

# Emergency Response to Improve Food Security and Build Resilience of Climate Affected Families Including IDPS and Returnees in Bamyan, Afghanistan (CWS)

Third Party  
Project Evaluation  
Report

March, 2023

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and we are thankful for the opportunity to generate knowledge and evidence on the project to support the improvement of education systems and learning outcomes.

The findings within this document, however, are entirely the responsibility of the technical lead/author.

HPRO

March, 2023

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## Abbreviations

ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
AFN	Afghani
AHF	Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund
BC	Bamyan Centre
CHS	Core Humanitarian Standards
CWSA	Community World Service Asia
LFA	Logical Framework
COVID	Corona Virus Disease
CWS	Church World Service Japan
FCS	Food Consumption Score
FIES	Food Insecurity Experience Scale
rCSI	Reduced Coping Strategy Index
HEAT	Household Emergency Assessment Tool
HHs	Households
HPRO	Health Protection and Research Organisation
IDP	Internally Displaced Peoples
JPF	Japan Platform
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
ODK	Open Data Kit
KII	Key Informant Interview
PDM	Post-Distribution Monitoring
RFP	Request for Proposal
SO	Shuhada Organization
ToR	Terms of Reference
WFP	World Food Program

# Introduction

## Overview

Afghanistan Hanger and Food Insecurity

Overview of Afghanistan Humanitarian Response Program (Emergency response phase), Emergency Food Assistance in Nangarhar Province

## Purpose of the Study

Structure of the Report

# I Introduction

## I.1 Overview

Third-party project evaluations are essential accountability and learning initiatives that JPF (The Japan Platform) regularly undertakes jointly with its member NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations) for quality improvement. This is more so for in Afghanistan where JPF and the member NGOs have no access to the project sites due to restrictions associated with the Japanese government funding. Local implementing partners/local offices remotely managed by the members NGOs implement project activities and forefront of daily communication with project stakeholders as well as project beneficiaries.

Given drastic situational changes in Afghanistan, JPF with consultation with the member NGOs, decided the third-party project evaluation for five projects in Afghanistan funded by year 2021 budget to focus on assessing and documenting outcomes (immediate impact) rather than exhausting limited resource by conducting summative and/or programme evaluation. A request for proposals (RFP) was made to solicit proposals to conduct Third-party project final evaluation services for five JPF projects and Health Protection & Research Organisation (HPRO), a Kabul based NGO, was selected to provide the service based on competitive selection process.

## I.2 Afghanistan Hunger and Food insecurity

Afghanistan has been subjected to decades of complex and protracted conflicts, combined with a changing climate, gender inequalities, rapid urbanization, underemployment and the economic fallout of the COVID-19 (Corona Virus Disease-19) pandemic. Over half of the country's population lives below the poverty line, and food insecurity is on the rise, largely due to conflict and insecurity cutting off whole communities from livelihood opportunities. 18.9 million people are identified as acutely food insecure, including hundreds of thousands who have been displaced by conflict since the beginning of the year 2021. Undernutrition is of particular concern in women, children, displaced people, and returnees, households headed by women, people with disabilities and the poor. Despite progress in recent years, undernutrition rates are now increasing and 2 million children are malnourished. Every year, some 250,000 people on average are affected by a wide range of environmental disasters including floods, droughts, avalanches, landslides and earthquakes. The impact of disasters and dependency on water from rain or snowmelt severely limit the productivity of the agricultural sector, which consequently affects the food security situation in Afghanistan<sup>1</sup>

### I.2.1. Situation Analysis of Bamyan<sup>2</sup>

Bamyan is located in Afghanistan's Central Highlands, where the Hindu Kush Mountains provide the origin for many of the country's rivers, including the Kabul, Helmand, Kunduz, Arghandab, and Hari rivers. Steep mountain slopes, deep valleys, and harsh winters characterize the landscape, and the people of Bamyan rely predominantly on rural agriculture and animal husbandry for their livelihoods. However, competition over and mismanagement

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.wfp.org/countries/afghanistan>

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Environment Programme (2015). *Bamyan: Building community based resilience to climate change and natural disasters*. <https://wedocs.unep.org/20.500.11822/22973>.



of the province's limited arable land has resulted in widespread soil erosion, the denuding of natural vegetation, and degradation of rangelands. Coupled with these environmental issues is an increased risk of natural disasters such as flood and drought, particularly as a result of climate change.

An analysis by Rasul G et al<sup>3</sup> about the seasonal patterns of food production and consumption in the remote and robust environment of Bamyan province reported the seasonality productive activities and other aspects of life. A serious shortage of employment, household tasks, access to fuelwood and travel were also emphasized. A collective exploration of different factors affecting the food consumption in Bamyan is presented below.

### **1.2.1.1 Food storage and market purchases**

According to literature review all the essential items, which cannot be produced in homes, were generally out-sourced from Bamyan city due to the absence of local retail outlets in many villages. The mode of transportation to the main Bamyan city was either on foot or donkey, or by motorbike or the sharing a hired car. The literature cites usually its the men who travel to Bazaar for purchases. The trend of visiting to markets by was once a quarter as per literature.

### **1.2.1.2 Food prices**

Seasonal prices for staples, like vegetables and fruit, were said to double, or more, between summer and winter.

### **1.2.1.3 Mobility and market access**

Public infrastructure including lack of all-weather roads and bridges affected households in diverse ways

- A high dependence of households on own-production, requiring land, irrigation and agricultural inputs were observed as important factors of food production. Household food strategies also involve access to urban markets, informal seasonal finance for production and consumption, paid casual labour and substantive employment in trade.
- Physical remoteness, poor infrastructure, extreme weather and personal insecurity hinder access to markets for products, food, labour and finance. Provision of, and access to, basic public services such as health and education limit individual and household well-being, opportunities and potential in the short-, medium- and long-term.

## **1.2.2 Recent projects by different NGOs in Bamyan**

A news agency reported that<sup>4</sup> a number of new projects were being carried out by many organisations. The projects include 10 irrigation canals and 10 culverts, which are

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<sup>3</sup> Golam Rasul, Abid Hussain, Lipy Adhikari, David James Molden. (2022) *Conserving agrobiodiversity for sustainable food systems in the Hindu Kush Himalaya*. International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability 17:6, pages 1-19.

<sup>4</sup> Bakhtar News (2022), *Work Construction of 20 Public Benefit projects start in Bamyan*

implemented in cooperation with national and international organizations in the center and districts of Bamyan province.

There was another report<sup>5</sup> of distribution of aid to 100 less fortunate families in Bamyan by an NGO in coordination with AHF (Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund). In the first phase, 109 families affected by drought and famine were distributed \$200. However, the residents of Bamyan province still complained against injustice in aid distribution.

In addition to this, in May 2022, the Shuhada Organization (SO) in continuation of implementing many humanitarian aid projects in Afghanistan after the fall of the government in August 2021, implemented another cash voucher distribution aid successfully.<sup>6</sup>

The SO team, in the presence of the government representatives, community elders, and some other chief guests provided cash vouchers to 453 families in four provinces (Kabul 138, Ghazni 105, Bamyan 105, and Daikundi 105) of Afghanistan; most of the project beneficiaries were extremely vulnerable and women-headed families. This project was funded by the Partners Relief & Development organization.

### **1.3 Overview of Emergency Assistance to improve food security and resilience of people affected by climate change, including internally displaced persons and returnees, in Bamyan Province, Afghanistan**

The project “Emergency Assistance to improve food security and resilience of people affected by climate change, including internally displaced persons and returnees, in Bamyan Province” was implemented from August 10, 2021 to November 4, 2022 [457 days] by CWS (Church World Service Japan), funded by JPF. The aim was to improve food security for internally displaced persons and people affected by climate change, including returnees, in Bamyan Province, and improve community resilience to disasters. The project included providing to maintain food security, cash-for-work to improve disaster preparedness and restore livelihoods and agricultural training for mitigating economic risks from climate change.

The project enabled households in three districts of Bamyan province [Yakawlang, BC (Bamyan Centre), and Saighan] to purchase food for survival by providing cash transfers to vulnerable people suffering from severe socioeconomic conditions due to multiple factors such as conflict, limited humanitarian access, disasters, and corona. Under the project, two rounds of cash distribution was done and 13512.95 AFN (Afghani) and 8880 AFN was distributed to the beneficiary HHs in two rounds, respectively. A total of 849 vulnerable households suffering from severe socioeconomic conditions were provided assistance in first

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<https://bakhtarnews.af/en/work-construction-of-20-public-benefit-projects-start-in-bamyan/>

<sup>5</sup> Pajhwok News (2021), *Less fortunate Bamyan families distributed Cash Assistance*

<https://pajhwok.com/2021/12/31/less-fortunate-bamyan-families-distributed-cash-assistance/>

<sup>6</sup> Shuhada Organization (2022), *Humanitarian Aid Distribution in four provinces of Afghanistan*  
<https://shuhada.org.af/uncategorized/cash-vouchers-distribution-to-453-families-in-four-provinces-of-afghanistan-may-2022/>

round. Further, in second round, additional 81 HHs (Households) were provided with the assistance (849+81=930).

