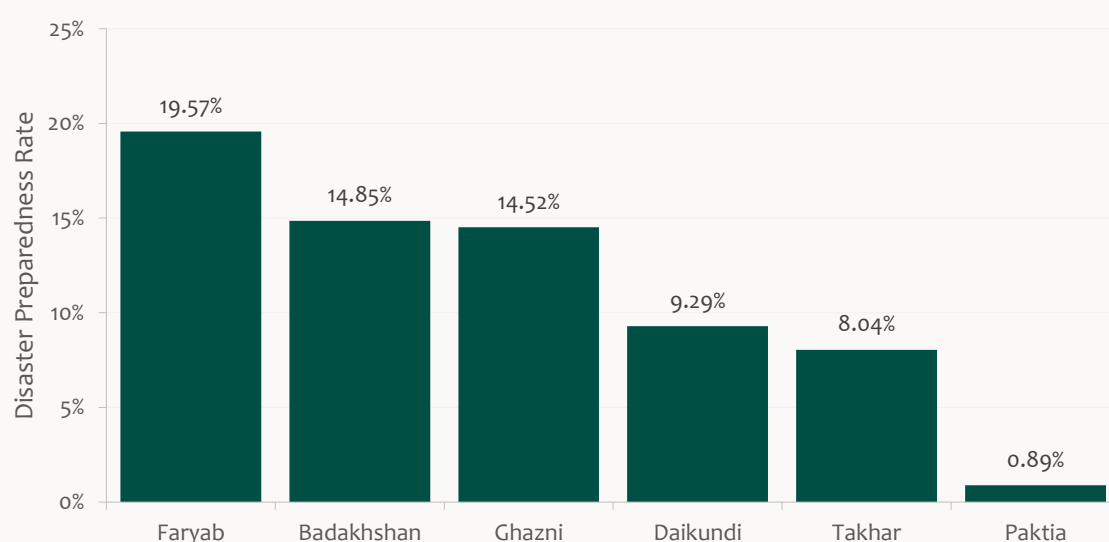
Figure 42: Preparedness to natural disasters (n = 137)



Among the disaster preparedness indicators that surveyed households were asked about, the linkage with NGOs and government had the highest score. Around 24.5% of households confirmed having access to the contact of relevant government departments and NGOs to inform them about the occurrence of natural disasters. This is the minimum action that communities can take when a natural disaster happens. However, there is a significant need to have first aid kits, access to temporary shelters, an early warning system, disaster simulation exercises, resources such as stockpiles of food and non-food items, and savings for communities to be prepared to take the necessary initial steps before aid comes from the government or NGOs.

Comparing the average disaster preparedness among provinces, the assessment findings reveal that Kapisa, Paktia, Takhar, and Daikundi provinces have the lowest levels of preparedness and responsiveness to natural disasters. However, Ghazni, Badakhshan, and Faryab provinces seem to be in a relatively better condition, comparatively. The relatively higher percentage of disaster preparedness in Badakhshan and Ghazni provinces can be attributed to years of NAC's and other organizations' DRR interventions that provided awareness among communities. Figure 44 below depicts the simple bar means of disaster preparedness, disaggregated by province.

Figure 43: Preparedness to natural disasters demonstrated - by province (n = 137)



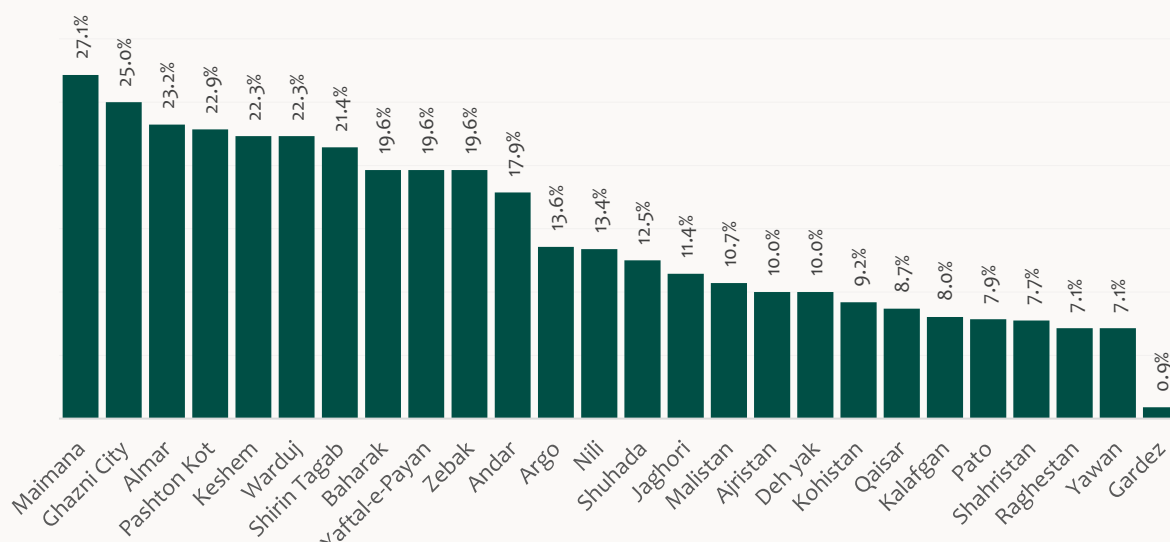
Based on statistics from UNOCHA's natural disaster data dashboard⁹, since January 2021, Badakhshan has consistently experienced flash floods, landslides, and avalanches affecting 8,833 people; Ghazni has experienced flash floods affecting 4,925 people; Paktia has witnessed flash floods and heavy snowfall affecting 4,317 people; flash floods in Kapisa affected 1,934 people; heavy snowfalls and flash floods in Faryab affected 1,792 people; and 1,025 people in Takhar were affected by flash floods, earthquakes, and landslides. Statistics show that Badakhshan, Ghazni, and Paktia are among the top provinces that have been affected by flash floods, landslides, earthquakes, avalanches, and heavy snowfalls.

Based on the same report, and specifically related to Badakhshan, Yawan and Raghestan districts accounted for 34% of the people affected from landslides, avalanches, and flash floods; Ghazni

⁹ UNOCHA (2024). Natural Disaster Dashboard. <https://response.reliefweb.int/afghanistan/natural-disasters-dashboard>

city and Deh Yak, in Ghazni, accounted for 55% of the people affected from flash floods; and Gardez in Paktia Province accounted for 60% of the people affected from flash floods, earthquakes, and heavy snowfalls. Figure 45 below displays the levels of disaster preparedness, disaggregated by district.

Figure 44: Preparedness to natural disasters demonstrated – by district (n = 137)



To comparatively see the capabilities of districts in responding to natural disasters, a district-based analysis was conducted on disaster preparedness. However, it should be noted that comparisons between different districts merely reflect the situation in certain communities within the surveyed and do not represent the overall situation in the districts or provinces. Keeping this in mind, Maimana, Ghazni City, Almar, Pashton Kot, Warduj, Keshem, and Shirin Tagab are the districts with relatively higher percentage of households confirming disaster preparedness indicators. However, Gardez in Paktia, Yawan and Raghestan in Badakhshan, and Deh Yak in Ghazni are districts with no or little capability (below 10%) in responding to natural disasters despite being districts with the highest vulnerability to natural disasters compared to other districts in the provinces as reported by our baseline respondents.

4.1 Food Security

Objective / Outcome Indicator (ERA II, EU, and IsDB): % of supported households with borderline or acceptable food consumption scores. (31.56%; 18.42% female and 37.18% male)

Improving the food security of households is a main objective for all projects in this baseline. This imperative stems from the persistent challenges of food insecurity and hunger in Afghanistan.

Based on the IPC report 2023, as of October 2023, over 13 million Afghans were experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above), with a staggering 29.2 million individuals - more than two-thirds of the population - requiring assistance to survive. In this baseline study, we also aim to assess the food security status of households that may become beneficiaries of our multi-donor projects and programs in the coming years. This assessment is particularly pertinent to aligning with our program indicators and ensuring effective outreach to those in need.

It is noteworthy that, employing the triple-nexus approach (linking short-term food security interventions with longer term development activities, combined with improving dialogue and conflict transformation skills) in previous years, NAC has supported community members (both women and men) to improve their food security through a range of interventions, including the provision of agricultural inputs (e.g., seeds and saplings); the introduction of modern cultivation methods; equipping farmers with small-scale agriculture and climate-smart technology; establishing demonstration plots; supporting and scaling up women’s SHGs; and food assistance and food for work projects, all of which has contributed towards improving households’ food security in the supported communities. For instance, in 2023 alone, NAC supported 482,368 households (4,736,854 women, men, girls, and boys) with cash for food, food for work, livestock, home gardening, farming tools, summer crop seed, poultry package, bee keeping package, mushroom package, greenhouse kit, unconditional cash transfer, soybean cultivation, micro-solar drier, and wheat seed activities towards improving their food security through funds from FAO, AHF, and Norad (Addendum 4) in 170 districts of the 14 provinces of Badakhshan, Balkh, Daikundi, Faryab, Ghazni, Kabul, Kapisa, Khost, Nangarhar, Paktia, Paktika, Panjshir, Parwan, and Takhar.

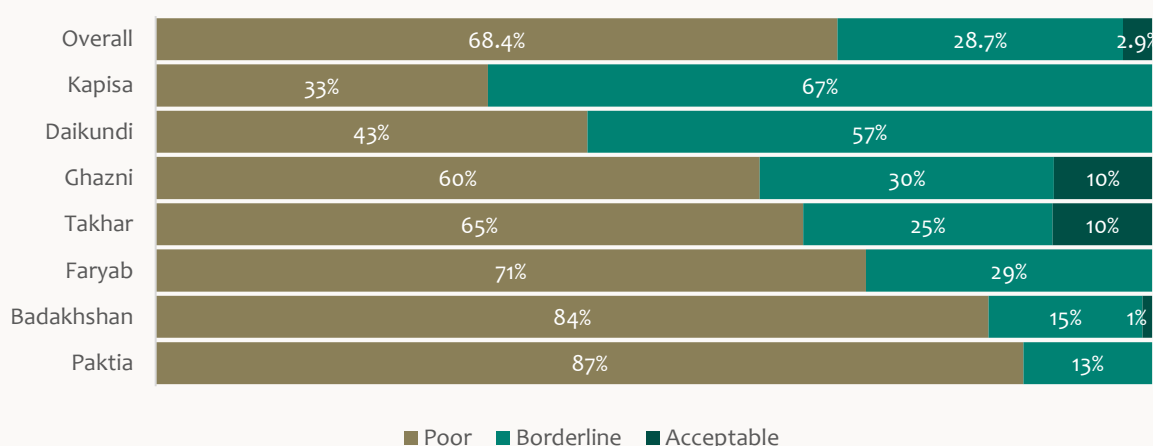
In the new phase, as NAC plans to extend its support to other communities and households, it is imperative to establish a baseline regarding the food security situation of these households. Therefore, in this study we also focused on specific household food security variables, utilizing the FCS, Reduced Coping Strategy Index (RCSI), and Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS) as the primary measurement tools. The following section of the report presents the key findings under each measurement index:

4.5.1 Food Consumption Score (FCS)

Our primary measure of household food security status is the FCS, a weighted score calculated using the frequency of consumption of different food groups consumed by a household during the seven days before the survey. We used a modified FCS index for data collection, enabling us to construct the measure robustly. The food groups, with the respective weights based on energy, protein and micronutrient densities, include main staples (2), pulses (3), vegetables (1), fruits (1), meat and fish (4), milk (4), sugar (0.5), oil (0.5), and condiments (0). The constructed FCS is a continuous variable taking values between 0 and 112.

Analyzing the FCS dataset, the results indicate that overall, 68.4% of the households were assessed as poor, followed by 28.7% as borderline, and 2.9% as acceptable.

Figure 45: Food consumption score - by province (n = 583)

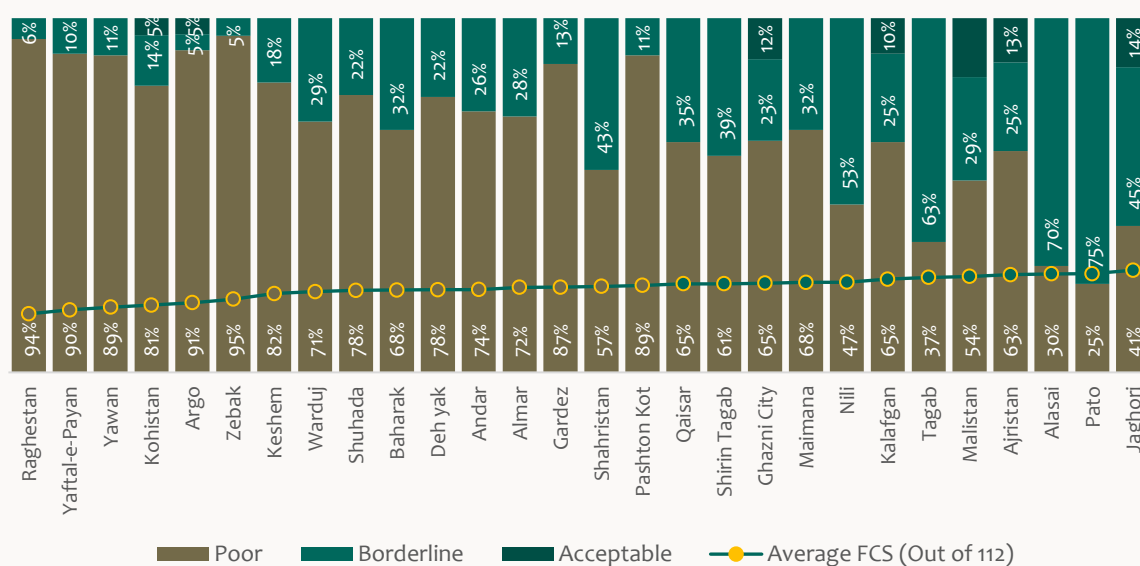


As shown in the figure 46 above, amongst the provinces covered under this baseline, Paktia and Badakhshan provinces were assessed as having the highest level of food insecurity, with 87% and 84% poor, 13% and 15% borderline, and 0% and 1% acceptable, respectively. Following them are Faryab (71% poor and 29% borderline), Takhar (65% poor and 25% borderline), and Ghazni (60% poor and 30% borderline). Out of the seven provinces, only two (Ghazni and Takhar) have a 10% acceptable rate of FCS (the highest among the seven); in the other provinces, the rate ranges between 0% and 1%.

Looking at the district level data of the baseline, households in Raghestan and Yaftal-e-Payan districts of Badakhshan are reportedly the most food insecure, with 94% of surveyed households in Raghestan and 90% of households in Yaftal-e-Payan reporting having physical and economic hardship to access sufficient and nutritious food. Ghazni, Deh Yak and Andar districts stand out as places where households reported extreme food insecurity and drought as the primary contributors to their low FCSs.

Comparing the FCS among 28 districts targeted under this baseline assessment, it can clearly be seen that Raghestan (average FCS = 18.5), Yaftal-e-Payan (19.8), Yawan (20.6), Kohistan (21.3), Argo (22), Zebak (23.1), Warduj (25.5), Shuhada (25.9), Baharak (26.1), Deh Yak (26.1), Andar (26.2), Almar (26.9), Gardez (26.9), Shahristan (27.2), and Pashtoon Kot (27.5) are among the poorest districts compared to Qaisar (28), Shirin Tagab (28), Ghazni City (28.2), Maimana (28.4), Nili (28.5), Kalafgan (29.5), Tagab (30.1), Malistan (30.3), Ajristan (30.9), Alasai (31.2), Pato (31.2), and Jaghori (32.3) districts. The chart below displays the FCS disaggregated by districts.

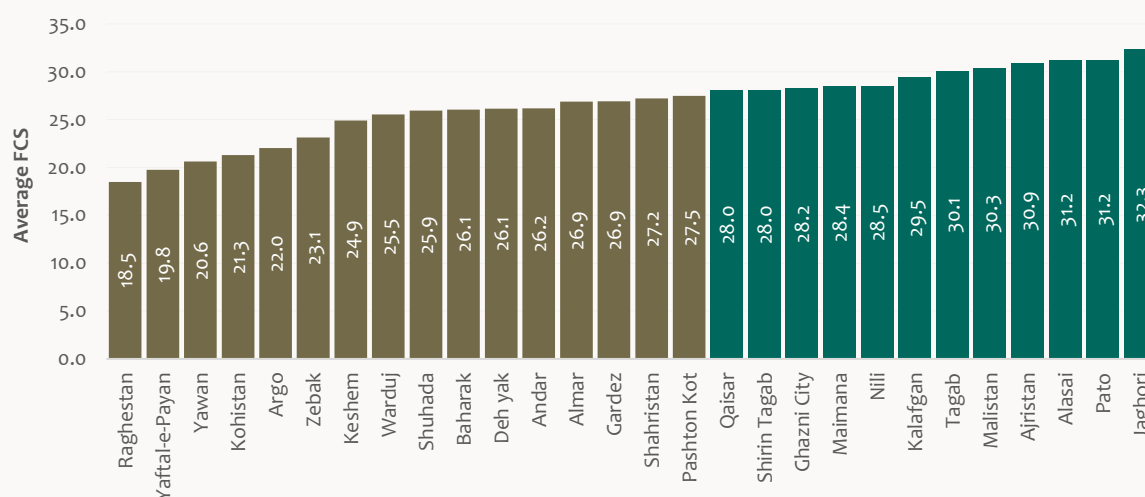
Figure 46: Food consumption score - by district (n = 583)



The chart above orders districts by most food insecure, from the left to the least food insecure districts on the right, based on the average FCS (out of 112) at the district level. Considering this, Kohistan District is more food insecure (with an average FCS of 21.3 out of 112) compared to Qaisar District (with an average FCS of 28), even though there is a relatively lower percentage of households with poor FCSs in Kohistan compared to Qaisar district.

