



INFORMAL SETTLEMENT FOOD SECURITY ASSESSMENT

AFGHANISTAN

ASSESSMENT

JANUARY 2017



AFGHANISTAN
FOOD SECURITY CLUSTER
Strengthening Humanitarian Response



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About REACH

REACH is a joint initiative of two international non-governmental organizations - ACTED and IMPACT Initiatives - and the UN Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNOSAT). REACH's mission is to strengthen evidence-based decision making by aid actors through efficient data collection, management and analysis before, during and after an emergency. By doing so, REACH contributes to ensuring that communities affected by emergencies receive the support they need. All REACH activities are conducted in support to and within the framework of inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. For more information please visit our website: www.reach-initiative.org.

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SUMMARY

Socio-economic and security concerns in Afghanistan, due to conflict and natural disasters, result in the increasing displacement of households across the country and in neighbouring regions. In 2016, the number of households forced to leave their home reached record highs with more than 650,000 individuals forcibly displaced within the country due to armed conflict alone. Not only has the situation continued into this year, but the mass return of Afghan nationals from Pakistan is placing further strain on some of the country's most vulnerable populations. Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and returnees face particular economic hardship, with many ending up residing in informal settlements. These populations are characterized by a high level of vulnerability. In particular, food insecurity is a primary concern for settlement residents, and the increasing size of these sites and the pressure on limited resources is expected to worsen.

To understand these changing dynamics, a comprehensive food security assessment has been conducted throughout Kabul and Nangarhar, as these two provinces are most densely populated by IDPs and returnees. In close coordination with the Afghanistan Food Security Cluster, this study aims to provide updated food security knowledge about vulnerable households in informal settlements and assess the exposure of households to low food consumption and food-based coping strategies. The assessment builds on the Kabul Informal Settlement (KIS) Winter Needs Assessment conducted by the World Food Programme (WFP) in November 2015. The latter provides initial insight into the food security status of household within these sites, offering a baseline for aspects of this assessment.¹ Taking this as a basis, a qualitative research methodology consisting of household level surveys was developed.

Accordingly, random sampling generated interviews with 593 households residing in 56 settlements in Kabul and 409 households across 23 settlements in Nangarhar, with data collected throughout January 2017. The study focuses on important aspects of food insecurity, specifically highlighting the differences between returnee and IDP populations. Due to limitations of the sample size, some in-depth disaggregations were not possible in the assessment; findings are therefore mostly presented either at the province level or by displacement status. The main purpose of the assessment was to inform food security interventions in the coming year, strengthening the food security situation within the sites. This summary outlines the key findings of the report, which has been divided into two sections. The first details the main characteristics and demographics of the surveyed households and the second outlines key food security measures including food consumption, use of coping strategies and overall food security status.

Household Characteristics

Household characteristics are broadly similar between Kabul and Nangarhar. Within settlements, the main differences concern household head and size, as well as varying proportions of IDPs and returnees.

- Proportions of men and women, and boys and girls in the settlements were found to be equal.
- Across both provinces, households consisted of approximately 1.5 families. In Kabul, a household had an average of eight members compared to 12 in Nangarhar.
- IDPs comprised 68% of the populations while 28% were returnees. The remaining 4% did not know their displacement status. Of the returnees, 71% were UNHCR registered and 29% were undocumented. The proportion of IDPs was greater in Nangarhar (86%) than in Kabul (56%).
- Households in Kabul were found to have been in their settlements for an average of six years while in Nangarhar this average was three years. In both provinces, it is likely that recent influx of returnees affected the average length of stay, with more households arriving in 2016 compared to any other year.
- Households which received humanitarian assistance were far fewer in Nangarhar (13%) than in Kabul (76%). In Nangarhar, 89% of households reported a need for food assistance, while 63% of households reported requiring employment assistance and 53% health care assistance. In Kabul, most households reported to need shelter support (90%), food assistance (79%) and employment support (68%).

¹ WFP, Kabul Informal Settlement Winter Needs Assessment, November 2015.