Smart agriculture activity was conducted for 450 beneficiaries, whereas Disaster risk reduction activity was conducted for 144 beneficiaries. In addition to this, 450 beneficiaries were provided with kitchen gardening training. CWSA program conducted two types of monitoring in line with JPF requirements, one was quick verification and second was PDM. The monitoring reports did not highlight any unintended use of the cash.

Table: CWSA monitoring activities during program implementation



#### Project outcomes:

- The acquisition of livestock/household garden management and climate change-responsive farming practices by the target will improve the food security of each household.
- Improve the resilience of target communities to disasters.

## 1.4 Purpose of the study

The main objectives of this study are

- To verify and measure outcomes of the projects;
- To understand the beneficiary's satisfaction;
- To document above achievements and challenges;
- To provide any possible indicatives for improving the projects for both JPF and member NGOs

## **1.5 Structure of the report**

This report represents the synthesis of a number of different streams of analysis and associated reports, including a set of case studies. The main body of the report is structured as follows:

**Chapter 2:** Methodology

**Chapter 3:** Findings

**Chapter 4:** Recommendations

# Methodology

Study Overview

Methodology for Data Acquisition

Data Collection

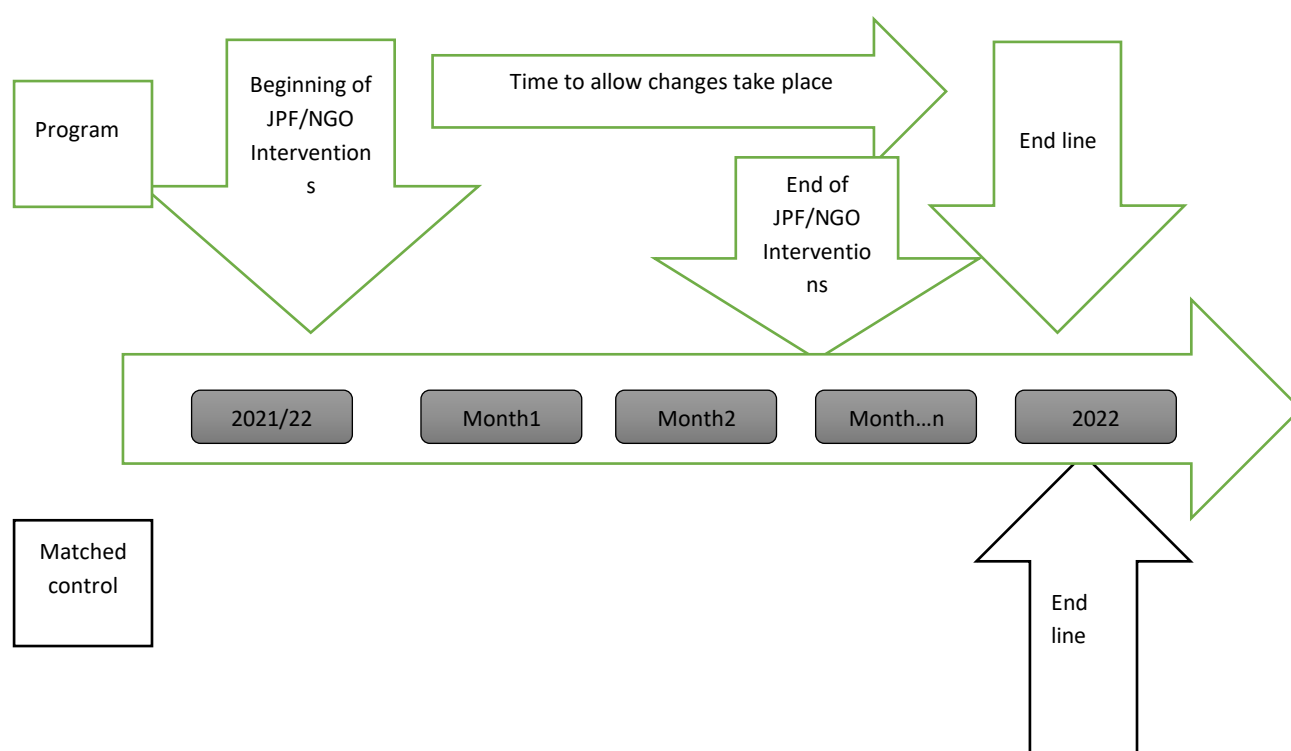
Data Management and Analysis

## 2 Methodology

### 2.1 Study Design

The design of Emergency humanitarian assistance in Bamyar Province made it imperative to use mix methods – quantitative and qualitative methods, and different streams of analysis- for the study.

A case-control methodology will be adopted for impact evaluation in consultation with the JPF and CWS to provide a scientific rigor to the evaluation. In this case-control method participants from both the intervention and the control group was purposively selected through matching by village level characteristics. The impact assessment was measured using project outcome indicators.



The impact indicators for the project were divided into 2 groups according to the project outcomes linked to each component:

- Improved food security of households by equipping them with livestock/home garden management and climate compatible farming practices (component 1)
- Increased resilience of the target communities to disasters due to training of agriculture techniques (component 3)

Additionally, there have been added indicators to explore women empowerment in domestic economy decision making.

Regarding to component 2, related to disaster risk reduction (mainly through infrastructure rehabilitation with cash for work activities), the evaluation will take place from the qualitative perspective with direct observation of the infrastructure reforms. On the other side, in section 1.3 of the sampling methodology, beneficiaries of this component of the program are

taken into account regarding the impact that increased income with cash for work has on food consumption and coping strategies.

Finally, there were included indicators of satisfaction of beneficiaries in the context of the project. The information was collected in a household survey in a structured questionnaire.

For estimating the impact of the program, the study used **mean difference method**. This method consists of comparing the mean values of the impact indicators between the treatment group (beneficiaries of the program) and the control group (not beneficiaries). In other words, it measures the differences in outcomes between program participants after the program took effect and another group who did not participate in the program. The mean difference is a standard statistic that measures the absolute difference between the mean value in two groups in an experiment. It estimates the amount by which the experimental intervention changes the outcome on average compared with the control. The statistical significance of the indicators is checked, and as consequence the difference between both means to know if the impact of the program both in food security and resilience through the different indicators outlined in the findings section 3.

For the identification of treatment and control groups, HEAT database used by CWS for identifying the most vulnerable households was adopted. In the case of the treatment group, the beneficiaries were randomly selected from the HEAT database. In the case of the control group, non-beneficiaries were randomly selected through households that have not received the cash for food program and also having similar vulnerability scores of the households that have received it.

### **Improved food security due to the acquisition of livestock/household garden management and climate change-responsive farming practices**

As outlined in the project logframe, the indicators 1.1 and 1.2 are the ones that were used to assess both household caloric availability and dietary diversity and behavioural responses to food insecurity. Indicators 1.3 and 1.4 are adapted from the project logframe.

#### **Food Consumption Score (FCS)**

The Food Consumption Score (FCS) is an index that was developed by the World Food Programme. The FCS aggregates household-level data on the diversity and frequency of food groups consumed over the previous seven days, which is then weighted according to the relative nutritional value of the consumed food groups. For instance, food groups containing nutritionally dense foods, such as animal products, are given greater weight than those containing less nutritionally dense foods, such as tubers. The food consumption score is a proxy indicator of household caloric availability and dietary diversity. Based on this score, a household's food consumption was further classified into one of three categories: poor, borderline, or acceptable. However, in this exercise, findings section details out the comparison of the raw FCS score of the beneficiaries with the raw score of the counterfactual (control group).

#### **Harvest garden vegetables through training in home gardening**

One of the targets of the program was that the beneficiary can harvest their own vegetables through training in the home garden.

## Harvest crops by implementing climate change responsive farming methods

The third target of the program was that the beneficiary can harvest their own crops through training in the home garden.

### Practice of home gardening techniques

To measure this indicator, questions were asked about the module “Precautionary measures during cultural practices of vegetables”. It consists of a multiple choice where different taught measures were named to understand if they practice them.

### Practice of climate change resilience methods

To measure this indicator, questions were asked about the module “site selection” from the Climate Smart Agriculture Manual. It consists of a multiple choice where different taught measures were named to understand if beneficiaries practice them.