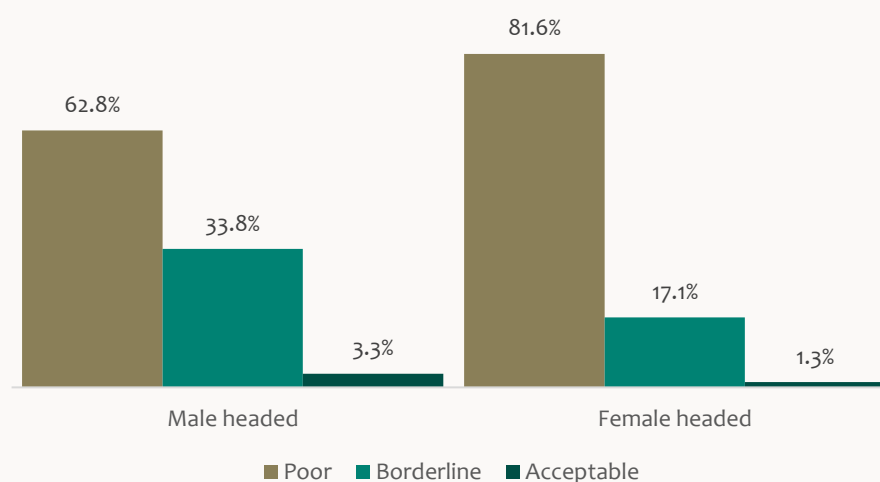
The chart below displays the average FCS at the district level ordering districts from most food insecure on the left to the least food insecure on the right.

Figure 47: Average food consumption score - by district (n = 583)



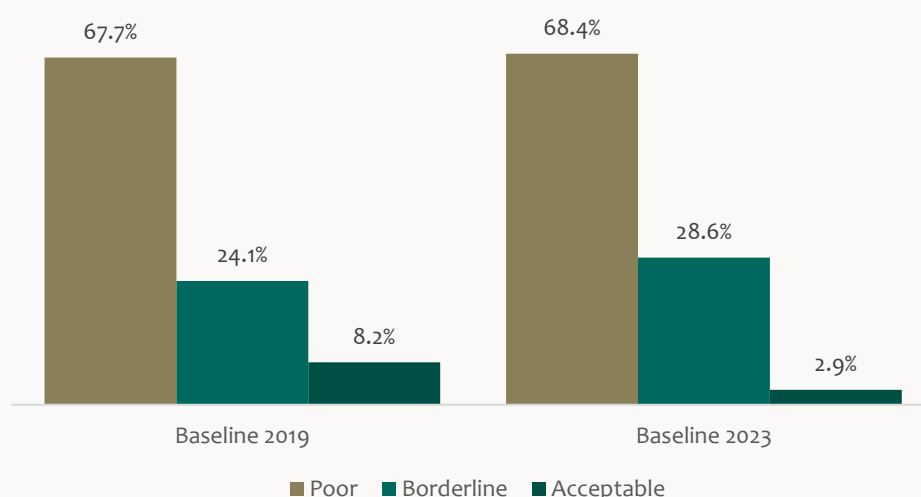
Comparing the FCSs of male- and female-headed households, we noticed that female-headed households are reported to be more food-insecure than male-headed households; 81.6% of female-headed households were reported poor compared to 62.8% of male-headed households. The chart below displays the FCS, disaggregated by male- and female-headed households.

Figure 48: Food consumption score - by gender of heads of households (n = 466)



Comparing with data from 2019, there were no major changes in the percentage of households with poor FCSs and this can be attributed to a huge amount of humanitarian aid NAC delivered in late 2023 in these provinces. Despite the humanitarian aid delivered, a slightly poorer food security situation can be noticed in 2023 compared to 2019. In 2023, only 2.9% of households had an acceptable FCS compared to 8.2% in 2019. The chart below compares FCSs between the 2023 baseline with the 2019 baseline.

Figure 49: Food consumption score - by year (n = 583)



It is important to note that the baseline was conducted in November, at the time of the year when farmers have usually recently collected their harvest, making it perhaps relatively a better season of the year for households in terms of food access and diversification. It is possible that the results would be much worse if we conducted the household survey during winter when accessibility to and from communities is also limited.

“We were forced to depend on less preferred and less expensive foods because the food items we bought earlier from the bazaar have run out and we have no money to buy them again. As a result, we eat only bread to survive”.

Smallholder farmer, Qaisar, Faryab

The underlying reasons for poor FCS reported by households include the following: 1) reduced agricultural productivity largely due to drought and irrigation water scarcity, leading to diminished nutritional value of crops; 2) limited access to markets and disruptions in the food supply chain, hindering the transportation of essential food items to and from targeted communities; 3) insufficient income with rising food prices, making it challenging for households to afford nutritious food particularly during winter; and 4) lack of support from government and other programs.

4.5.2 Reduced Coping Strategy Index (RCSI)

Understanding the coping strategies for food insecurity used by households is crucial when assessing the extent of food insecurity. We utilized the Reduced Coping Strategy Index (RCSI) to measure the frequency and degree of consumption-based coping strategies and behaviors that households engaged in as a response to food shortages in the seven days preceding the survey.

The most prevalent coping strategies identified from the data are as follows:

- Relying on less preferred and less expensive foods (95%).
- Borrowing food or relying on help from friends or relatives (80%).
- Limiting portion size at mealtimes (63%).
- Restricting consumption by adults to enable children to eat more (57%).
- Reducing the number of meals eaten in a day (39%).

The most prevalent coping strategy is relying on less preferred and less expensive food. According to the survey data, 95% of the households used this coping strategy for three days each week, on average. By relying on less expensive and less nutritious foods, households may find it difficult to meet their nutritional needs. This is mainly due to limited awareness of rural households about the importance of nutrition leading to the consumption of the same types of meal that are cheap and accessible to them. For instance, smallholder farmers and herders mainly rely on agricultural and livestock production to meet their food needs.

Diversified nutrition does not necessarily mean including expensive food items in the diet; households can consume a diversified range of inexpensive food items available locally for a healthier diet. As such, to contribute to increased food security, the primary action can be promoting crop diversification among smallholder farmers by introducing new types of nutritious crop seeds. Additionally, awareness raising campaigns and sessions can help encourage smallholder farmers to grow these crops and supply more nutritious foods for their households and communities.

Another main coping strategy adopted by 80% of the households is borrowing food and relying on help from friends and relatives, which occurred around one and half days per week among the survey participants. In emergency situations such as shocks, rural households mainly rely on friends, relatives, and particularly on humanitarian aid to cope with the situation. However, more sustainable interventions such as construction and rehabilitation of agro-based infrastructure, supporting agriculture and livestock, empowering MSMEs, and establishing and supporting community-based organizations enhance the ownership of the communities in reducing food insecurity and increasing resilience to shocks.

Figure 50: Coping strategies adopted by households (n = 583)

Coping Strategies	% of households utilized coping strategy at least once in the past 7 days	Average number of times (days) coping strategy used in the last 7 days
Rely on less preferred and less expensive food	95%	2.9
Borrow food, rely on help from a friend or relative	80%	1.4
Limit portion size at mealtimes	63%	1.0
Restrict consumption by adults to enable children to eat	57%	0.9
Reduce number of meals eaten in a day	39%	0.5

Limiting portion size at mealtimes and restricting consumption by adults to enable small children to eat more were respectively reported by 63% and 57% of respondents to have occurred about once a week. Additionally, 39% reportedly reduced the number of meals eaten in a day about once every two weeks.

Through FGDs, smallholder farmers and herders were asked about their food security situation. Below are some of their quotes.

“Food is not sufficiently accessible by community members in our village. We hardly get good food to eat. Tea and bread are the most common meals we have. Meat is only consumed on special occasions such as Eid-ul Adha”.

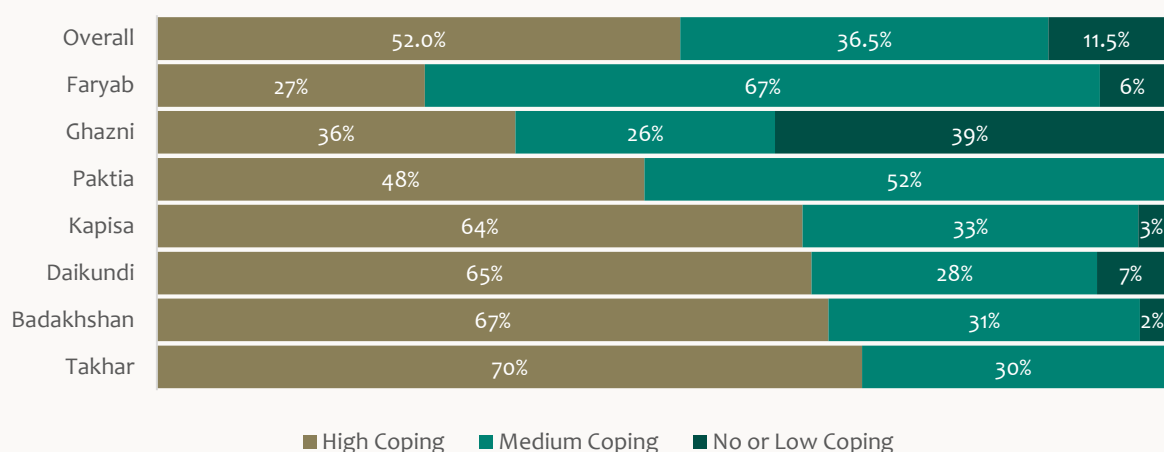
Smallholder farmer, Keshem, Badakhshan.

“Most of my household’s meals are now bread, rice, potatoes, and turnips since the drought became serious in the area. I cannot cultivate vegetables or grains on my land, so I buy mostly potatoes and turnips and most of the time we eat bread with boiled onion and oil and water”.

Farmer from Nili District, Daikundi

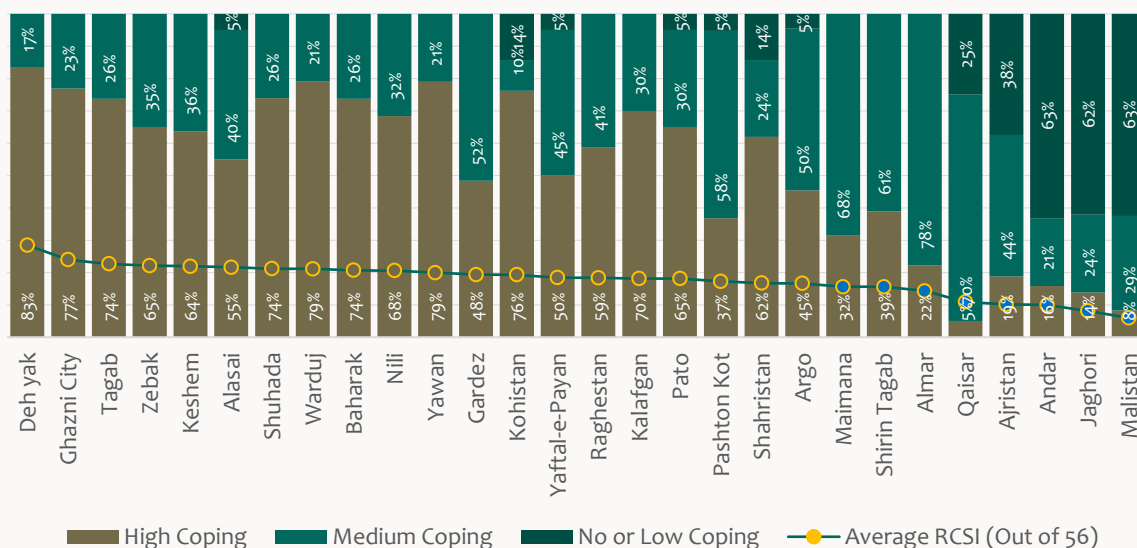
To gain a deeper insight into the implications, the reported strategies were categorized based on the RCSI into “No or low coping” (with RCSI score of 0 to 3), “Medium coping” (with RCSI score of 4 – 9), and “High coping” (with RCSI score of above 9). According to the results, overall, 52% of households reported high coping strategies, while 36.5% of households have engaged in medium coping strategies. Only 11.5% of surveyed households have used either no or a low level of coping strategies. Figure 52 below presents the level of coping strategies used by households by province:

Figure 51: Reduced coping strategy index - by province (n = 583)



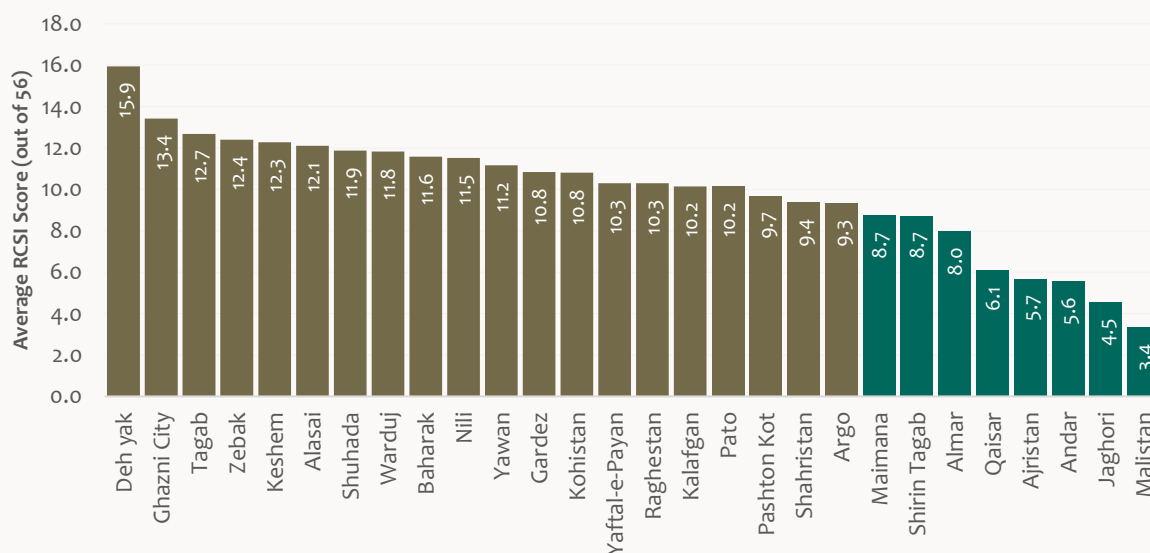
As depicted above, rates of households indicating ‘no or low coping strategies’ had minimal variance between provinces, with the exception of Ghazni, which fared better, with 39% reporting no or low coping strategies. Nevertheless, upon comparing various districts within Ghazni, significant variation become evident. For instance, in Jaghori, the average proportion of households utilizing no coping strategy stands at 62%, whereas in Deh Yak, this average drops substantially to only 17%. The chart below displays the RCSI scores by district.

Figure 52: Reduced coping strategy index – by district (n = 583)



The figure above sorts of districts from the highest (left) to lowest (right) levels of coping strategies adopted by the households in the districts based on the average RCSI (out of 56). According to the RCSI thresholds, scores between 0 to 3 are categorized as “No or low coping”, scores between 3.1 to 9 are categorized as “Medium Coping”, and scores above 9 are categorized as “High Coping”. Considering these thresholds, Malistan, Jaghori, Andar, Ajristan, Qaisar, Almar, Shirin Tagab, and Maimana are categorized as districts adopting medium level coping strategies, respectively. The figure below displays the average RCSI scores of households by district, with tan columns indicating high coping and blue columns indicating medium coping levels.

Figure 53: Average reduced coping strategy index score - by district (n = 583)



The survey data show that there is a significant negative correlation between the average district RCSI scores and FCS ($r = -0.9$), meaning that districts with the poorest FCS have adopted the highest levels of coping strategies. For instance, Malistan and Jaghori districts in Ghazni and Qaisar, Shirin Tagab, and Maimana districts in Faryab are the least food insecure districts

(categorized as borderline) and consequently their households adopt relatively lower levels of coping strategies. This is particularly evident in Jaghori. The district is one of the least food insecure, with an average FCS of 32.3 (categorized as borderline) that adopted the lowest levels of coping strategies, after Malistan, with an average RCSI score of 4.5 (categorized as medium coping).