- Most households reportedly intended to stay in their current location for the foreseeable future in both Kabul (74%) and in Nangarhar (47%). Since risk of eviction is high and with households reluctant to move of their own accord, forced secondary displacement within the province could be anticipated. In Nangarhar, 44% of households planned to return to their place of origin within Afghanistan, while this percentage amounts to 15% in Kabul. This may be expected as households recently returned from Pakistan may have temporarily settled in Nangarhar before carrying on to their area of origin.
- Indicative findings point out that female headed households may be more vulnerable than men headed ones. In Kabul, 67% of female headed households while 54% of male headed households, were found to be severely food insecure. In Nangarhar, 80% of female headed households were found to be severely food insecure compared to 69% male.

Food Security Analysis

Food Consumption

Overall, it was found that informal settlements have a poor food consumption level, with IDPs displaying a particularly vulnerable situation in this regard. Findings are based on computed Food Consumption Scores (FCS) which evaluates the frequency at which differently weighted food groups are eaten by a household.

- Of all the informal settlements, 91% consume an inadequate amount of food. Within this, 55% were found to have poor food consumption and 36% had borderline acceptable food consumption levels.
- The proportion of households with poor food consumption was marginally higher in Nangarhar (56%) than in Kabul (51%).
- Findings indicated a deterioration in the food consumption situation in informal settlements in Kabul since November 2015; the percentage of households with poor food consumption rose by 9%.
- Findings indicate that returnee households were less food insecure in terms of consumption than IDPs. Amongst IDP households, 55% were found to have poor food consumption compared to 34% of returnees. Alternatively, 28% of returnees were food secure compared to only 7% of IDPs.
- The influence of food prices affected food consumption differently. Demand was found to be highly inelastic for dietary staples, such as beans and pulses, and cereals and tubers; alternatively, it was very elastic for less essential foods, such as oil. As such, it can be determined that the consumption of essential foods, such as pulses and cereals, was affected by factors other than cost, such as limited supply in the markets.
- In addition, no relationship was identified between the time and distance to a food market and FCS. Even if a market was very far away, this did not prevent a household from travelling to the location to purchase food. As such, food accessibility is not a concern, implying again that food availability is an issue.
- Scoring indicated that 68% of households in Kabul and 63% in Nangarhar had sufficient dietary diversity, with many of these households consuming seven or eight food groups in the past week. As such, food diversity may not be as concerning a priority as other aspects of food security in informal settlements.

Food-Based Coping Strategies

Across assessed informal settlements, findings point out to high dependence on negative coping strategies, such as eating fewer meals or reducing portion sizes. Since some of these strategies include borrowing food from friends or relatives, this can have negative implications for other households. The reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI) was used to determine a household's dependence on food-based coping strategies, in which each strategy is weighted according to severity and is multiplied by the number of days each strategy is used in a given week. As 100% of households make use of at least one negative coping strategy during a week period, and most households use a variety of food-based coping strategies regularly throughout the week, this can be interpreted as a high dependency on food-based coping strategies.

- In both Kabul and Nangarhar, it was found that consuming less preferred or less expensive food was the most commonly implemented coping strategy, with 98% of households relying on this method at least once a week. The second most prevalent method is limiting portion sizes during meals, used by 91% of households at least once a week.
- In Kabul, 38% of households had a high dependency on coping strategies and 28% had low dependency on coping strategies. This situation has worsened since November 2015, with the proportion of highly dependent households rising by nine percentage points and those with little dependency falling by 23 percentage points. In Nangarhar a greater proportion of households (52%) were highly dependent on coping strategies while fewer had low dependence (7%).
- It was also found that returnees in both provinces had a slightly lower proportion of households highly dependent on coping strategies. Amongst IDPs, 55% of households were highly dependent compared to 38% of returnees.

Overall Food Security Status

By combining the FCS with coping strategies, it can be concluded that the overall food security status of informal settlement households in Kabul and Nangarhar is severely low.