### Women empowerment in domestic economy decision making

Two single choice questions were asked to explore if there are any gender issues regarding the administration of resources. Those were who keeps the income of the household and who takes the spending decisions of the household

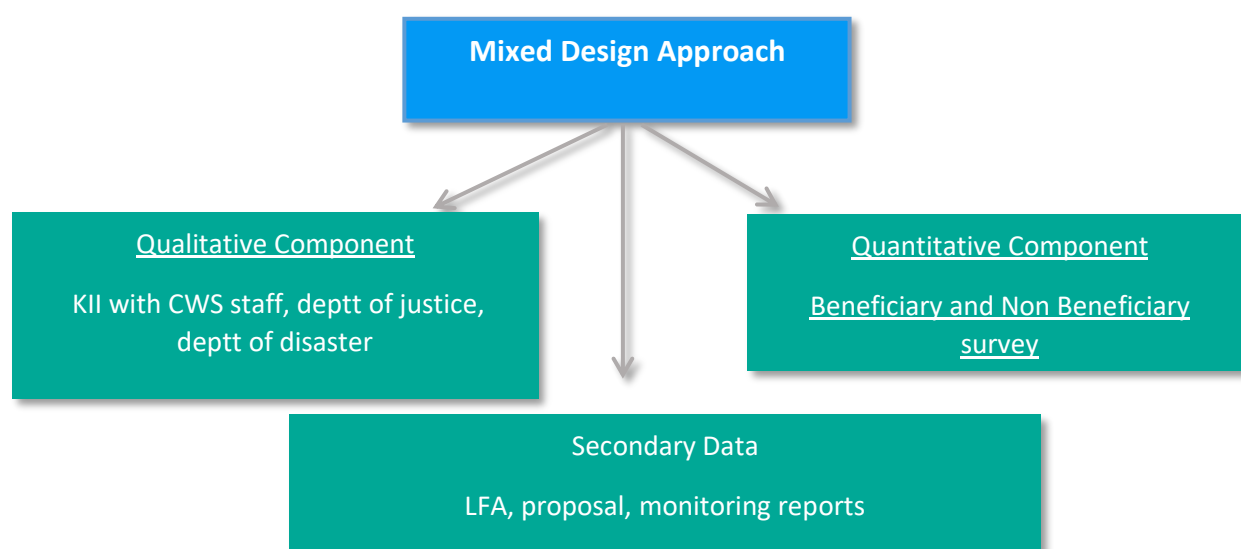
### Satisfaction of beneficiaries

The beneficiary satisfaction was assessed on a set of questions depending on the intervention in which the beneficiaries took part. Those questions were asked on single choice selection in a 1 to 5 Likert scale between satisfied, satisfied, neutral, very dissatisfied and dissatisfied.

## 2.2 Methodology for data acquisition

In line with the above mentioned objectives, a mixed design approach was adopted for the evaluation. As a method, this research design focused on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide a better understanding of study objectives. Evaluation design was based on triangulation of primary and secondary information collected during the study. A case-control methodology was adopted for impact evaluation in consultation with the JPF and to provide a scientific rigor to the evaluation (fig 1).

Figure 1: Summative evaluation data collection methodology





## 2.2.1 Sampling

In order to calculate minimum sample size for HH, we have used the following formula:

$n = N * X / (X + N - 1)$ , where,

$X = Z_{\alpha/2}^2 * p * (1-p) / MOE^2$ ,

$Z_{\alpha/2}$  is the critical value of the Normal distribution at  $\alpha/2$  (e.g. for a confidence level of 95%,  $\alpha$  is 0.10 and the critical value is 1.645), MOE is the margin of error 10%,  $p$  is the sample proportion (assuming the largest possible variance of 50%), and  $N$  is the population size (1045)

Minimum sample size ( $n$ ) = 89 HH

An estimated number of 18 extra observations were collected, increasing the total to 107 surveys, in case of a data loss (worst case scenario of 20% data missing). Of this 80 were allocated to treatment and 27 to control HHs. In this case-control method participants from both the intervention (80 HH) and the control group (27 HH) were purposively selected through matching by village type. The impact assessment was measured using project outcome indicators.

Case-control sampling methodology: stratified simple random sampling for selection of 80 beneficiary HH were adopted and 27 non-beneficiary HH from control cases. The criteria for selection of control area were HH from the same villages and have a similar vulnerability & demographic profile according to HEAT (Household Emergency Assessment Tool) database of the treatment cases, with the exception that cash for food distribution is not conducted from the JPF project nor from any other organisation.

Table 1: Sampling methodology: stratified random sampling by district and size of the intervention.

District	Village	sampled HH	Percentage
Center of Bamyan	Dahan Qul Tupchi	17	21.3%
	Qafila Bashi	23	28.8%
Saighan	Ghurab	22	27.5%
Yakawlang	Dahan kanak	18	22.5%
<b>Total</b>		<b>80</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 2: The number of selected beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries

District	Village	Beneficiary HH	Non Beneficiary HH	Total
Center of Bamyan	Qafila Bashi	23		23
	Fatmasti		18	18
	Dahan Qul Tupchi	17		17
Saighan	Ghurab	22		22
	Dahan Sarayak		9	9
Yakawlang	Dahan kanak	18		18
Total		80	27	107

Table 3: Surveys and interviews conducted during the summative evaluation

Respondents	Centre of Bamyan	Saighan	Yakawlang	Total
Beneficiary survey	23	22	18	80
Non beneficiary survey	18	9	-	27
KII with the Manager of Damage Assessment from incident department in Bamyan	1			
KII with employee of Institute for Strengthening the Comprehensive Civil Status	1			

## 2.2.2 Tools for primary data collection

- Beneficiary survey: to gather information on food assistance through cash benefit.
- Non-Beneficiary survey to assess the counterfactual scenario
- KII with department of justice, improving justice and humanitarian

## 2.2.3 Secondary data collection

**Desk Review:** Prior to starting, review of documents regarding the project, a introductory meetings were held with CWS team on the project. Post meeting, a comprehensive review of secondary documents related to the project was conducted. This involved:

- Monthly Reports
- Project Implementation Plan
- PDM (Post-Distribution monitoring) reports

- Review of implementation plan, PDM monitoring tools: primarily to analyse the processes, output as per LFA (Logical Framework)

Literature review was first conducted during the tool development. The documents received from project such as application, monthly reports were critical for understanding the context for emergency food distribution evaluation. The gathered information was used to inform our data collection tools. Evaluator also reviewed existing peer reviewed journals on the internet for developing the tools. We used the key words (“cash transfer for food” or “humanitarian assistance” or “Bamyan food insecurity assistance ” or “food insecurity”) and (“tools” or “questionnaires”) and (“Afghanistan” or “Pakistan” or “India” or “Iran” or “developing countries” or “low- and middle income countries”). Where possible, evidences were triangulated. However, sometimes analyses were constrained by the availability of secondary data.

## **2.3 Data collection**

### **2.3.1 Training and Field Testing**

The training of provincial supervisor and enumerator for the project in Bamyan province conducted successfully on August 18, 2022 at Nrooband Qalla Hotel in Bamyan. The training facilitated by HPRO technical team. Two participants one male and one female participated in this training. The methods used in the training were Interactive presentations and group discussions, Individual and group exercises, feedback from participants and facilitators, daily reflections from participants and role plays facilitated by investigators. In addition, the data collection tools presented separately to the participants and practically worked on the tools in Smart Phones using ODK (Open Data Kit) system. Different methods, such as presentation, group work, questions and answers and practical work were conducted. Finally, the feedback was given by the facilitators regarding filling out the questionnaires and using ODK properly.

### **2.3.2 Data collection**

Data collection was conducted from August 19 to 25, 2022. An ODK based cloud mobile data collection platform “Kobotoolbox” was used for the data collection and storage. Digital data collection tools were designed in a manner that ensured receipt of quality data to the system, all possible validation measures were taken into account while designing the tool. Data collectors were popped up with alerts while submitting invalid data and they wouldn't be able to submit incomplete or invalid data.

The key challenge faced by data collection team was accessing interviewees due to several reasons related to Covid, growing insecurity across Afghanistan. This resulted in difficulty in intra district movement and conducting KII's. Thus, phone interviews of all participants were conducted from HPRO office. This was successfully executed due to presence of CWS structured database with all necessary details which allowed telephonic access to participants

### **2.3.3 Monitoring and Supervision for quality assurance**

A monitoring team from HPRO Kabul office performed spot checks of interviews as soon as it is uploaded in HPRO ODK. The study supervisor also conducted monitoring of the data collection process on ODK. Besides taking such quality control measures in the data collection application, a data quality assurance officer was assigned to regularly check the data for invalidity and communicated the data related issues with the data collectors. Incorrect records were rectified or eliminated from the database. To ensure respondents' personal

information confidentiality instead of collecting their name, the application generated an auto number for each respondent formatted as (Province Code, District Code, First three letters of village name, 4 digit random number). All qualitative data collection events were audio recorded. The quality assurance manager conducted quality checks on transcribed interviews and second quality assurance check was conducted on translated interviews.