While the study has not documented the subsequent impact of using these coping strategies for the survival of household members, as noted in several previous studies, the utilization of any of the aforementioned strategies, particularly on a regular basis, can have adverse consequences on the overall health and wellbeing of household members. It emphasizes the need to provide positive alternatives by assisting households in enhancing their food security through the projects for which this baseline was conducted. Fortunately, through previous activities and projects implemented by NAC to address such issues in the past, we have observed significant potential for change. Our food security program, with its distinctive approach, has demonstrated the ability to positively influence practices and behaviors related to coping strategies. For instance, findings from our ERA endline review report in 2023 indicate a promising outcome. The report revealed that only 16.2% of households supported by NAC's food security activities were relying on high levels of coping strategies, compared with above 50% on average for the same households in 2019. This outcome underscores the effectiveness of interventions in reducing the dependence on negative coping strategies among rural households discussed above.

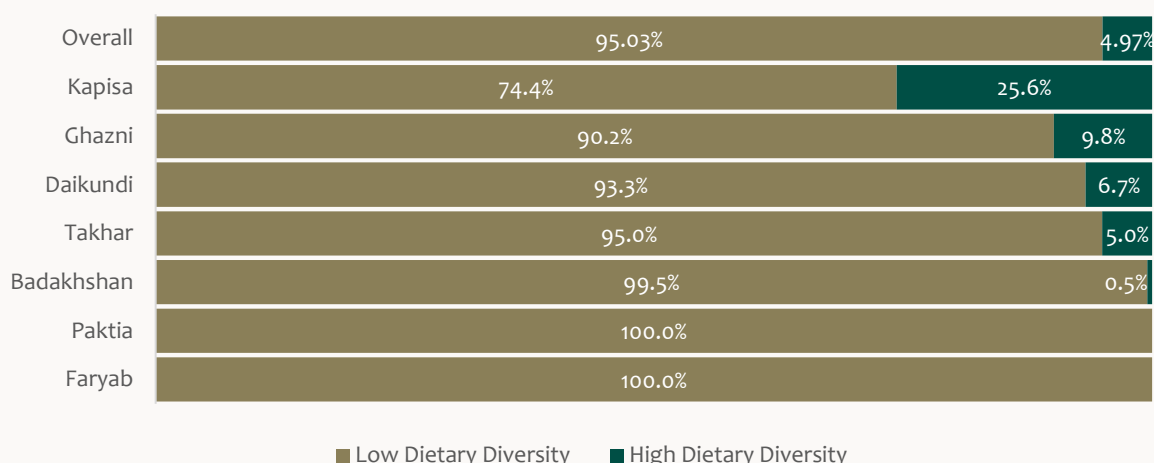
4.5.2 Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS)

Outcome Indicator (ERA II): % of supported households with "high" dietary diversity. (4.97%)

The HDDS assesses the consumption of food groups by household members over a one-week period prior to the survey. The index helps in understanding a household's ability to access a variety of food items. Using this model, we evaluated households' dietary diversity by considering eight food groups and asked respondents to report their consumption of these groups over the past seven days. Accordingly, households that consumed food from four or fewer food groups (out of eight) over a seven-day period are categorized as having low dietary diversity.

The results obtained from using the HDDS in this assessment are highly concerning. According to the findings, 95.03% of surveyed households exhibited a low level of dietary diversity. The figure below illustrates the dietary diversity of households across different provinces.

Figure 54: Household dietary diversity score - by province (n = 583)

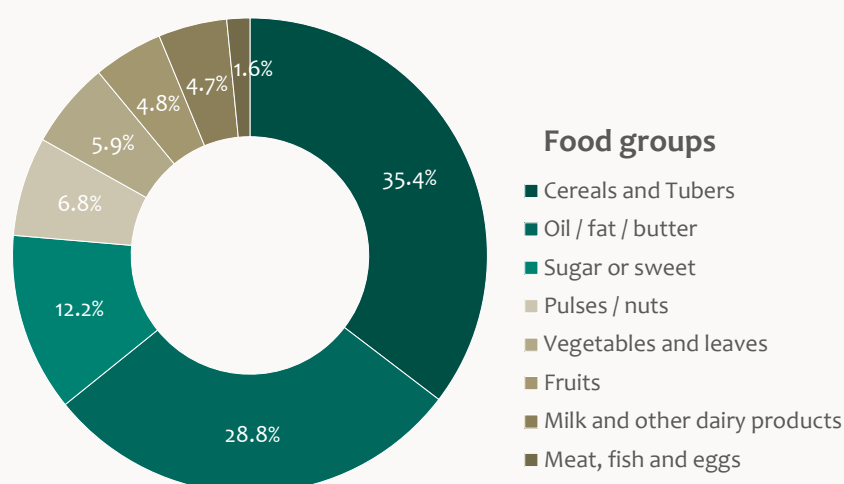


Based on the assessment findings, there is a relatively higher percentage of households in Kapisa with a high dietary diversity. We further investigated the reasons for this higher dietary diversity in Kapisa and it turned out that this province is ranked as the second top province, after Daikundi, of farmers cultivating vegetables for their own consumption and for selling (86%, refer to page 57, Figure 57), as well as the province in which a relatively higher percentage of targeted farmers have received training on nutrition and diet diversification (refer to page 59, Figure 61) and utilizing new vegetable growing methods (56%, refer to page 59, Figure 60), and that was categorized as least food insecure (67% borderline, refer to page 48, Figure 46). Furthermore, in 2023 alone, 25,632 smallholder farmers and herders in Kapisa were trained and supported with agricultural trainings and inputs such as certified wheat seed, varieties of vegetable seeds, fertilizers, farming tools, and livestock packages by NAC through its humanitarian projects.

Kapisa is a testimony to good practice on how project interventions including humanitarian support can lead to dietary diversity and overall improved household food security. It particularly highlights the importance of training to smallholder farmers on new and innovative agricultural methods and consistent support, including such activities as the provision of certified seed packages.

The food items' type (food groups) is another indicator to measure dietary diversity of households. However, it comes as no surprise that the surveyed households predominantly consume cereals and tubers, sugars, oils and fats as their main food groups, accounting for three fourths of the meals. Specifically, 35.4% of the targeted households' food consumption is attributed to cereals and tubers, 28.8% to oils and fats, and 12.2% to sugars or sweets. Only 6.8% are pulses and nuts, 5.9% vegetables, 4.8% fruit, 4.7% milk and dairy products, and 1.6% meat, fish, and eggs.

Figure 55: Food groups consumed by households (n = 583)

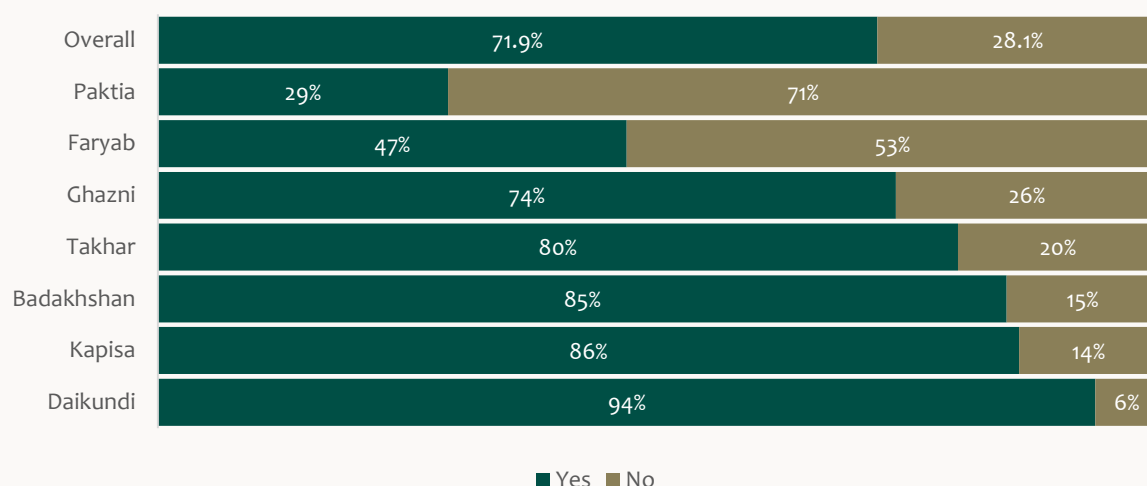


This indicates a need for balancing by reducing the households' dependency on oils and fats while also encouraging increased access to and consumption of vegetables, fruits, and protein sources. As emphasized by FAO (1996), food security is not only about access; it is also about quality, safety, and nutritiousness of food items to meet dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

Household dietary diversity is influenced by a multitude of factors, some of which were captured in this assessment, which revealed the significance of agriculture and livestock productivity in improving dietary diversity. Recognizing the importance of vegetables in nutrition and their value in the HDDS measurement scale, we specifically delve into vegetable productivity as a dietary diversity indicator. We explore the access, cultivation, and processing practices by smallholder farmers' households.

While 72% of the farmers confirmed they cultivated vegetables, the diversity remains limited, primarily dominated by onions and tomatoes, which are the most commonly grown vegetables in these communities. Other vegetables such as coriander, squash, turnips, red radishes, eggplant, okra, cabbage, cauliflower, and others, as reflected in the index, are rarely reported. It is worth noting that onions and tomatoes are indispensable ingredients in almost all meals served in Afghanistan and are cultivated by approximately 60% of smallholder farmers.

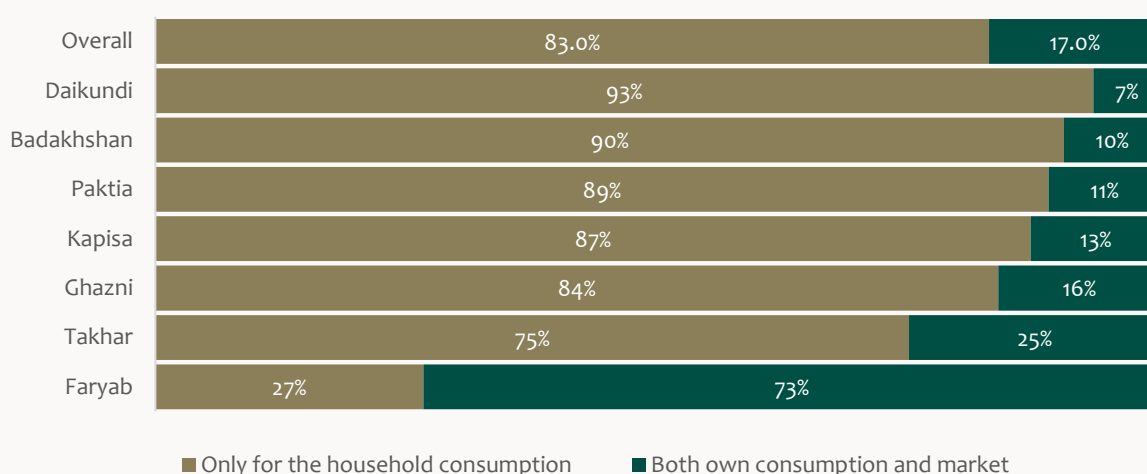
Figure 56: Farmers cultivating vegetables on their land (n = 253)



Of the farmers surveyed, 28.1% do not cultivate vegetables at all. Paktia and Faryab provinces are top on the list, with 71% and 53% of farmers respectively indicating that they do not cultivate vegetables at all. While our baseline has not provided us with a deeper understanding of the reasons behind this trend in these two provinces, it clearly underscores the importance of considering these gaps when implementing activities aimed at improving food security and diversity in these provinces.

Moreover, among the farming households engaged in vegetable cultivation utilizing their house gardens and agricultural land, 83% reported that they cultivate solely for household consumption. Only 17% of farmers confirmed that they cultivate for both their own consumption and the market.

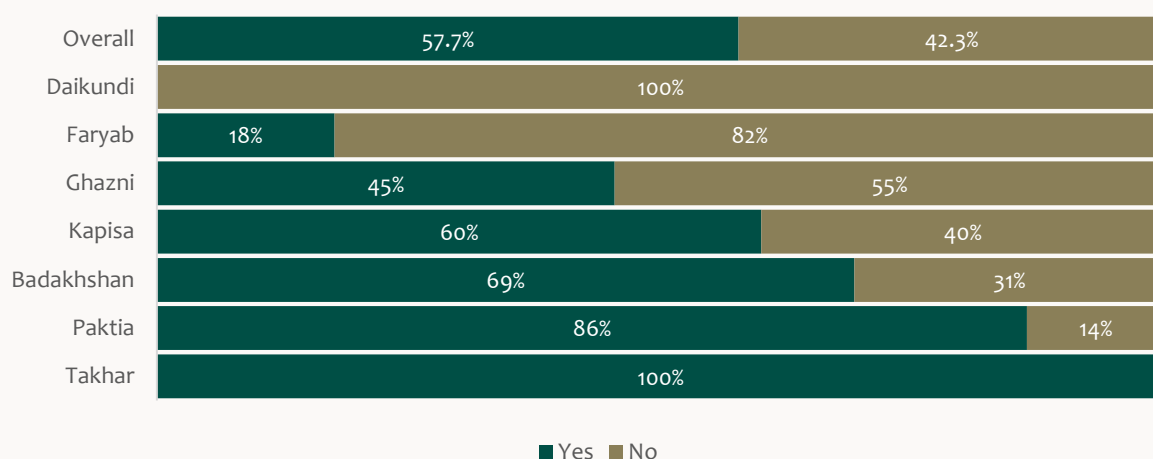
Figure 57: Main purpose for cultivating vegetables (n = 282)



In order to follow the reasons behind smallholder farmers who refrain from cultivating vegetables, we investigated their access to vegetable seeds in the local market. The findings revealed that 33% of the farmers reported a lack of access to vegetable seeds in their local markets. Although this limitation can impede a household's ability to cultivate vegetables and poses a significant challenge to enhancing their dietary diversity and food security in most hard-to-reach communities, it seems that it is not the only contributing factor everywhere. For

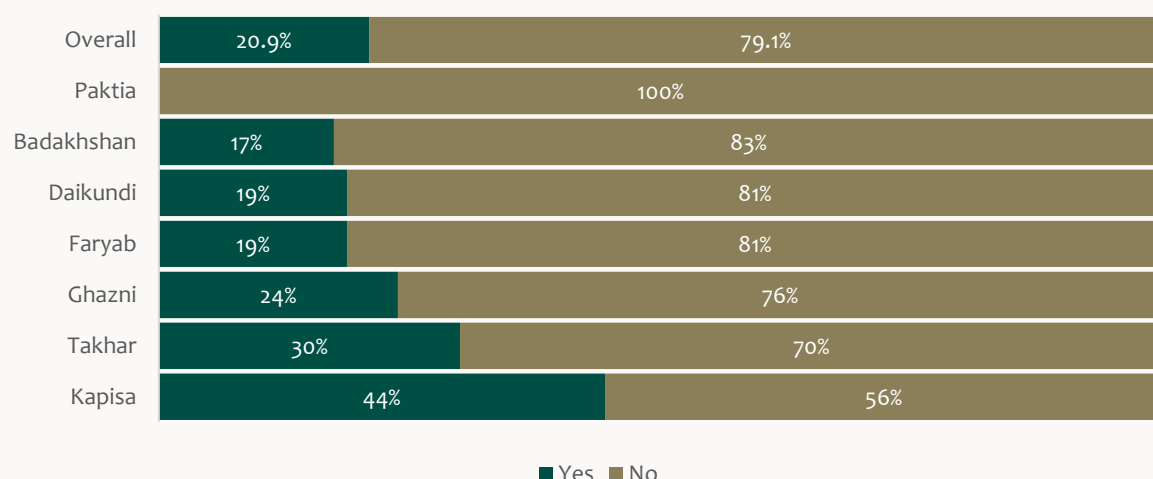
instance, in Paktia, access to vegetable seeds in the local market is very high but on the other hand households are less engaged in cultivating vegetables, partly because households (particularly in the provincial capital) often purchase inexpensive vegetables imported from Pakistan, which shares a border with the province. However, this is not always the case as the border is sometimes closed between the two countries.