- The food security situation was found to be severe across the two provinces, with 68% of households being severely food insecure, and especially in Nangarhar where 70% of households were considered severely food insecure, and only 9% were food secure. In Kabul, 55% were found to be severely insecure – an increase of seven percentage points since November 2015. However, in Kabul, food secure households had risen very slightly by 0.8 percentage points, possibly indicating greater inequality within the settlements.
- IDPs were found to be more severely food insecure than returnees, with 73% of IDPs falling into this category compared to 40% of returnees. In Nangarhar, 74% of IDPs were severely food insecure compared to 30% of returnees.
- Results indicate that location rather than displacement status affects food expenditure share (FES). In Kabul, IDPs spent on average 57% of their expenditure on food while returnees spent an average of 51%. In Nangarhar, IDPs spent an average of 48% and returnees only 37% on average.

Concluding Remark

The findings above specify that food insecurity is rife amongst informal settlements in both provinces, particularly in Nangarhar and among IDPs. The high level of food insecurity in all assessed informal settlements points to an urgent need of humanitarian assistance, likely to increase as the number of settlement residents grows.

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List of Acronyms

DD	Dietary Diversity
FCS	Food Consumption Score
FES	Food Expenditure Share
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ODK	Open Data Kit
rCSI	Reduced Coping Strategies Index

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout 2016, the number of IDPs and returnees in Afghanistan sharply increased. More than 650,000 individuals were displaced across the country last year due to conflict alone.² This surge has continued into 2017, with 15,445 individuals from 18 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces verified as displaced prior to 18 February 2017.³ In addition, the increasing pressure on Afghan refugees in Pakistan to return to their country of origin has resulted in the ongoing mass return from Pakistan. This crisis has prompted the return of nearly 620,000 undocumented and registered returnees in 2016, while January 2017 already saw nearly 6,000 undocumented Afghans return, despite the winter pause.⁴ Many of these vulnerable groups have moved to informal settlements throughout Afghanistan, where humanitarian needs are already strained. Consequently, the increasing numbers of settlers poses a particular risk to food security as diminishing resources are consumed at a quickening rate.

It is projected that in 2017, 1.6 million people in Afghanistan will suffer from severe food insecurity.⁵ The causes of food insecurity in Afghanistan are manifold. Conflict perpetuates limited food availability country-wide, whilst unemployment and overcrowding affect food access. As such, levels of food security differ throughout the country with areas prone to large influxes of IDPs and returnees, particularly urban regions receiving high labour migration are facing particular risk of food insecurity. Given the diverse composition and varied nature of informal settlements, little research provides an assessment of the food security situation at the present moment and the consequent needs of vulnerable groups within this setting. WFP's KIS Winter Needs Assessment in November 2015 provides the most up-to-date understanding of the food security situation in Kabul informal settlements. This assessment found that 80% of households were food insecure, with factors such as having a female household head increasing food vulnerabilities. This provides a point of comparison throughout this report, which is then built upon to encompass a broader range of insight.

As such, this assessment determined the degree of food insecurity in informal settlements across Kabul and Nangarhar; two provinces most densely populated by IDPs and returnees. Household-level surveys, designed by REACH in collaboration with the Afghanistan Food Security Cluster, were carried out in 593 randomly sampled households in Kabul and 409 in Nangarhar, between the 15th and 29th of January 2017. Specifically, this study identified the level of vulnerability to food insecurity and the food-based coping strategies implemented by households in need, to define the overall food security situation within the settlements. Where possible, comparisons were made with the findings of WFP's KIS Winter Needs Assessment, although this assessment went beyond this, attempting to note differences in needs between IDPs and returnees. This information is intended to guide the programming and targeting of severely food insecure households in food security interventions during 2017.

The first section of this report outlines the methodological approach used, including details of the data collection method as well as justification of specific terminology and the food security analysis tools employed. The following section presents findings of the study, outlining specific demographic vulnerabilities, food consumption scores (FCS), food-based coping strategies and overall levels of food security. The report concludes by summarising key results and providing recommendations for food security interventions.

² Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Afghanistan Weekly Field Report, 12-18 February 2017.

³ Ibid.

⁴ OCHA, Afghanistan: Returnee Crisis, Situation Report No. 6, 29th January 2017.

⁵ OCHA, Humanitarian Needs Overview, November 2016.