### **2.3.4 Means of Communication**

The mode of communication was phone calls for weekly communication between Kabul team and CWS team. Virtual platform such as zoom, skype was used for sharing progress updates between JPF, CWS and HPRO team.

## **2.4 Data management and analysis**

### **2.4.1 Transcription and Translation**

Transcription of field notes started as soon as the data arrived in the database. The quality assurance officer reviewed field notes for completeness and made additions to the notes after listening to the audio-recorded interviews. To get an accurate account of data from the interviews, the quality assurance officer, data manager and field supervisor reviewed notes and make additions to the field notes. One translator was solely responsible for translating transcripts from Farsi/Pashto to English. The quality assurance officer translated quantitative information. Verbatim transcripts were created from the recordings using a standardized transcription protocol. Transcripts were translated into English, and used for analysis.

### **2.4.2 Coding of data**

#### **Quantitative**

The questionnaires were coded with such as district name, village name etc. The study team developed coding rules for all the situations and applied them consistently. The coding issues were pertaining to missing information, ambiguous information, details of response is disconnected from choices selected by respondents. The data files were cleaned for errors. The data manager checked thoroughly the data file to ensure that all responses are within the valid range. Invalid entries were rechecked with the electronic database and based on consensus within the team, observations were replaced with valid numbers.

#### **Qualitative**

Some identifiers such as KII interview name used in the study were put in hidden folders since we no longer need this information as we wanted to eliminate the possibility of linking responses on the electronic file to individuals. During the study respondents were given opportunity to provide written comments at the end of the questionnaire. The responses were coded according to the type of comment that was made. The open-ended comments were coded and the data was entered electronically in the access program.

The research objectives and research questions guided data coding for qualitative data. The key themes were developed based on the objectives of the evaluation. The sub-themes were generated using the relevant research questions. These were priori codes that guided the categorization of the data. As new sub-themes emerged, those were also coded as new codes. The quality assurance officer and data manager provided support to the team during transcription of field notes. After the transcription of field notes, a quality assurance officer worked on the organization of field notes. The field notes and transcribed interviews were organized by respondents and type of data collection method (KII). Data was organized by

main folder and sub folders and then started coding of data. A deductive thematic analysis was conducted with the transcripts using the qualitative data analysis software. For the coding process, first priori codes were developed based on the existing themes. Priori codes provide a general framework for major themes and subthemes that were generated later through an iterative process. Then, the technical lead had to review transcribed notes multiple times so they could label or group certain areas in the dataset. The quality assurance officer and field coordinator team looked for similar views and opinions and group them together to support a particular theme.

### **2.4.3 Data analysis**

#### **Quantitative**

For quantitative data analysis, data was first run for missing values, double entries in STATA 14. Data was recoded for certain values and new variables were generated. During data analysis of quantitative data, data issues of type I and type II errors was assessed. The quantitative information was compiled to generate ratios and figures. In this study only univariate analysis was conducted, mainly in the form of frequencies and percentages. Later, pivot tables were generated using Ms Excel to segregate the values as per sub-groups.

#### **Qualitative**

KII and FGD interviews were first transcribed and then translated to English. Followed by analysis of qualitative data under the major themes of 1) Program functioning, 2) Comparative household food assessment between beneficiary and non-beneficiary 3) Project Management. Sub themes were generated under each major theme based on the objectives stated in ToR. The purpose was to group themes in a hierarchical structure. Sub themes were placed under each major theme in a way that supports the major theme.

### **2.4.4 Limitations**

There were various limitations to this study, which can be divided into, challenges of field, and evaluation scope. The scope of evaluation was broad considering the interventions in three districts. The evaluation team in consultation with CWS field team tried to select control groups as close to the beneficiaries as possible so there is close matching guided by the HEAT database with both beneficiaries and no beneficiaries. However, there were challenges at matching the households as control. This limited the exercise of comparing results between beneficiaries and control groups of the Food Consumption Score (FCS), the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) and the Coping Strategy Index (CSI). As a consequence, we only presented the FCS from a descriptive perspective to complement the first and second outcome indicator stated in the logframe which is improved food security and improved the resilience of target communities to disasters.

# Key Findings

Program Functioning

Impact Eva

Impact Evaluation: Improved access to food

Project Management

### 3 Key Findings

Sections 3.1 to 3.3 present the findings of analysis under three thematic areas. Reference was also be made to link the findings with the project's stated outcome. As discussed in Chapter 2 (Methodology), the findings draw primarily from the in-depth analysis performed through an extensive review of policies around cash assistance for work, climate resilience techniques related documents and primary data generated from the field.

This section presents the findings under three large themes followed by sub thematic areas. Headline findings are presented as bold (and numbered) statements and the supporting findings are presented as sub sections with additional paragraphed text.

## 3.1 Objective1: To verify and measure outcomes of the projects

### 3.1.1 Beneficiary enrolment

The study involves 80 beneficiary households from three districts (center of Bamyan, Saighan and Yakawlang). Two villages (Dahan Qul Tupchi and Qafila Bashi) were included from center of Bamyan, and one village each from Saighan and Yakawlang, namely, Ghurab and Dahan Kanak, respectively. The highest percentage of the HHs were from Qafila Bashi village of BC (28.8%) followed by Ghurab of Saighan (27.5%) and then, Dahan Kanak of Yakawlang (22.3%), ( table 4)

Table 4: Sample distribution of beneficiaries by village

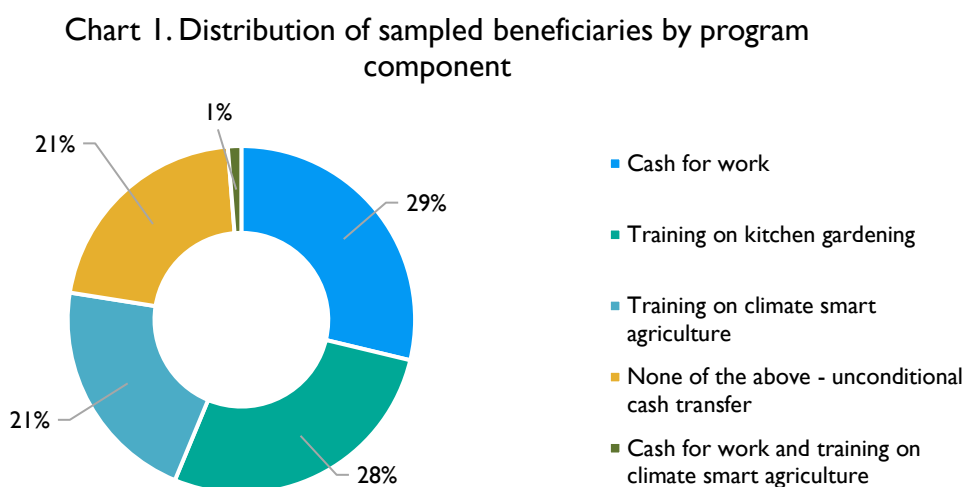
District	Village	Sampled HH	Percentage
Center of Bamyan	Dahan Qul Tupchi	17	21.3%
	Qafila Bashi	23	28.8%
Saighan	Ghurab	22	27.5%
Yakawlang	Dahan kanak	18	22.5%
<b>Total</b>		<b>80</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

All of the sampled beneficiaries were enrolled in the program for the period of 5 months at the moment of the data collection.

The majority of the sampled beneficiaries were enrolled in the cash for work component (29%) followed by 28% of the beneficiaries in training on kitchen gardening and beneficiaries that took part of the training in smart agriculture.

The 21% of the sample were not enrolled in any of the abovementioned components but received cash transfers “Cash for saving life”. One of the cases was observed from the findings about a beneficiary enrolled both in the cash for work and training on climate smart agriculture (figure 2).

Figure 2: Distribution of sampled beneficiaries by program component



### 3.1.2 Beneficiaries demographics

The total number of beneficiaries enrolled for the interview were 80. Out of them, 51 (64%) were males and 29 (36%) were females. Majority of the beneficiaries belonged to the age group 31-60 years. Among the beneficiaries, 56(70%) belonged to the Hazara ethnicity followed by Qazal bash (18, 22%) and Tajik (6,8%). Majority (89%) of the beneficiaries were married and 5% and 6 % were single and widowed, respectively. There was a large proportion of the beneficiaries, who were illiterate (53, 66%) and only 4 (5%) were graduate (table 5).