Figure 58: Accessibility of vegetable seeds in the local market (n = 71)



Another factor identified as a deterrent to smallholder farmers in growing vegetables or cultivating many varieties is their capacity and knowledge about vegetables and cultivation techniques. When asked about their familiarity with and knowledge of new methods of vegetable cultivation, a staggering 79.1% of all smallholder farmers reported using traditional methods. Moreover, they revealed that they had not received any training on the usage of new cultivation methods for growing vegetables in the past three years. Figure 60 below illustrates the responses on learning and use of new vegetable growing methods across the provinces:

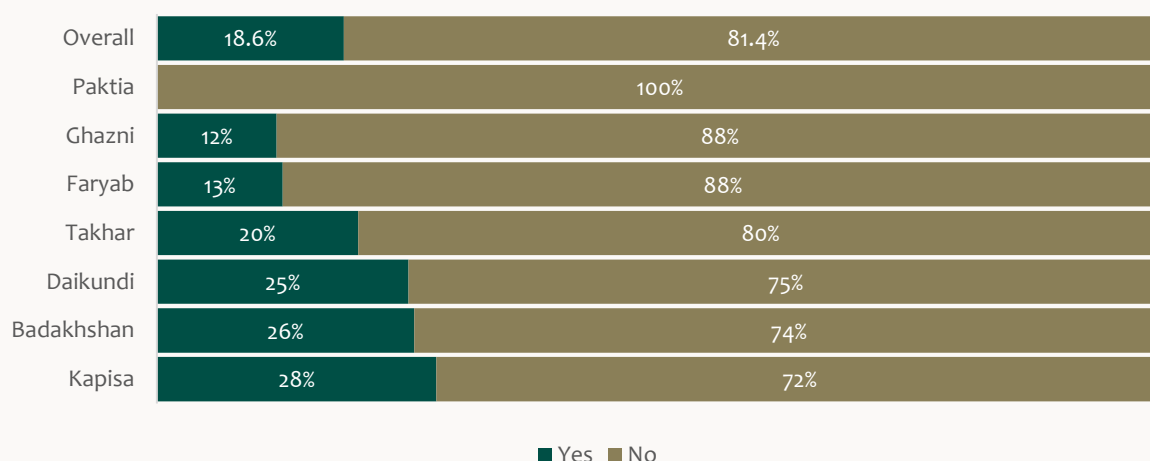
Figure 59: Smallholder farmers learned and used new vegetable growing methods (n = 253)



The data indicate a relatively higher percentage of farmers in Kapisa and Takhar provinces who have learned and adopted new methods of vegetable cultivation. These provinces also stand out as among the top regions where smallholder farmers cultivate the highest and diverse array of vegetables. Conversely, in Paktia Province, smallholder farmers who have not received any

training on new cultivation methods are among those who grow the fewest varieties of vegetables on their land. This perhaps suggests that smallholder farmers are not cultivating a diverse range of vegetables because they do not have the needed capacity and skills. It in turn underscores the significance of our lead farmer extension programs, which play a crucial role in enhancing the capabilities of smallholder farmers in rural communities. The approach supports smallholder farmers in growing nutritious food, including a wider variety of vegetables, thereby contributing to food security and diversification of households.

Figure 60: Smallholder farmers received training on nutrition and diet diversification (n = 253)



Household dietary diversity is significantly influenced by the behavior and knowledge of household members regarding nutrition and diet diversification. Unfortunately, this aspect is often overlooked in many food security interventions and often remains as an ‘unobserved’ factor. In this assessment, we took a deliberate approach by asking specific questions about diet diversification and whether the household members had received any training on related issues and topics. Overall, 81.4% of respondents reported a lack of training in this regard, underscoring a significant knowledge deficit. However, their expressed needs and interest in this area show the demand for providing relevant training and support to improve household dietary diversity and promote better nutrition practices and food security.

4.2 Access to Healthcare Services

Afghanistan continues to grapple with an enduring health crisis characterized by a multitude of challenges, including inadequate funding, a shortage of healthcare professionals, and limited access to quality healthcare, particularly for women, children, and those living in rural and hard-to-reach communities. In 2023, over 17.6 million individuals urgently required humanitarian health assistance, with 9.5 million individuals residing in over 20,000 villages with no or very little access to the most basic healthcare services. The most severe repercussions of this protracted health emergency are borne by Afghan women and children, who find themselves on the margins of society and increasingly vulnerable to adverse health outcomes, particularly concerning

reproductive, maternal, newborn, and child health. Tragically, preventable maternal and infant mortality claims the lives of 21 mothers and a staggering 148 infants¹⁰ every day.

In response, NAC, particularly through its ERA program, continues its health and health education initiatives, focusing on continued support for the Ghazanfar Institute of Health Sciences (GIHS) and other regional Institutes of Health Sciences (IHSs) to educate healthcare professionals, and providing RMNCAH healthcare services in rural and hard-to-reach communities through our Mini Continuum of Care Centers (CCCs) and Comprehensive Continuum of Care Centers (CCCCs). In this study, aligned with the program design and objectives, we particularly investigated variables related to access to basic healthcare services in the targeted communities. Exploring access to basic healthcare services, including those related to RMNCAH. We surveyed 583 households in all communities under this assessment. Although the assessment provides primary information about access issues, we acknowledge that a more comprehensive study is required to get a full overview of the healthcare situation in the targeted communities and districts. The following sections present the key findings under each program indicator.

4.6.1 Access to Quality Healthcare Facilities and RMNCAH Services

Objective Indicator (ERA II): # of communities with improved access to healthcare services.

Outcome Indicator (ERA II): # of income-poor community members from rural and hard-to-reach communities provided with emergency and quality healthcare services - disaggregated by age, gender, disabilities, and services provided.

To gain insights into the situation of healthcare services within our targeted communities, in this assessment we attempted to gather the experiences and perspectives of surveyed households regarding the accessibility of health facilities, types and availability of services, distance to clinics, and quality and affordability of services provided by public health facilities.

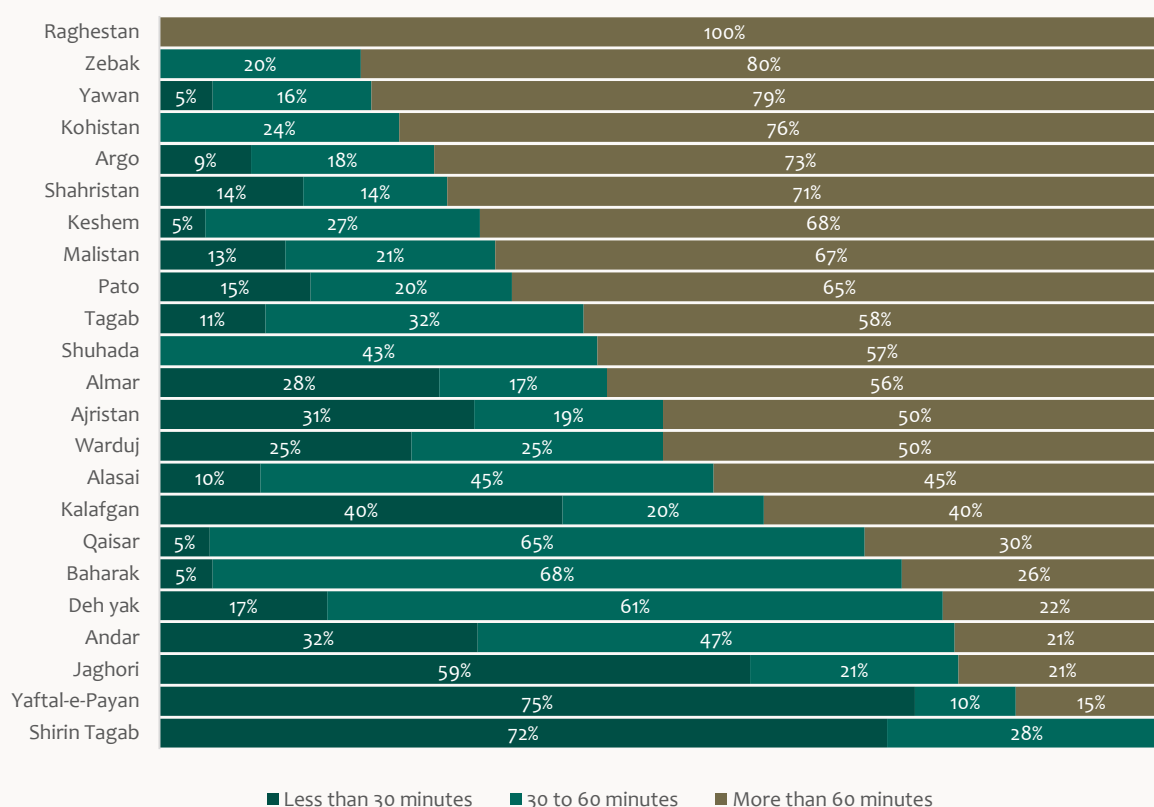
To start with, respondents were asked questions regarding where the community members usually go for healthcare services. Overall, 61% of the respondents reported that they have to go to district or provincial centers for treatment as they lack access to such services in their own communities. However, 30% confirmed that they have access to health centers in their communities or the communities close to their residences. Another 9% of the respondents reported access to some primary healthcare services such as midwifery assistance at home. Overall findings in this regard indicate that the surveyed community members, particularly in rural and hard-to-reach communities, have to travel long distances and often difficult routes to district or provincial centers to visit health clinics, which is not always easy, especially during winter due to snowfall and roadblocks.

Asking the respondents specific questions about the distance to the nearest health centers from their residences, 46% of the households reported that the distance to the nearest healthcare center is more than one hour. Another 29% reported a distance of 30 to 60 minutes and only 25% (primarily from district centers and semi-urban areas) mentioned a travel time of less than 30 minutes to reach a healthcare center from their residence. Out of the households who reported

¹⁰ WHO (2024). Health Emergency Appeal - Afghanistan : https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/documents/emergencies/2024-appeals/afghanistan---who-2024-health-emergency-appeal.pdf?sfvrsn=b87cf11a_1&download=true

more than one hour, 22.3% indicated that it takes more than two hours to reach the closest clinic and 23.5% reported a distance between one and two hours. However, it is crucial to acknowledge the variations and discrepancies between different provinces or districts. For example, the average distance (in time) to health facilities in Badakhshan was reported as 1.7 hours, while this period is relatively lower (0.6 hours) in Paktia. Similarly, variations existed between districts within a province. Raghestan and Yawan were found to be the hardest to reach districts with an average time to reach a healthcare center of 3 hours and 2.5 hours, respectively.

Figure 61: Distance of the closest health center from residences by walking (n = 583)



When comparing the surveyed districts, Kohistan, Raghestan, Yawan and Zebak districts in Badakhshan stand out where an absolute majority of respondents stated that the nearest health center is more than one hour away from their residence, followed by Shahrstan and Malistan in Ghazni Province where respectively 71% and 67% of respondents mentioned a similar distance. These districts encounter extreme difficulties in healthcare accessibility due to their harsh geographic characteristics, inaccessibility to the roads and distance from district or provincial centers. Consequently, residents must travel greater distances to access healthcare facilities, exacerbating the challenges associated with healthcare access, particularly for those families who are unable to pay a huge amount for transportation to district or provincial centers.

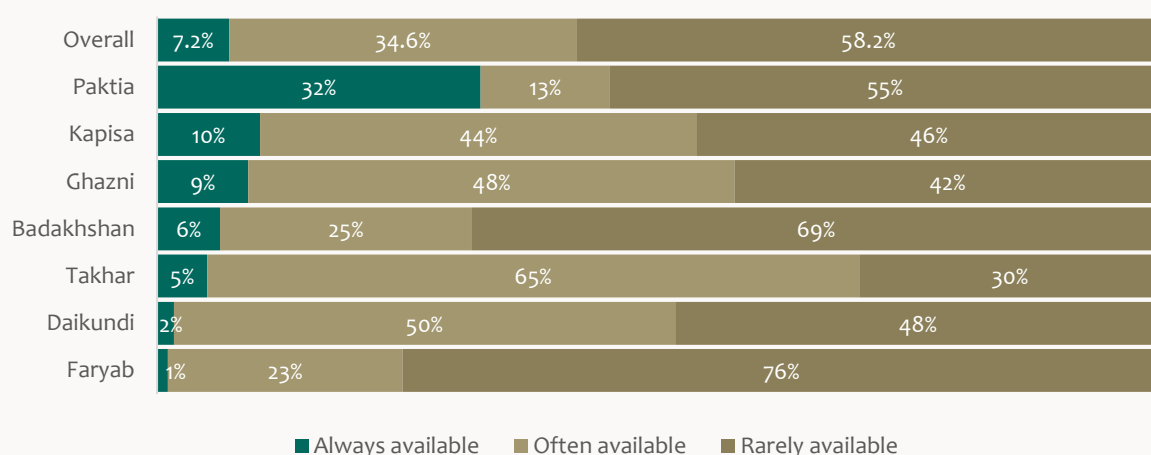
Through the FGDs and interviews, we documented multiple cases of the unfortunate loss of urgent patients and pregnant women during transportation to a provincial center. As reported by community members (both male and female), pregnant women face extreme life-threatening risks due to inadequate access to health facilities and timely medical care, often resulting in tragic outcomes for the mother and/or their child.

“Although there are public and private clinics at the provincial level, the geographical [harsh roads], financial and social barriers are the prevailing issues limiting women to access the clinics timely and resulting in loss of lives”.

Community member, Raghestan, Badakhshan

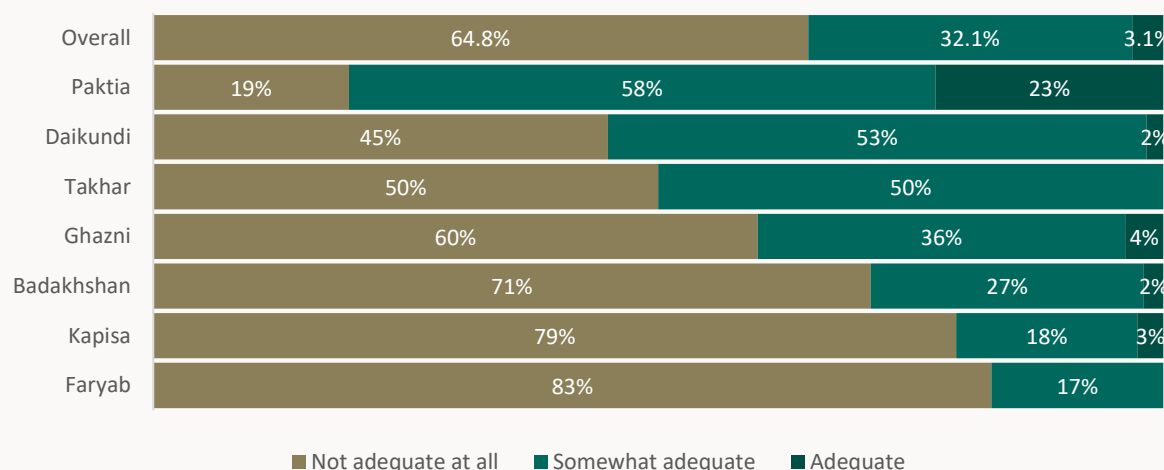
Even if individuals take the risk and travel to health clinics, it is also reported that services are not always available for visitors in public healthcare centers. Specifically, 58.2% reported that services are rarely available for visitors, 34.6% of the respondents mentioned that services are often available, and only 7.2% confirmed that services are always available.

Figure 62: Availability of healthcare services to community members (n = 583)



Moreover, we asked respondents about the adequacy of services provided by these facilities. The findings revealed that overall, 65% of respondents deemed the services provided by healthcare centers inadequate, while 32% stated they were somewhat adequate. Only 3% reported that the services provided by the healthcare centers were adequate. The primary reasons cited for inadequacy, as highlighted by community members and health center visitors, include a lack of healthcare personnel, especially female healthcare workers, and shortages of essential medicines, vaccinations, and medical equipment.

Figure 63: Adequacy of Healthcare Services (n = 583)

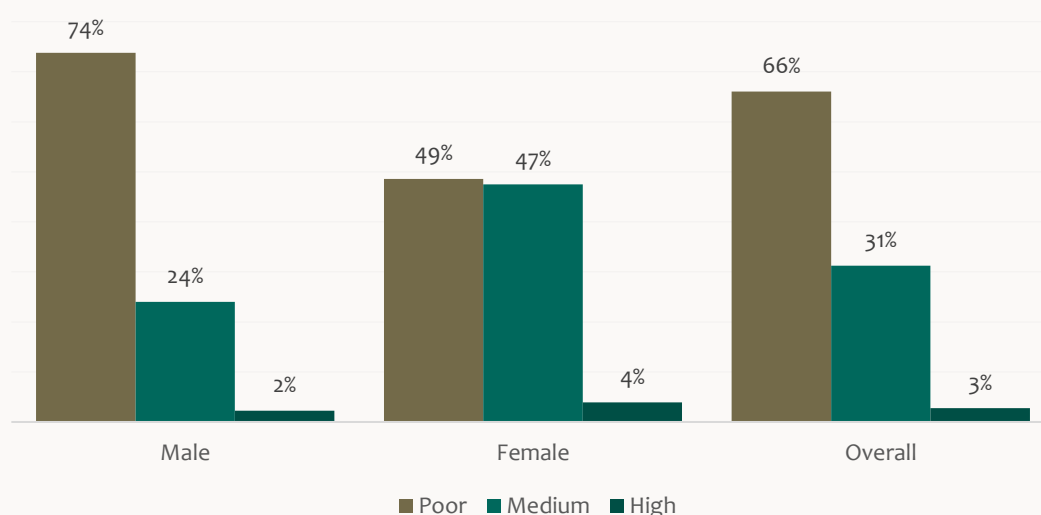


Participants in the FGDs discussed the recent increases in the number of patients in public clinics and hospitals, particularly at the district and provincial levels, and highlighted the need for additional healthcare personnel, especially nurses and midwives. They believe that insufficient staffing inevitably leads people to seek treatment for critical patients at private hospitals due to a lack of necessary facilities and skilled professionals in public centers. This, in turn, exacerbates the deterioration of family economic situations.