METHODOLOGY

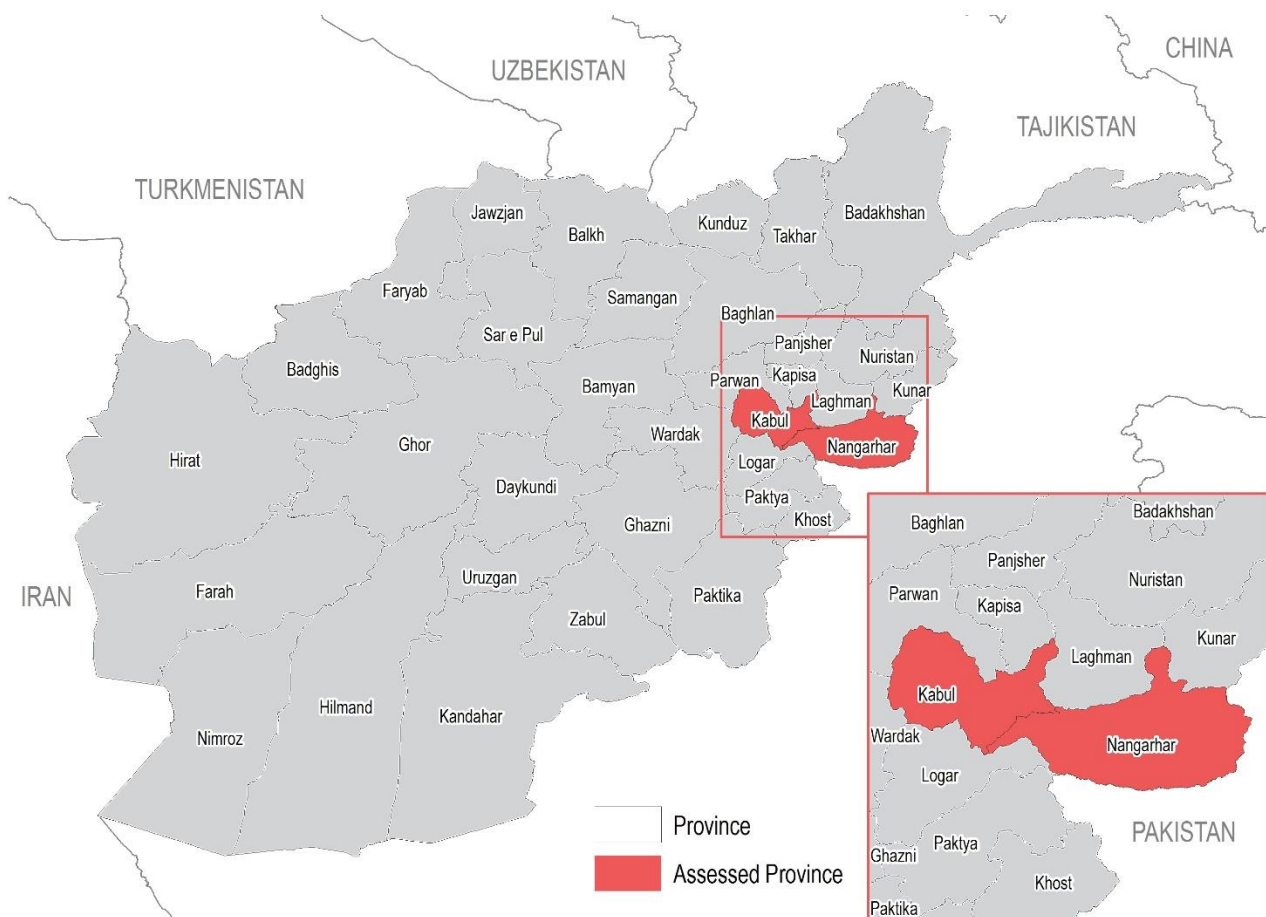
In December 2016, REACH launched the food security assessment of informal settlements across the provinces of Kabul and Nangarhar, in collaboration with the Afghanistan Food Security Cluster. The purpose was to better understand the security needs of vulnerable households residing within informal settlements in the two sub-populations. Data collection at the household level took place between 15th and 29th January 2017, sampling from 56 settlements in Kabul and 29 in Nangarhar, housing IDP, returnee or both populations.