Table 5 : Demographic information of the beneficiaries

Demographics (N=80)	n (%)
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	51 (64)
Female	29 (36)
<b>Age group (in years)</b>	
<30	21 (26)
31-40	18 (23)
41-50	18 (23)
51-60	15 (19)
>60	8 (10)
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
Hazara	56 (70)
Qazal Bash	18 (22)
Tajik	6 (8)
<b>Marital Status</b>	
Married	71 (89)
Single	4 (5)
Widowed	5 (6)
<b>Education</b>	
Illiterate	53 (66)
Primary (1 <sup>st</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> )	9 (11)
Medium (7 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup> )	6 (8)

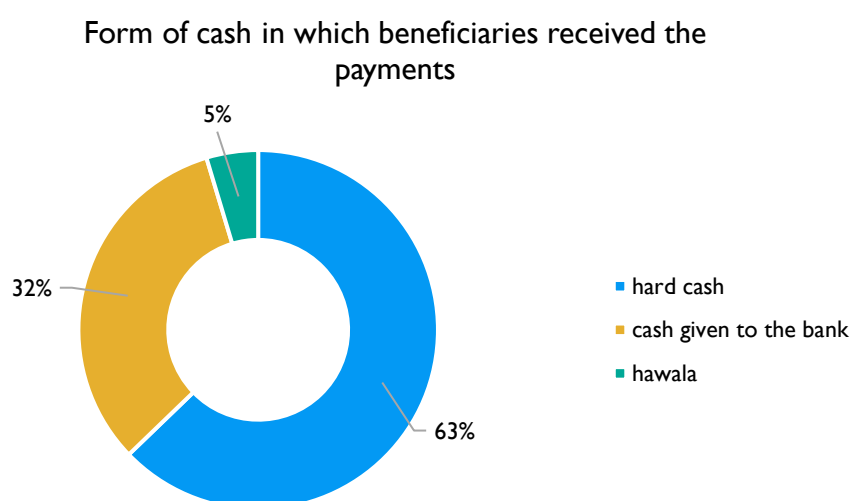


High (10 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> )	8 (10)
Graduation	4 (5)

### 3.1.3 Cash Distribution

Most of the beneficiaries received the cash in paper form, as hard cash (63%). The second form of distribution was the cash given to the bank (32%) and finally via hawala 5% (figure 3) (although CWSA MEAL didn't find cash receipt via hawala).

Figure 3: Form of cash in which beneficiaries received the payments



**Beneficiary preference:** the most preferred mean for cash distribution by the beneficiaries was hard cash (88%) and in second place cash delivered to the bank (12%)

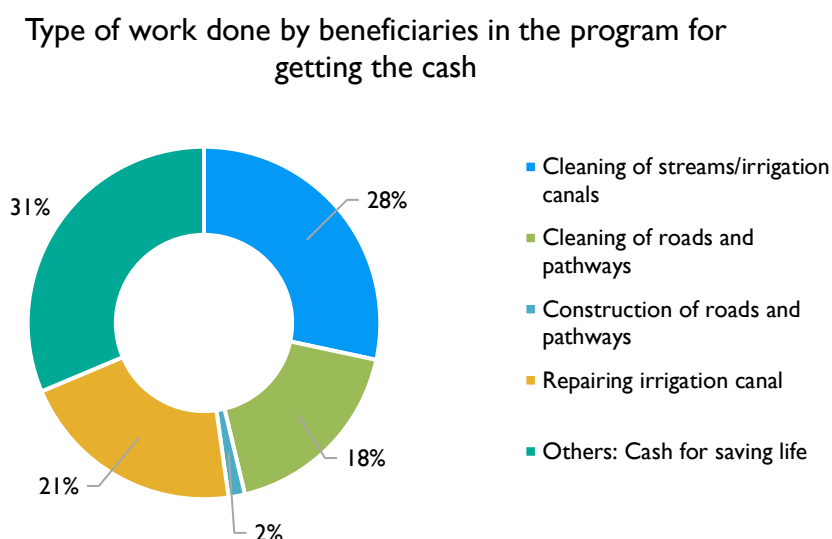
**Transportation journey:** It took 35 minutes on average, for beneficiaries to get to the distribution point. Once in the distribution point, it took 1 hour and 2 mins and it costed in average 190.2 AFN (nearly 2.17 dollars). Analysing by village shows beneficiaries from Ghurab had largest travel time, waiting time and highest spending on the transportation costs to get to the cash distribution points.

Table 5: Average time and costs it took beneficiaries to receiving cash, by village

Village	average time to get to distribution point by district	Average time waiting to receive the cash once arrived at the distribution point	total costs for receiving the cash (AFN)
Dahan kanak	23	60	222.2
Dahan Qul Tupchi	27	26	57.1
Ghurab	60	72	357.1
Qafila Bashi	23	72	60.0
<b>Total average</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>190.2</b>

Most of the beneficiaries received “cash for saving life” (31%). In second place, in the scheme of cash for work, 28% cleaned streams/irrigation canals. In third place, 21% repaired irrigation canals (figure 4).

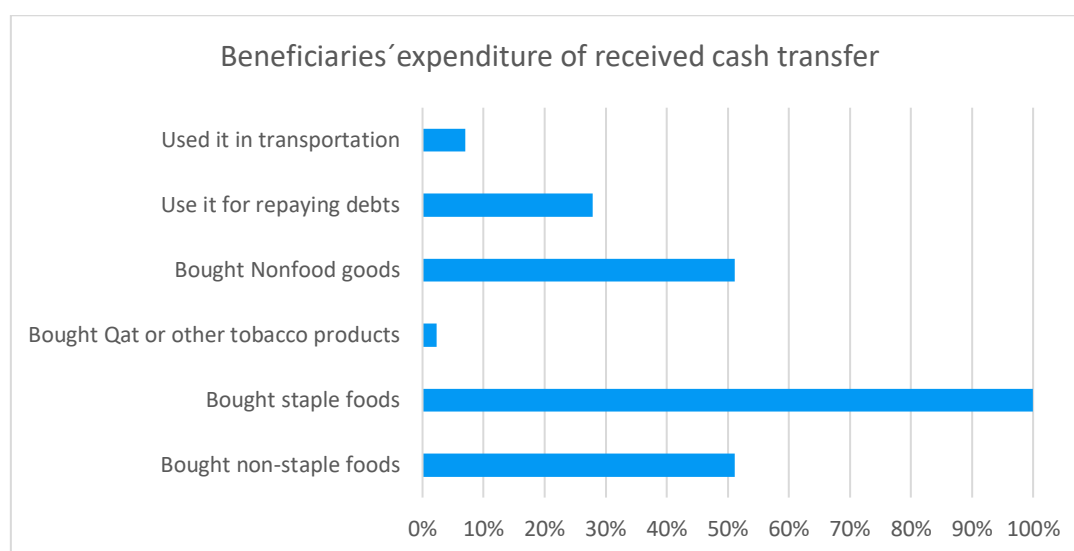
Figure 4: Type of work done by beneficiaries in the program for getting the cash



### 3.1.4 Use of cash

Regarding the expenditure of the cash received by the beneficiary households, all of them used it to buy staple food while 51% bought non-staple food as well. Additionally, 51% also bought non-food goods, 28% used the money to repay debts and 7% used it in transportation. Only 2% used it to buy qat or other tobacco products (although CWSA MEAL didn't find such case during monitoring). There were not reported issues about barriers of access to buy food from the market.

Figure 5: Beneficiaries' expenditure of received cash transfer

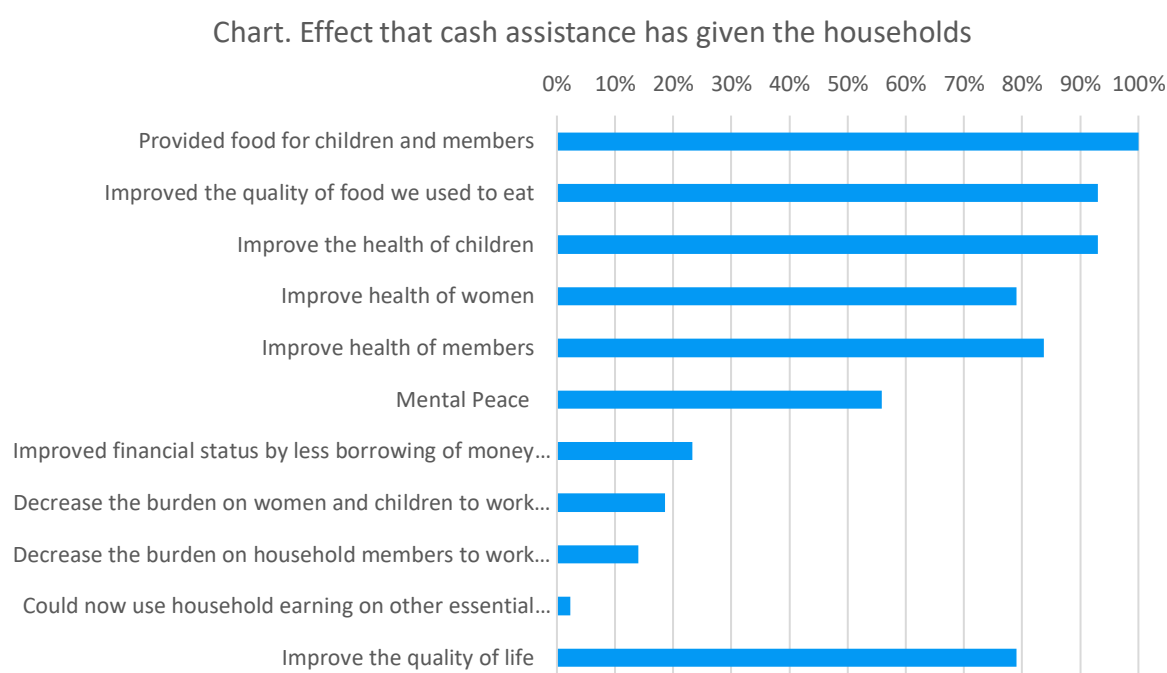


## 3.2 Objective 2-To understand the beneficiary's satisfaction

### 3.2.1 Beneficiaries' perception of the aid's impact

All beneficiaries reported that the cash assistance has helped to provide food for the children and members of their households. Additionally, 93% of the households recognized that it improved the quality of food they use to eat and thus improved the health of their children (93%) and their family members (84%) and women (79%). (Figure 15). The 56% of the cash beneficiaries claimed that it improved their mental peace.