One of the provinces with a high reporting rate of ‘adequacy’ is Paktia, where an inspiring 81% of respondents expressed levels of satisfaction with the adequacy of health services in their province. This can be attributed to the positive effects of IHS Gardez in filling the gap of healthcare personnel in public and private hospitals and responding to improving access to quality healthcare services in this region. Collaborating with IHS Gardez, NAC has been running health education programs in midwifery, nursing, laboratory operations, pharmacy, and physiotherapy. Currently, there are 103 students (32 male, 71 female) studying in NAC’s midwifery, nursing, laboratory operations, and pharmacy programs. In addition to IHS Gardez, NAC is also implementing its health education program with IHSs in Jalalabad, Kapisa and most recently Badakhshan.

Following the access issue, in this baseline we also investigated the insights of the community members about the quality of existing healthcare services in the targeted provinces. Drawing from the OECD’s three core quality healthcare dimensions – effectiveness, safety, and patient-centeredness – the surveyed households were asked questions regarding the quality of healthcare services in their respective provinces. As shown in Figure 65 below, overall, 66% reported the quality of existing healthcare services as ‘poor’, with 31% rating it as ‘medium’ and only 3% considering it ‘high quality’.

Figure 64: Quality of healthcare services (n = 583)



When comparing the responses from male and female participants, a higher percentage of male respondents (74%) expressed dissatisfaction with healthcare services compared to female respondents, where 49% rated the services as poor.

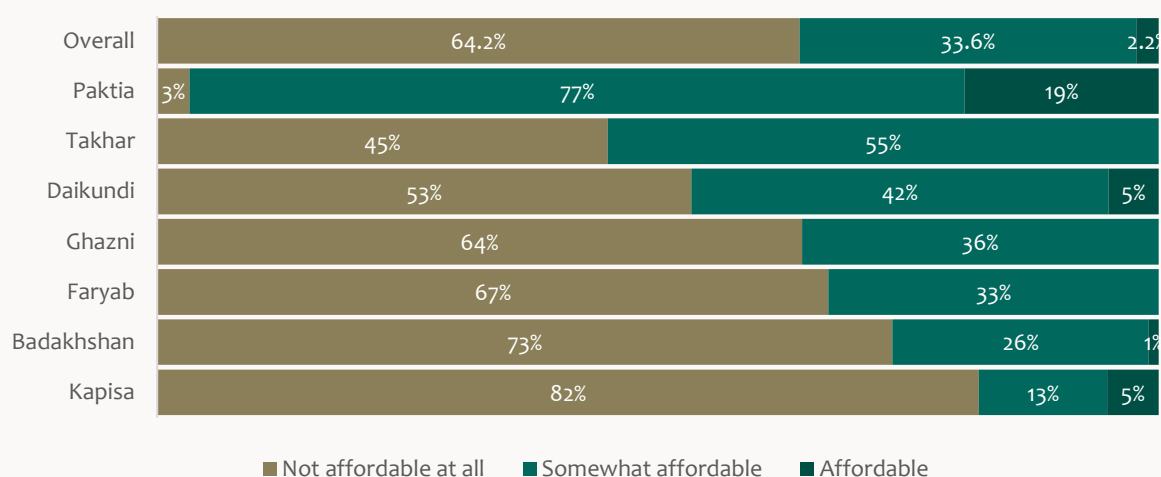
The underlying reasons cited for the poor quality of health services included, once again, a lack of qualified healthcare staff, insufficient medical equipment for diagnoses, and the low quality of medicines, as well as the behavior of healthcare workers in public health centers. Additionally, it

was reported by surveyed households that the quality of services in public hospitals has severely deteriorated since the regime change, and free services such as free medicine are no longer available for women and children.

Another element that we focused on in this assessment was the financial constraints that households face to receive healthcare services. Although public healthcare services (run by the government or NGOs) are supposed to be free of charge, there are considerable costs that visitors must pay, including transportation, medicines, additional diagnostic costs (often by private providers), and many other ‘hidden costs’. For example, rural households often incur significant expenses for transportation to reach the district or provincial center if there are no healthcare facilities available at the community level. Additionally, there is a common culture of clinic staff demanding money from patients as a ‘gift’ or *nazrana*, particularly after the successful delivery of a baby.

When asking the respondents about their ability to financially afford the services provided in community health centers, the results were as follows: overall, 64.2% of respondents found the cost of services to be not affordable at all, 33.6% mentioned that it was somewhat affordable, and only 2.2% found the cost of services affordable for them.

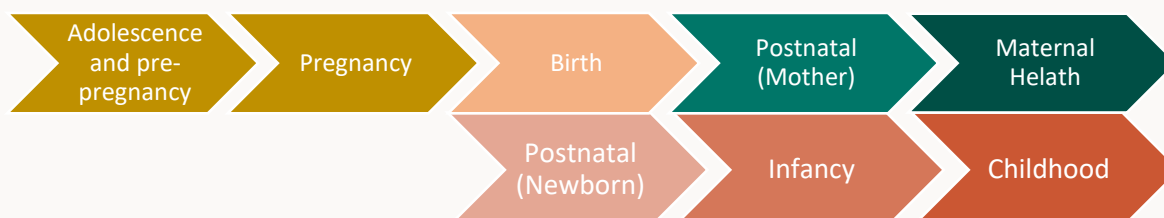
Figure 65: Affordability of healthcare services (n = 583)



The ability of households to afford healthcare costs in rural communities is directly linked to their livelihood and other rural income-generating activities. This dependence is evident in the Livelihoods section, where the average annual income is reported as AFN 90,838. Health expenses emerge as the second-largest expenditure for households, with an approximate allocation of AFN 19,000 (about 14.4% of household expenditure) per year. As such, when health expenses increase, the vulnerability of the family in other areas also grows, leading to potential issues such as food shortages and the adoption of negative coping strategies.

Overall, based on the desegregated data by districts, Almar (100%), Ajristan (94%), Yawan (84%), and Tagab (84%) are where the households reported that they are not able to afford the health services costs at all. As mentioned, these costs are not only for direct treatment or medicine, but also includes transportation and other hidden costs. Paktia (Gardez) stands out as having the lowest costs as the distance to the health center is significantly less compared to rural districts.

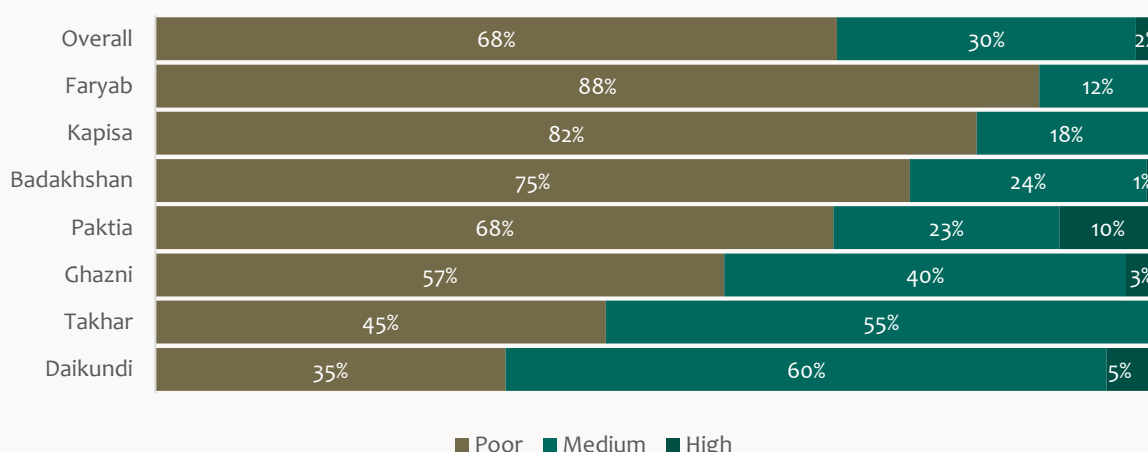
We extensively investigated the accessibility of RMNCAH services within the communities surveyed. This inquiry is pivotal within the framework of our ERA II program. Currently, we run and support eight CCCs in Kapisa, Paktia, and Khost, with plans to expand to other provinces through our new CCCCs. These centers partially offer RMNCAH services to rural communities, following the WHO guidelines on RMNCAH. Both the CCCs and CCCCs provide essential healthcare packages tailored to the needs of women, adolescent girls, and children at critical life stages, particularly focusing on maternal and newborn health.



In this baseline we asked the participants to rate their accessibility to RMNCAH services in their communities. Overall, 68% of the respondents indicated that access to RMNCAH services is poor, followed by 30% who mentioned their access is medium, and only 2% of the respondents mentioned having high access.

Faryab, with 88%, Kapisa, with 82%, and Badakhshan, with 75%, exhibited the highest rates of poor access to RMNCAH services. Upon closer examination of the data from these three provinces, we found that Raghestan, Almar, and Qaisar were the districts where access to RMNCAH services was reported to be extremely poor. In Kapisa, despite many communities being covered by existing NAC CCCs, due to its large population and distance between communities, the challenges still persist, and communities suggested the establishment of more community healthcare centers.

Figure 66: Accessibility to RMNCAH services at the community level (n = 583)

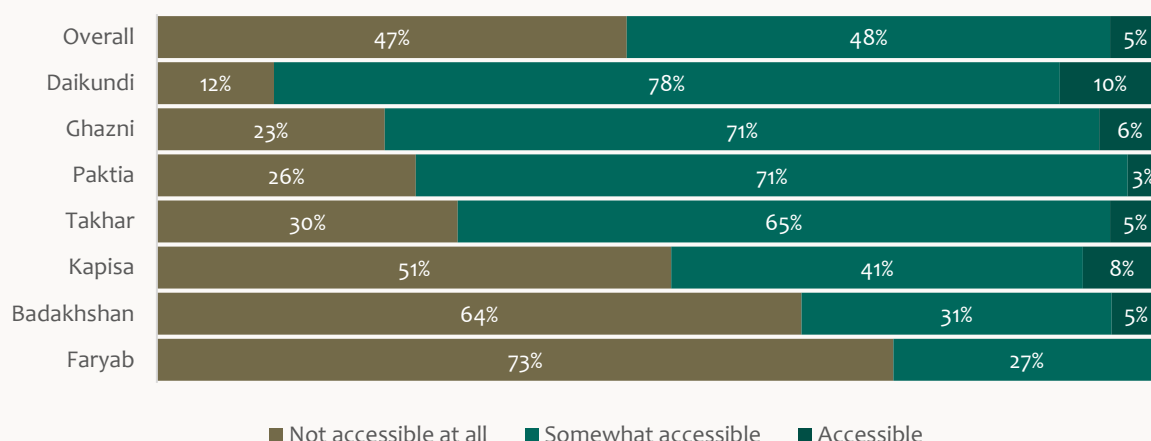


The lack of access to RMNCAH services is particularly acute in hard-to-reach and mountainous communities like the Ragh districts (Kohistan, Raghestan and Yawan) of Badakhshan, where the distance between communities is significantly high. As reported by community members, this challenge is exacerbated during winter road closures due to snow. It is noted that in the absence of accessible roads, households are forced to rely on alternatives which are not always appropriate. For example, using donkeys a means of transportation, which often poses serious

risks to the health and well-being of pregnant women and children in emergency situations, or at least leads to significant delays in reaching healthcare centers.

The challenge becomes even more apparent when we ask households about their access to antenatal and postnatal healthcare services for mothers and newborns. In total, 5% reported services being ‘accessible’, 48% reported ‘somewhat accessible’, and 47% of respondents reported that mothers and newborns have ‘no access at all’.

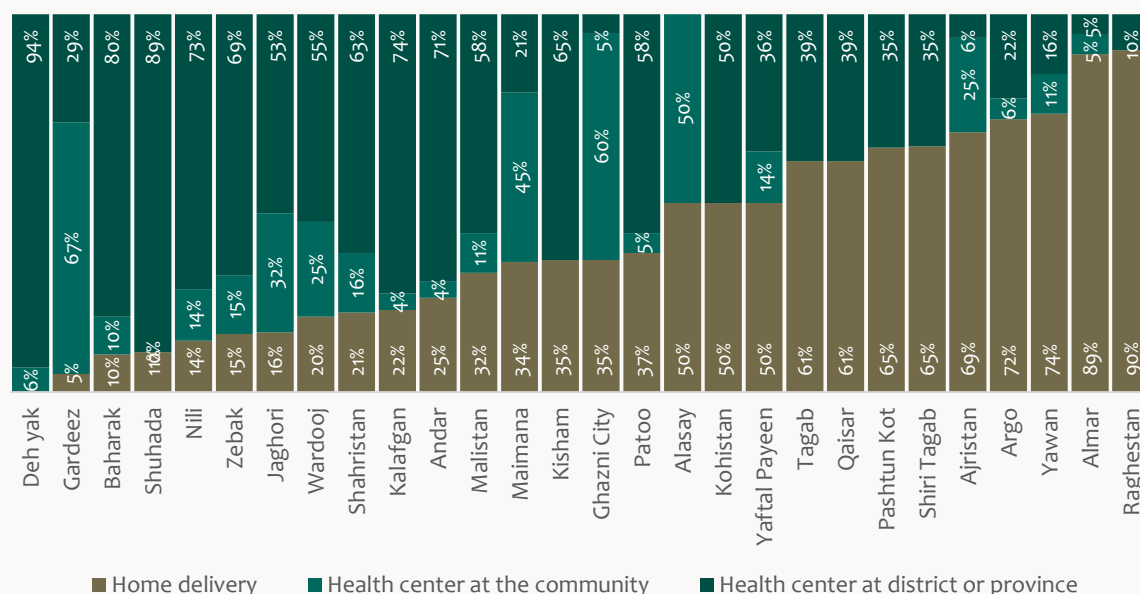
Figure 67: Accessibility of mothers and newborns to antenatal and postnatal care services (n = 583)



This indeed highlights the access gap of mothers and newborn babies to ANC and PNC services in the targeted districts and underscores the severe need for the expansion of the CCCs and CCCCs in rural communities, as through these centers we provide ANC and PNC services. Our records show that in 2023 alone a total of 36,200 people visited the NAC CCCs mainly for ANC and PNC services.

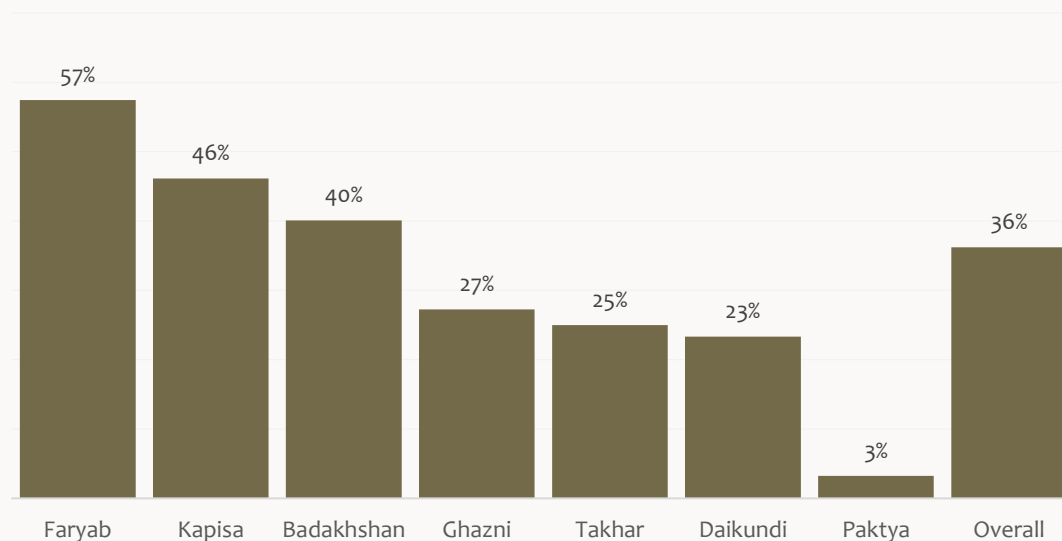
The limitation was further evidenced when we asked where mothers usually deliver their babies. Out of 583 respondents, 224 (38%) stated that mothers deliver at home. Among these, 87% reported deliveries without unskilled midwives, and only 13% confirmed access to trained skilled midwives. Another 16% reported that they deliver at community health centers and 46% said that they have to travel to the district or provincial hospital for delivery.