Objectives

The overall objective of this assessment was to determine the level of food security in informal settlements in Kabul and Nangarhar. In doing so, it seeks to identify the main demographic characteristics of households in informal settlements in each of the two provinces and outline the key food security vulnerabilities of these households, focusing on IDP and returnee populations where possible. Specifically, using food security analysis tools outlined below, the assessment identified relationships between key vulnerabilities and consequential food insecurities.

Household Level Sampling

Map 1: Reference map of Kabul and Nangarhar



Secondary data review was used to identify parameters for the sampling framework, such as understanding the location and population of informal settlements, and to inform research indicators. This last point was particularly necessary for streamlining indicators to match previous studies, including the World Food Programme's (WFP) Kabul Informal Settlement Winter Needs Assessment.⁶

The sampling framework implemented a probability sampling strategy to randomly select households within informal settlements in the two provinces. This random selection was drawn from 60 Kabuli informal settlements and 25 in Nangarhar. Consequently, 56 informal settlements in Kabul were visited by field staff, as were 23 sites in Nangarhar. The total sample of 593 households in Kabul and 409 in Nangarhar allow findings to be generalised for the two provinces overall with a 98% confidence level and 4% error margin. When disaggregating the two provinces by displacement status, IDP populations have a confidence level of 97% and a margin of error of 4.4% while returnee populations have a confidence level of 95% and an error margin of 6%. Alternatively, when disaggregating by each province separately, the two samples can be generalised with a 95% confidence level and a 5% error margin.

To ensure that the assessment serves information requirements, the interview questionnaire was developed in collaboration with the Food Security Cluster. REACH translated the final questionnaire into Dari and Pashtun, and prepared the survey for smartphone usage with Open Data Kit (ODK) software.

Key Concepts

Some of the terms used throughout this assessment have a broad definition and thus the interpretations applied in this study are as follows:

Household – A housing unit in which there is one clearly defined head of household, with all other individuals living within the boundaries of the household and who regularly share meals, including family and non-family members.

Informal Settlement – A collection of households in a given community for which there is no written, legal agreement for occupancy, and thus there is a potential threat of eviction. Beyond this, the characteristics of a settlement can vary.

IDP – An individual forced to leave his/her home and travel to a different location, whilst staying within Afghanistan.

Returnee – An Afghan national who previously fled his/her home to live in another country and has since returned to Afghanistan.

Food Security Analysis Tools

To assess the food security level of households, a number of assessment tools were implemented, primarily considering food consumption and food access indicators. This formed the basis of the analysis found in this study. The analysis tools used are largely in line with WFP's Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators of Food Security (CARI) model, which combines food security indicators using data typically gathered in a food security assessment⁷. This composite model draws together current food consumption behaviours with coping strategies within the household. However, data collection in this study did not include livelihood coping strategies. Therefore, selected elements of the CARI model were implemented and then supplemented by alternative analysis tools. These include Food Consumption Scores (FCS), Dietary Diversity (DD), reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI), overall food security status and Food Expenditure Share (FES). Each of these tools are explained in the relevant findings section.

⁶ WFP, Kabul Informal Settlement Winter Needs Assessment, November 2015.

⁷ WFP, VAM Guidance Paper, 2014.

Limitations

This assessment has been designed to generate representative findings at the province level with 95% confidence and 5% error margin. To maintain the statistical integrity of the assessment, when disaggregated beyond the province level, an adjusted significance level is applied. Thus the generalisability of findings in these cases is reduced and may more accurately represent indicative findings within the sample.

Data was sampled at the province level and so results which represent the overall population of Kabul and Nangarhar's informal settlements were weighted to reflect the total population. Samples were selected from a previously compiled list of all informal settlements in Kabul and Nangarhar. However, in these provinces, new settlements regularly appear while other sites may be evicted. Therefore, the findings present an accurate representation of the situation at the time of data collection and provide significant insight into the broader settlement setting.