Figure 6: Effect that cash assistance has given the households



The 14% of the beneficiaries of cash for work component also were part of other assistance program, most of them were beneficiaries of the WFP (World Food Program )and one received cash from ADRA as well. There is an existing possibility of time gap between project participants receiving assistance from CWS and WFP or other NGO. According to CWS staff at the stage of beneficiary identification and selection, HH's did not received assistance from any other organization. The cash for work component implemented from March to May 2022 and the third-party evaluation data collection was conducted during August 2022.

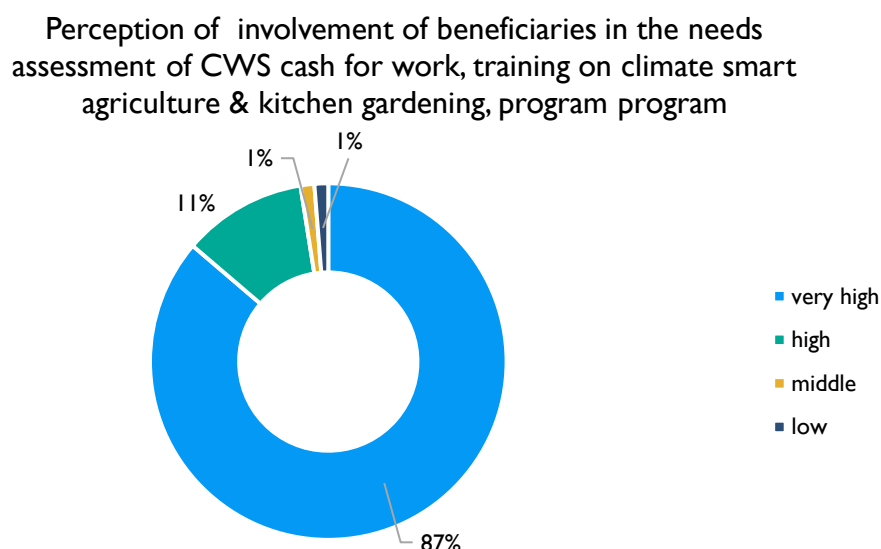
### 3.1.6 Perception of involvement of beneficiaries and complaint mechanisms

Most of the beneficiaries (87%) perceived a very high involvement in the needs assessment for all the project components. In total 98% felt a high or very high degree involvement in the implementation process of the project (figure 16).

The high Involvement of beneficiary from the findings suggests that the beneficiaries are involved when the list of the potential interventions is prepared. They are asked about their

requirements and the intervention they need the most at that time. So, most of the beneficiaries mentioned that they have a high involvement in the in the needs assessment of CWS cash for work, livestock distribution, training on climate smart agriculture & kitchen gardening, program.

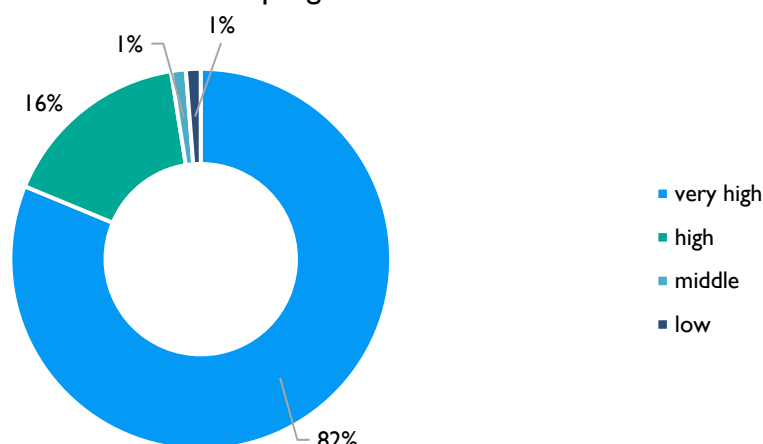
Figure 7: Perception of involvement of beneficiaries in the needs assessment of CWS cash for work, training on climate smart agriculture & kitchen gardening, program.



In the case of the implementation process, almost every beneficiary felt involved at some point: 82% very highly involved, 16% highly involved and 1% middle involved. (Figure 17).

Figure 8: Perception of involvement of beneficiaries in the implementation process (incl. project steering committee) of CWS program

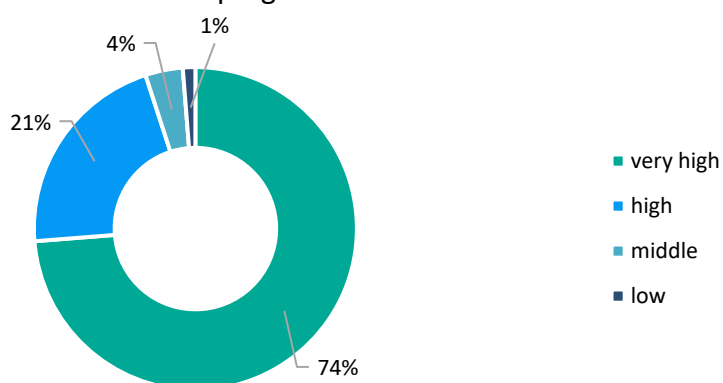
Perception of involvement of beneficiaries in the implementation process (incl. project steering committee) of CWS program



The majority of beneficiaries felt very highly involved in the monitoring mechanisms of the project (74%). Additionally, the 21% of the beneficiaries felt highly involved in the mechanism (figure 18).

Figure 9: Perception of involvement of beneficiaries in the monitoring process (incl. complaint mechanism) of CWS program

Perception of involvement of beneficiaries in the monitoring process (incl. complaint mechanism) of CWS program



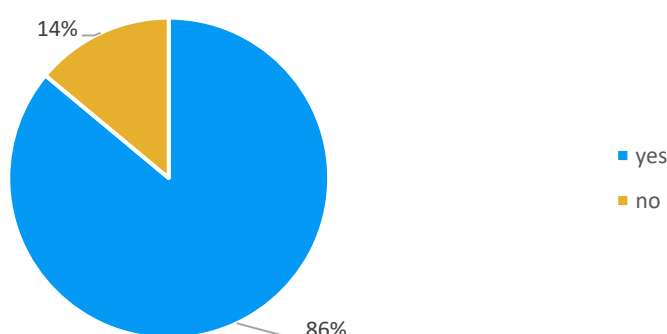
Almost all beneficiaries recognized the complaint/feedback mechanism of the project (97,5%). From the users of the feedback/complaint mechanisms, the 75% (three of them) recognized an authorized person to solve issues. However, only half of them (2 beneficiaries) have had their issue resolved in a timely manner. Additionally, both beneficiaries that have had their issues resolved, noticed that there were improvements after the complaint was solved.

Regarding the cash transfers, almost all beneficiaries (95,3%) reported to have received the cash on time, and 97,7% received the full amount of cash as informed by CWS staff. All beneficiaries reported to have been treated courteously.

All beneficiaries consider that the CWS cash for work, livestock distribution, training on climate smart agriculture & kitchen gardening, program is fair and is helpful for their families and are willing to continue being part of program (figure 19)

Figure 10: Cash transfers beneficiaries consider that cash for work assistance is sufficient to provide food for their families.

Chart 9. Cash transfers beneficiaries consider that cash for work assistance is sufficient to provide food for their families



Most of the beneficiaries (86%) consider that the cash assistance is sufficient to provide food for their families for one month.