Figure 68: Where Do Community Women Deliver their Babies? (n = 583)



Even those with access to delivery at health centers were not satisfied with the quality of the services. As mentioned earlier, 66% of the baseline respondents reported that the quality of health services in the public and private healthcare centers are not sufficient or of good quality.

Figure 69: Households experienced mother or newborn mortality due to poor healthcare services (n = 583)



As a result of the challenges discussed, a total of 36% of the respondents reported that their households experienced maternal or newborn mortality in the past three years. Excluding the urban and semi-urban areas from the dataset, the situation becomes even worse. Looking at the district level distribution of data, 40% of rural communities experienced maternal or newborn mortality in the last three years. Faryab (particularly Almar), Kapisa and Badakhshan (Largely Raghestan and Yawan) are at the top of the list respectively with 57%, 56%, and 40% confirming that their households experienced the mortality of mothers and/or newborn babies, followed by Ghazni (27%), Takhar (25%), and Daikundi (23%) reporting mortality in the last three years.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This baseline assessment provides an overview of the current life and livelihood situation of assessed households across 236 communities in 28 districts. Our household survey particularly highlighted the main challenges of surveyed households and communities in regard to their livelihoods, food access and diversification, natural resource management, natural disaster and climate change adaptation, and access to healthcare services.

A substantial number of assessed households reported reduced agricultural productivity (71%) due to challenges such as drought (lack of rainfall and water scarcity), insufficient seeds, poor soil fertility, and lack of knowledge on new farming methods, techniques and technologies. As a result, the smallholder farmer respondents reported decreased yields compared to the previous year. Similarly, livestock productivity (as the primary or secondary income source for at least 33.4% of households) was also severely affected by drought, lack of fodder, animal diseases, and limited access to veterinary services. According to respondents, these challenges have severely contributed to reduced household incomes and economic benefits from agricultural and livestock activities, with 66% of surveyed households including smallholder farmers and smallholder herders reported income reductions since last year.

Food insecurity still remained a major problem, where only 2.9% of surveyed households reported having acceptable FCS and 66% consumed less than five food groups in the previous week, indicating limited dietary diversity. Coping strategies such as relying on less preferred foods, borrowing food, limiting portion sizes, and reducing meals have been widely adopted by many targeted households, with 52% of households reporting high negative coping strategies and 36.5% of households engaging in medium coping strategies.

While some sustainable natural resource management (NRM) and climate-smart agriculture practices such as planting trees and grass bands, tracing, and avoiding bush burning are being adopted, the rate of adoption remains low and stands only at 16.67%.

In addition, the assessment revealed gaps in community preparedness to natural disasters and the impacts of climate change. The gaps include a lack of active DRR committees in the targeted communities, and the absence of community level initiatives such as hazard mapping, early warning systems, and stockpiles in the newly identified communities. In addition, according to community members, the lack of protective infrastructure such as protection walls and check dams is the key challenge preventing their preparedness and ultimately their resilience to natural disasters.

Access to quality healthcare services, particularly RMNCAH services, remains limited for a significant number of the surveyed households. The shortage of healthcare personnel, especially female healthcare workers at the community level, insufficient and poor quality of healthcare services in public and private healthcare clinics, and the unaffordability healthcare services in private and public facilities are indicated as the key challenges in this sector.

To effectively address the gaps reported by assessed households, the assessment puts forth the following recommendations:

- 1) The household size considered by most aid agencies, including the UN, is an average of 7 members per household, which reflects the overall household composition in urban and rural settings. However, our findings reveal a larger household size in rural communities, with an average of 9.82 members per household. Hence, to ensure that efforts meet the

- needs of rural households effectively, it is recommended to consider the larger size for rural households in providing support and assistance in both the short and long term.
- 2) Because many of our potential project participants, particularly smallholder farmers, herders, SHG members, and NRM and DRR committee members, are unable to read and write, it is strongly recommended to use more visual IEC materials instead of written text in our capacity building programs with the community members. It is also helpful to promote the participation and effective engagement of communities that we are working with in our activities.
 - 3) Out of an average of 4.1 working-age household members per household, only 1.8 members are currently contributing to household incomes. As such, with 56% of working-age household members out of a job, creating job opportunities through construction and rehabilitation of infrastructure, MSMEs, SHGs, and entrepreneurship programs is recommended. The NAC community contracting approach in construction projects can effectively enable households to create jobs and generate income within the community. For younger adults, the TVET programs and initiatives are particularly recommended to address unemployment in the longer term.
 - 4) As illustrated in the findings section, agricultural productivity is negatively affected by natural disasters (particularly droughts and seasonal floods), insufficient farming capacities and conventional farming methods and technologies, the lack of proper irrigation systems, and the unaffordability of seeds and fertilizers. As reported, these challenges have predominantly led smallholder farmers to keep 32% of irrigated land and 53% of their rain-fed land uncultivated. Addressing these challenges can effectively increase yields and enhance agricultural productivity in the targeted communities. To do so, needs-based construction and rehabilitation of agro-based protective and productive infrastructure, providing comprehensive capacity building support, and ensuring access to agricultural inputs for smallholder farmers are the key recommendations.
 - 5) Addressing challenges related to animal feed and veterinary services for smallholder herders is essential for ensuring sustainable household incomes. Recommendations collected from communities include promoting self-sufficiency in the provision of veterinary services (for example through training of community based veterinary workers), producing animal feed by the community members, and distributing livestock packages including fodder seed.
 - 6) The impact of climate change and natural disasters has had a devastating effect on the productivity of agriculture, horticulture, and livestock. Given that the government does not have the capacity or resources to build community resilience against the impacts of these hazards, it is particularly important to intervene and strengthen community structures such as CDMCs and DDMCs to take ownership and responsibility in building resilience to the impact of climate change and natural disasters.
 - 7) Sustainable natural resource management at the community level requires building adaptive capacities and engagement that enables communities to collectively work for change and effectively respond to potential disturbances. The empowerment of community-level structures and institutions such as CDMCs, DDMCs, NRM committees, lead farmer associations, follow farmer clusters, and SHGs are particularly recommended to improve environmental awareness and behaviors.
 - 8) A majority of the smallholder farmers are reportedly adopting conventional agriculture methods and technologies where natural resources are ineffectively and inefficiently managed. Aligning farming practices with CSA is an important step towards reducing the impact of climate change, increasing the sustainable management of natural resources, and improving agricultural and horticultural productivity that creates both economic and

environmental benefits. In doing so, it is recommended not only to focus on capacity building programs but also ensure that smallholder farmers have access to agricultural inputs and resources and their lands are protected.

- 9) Despite the emergency and humanitarian assistance provided to vulnerable households in response to ongoing poverty and hunger in the country over the past few years, an absolute majority of surveyed households, particularly in rural communities, do not have enough to eat. This situation not only calls for the continuation of such assistance but also recommends a shift in modality from short-term emergency response to more long-term interventions to sustainably address the issue.
- 10) To improve food security and household dietary diversity in rural Afghan communities, prioritizing agriculture and livestock productivity is crucial. Therefore, enabling smallholder farmers, herders, women in SHGs, and MSMEs should be prioritized. Simultaneously, it is recommended to establish local knowledge on climate-smart agriculture to ensure the cultivation of vegetables, crops, and products that are adapted to current climate change trends and market needs.
- 11) Improving market linkages and enhancing sales and marketing skills among smallholder farmers, herders, SHG members, and MSME members are essential for enabling them to sell their products effectively.
- 12) Healthcare, particularly RMNCAH services, is rarely accessible in the majority of the targeted communities. If there is any, unaffordability and inadequacy have been consistently reported. Given the poor economic conditions of the people in these communities, establishing accessible, affordable, and possibly community-led healthcare centers in hard-to-reach communities with a focus on RMNCAH services including antenatal and postnatal services is recommended by respondents in this study.

ANNEXES

Annex I: Household Survey Questionnaire

BASELINE ASSESSMENT

ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Important Note for Enumerators: Please get consent BEFORE you start filling in the questionnaire.

Hello, my name is (_____), I am working with Norwegian Afghanistan Committee (NAC). Your household has been randomly selected to participate in this baseline assessment. We want to learn about the situation of households that are participating or supposed to participate in NAC activities so that we can understand better the current situations in your community, your needs and vulnerability in relation to our future programs. This study is confidential, and your data will be used anonymously, and your name will not be disclosed anywhere. You have the right to withdraw your data at any time within two weeks after filling in the questionnaire. This questionnaire will take approximately 45 - 60 minutes to complete. And you must be over 16 years old to participate in this study.

Consent: I consent to participating in this study and am happy to complete this questionnaire.

0 = No, 1 = Yes if no, go to the end of the questionnaire and say thank you.

A: BASIC INFORMATON

No	Question	Answer
A1	Interview date	[Select date automatically from your tablet]
A2	Interviewer name	[Insert text here]
A3	Province	1 = Badakhshan 2 = Daikundi 3 = Faryab 4 = Ghazni 5 = Kapisa 6 = Paktia 7 = Takhar
A4	District	[Select district from the list]
A5	Village / community name	[Insert text here]

B: HOUSEHOLD DEMOGPRAHIC INFORMATION

No	Question	Answer
B1	Is respondent head of household?	0 = No 1 = Yes
B2	Respondent's name	[Insert text here]
B3	Respondent's gender	1 = Female 2 = Male
B4	Respondent's contact number	[Insert contact number here]
B5	Respondent's age	[Insert number here]

B6	Respondent's marital status	1 = Single 2 = Married 3 = Divorced 4 = Widowed 5 = Prefer not to answer							
B7	Respondent's education level	1 = No schooling 2 = Informal education (Islamic studies) 3 = Primary education 4 = Lower secondary education 5 = Upper secondary education 6 = Diploma (Grade 14) 7 = Bachelor and higher							
B8	Disability status of respondent	1 = Disabled – not able to work 2 = Disabled – able to work 3 = No disability							
B9	Employment status of respondent?	1 = Employed – regular wage 2 = Employed – casual labor 3 = Self-employed 5 = Out of work / not earning 6 = Other							
B10	Respondent type [Multiple choice]	1 = Smallholder farmer 2 = Smallholder herder 3 = SHG member 4 = DRR committee member 5 = NRM committee member							
B11	Please indicate number of household members based on below disaggregation								
	Total household member	0-5 years old		6-17 years old		18-64 years old		65 and above	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
B12	Has your household benefited from one or more of these services in the last three years? [Multiple choice]	1 = Health 2 = Education 3 = Dialogue and Conflict Transformation 4 = Disaster Risk Reduction 5 = Natural Resources Management 6 = Food Security 7 = Shelter / NFI 8 = Business activities through SHGs 9 = Others, please specify							

C: HOUSEHOLD INCOME & SPENDING AND LIVELIHOOD INCOME & SPENDING AND LIVELIHOOD

No	Question	Answer
C1	Does your household have any source of income?	0 = No 1 = Yes

C2	If yes, what are the household's three main sources of income? [Multiple choice]	1 = Farming production 2 = Orchard production 3 = Livestock production 4 = Poultry farming/keeping 5 = Agricultural wage labor 6 = Non-agricultural Wage labor 7 = Salary work 8 = Remittance 9 = Small business / Petty trade / shopkeeping 10 = Assistance from government/UN/NGOs 11 = Others, please specify
C3	How much is your household yearly income from these sources (in AFN)?	[Insert number here]
C4	How many household members contribute to the household income?	[Insert number here]
C5	How has your household income changed since last year?	1 = Significantly decreased 2 = Decreased 3 = Remained the same 4 = Increased 5 = Significantly increased
C6	If decreased, what were the main reasons? [Multiple choice]	1 = Drought 2 = Flood 3 = Landslide 4 = Avalanches 5 = Crop diseases 6 = Reduced employment rate 7 = Inflation rate 8 = Insecurity 9 = Death of household head/member 10 = Displacement 11 = Other, please specify
C7	How much is your household yearly expenses (AFN)?	[Insert number here]
C8	What were three main household's expenditures in the last year in order of priority? [Multiple choice]	1 = Food 2 = Shelter and cloths 3 = Health 4 = Education 5 = Ceremonies (wedding, dead, etc.) 6 = Other, please specify
C9	Is the household yearly income sufficient to cover the household yearly expenses?	1 = Very insufficient 2 = Insufficient 3 = Sufficient 4 = Very sufficient
C10	Have you experienced any improvement in livelihood opportunities in the last three years?	0 = No 1 = Yes
C11	If yes, what type of improvement have you experienced? [Multiple choice]	1 = Improved food security 2 = Improved employment opportunities 3 = Improved resilience to natural disasters 4 = Improved life skills 5 = Improvement in agricultural productivity 6 = Improvement in livestock productivity 7 = Others, please specify

C12	If no, what were the main reasons?	[Insert text here]
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D: DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

How do you rate your community in initiation of the following practices towards improved resilience to the impact of natural disasters?

#	Initiatives/Practices	Answer
D1	Our community has a trained and equipped Community Disaster Management Committee (CDMC) prepared to actively respond to natural disasters.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree
D2	Our community received DRR trainings and First aid kits.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree
D3	There is an active District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC) that supports CDMC to effectively respond to natural disasters.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree
D4	Disaster-protective infrastructures (protection walls, gabion walls, etc.) have been constructed / rehabilitated in our community that helps mitigate the impact of natural disasters.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree
D5	Our community has learned and willing to initiate planting of saplings and drought-resilient seeds to reduce the impact of natural disasters.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree
D6	Safe zones are identified in our community for emergency situations.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree
D7	Early warning systems are established to inform community members about the occurrence of the disasters in advance.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree
D8	Community hazard maps are developed to help in understanding of risks of natural disasters and ways to mitigate them.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree
D9	Our community has conducted disaster simulation exercises that helped keep our people alert.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree

D10	Community members are aware of effective preparation and response to disasters.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree
How do you rate the preparedness and responsiveness of your community to the impact of natural disasters?		
No	Community Initiatives	Responses
D11	We have a Community Disaster Management Committee (CDMC) that helps community members in preparing for and responding to natural disasters.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree
D12	We have a community-based Disaster Management Plan (CBDMP) in our community.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree
D13	Awareness raising campaigns have been conducted and DRR messages have been disseminated among community members.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree
D14	We have DRR tools and packages.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree
D15	There are reserves/stockpiles of food and/or non-food items in your community for emergency situations.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree
D16	We have access to a temporary shelter in case of an emergency like a flood, earthquake, avalanche, land slide, etc.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree
D17	Our community has initiated mobilization of resources for additional support to prepare for and respond to disasters.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree
D18	There are savings / contributions for emergency responses in your community.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree
D19	We have the contact numbers of responsible employees of INGO or Governmental organizations to inform about the disaster.	1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree

E: SMALLHOLDER FARMERS

#	Question	Response	
E1	How much arable land does your household own or have access to? (In Jerib)	Irrigated land	[Insert number here]
		Rain-fed land	[Insert number here]
E2	How much of the arable land did you cultivate last year? (In Jerib)	Irrigated land	[Insert number here]
		Rain-fed land	[Insert number here]
E3	If G2 is less than G1, What were the main three reasons to leave your land uncultivated? [Multiple choice]	1 = Lack of seeds 2 = Poor seed quality 3 = Poor soil fertility 4 = Pests/Weeds/crop diseases 5 = lack of rain 6 = Lack of irrigation water 7 = Lack of animal plowing 8 = Lack of agriculture tools 9 = Lack of Labor 10 = Insecurity 11 = Natural disasters 12 = Other, please specify. 13 = Land did not remain uncultivated	
E4	Are agricultural lands in your community prone to the effects of natural disasters?	0 = No 1 = Yes	
E5	If yes, what main natural disasters are threatening lands in your community?	1 = Flood 2 = Earthquake 3 = Landslide 4 = Avalanches 5 = Others, please specify	
E6	Are the current protective structures (DDR infrastructures) able to protect lands in your community from natural disasters?	1 = Not protective at all 2 = Somewhat protective 3 = Very protective	
E7	Do the current productive infrastructures (NRM infrastructures) improve agricultural productivity in your community?	1 = Do not improve at all 2 = Somewhat improve 3 = Improve a lot	
E8	Is there a need for construction / rehabilitation of more productive and protective infrastructures to support agricultural productivity and improve resilience to natural disasters in your community?	0 = No 1 = Yes	
E9	If yes, what main productive and / or protective infrastructures are needed? [Multiple choice]	1 = Irrigation canal 2 = Gabion wall 3 = Check-dams 4 = Upper catchment 5 = Retention wall 7 = Water reservoir 8 = Trench 9 = Rehabilitating pasture/rangeland 10 = Others, please specify	
E10	Do you cultivate vegetables in your land or house?	0 = No 1 = Yes	