Finally, due to financial limitations of data collection, information was not collected on the livelihood coping strategies of households, which would indicate whether a household implements stress, crisis or emergency strategies. Discussions with the food security cluster played a role in the decision not to collect this data, as it was identified that households in informal settlements had already taken drastic measures to support the household's wellbeing. For example, one common livelihood coping strategy is the selling of household assets. However, as settlement households are so impoverished, they do not have assets to sell. Similarly, another strategy used by households is to harvest crops early, yielding lower profits but benefitting from an earlier financial influx. However, settlement households are in conditions which thus prevent them from growing crops, and so harvesting crops early is an irrelevant coping strategy.⁸ As such, the livelihoods coping strategies are arguably not an accurate reflection of the coping strategies used in settlements. However, without this data it is not possible to complete a full CARI model analysis, which prevents the scope of comparison between this and other similar assessments. However, this is only one aspect of the CARI model and consequently many other comparisons can be conducted despite a lack of this data.

⁸ WFP, VAM Guidance Paper, 2014.

FINDINGS

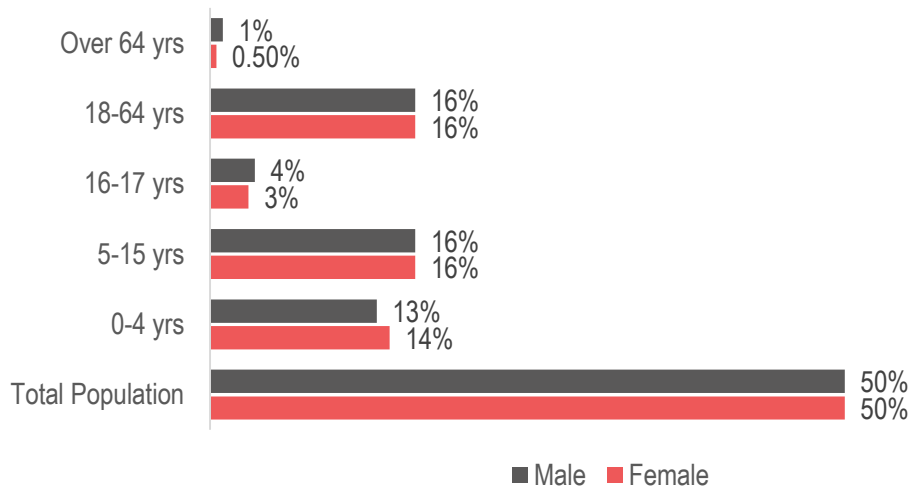
This section outlines the main results of this assessment. Initially, the key demographics and socio-economic characteristics of the population groups within the informal settlements are presented. This includes the identification of general vulnerabilities of households, helping to capture the nature and composition of informal settlements in Kabul and Nangarhar provinces. Following this, by an in-depth analysis of the specific food vulnerabilities, coping strategies and needs of households in the settlements. This includes discussion on the key relationships between food security status and income source, expenditure, food access and key identified vulnerabilities, largely in line with WFP's Kabul Informal Settlement Winter Needs Assessment.⁹ Consequently, changes in the level of food security within informal settlements in Kabul in the last year can be identified. Where statistically possible, analysis also moves beyond this comparison by specifically highlighting the different vulnerabilities of IDPs and returnees in an informal settlement setting, providing an understanding of the food-based dynamics of these vulnerable groups.

Household Characteristics

Demographics

Firstly, as can be seen in the population chart in Figure 1, there is an even split between female (50%) and male (50%) residents within the informal settlements in Kabul and Nangarhar. Children aged less than 16 years comprise 59% of the population.

Figure 1: Demographic profile



Across the two provinces, informal settlements were found to have an average household size of nine individuals consisting of 1.5 families on average. In Nangarhar, this average household size rose to 12 compared to eight in Kabul. In terms of number of children under the age of 16, Nangarhar had a higher average of seven compared to five children in Kabul.¹⁰ The dependency ratio can be calculated, with a higher result, above one, indicating that the household members of working age (16-64) support a greater number of elderly and youths. In Nangarhar, this ratio is 1.5 while in Kabul it is 1.6. The proportion of adults in employment is not known in this assessment, and so no comment can be made on the need for employment assistance. However, should future assessments identify low levels of employment, these high dependency ratios could indicate employment assistance as a priority intervention.