### 3.1.6 Satisfaction of beneficiaries

Almost all cash transfer beneficiaries felt either satisfied or very satisfied with the different aspects of the program. Those aspects were evaluated with a Likert scale from 1 to 5, where 1 meant very dissatisfied and 5 very satisfied. The low score of satisfaction regarding travel cost and time was contributed by comparatively lower satisfaction degree of beneficiaries from Qafila Bashi and Ghurab villages. Further, the beneficiaries of Qafila Bashi reported the poorest satisfaction score on waiting time for receiving cash (table 13).

Table 6: Satisfaction degrees of various aspects of the cash program

Aspect of the cash program	satisfaction degree
Satisfaction regarding the cash distribution system	5.0
Satisfaction regarding how the CWS staff informed about the process	5.0
Satisfaction regarding the ease of getting the cash	4.9
Satisfaction regarding the location of cash distribution	4.8
Satisfaction regarding the amount of time you spent waiting	4.4
Satisfaction regarding the respectfulness of the staff	5.0

Satisfaction regarding the travel cost and time had to be spent away from job to reach to location and receive cash	4.0
Satisfaction regarding the overall cash assistance program	4.9

### 3.3 Objective 3- To document project's achievements and challenges

#### Achievements

##### 3.3.1 Impact Evaluation: Improved access to food

The impact indicators for the project can be divided into 2 groups according to the project outcomes linked to each component:

- Improved food security of households by equipping them with livestock/home garden management and climate compatible farming practices (component 1)
- Increased resilience of the target communities to disasters due to training of agriculture techniques (component 2)

Additionally, there have been added indicators to explore women empowerment in domestic economy decision making.

##### 3.1.5.1 Indicators

As outlined in the logframe, the indicators 1.1 (FCS) and 1.2 (rCSI) are the ones that were used to assess both household caloric availability and dietary diversity and behavioral responses to food insecurity. Indicators 1.3 and 1.4 are adapted from the project logframe (figure 6).

The second outcome (fig 7) related to resilience to disasters includes 2 indicators. The indicator 2.1 is elaborated taking into account the Kitchen Gardening Training Manual and the indicator 2.2 is elaborated taking into account the Climate Smart Agriculture Manual.

Figure 11: First outcome of the project: Improved food security due to the acquisition of livestock/household garden management and climate change-responsive farming practices

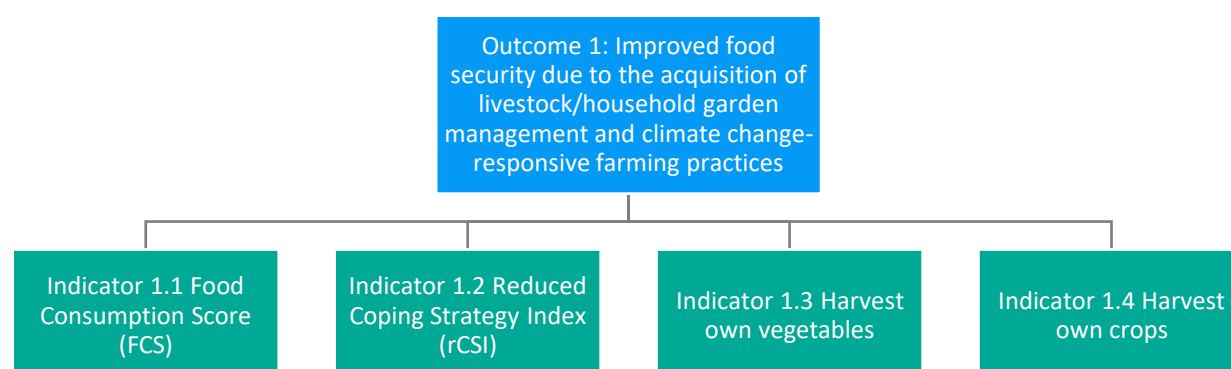
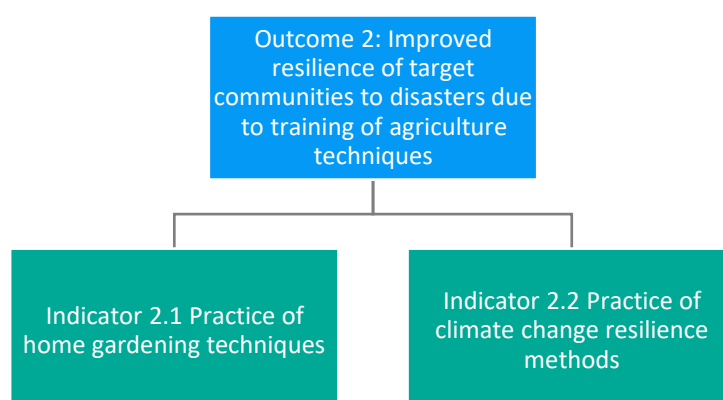


Figure 12: Second outcome of the project: Improved resilience of target communities to disasters due to training of agriculture techniques



### 3.1.5.2 Methodology

A mean difference between the beneficiaries' group (treatment group) and the non-beneficiaries' group (control group). The control group created selecting households from the same areas, with a similar income level (regarding the data availability).

### 3.1.5.3 Food Consumption Score (FCS)

The FCS is an index that was developed by the World Food Programme. The FCS aggregates household-level data on the diversity and frequency of food groups consumed over the previous seven days, which is then weighted according to the relative nutritional value of the consumed food groups.



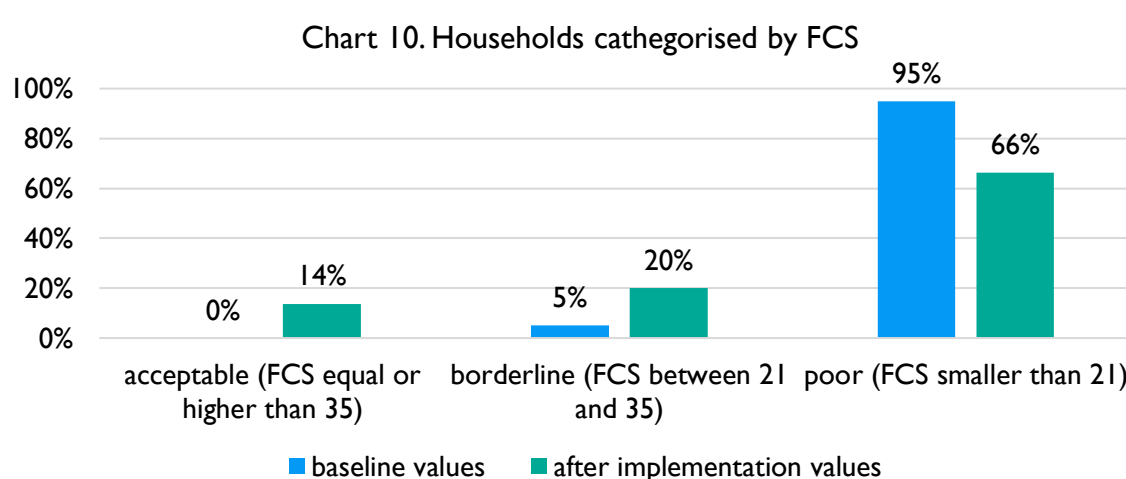
It is determined the household's food consumption status based on the following thresholds: 0-21: Poor; 21.5-35: Borderline; >35: Acceptable.

The target stated at the logframe is a 60% improvement between the values at the moment the project was launched and after the intervention.

The baseline study conducted by CWS, comprised of 269 households and presented the average FCS was 15 (poor) at the beginning of the project. None of the project participants reported acceptable food consumption, while only 5% project participants were in borderline and the rest of 95% were poor food consumption.

Comparing with the baseline, the current study results in terms of the impact evaluation shows that the overall FCS of participants increased in more than 2 points -the average FCS of the beneficiaries after the project was implemented was 17.5. Moreover, there was a reduction of 29 percent points of households with poor consumption values (for the HHs whose FCS was smaller than 21) after the implementation of the project, and an increase of 15 points of borderline values (FCS 21-35) and 14 points of increase of acceptable values (FCS =>35). Overall FCS has resulted in 60% improvement, hence achieved the project target (figure 13).

Figure 13: Households categorized by FCS



### 3.1.5.4 FCS Mean comparison (beneficiaries and control group)

A mean difference between the beneficiaries' group (treatment group) and the non-beneficiaries' group (control group). The control group created selecting households with similar housing characteristics from neighbouring villages at least 5km away to prevent spill over effects (table 7).