E11	If yes, what type of vegetables do you cultivate in your land or house?	1 = Turnip 2 = Tomato 3 = Eggplant 4 = Okra 5 = Squash 6 = Cauliflower 7 = Cabbage 8 = Coriander 9 = Onion 10 = Red radish 11 = Others, please specify
E12	Do you grow these vegetables for the household consumption or you also sale them in the market?	1 = Only for the household consumption 2 = Only for selling in the market 3 = Both own consumption and market
E13	Do you have access to vegetables seeds in the local market?	0 = No 1 = Yes
E14	Have you grown any new varieties of vegetables in the last three years?	0 = No 1 = Yes
E15	If yes, which new vegetables have you grown? <i>[Multiple choice]</i>	1 = Turnip 2 = Tomato 3 = Eggplant 4 = Okra 5 = Squash 6 = Cauliflower 7 = Cabbage 8 = Coriander 9 = Onion 10 = Red radish 11 = Others, please specify
E16	Have you learned and used any new vegetable growing methods in the last three years?	0 = No, 1 = Yes
E17	If yes, which methods? <i>[Multiple choice]</i>	1 = Line cultivation 2 = Proper irrigation method 3 = Use of fertilizers 4 = Use of appropriate seed rate 5 = Others, please specify
E18	Have you received training on nutrition and diet diversification from any organization in the last three years?	0 = No 1 = Yes
E19	What type of fertilizers do you use in your farming lands? <i>[Multiple choice]</i>	1 = Chemical fertilizer 2 = Animal manure 3 = Compost 4 = Others, please specify
E20	On average, how much (in percentage) chemical fertilizer did you use in the previous year?	<i>[Insert percentage here]</i>
E21	Have you received any agricultural input or support from any NGOs / Government in the last three years?	0 = No 1 = Yes

E22	If yes, what type of agricultural inputs and support you have received? [Multiple choice]	1 = Certified seed 2 = Fertilizers 3 = Agricultural tools and equipment 4 = Training on new farming methods 5 = Sapling 6 = Others, please specify
E23	What types of training have you received in the last three years? (LFE) [Select all that apply]	1 = Modern farming methods 2 = Composting 3 = Fertilizer Application 4 = Nutrition 5 = Effective use of IPM (Integrated Pest Management) 6 = Bio-intensive gardening 7 = Orchard layout (practical) 8 = Pruning (practical) 9 = Grafting (practical) 10 = Soil and water conservation 11 = Other, please specify
E24	What types of activities have you carried out to support farming in your community? (LFE) [Select all that apply]	1 = Provided technical advice to other farmers 2 = Monitored community farmers activities 3 = Disseminated agricultural messages 4 = Mobilized farmers for agricultural meetings 5 = Sought assistance for identified agricultural problems 6 = Tested agricultural technologies with farmers 7 = Organized practical farming classes with farmers 8 = Organized field farmer days to share experience 9 = Other, please specify 10 = None
E25	What types of agricultural technologies / methods have been disseminated in your community? (LFE) [Select all that apply]	1 = Improved farming methods 2 = Composting 3 = Crop storage 4 = Nutrition 5 = Seed multiplication 6 = Grafting 7 = Pruning 8 = Soil and water conservation 9 = Orchard layout 10 = Effective use of IPM 11 = Effective use of INM 12 = Effective use of ICM 13 = Bio-intensive gardening 14 = Other, please specify 15 = None

E26	What types of environmental-friendly and sustainable NRM practices have been adopted in your community to reduce the impact of climate change? (Environmental awareness) [Select all that apply]	1 = Planting grass bands at the edge of fields 2 = Tracing and contouring sloped lands 3 = Rehabilitation of pastures 4 = Controlling overgrazing 5 = Construction of NRM infrastructures 6 = Avoiding bush burning 7 = Forests management 8 = Reducing usage of pesticides 9 = Managing wastes (human waste, organic waste) 10 = Protecting drinking waters from pollution 11 = Other, please specify 12 = None
E27	How has your agricultural productivity / harvest changed since last year?	1 = Decreased a lot 2 = Decreased a little 3 = Remained same 4 = Increased a little 5 = Increased a lot
E28	If decreased, what were the main reasons?	[Insert text here]
E29	If increased, what were the main reasons?	[Insert text here]
E30	Is there a NRM committee in your community?	0 = No 1 = Yes
E31	If yes, how functional is the NRM committee?	1 = Not functional at all 2 = Somewhat functional 3 = Very functional

F: CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE

How do you rate the adoption of climate-smart agriculture practices in your community?		
#	Practices	Response
F1	Plantation of drought-tolerant non-fruit saplings	1 = Not at all 2 = Low 3 = Moderate 4 = High
F2	Plantation of climate-adapted fruit saplings	1 = Not at all 2 = Low 2 = Moderate 3 = High
F3	Construction/rehabilitation of agro-based infrastructures (e.g., Irrigation canal, intake, supper passage, etc.)	1 = Not at all 2 = Low 2 = Moderate

		3 = High
F4	Water conservation (e.g., drip irrigation)	1 = Not at all 2 = Low 2 = Moderate 3 = High
F5	IPM practices (e.g., installing carton on trunk, spraying of dishwashing liquid for pest control, usage of lime on trunk, pest trap, distance between crops, weed control, etc.)	1 = Not at all 2 = Low 2 = Moderate 3 = High
F6	Usage of climate-adapted seeds (e.g., drought resilient seeds, sesame seeds, rain-fed alfalfa seeds, chickpea seeds, etc.)	1 = Not at all 2 = Low 2 = Moderate 3 = High
F7	Usage of organic fertilizers (over chemical fertilizers)	1 = Not at all 2 = Low 2 = Moderate 3 = High
F8	Establishment and development of greenhouses	1 = Not at all 2 = Low 2 = Moderate 3 = High
F9	Mulching	1 = Not at all 2 = Low 2 = Moderate 3 = High
F10	Crop rotation	1 = Not at all 2 = Low 2 = Moderate 3 = High

G: LIVESTOCK HOLDER

#	Question	Response
G1	Does your household own any type of livestock?	0 = No 1 = Yes
	If yes, please record the number of livestock you own.	
G2	Sheep / Goat Cattle / Yak Buffalo Horse, mule, donkey Camel	
G3	Have you vaccinated your livestock since last year?	0 = No 1 = Yes
G4	Have you dewormed your livestock since last year?	0 = No 1 = Yes
G5	If yes, how you got your livestock vaccinated and / or dewormed?	1 = By own budget 2 = By aid from NGOs / Government 3 = Other
G6	Is livestock your main source of income?	0 = No 1 = Yes
G7	How much is your yearly income from livestock? (in AFN)	[Insert number here]
G8	How do you earn from livestock?	1 = By selling animals 2 = By selling livestock products (Dairy, wool, etc.) 3 = Other, please specify

G9	How have the prices of animals and their products changed compared to the same time last year?	1 = Decreased a lot 2 = Decreased a little 3 = Remained same 4 = Increased a little 5 = Increased a lot
G10	How has your economic benefit from livestock changed since last year?	1 = Decreased a lot 2 = Decreased a little 3 = Remained same 4 = Increased a little 5 = Increased a lot
G11	What are the main sources of animal feed for your livestock? [Multiple choice]	1 = Pasture / rangelands 2 = Crop Residues 3 = Farming land 4 = NGOs support 5 = Community fodder bank 6 = Other, please specify
G12	Do you have irrigated or rain-fed land for cultivating fodder crop?	0 = No 1 = Yes
G13	If yes, how much of your land have you set aside for cultivating fodder crop? (in Jeribs)	[Insert number here]
G14	Have you or any of your household members received any type of support / aid for livestock-keeping since last year?	0 = No 1 = Yes
G15	If yes, what types of livestock support or aid have you received? [Multiple choice]	1 = Ruminant package 2 = Animal feed 3 = Fodder crop seed 4 = Livestock package (tools and equipment) 5 = Deworming and vaccination 6 = Training and awareness 7 = Other, please specify
G16	What types of animals has your household received? [Multiple choice]	1 = Sheep / Goat 2 = Cattle / Yak 3 = Buffalo 4 = Horse / mule / donkey 5 = Camel 6 = Other, please specify
G17	What types of livestock keeping training have you received? [Multiple choice]	1 = Livestock nutrition/feeding 2 = Livestock hygiene 3 = Deworming and vaccination 4 = Livestock farming 5 = Livestock marketing 6 = Dairy processing 7 = Other, please specify
G18	Are you facing any problems or challenges in raising animals?	0 = No 1 = Yes
G19	If yes, what are your main challenges in raising livestock? [Multiple choice]	1 = Lack of water for livestock 2 = Lack of fodder / animal feed 3 = Animal diseases 4 = Lack of veterinary services 5 = Lack of market for animals and livestock products 6 = Poor body condition

		7 = Reduced milking capacity 8 = Conflict on pastures for livestock 9 = Limited access to pastures / rangelands 10 = Higher price of fodder 11 = Others
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H: MICRO, SMALL, MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

#	Question	Answer
H1	Are you interested in running MSME or being a part of MSME groups?	0 = No 1 = Yes
H2	Are you currently running any type of micro-, small-, or medium-size business?	0 = No 1 = Yes
H3	If yes, what type of business are you running?	1 = Saving and loan 2 = Mushroom cultivation 3 = Beekeeping 4 = Poultry keeping 5 = Sapling production 6 = Farming 5 = Food processing (vegetables, fruits, etc.) 6 = Tailoring, knitting, embroidery 9 = Running a shop 10 = Baking 11 = Livestock 12 = Other, please specify
H4	Are you running the business individually or in a group?	1 = Individually 2 = In a group
H5	Is / are this / these the main source / s of your household income?	0 = No 1 = Yes
H6	How do you rate the productivity / level of production of your business compared to the same time last year?	1 = Decreased a lot 2 = Somewhat decreased 3 = Remained the same 4 = Somewhat increased 5 = Increased a lot
H7	If decreased, what were the main challenges? [Multiple choice]	1 = Lack of market for my products 2 = Lack of sufficient budget 3 = Lack of sufficient tools and equipment 4 = Lack of business skills (marketing, sales, etc.) 5 = Lack of technical skills 6 = Others, please specify
H8	Have you received any kind of support / aid from NGOs and others in the last three years to support your business?	0 = No 1 = Yes
H9	If yes, what type of support have you received?	1 = Grant 2 = Technical trainings 3 = Tools and equipment 4 = Market linkage supports 5 = Other, please specify
H10	Do you think working as a group (in MSME) help your business grow?	0 = No 1 = Yes
H11	If yes, how do you think MSME will increase productivity of your business?	[Insert text here]

I: SELF-HELP GROUP

#	Questions	Answer
I1	Are you an active member (leader) of SHG?	0 = No 1 = Yes
I2	In which year (Gregorian year) was the SHG established?	[Insert number here]
I3	How many women have membership in your SHG?	[Insert number here]
I4	How many SHG members are actively participating in SHG activities?	[Insert number here]
I5	What are the main activities in your SHG? [Multiple choice]	1 = Saving and loan 2 = Mushroom cultivation 3 = Beekeeping 4 = Poultry keeping 5 = Sapling production 6 = Farming 5 = Food processing (vegetables, fruits, etc.) 6 = Tailoring, knitting, embroidery 9 = Running a shop 10 = Baking 11 = Livestock 12 = Other, please specify
I6	What kinds of support have your SHG received in the last three years from NAC? [Multiple choice]	1 = Life skills Training 2 = Business-related technical skills training 2 = Materials (tools and equipment) 3 = Grant 4 = Network support (Linkage to market) 5 = Others, please specify
I7	Is there a demand for your products in the market?	1 = No demand 2 = Lower demand 3 = Higher demand
I8	Have SHG members learned and actively used life and livelihood skills through membership in the group?	1 = Not at all 2 = Somewhat 3 = A lot
I9	What new life and livelihood skills do you think SHG members need to learn?	1 = Sanitation and hygiene 2 = Dialogue and conflict transformation 3 = Family planning 4 = Reading and writing 5 = Nutrition 6 = Entrepreneurship 7 = Business-related technical skills (baking, tailoring, etc.) 8 = Others, please specify
I10	How do you rate your group's current productivity level compare to the same time last year?	1 = Decreased a lot 2 = Decreased a little 3 = Remained the same 4 = Increased a little

		5 = Increased a lot
I11	If decreased, what were the main reasons?	[Insert text here]
I12	How much money did your group save during the last year? (In AFN)	[Insert text here]
I13	How did your business improve from establishment until now?	1 = Deteriorated/collapsed 2 = Not improved 3 = Somewhat improved 4 = Improved very much
I14	If deteriorated/collapsed or not improved, what were the main reasons?	[Insert text here]
I15	How do you work with other members in your group?	1 = Collectively 2 = Individually 3 = Both
I16	Do SHG members have equal rights in decision making within the group?	0 = No 1 = Yes
I17	How often do you conduct group meetings?	1 = Never 2 = Once in six months 3 = Once in three months 4 = Once in a month 5 = Once in two weeks 6 = Once a week
I18	Do you have books of records for your group activities?	0 = No 1 = Yes
I19	Does your SHG have a business plan?	0 = No 1 = Yes
I20	How satisfied are you with the overall status and functionality of your SHG?	1 = Dissatisfied 2 = Slightly satisfied 3 = Very satisfied
I21	If dissatisfied or slightly satisfied, what are the main reasons?	[Insert text here]
I22	Is your SHG mature enough to carry on its activities without NAC's support?	0 = No 1 = Yes
I23	If not, what additional support does your SHG need to get matured? [Multiple choice]	1 = Business-related technical skills training 2 = Materials (tools and equipment) 3 = Grant 4 = Network support 5 = Life skills Training 6 = Others, please specify

J: FOOD CONSUMPTION SCORE

How many days during the past 7 days, did members of your household eat from the following food groups?		
#	Food group	Response
J1	Cereals and Tubers: <i>Bread, Rice, pasta, corn, potatoes</i>	[Insert number here]
J2	Pulses / nuts: <i>almonds, Beans, peanuts, lentils, nut, soy, pea and / or other nuts</i>	[Insert number here]
J3	Milk and other dairy products: <i>fresh milk / sour, yogurt, Qurut, cheese, other dairy products</i>	[Insert number here]
J4	Meat, fish, and eggs: <i>goat, lamb, beef, chicken, fish, egg</i>	[Insert number here]
J5	Vegetables and leaves <i>Okra, eggplant, green beans, spinach, etc.</i>	[Insert number here]
J6	Fruits (any type) <i>banana, apple, apricot, peach, lemon, mango etc.</i>	[Insert number here]
J7	Oil/fat / butter: <i>Vegetable oil, ghee, other fats / oil</i>	[Insert number here]
J8	Sugar or sweet: <i>Sugar, jam, honey, cakes, candy, cookies, and other sweet)</i>	[Insert number here]

K: REDUCED COPING STRATEGY INDEX

In the past 7 days, if there have been any times when you did not have enough food or money to buy food, how often has your household had to use the following coping strategies?		
#	Coping strategies	Response
K1	Rely on less preferred and less expensive food?	[Insert number here]
K2	Borrow food, rely on help from a friend or relative	[Insert number here]
K3	Limit portion size at mealtimes	[Insert number here]
K4	Restrict consumption by adults in order for small children to eat	[Insert number here]
K5	Reduce number of meals eaten in a day	[Insert number here]

L: ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICE

#	Questions	Response
L1	Where do community members usually visit for healthcare services? [Multiple choice]	1 = Home-based doctors/midwife 2 = Community clinic 3 = Clinic/health center at the district 4 = Provincial hospital 5 = Other, please specify
L2	How far is the closest health center from your residence? (by walk)	1 = Less than 15 minutes 2 = 15 to 30 minutes 3 = 30 – 60 minutes 4 = One to two hours

		5 = More than two hours
L3	How often are the community-based health centers available to community members?	1 = Rarely available 2 = Often available 3 = Always available
L4	What types of health services do you have access to in your community? (Multiple choice)	1 = RMNCAH services 2 = Physical therapy (Physiotherapy) 3 = Laboratory tests 4 = Emergency care 5 = Medical diagnosis 6 = Others, please specify
L5	Are the services provided by the community health center adequate to all community members?	1 = Not adequate at all 2 = Somewhat adequate 3 = Adequate
L6	How do you rate the quality of health services in community health center?	1 = Poor 2 = Medium 3 = High
L7	Are the cost of services provided in the community health center affordable?	1 = Not affordable at all 2 = Somewhat affordable 3 = Affordable
L8	How do you rate accessibility to RMNCAH services in your community?	1 = Poor 2 = Moderate 3 = High
L9	Where do community women usually deliver their babies?	1 = At home by unskilled birth attendants 2 = At home by skilled birth attendant (midwife) 3 = Health center at the community 4 = Health center at the district center 5 = Provincial hospital
L10	Are there antenatal and postnatal care services accessible for mothers and newborns?	1 = Not at all 2 = Somewhat accessible 3 = Accessible
L11	Have your household experienced mother or newborn mortality due to poor healthcare services in the last three years?	0 = No 1 = Yes

Annex II: List of Baseline Targeted Communities

#	Province	District	Community Name
1	Badakhshan	Argo	Aten Jelaw
2	Badakhshan	Argo	Bakhti shah
3	Badakhshan	Argo	Barlas
4	Badakhshan	Argo	Barlase Wakheyen
5	Badakhshan	Argo	Deh Bala
6	Badakhshan	Argo	Deh Magas
7	Badakhshan	Argo	Ganda Chushma
8	Badakhshan	Argo	Samati
9	Badakhshan	Argo	Tajika
10	Badakhshan	Baharak	Chapchi Maghzar
11	Badakhshan	Baharak	Furm Ragh
12	Badakhshan	Baharak	Madrase Khairabad
13	Badakhshan	Baharak	Pasi Rah
14	Badakhshan	Baharak	Robabi Zer Joi
15	Badakhshan	Keshem	Dahandare Parachi
16	Badakhshan	Keshem	Dashti Shahida
17	Badakhshan	Keshem	Farajghani
18	Badakhshan	Keshem	Nahib Hai Gharbi
19	Badakhshan	Keshem	Namazgah
20	Badakhshan	Keshem	Parachi
21	Badakhshan	Keshem	Roi Ab Jim
22	Badakhshan	Kohistan	Bekhah
23	Badakhshan	Kohistan	Furghil
24	Badakhshan	Kohistan	Furghil Bala
25	Badakhshan	Kohistan	Koshe Lal
26	Badakhshan	Kohistan	Shokuldara
27	Badakhshan	Raghestan	Bedender
28	Badakhshan	Raghestan	Deh Qaziyan
29	Badakhshan	Raghestan	Jedender
30	Badakhshan	Raghestan	Munjing
31	Badakhshan	Raghestan	Seyab Shar
32	Badakhshan	Shuhada	Boshti Bala
33	Badakhshan	Shuhada	Boshti Payan
34	Badakhshan	Shuhada	Boshti Wasat
35	Badakhshan	Shuhada	Dara Qalat
36	Badakhshan	Shuhada	Sarkhan
37	Badakhshan	Shuhada	Shaikh yarak
38	Badakhshan	Warduj	Astarb
39	Badakhshan	Warduj	Bara Bara
40	Badakhshan	Warduj	Ghunew
41	Badakhshan	Warduj	Khashbin
42	Badakhshan	Warduj	Margan
43	Badakhshan	Yaftal-e-Payan	Bazari Etifaq
44	Badakhshan	Yaftal-e-Payan	Deh Zendan

45	Badakhshan	Yaftal-e-Payan	Murghabidan
46	Badakhshan	Yaftal-e-Payan	Naland
47	Badakhshan	Yaftal-e-Payan	Nushrin
48	Badakhshan	Yaftal-e-Payan	Shakarlab
49	Badakhshan	Yawan	Bare Yawan
50	Badakhshan	Yawan	Dahane Dare Suri
51	Badakhshan	Yawan	Deh Surchan
52	Badakhshan	Yawan	Nawabad Darang
53	Badakhshan	Yawan	Sari
54	Badakhshan	Yawan	Sumchew
55	Badakhshan	Zebak	Dand
56	Badakhshan	Zebak	Eskenz
57	Badakhshan	Zebak	Kazdana
58	Badakhshan	Zebak	Nawabad
59	Badakhshan	Zebak	Shengok
60	Takhar	Kalafgan	Sar Asyab
61	Takhar	Kalafgan	Sar Qoroq
62	Takhar	Kalafgan	Zard Alo Dare Ulya
63	Ghazni	Ajristan	Ghaforkhel Khoshkaba
64	Ghazni	Ajristan	Golden
65	Ghazni	Ajristan	Hesa e Nor Qalandarkhel
66	Ghazni	Ajristan	Jalalwal
67	Ghazni	Ajristan	Khashalkhel
68	Ghazni	Ajristan	Mansorkhel
69	Ghazni	Ajristan	NasirKhel
70	Ghazni	Ajristan	Osmankhel
71	Ghazni	Ajristan	Qalandar Khel
72	Ghazni	Ajristan	Shamokhel
73	Ghazni	Ajristan	Sultankhel
74	Ghazni	Andar	Bangi
75	Ghazni	Andar	Chahar Dewar
76	Ghazni	Andar	Karso
77	Ghazni	Andar	Khane Kali
78	Ghazni	Andar	Kharkhasha
79	Ghazni	Andar	Mash
80	Ghazni	Andar	Merjan
81	Ghazni	Andar	Nayazullah
82	Ghazni	Andar	Shamshay
83	Ghazni	Andar	Sultan Bagh
84	Ghazni	Deh yak	Dehyak
85	Ghazni	Deh yak	Kohna Deh
86	Ghazni	Deh yak	Loghbat
87	Ghazni	Deh yak	Mostofi
88	Ghazni	Deh yak	Mulla Qazi
89	Ghazni	Deh yak	Rabat
90	Ghazni	Deh yak	Ramak
91	Ghazni	Deh yak	Saternay

92	Ghazni	Deh yak	Shetam
93	Ghazni	Deh yak	Tanfir
94	Ghazni	Deh yak	Tasang
95	Ghazni	Ghazni City	Bakavol
96	Ghazni	Ghazni City	Deh Kaka Hotqol
97	Ghazni	Ghazni City	Dekhodaydad
98	Ghazni	Ghazni City	Jalalwal
99	Ghazni	Ghazni City	Kariz Bala
100	Ghazni	Ghazni City	Khwaja baqal
101	Ghazni	Ghazni City	Loghbat
102	Ghazni	Ghazni City	Mongor
103	Ghazni	Ghazni City	Nawabad
104	Ghazni	Ghazni City	Nawghay
105	Ghazni	Ghazni City	Orzo
106	Ghazni	Ghazni City	Pajak
107	Ghazni	Ghazni City	Qala e Lalai Orzo
108	Ghazni	Ghazni City	Qalaqaj Sofla
109	Ghazni	Ghazni City	Rawza Bala
110	Ghazni	Ghazni City	Rawza Goristan
111	Ghazni	Ghazni City	Rawza Payen
112	Ghazni	Ghazni City	Rawza Sultan Mahmud
113	Ghazni	Ghazni City	Se Godol Bakavol
114	Ghazni	Ghazni City	Shahrak Mohajeren
115	Ghazni	Jaghori	Almito
116	Ghazni	Jaghori	Awdola haidara dawod
117	Ghazni	Jaghori	Balandeh Zerak
118	Ghazni	Jaghori	Daltemor
119	Ghazni	Jaghori	Gardan dawod
120	Ghazni	Jaghori	Gardansang
121	Ghazni	Jaghori	Gonbad Angori
122	Ghazni	Jaghori	Gonbad Hotqol
123	Ghazni	Jaghori	Haidara
124	Ghazni	Jaghori	Joy Zerak
125	Ghazni	Jaghori	Kaka hotqol
126	Ghazni	Jaghori	Kalan Deh
127	Ghazni	Jaghori	Kalandeh Angori
128	Ghazni	Jaghori	Kohna Deh Payen
129	Ghazni	Jaghori	Naizar Haidara dawod
130	Ghazni	Jaghori	Nawdeh haidara
131	Ghazni	Jaghori	Nawdeh Zerak
132	Ghazni	Jaghori	Paijulga Haidara
133	Ghazni	Jaghori	Sabzchob
134	Ghazni	Jaghori	Shebqal Payen
135	Ghazni	Jaghori	Tob Dawlatsha Dawod
136	Ghazni	Jaghori	Tokrik Walang
137	Ghazni	Malistan	Boghra
138	Ghazni	Malistan	Chawni Nawdeh

139	Ghazni	Malistan	Chorbek
140	Ghazni	Malistan	Dahan Basar Sabzak
141	Ghazni	Malistan	Dahan Ghojor Maknak
142	Ghazni	Malistan	Dahansay Sabzak
143	Ghazni	Malistan	Deh Qaridar
144	Ghazni	Malistan	Kosha
145	Ghazni	Malistan	Paijulga Maknak
146	Ghazni	Malistan	Payen Sar Balaqsan
147	Ghazni	Malistan	Petab Bala Belawgho
148	Daikundi	Nili	Bala Bagh Lazer
149	Daikundi	Nili	Chahar Dar Dasht
150	Daikundi	Nili	Dahan Omarshah Lazer
151	Daikundi	Nili	Deh Payeen Sangmom
152	Daikundi	Nili	Fath Mohammad
153	Daikundi	Nili	Ghodar Kohna
154	Daikundi	Nili	Hejdi Sofla
155	Daikundi	Nili	Hejdi Ulya
156	Daikundi	Nili	Kariz Nawjoy
157	Daikundi	Nili	Kharjal Lazer
158	Daikundi	Nili	Maidan Sar Nili
159	Daikundi	Nili	Payen Bagh Lazer
160	Daikundi	Nili	Petab Sar Nili
161	Daikundi	Nili	Saralij Ghodar
162	Daikundi	Nili	Sarqol Sangmom
163	Daikundi	Pato	Berez Woger
164	Daikundi	Pato	Dahan Daglij
165	Daikundi	Pato	Dahan Jangal
166	Daikundi	Pato	Dara e Woghner
167	Daikundi	Pato	Jangalag Woger
168	Daikundi	Pato	Khachozai
169	Daikundi	Pato	Malizai
170	Daikundi	Pato	Mollayan
171	Daikundi	Pato	Nedazai Tamzan
172	Daikundi	Pato	Pato Nedazai
173	Daikundi	Pato	Pato Sofla
174	Daikundi	Pato	Petab
175	Daikundi	Pato	Raqol Tamzan
176	Daikundi	Pato	Sorenj
177	Daikundi	Pato	Sorenj Qokhor
178	Daikundi	Shahristan	Deh Osho
179	Daikundi	Shahristan	Jawoz Sofla
180	Daikundi	Shahristan	Meja Worgha
181	Daikundi	Shahristan	Nawrak Kotot
182	Daikundi	Shahristan	Palan Waras
183	Daikundi	Shahristan	Pay Chokshahr
184	Daikundi	Shahristan	Petab Largar
185	Daikundi	Shahristan	Sar Alqan

186	Daikundi	Shahristan	Sar e Osho
187	Daikundi	Shahristan	Sar Mohr
188	Daikundi	Shahristan	Saralij Ghodar
189	Daikundi	Shahristan	Shenya Largar
190	Daikundi	Shahristan	Shenya Worgha
191	Daikundi	Shahristan	Tagab Largar
192	Daikundi	Shahristan	Zard Nai Waras
193	Faryab	Almar	Chughtak
194	Faryab	Almar	Dewana Khana
195	Faryab	Almar	Khodaymat
196	Faryab	Almar	Nughli
197	Faryab	Maimana	Deh Sayedan
198	Faryab	Maimana	Torpakhto
199	Faryab	Pashton Kot	Arab Aqsai
200	Faryab	Pashton Kot	Kheshtpul
201	Faryab	Pashton Kot	Zar Shoi
202	Faryab	Qaisar	Burghan Khoja Ha
203	Faryab	Qaisar	Yanga Tashqul
204	Faryab	Shirin Tagab	Balooch
205	Faryab	Shirin Tagab	Islam Qala
206	Kapisa	Alasai	Adina Khel
207	Kapisa	Alasai	Ahangaran
208	Kapisa	Alasai	Dadaki
209	Kapisa	Alasai	Hashimi Khanda
210	Kapisa	Alasai	Meryal Khel
211	Kapisa	Alasai	Pacha Qawm
212	Kapisa	Alasai	Saheb Zada Khel
213	Kapisa	Alasai	Sang Charkh
214	Kapisa	Alasai	Shakot
215	Kapisa	Tagab	Ali Khel
216	Kapisa	Tagab	Badro Aka khel
217	Kapisa	Tagab	Hamza Khel
218	Kapisa	Tagab	Jandad
219	Kapisa	Tagab	Landa Khel
220	Kapisa	Tagab	Qale Saleh
221	Kapisa	Tagab	Saheb Zadagan
222	Kapisa	Tagab	Shinki Khanan
223	Kapisa	Tagab	Sinzai
224	Kapisa	Tagab	Tara Khel
225	Paktia	Gardez	Mahmood Qala
226	Paktia	Gardez	Mamrai
227	Paktia	Gardez	Mehlan
228	Paktia	Gardez	Spari
229	Paktia	Gardez	Wache Ghurak
230	Paktia	Gardez	Zaho
231	Ghazni	Malistan	Petab Payensar Belawgho
232	Ghazni	Malistan	Poshtjoy Bala Paijulga

233	Ghazni	Malistan	Qare Pay Warda
234	Ghazni	Malistan	Qash Olombalaqsan
235	Ghazni	Malistan	Quran Payeen Warda
236	Ghazni	Malistan	Rabat

Annex III: Baseline Results on Objective and Outcome Indicators

Goal	Indicator	Baseline
Empowering Rural Afghanistan (ERA II)		
Objective 3: Supported vulnerable, rural households and communities have improved food security, household income, and resilience to the impact of climate change	% of supported households with borderline or acceptable food consumption scores (FCSs)	31.56% (18.42% female and 37.18% male)
	% of supported community members demonstrate improved livelihood opportunities - disaggregated by gender	14.75% (14.53% female and 14.85% male)
	% of supported communities demonstrate improved resilience to the impact of natural disasters	14.56%
Outcome 3.1: Improved nutrition, food security, resilience and food and livelihood diversification through agriculture and livestock	% of smallholder farmers supported implement innovative climate-smart agriculture practices - disaggregated by gender	27.72% (23.48% female and 29.25% male)
	% of supported community members reporting increased economic benefits from livestock - disaggregated by gender, disabilities and other vulnerable groups (e.g., women and elderly-headed households)	6.63% (4.17% female and 7.63% male)
	% of supported community members with improved knowledge of sustainable natural resource management - disaggregated by gender	NA – this will be measured through pre- and post-tests.
	% of supported households with "high" dietary diversity	4.97%
Outcome 3.2: Micro, small, and medium enterprise (MSME) groups supported through sustainable value chain development	% of supported MSME members reporting increased volume of production and/or productivity of agriculture/horticulture/livestock products to meet market requirements - disaggregated by gender	17.59% (14.77% female and 18.67% male)
Outcome 3.3: Systems strengthening	# of institutions adopting and maintaining climate-smart agriculture and natural resource management	0
	% of community-based institutions demonstrating improved capacity to increase livelihood opportunities	0 (will be assessed once established)
Outcome 3.4: Rural communities have improved resilience to natural disasters and emergency response mechanisms in place	% of supported communities enabled to effectively prepare for and respond to natural disasters	12.93%
	% of supported communities have improved access to DRR infrastructure	23.72%
European Union (EU)		

Objective 1: Civil society supported in strengthening rural communities' natural resource management and resilience to the impacts of climate change.	Objective Indicator 1: % of civil society actors demonstrating improved capacities for climate change adaptation	27.72%
	Objective Indicator 2: % of supported communities demonstrate improved resilience to the impact of natural disasters	14.56%
	Objective Indicator 3: % of supported communities adopting sustainable, integrated natural resources management practices – disaggregated by gender	15.87%
Outcome 1.1: Improved civil society capacities for climate change adaptation, through climate-smart agriculture, livelihood diversification and efficient and sustainable NRM	Outcome Indicator 1.1: % of supported households with borderline or acceptable food consumption scores (FCSs)	31.56% (18.42% female and 37.18% male)
	Outcome Indicator 1.2: % of smallholder farmers supported implement innovative climate-smart agriculture practices - disaggregated by gender	27.72% (23.48% female and 29.25% male)
	Outcome Indicator 1.3: % of supported community members demonstrate improved livelihood opportunities - disaggregated by gender	14.75% (14.53% female and 14.85% male)
Outcome 1.2: Strengthened knowledgebase and improved capacities amongst civil-society actors on research related to climate change and natural resource management	Outcome Indicator 2.1: # of institutions with improved capacity in conducting new and innovative climate-smart agriculture and integrated natural resources management	0
	Outcome Indicator 2.2: % of community members reporting improved environmental protection practices – disaggregated by gender	17.46%
Outcome 1.3: Improved resilience to natural disasters and strengthened civil society emergency response mechanisms	Outcome Indicator 3.1: % of supported communities enabled to effectively prepare for and respond to natural disasters	12.93%
	Outcome Indicator 3.2: % of supported communities reporting improved agriculture productivity or resilience to natural disasters as a result of productive and protective infrastructure	13.34%

Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)

Objective 1: Support vulnerable rural households in communities to have improved food security, household income, and resilience to climate change through the construction of agro-based infrastructure projects in the provinces of Badakhshan, Faryab, and Ghazni

Outcome 1.1: Improved nutrition, food security, resilience, and food and livelihood diversification through support to agriculture sector	% of supported community members with acceptable and borderline food consumption score	31.56% (18.42% female and 37.18% male)
	% of supported community members reported increased household income	10.98%
	% of supported community members reporting improved resilience to climate change	14.56%

Afghanistankomiteen
Norwegian Afghanistan Committee



کمیته ناروی برای افغانستان
د افغانستان لپاره د ناروې کمیټه