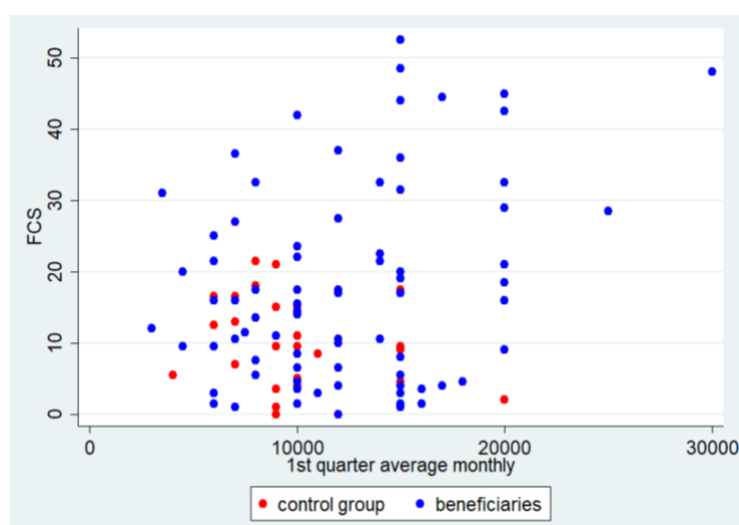
Table 7: Sample distribution of beneficiaries by village

District	Village	Beneficiary HH	Non-Beneficiary HH	Total
Center of Bamyan	Qafila Bashi	23		23
	Fatmasti		18	18

	Dahan Qul Tupchi	17		17
Saighan	Ghurab	22		22
	Dahan Sarayak		9	9
Yakawlang	Dahan kanak	18		18
Total		80	27	107

Before performing the analysis, the sample was checked and it seems to be slightly skewed towards low FCS, but some high value outliers were removed to preserve the statistical significance of the estimates. The extreme values of monthly expenditure on 1<sup>st</sup> quarter ranged were 25000 and 30000 which were removed for the analysis.

Figure 14: Scatterplot of FCS and 1st quarter expenditure per month (before removal of outliers)



**Scatterplots** are used to display the relationship between two quantitative variables. The above scatter plot shows the relationship between the FCS and the monthly expenditure of the HH for 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. Each dot represents the FCS score of one HH versus its monthly expenditure. This plot shows no association between the FCS and monthly expenditure. This means that FCS score does not depend on the monthly expenditure of the HH.

Figure 15: Box and whiskers diagram before and after removal of outlier values.



As follows the FCS indicator was studied with a mean difference between beneficiaries and no beneficiaries. There was performed a statistical T test in which the null hypothesis is that there is no difference between beneficiary and non-beneficiaries. So to prove that there is such a difference we hope to reject this null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis (that there is a difference in the mean of the two groups).

The coefficient of the difference between the two groups is expected to be the effect that the program has had on the different indicators

### 3.1.5.6 FCS results

Analysing the mean differences between beneficiary and non-beneficiary shows P value smaller than 0.05-in this case 0.02 suggesting statistical significance that there is a difference between the group of beneficiaries and the non-beneficiaries. That difference is almost 6 points more in the case of the beneficiaries highlighting improved levels of household caloric consumption and dietary diversity.

Figure 16: The output of the statistical analysis of t test done for FCS

```
. ttest FCS, by( tpart )
```

Two-sample t test with equal variances

Group	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
0	27	10.40741	1.18995	6.183161	7.96143	12.85338
1	77	16.26623	1.407813	12.35351	13.46233	19.07014
combined	104	14.74519	1.113369	11.35418	12.53709	16.9533
diff		-5.858826	2.48509		-10.78799	-.9296629

diff = mean(0) - mean(1) t = -2.3576  
 Ho: diff = 0 degrees of freedom = 102

Ha: diff < 0 Ha: diff != 0 Ha: diff > 0  
 Pr(T < t) = 0.0102 Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0203 Pr(T > t) = 0.9898

### **3.1.5.7 Harvest own vegetables**

The beneficiaries of training in kitchen gardening were asked if they harvest their own vegetables and if they did that before taking the training. As a result, the target of 80% of people harvesting their own vegetables was fulfilled because all beneficiaries that took part of the training, now harvest their own vegetables. The background information from the project revealed that 28.75% of the people were harvesting their own vegetables. These were the people who were enrolled for the training and as per the interview, all the beneficiaries were harvesting their own vegetables based on the training. Hence, the target of 80% harvesting their own vegetables was achieved.

### **3.1.5.10 Harvest own crops**

The beneficiaries of training in smart agriculture were asked if they harvest their own crops and if they did that before taking the training.

As a result, the target of 80% of people harvesting their own crops was fulfilled because all beneficiaries that took part of the training, now harvest their own crops. Before the training there was almost a 30% that did not perform that practice. So, the people who were not harvesting their crops started harvested the crops by incorporating the practices taught at the training.

### **3.1.5.11 Practice of home gardening techniques**

The logframe target regarding home gardening techniques is that 80% of the participants are practicing what they learned in the training in the home garden.

All participants of the kitchen gardening sessions practice the main home gardening techniques such as:

- Cleaning/Washing harvest equipment's before using
- Keeping tools away from children and in secured area
- Wearing shoes/slippers before going to garden
- Being aware about insect repellent plants

On the other hand, there are two kitchen gardening techniques that are not performed by all participants, 68% use plastic gloves or homemade gloves during harvesting/picking and 64% keep the kitchen garden area fenced and protected. Moreover, all the beneficiaries didn't prepare home-based insecticides such as neem leaf extract, garlic extract and do not monitor pest population by using hand lens or other tools. These findings were more or less similar across all the villages.

It is also important to highlight that the project period was extended during the project and continued by November, 2022, although TPE data collection was conducted in August 2022. Hence one more kitchen gardening training session and 3-4 Smart Agriculture training sessions were conducted after the TPE. CWSA internal monitoring team found that 86% of the participants of the kitchen gardening trainings practice what they have learnt in the sessions.

### **3.1.5.12 Practice of climate change resilience methods**

The logframe target regarding home gardening techniques is that 80% of the participants are practicing what they learned in the training in the home garden.

Currently, all beneficiaries that were trained in climate smart agriculture practice the following methods:

- Prepare beds in the east and west direction and line from north to south direction on the beds
- Have marked areas affected by weed on your farmland in some form
- Practice mulching
- Use methods for prevention of disease like wilting, blotches, scabs, fungus
- Introduced strict sanitation practices to reduce diseases
- Made changes in the rows such as making them wide enough or orienting rows towards wind or irrigating early during the day

Specifically in the case of preparing beds in the east and west direction, before undertaking the training, only 27% of the beneficiaries practiced it, hence 73 percent points increase. Similarly, only 32% of the beneficiaries marked areas affected by weed on their farmland before taking the training. As consequence of the training there was an increase of 68 percent points. On the other hand, there are only 5 climate smart techniques out of 20 techniques that are not performed by all participants. These techniques were namely, intercropping, harvesting legume between two crops, burning crop residue, practicing mulching and drying vegetables before storing.

In contrast to these well practiced techniques, the practice of having a compost pit for green manure was conducted by only 14%, this may be due to the fact that people didn't want to designate a portion of their land for compost pit. Nevertheless, there is a need to explore the exact reasons further,

## **Challenges**

### **3.3.1.3 general challenge of cash assistance under emergency response**

Some of the challenges from the findings appear to be around the amount of cash delivered, which in some cases is not enough to fulfil the family needs. The expenditure of families has been sustained through cash assistance although discontinuation of the program, it could drop drastically, affecting the food consumption and other aspects of wellbeing.

### **3.3.2 Program Management**

#### **3.3.2.1 Challenges under program management**

The key issue cited by KII and FGD respondents was the effective procedure for beneficiary identification and coverage of the assistance. Bamyan having number of disasters affected population, poverty-stricken households and IDPs warrant careful selection of beneficiaries for ensuring aid reaches the deserving beneficiary was cited by the local government authorities. In order to address the demand for assistance the member NGO adopt various

measures to address this within the ambit of resources by increasing the number of rounds of assistance, fundraising to other donors and at times crowdfunding for generating additional resources.

### **3.4 Objective 4- To provide any possible indicatives for improving the projects for both JPF and member NGOs**

#### **3.4.1 More emphasis on sustainable assistance**

From the evaluation, it was reported that the trainings for smart agriculture and kitchen garden given to the beneficiaries were effective as the beneficiaries of these training were found to be practicing these techniques in their fields and kitchen, which was very impressive. However, it is evident that the number of beneficiaries selected for these training was very limited. So, it is recommended that these training should be given to an increased number of beneficiaries to improve their agricultural and kitchen practices. Moreover, these training also improve sustainability and resilience among the community as they become skilled and trained and improve their productivity.

#### **3.4.2 Exploring different method of cash distribution**

This evaluation reported that most of the beneficiaries of cash transfers received the cash as hard money and mostly through banks. However, we suggest that other methods of cash transfers can be explored to increase reach to women beneficiaries considering the social restrictions on their movement. Moreover, it was found out in the evaluation, that beneficiaries spend a significant amount of cash on transport for coming to the place of cash distribution. So, by using other means of cash transfers, the cost incurred by them will also be reduced.