⁹ WFP, Kabul Informal Settlement Winter Needs Assessment, November 2015.

¹⁰ T-test p-value = 0.000.

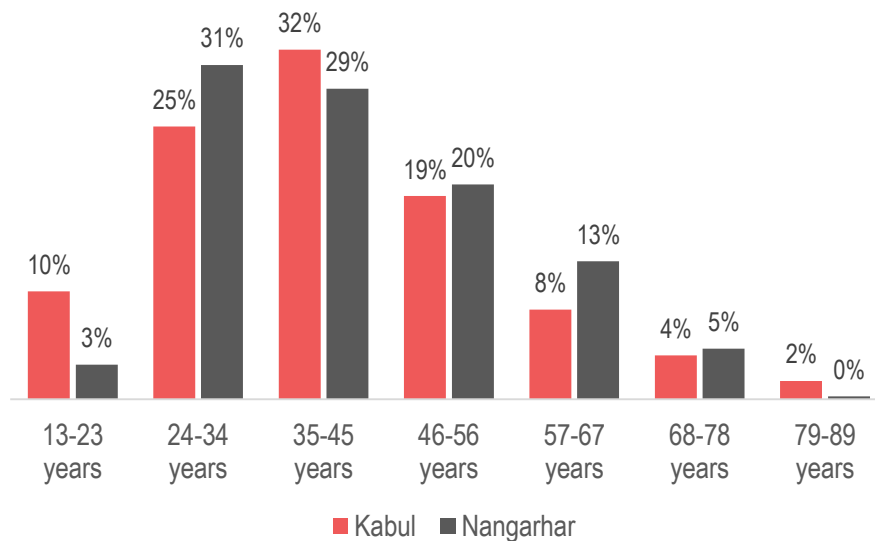
It was found that the vast majority of households were headed by men (90%). As can be seen in Figure 2, the percentage of female headed households in Nangarhar and Kabul settlements indicated no significant differences in the ratio of male and female headed households.¹¹

Figure 2: Household head gender



The age of household heads in the sample were similar in both provinces, with an average age of 43 in Nangarhar and 41 in Kabul. However, the age range was found to be broader in Kabul with the youngest aged 13 (17 in Nangarhar) and the oldest aged 90 (80 in Nangarhar) and so there is a slightly higher standard deviation in Kabul (14.6) than Nangarhar (13.6). The distribution of household ages can be seen in Figure 3, in which Nangarhar is slightly more skewed to the right than Kabul. Younger and older household heads can be more vulnerable as they may have fewer employment prospects, indicating vulnerabilities in the Kabul sample.

Figure 3: Ages of household heads in Kabul and Nangarhar



Throughout informal settlements in Afghanistan, a set of four specific vulnerabilities are prevalent: disability, breastfeeding, pregnancy and chronic illness. Table 1 summarises the vulnerabilities found within this assessment. As seen below, breastfeeding was the most commonly occurring vulnerability, with nearly one breastfeeding woman per household on average in Nangarhar. In this case, an independent samples t-test was conducted which identifies whether there is a statistically significant difference between two independent averages in a given dataset. Specifically, this allowed for an assessment of whether particular vulnerabilities were

¹¹ Gender of household head: Pearson's chi-squared test p-value = 0.177.

actually more prevalent in households in one province compared to the other. Consequently it was found that Nangarhar had statistically significantly higher numbers of breastfeeding, pregnant and chronically ill household members on average compared to Kabul.¹² However, a difference was not found between the number of disabled household members on average in households in Kabul and Nangarhar.¹³ These specific vulnerabilities were self-reported by the respondents and were not verified by health professionals, however the findings are likely indicative of vulnerabilities within the settlements and could be used to guide future assessments highlighting households in need of assistance.

Table 1: Proportion of households with one or more vulnerable individuals

Proportion of HH with members who are:	Kabul	Nangarhar	Kabul and Nangarhar
Disabled	24%	20%	20%
Breastfeeding	48%	63%	61%
Pregnant	15%	31%	28%
Chronically Ill	29%	47%	44%

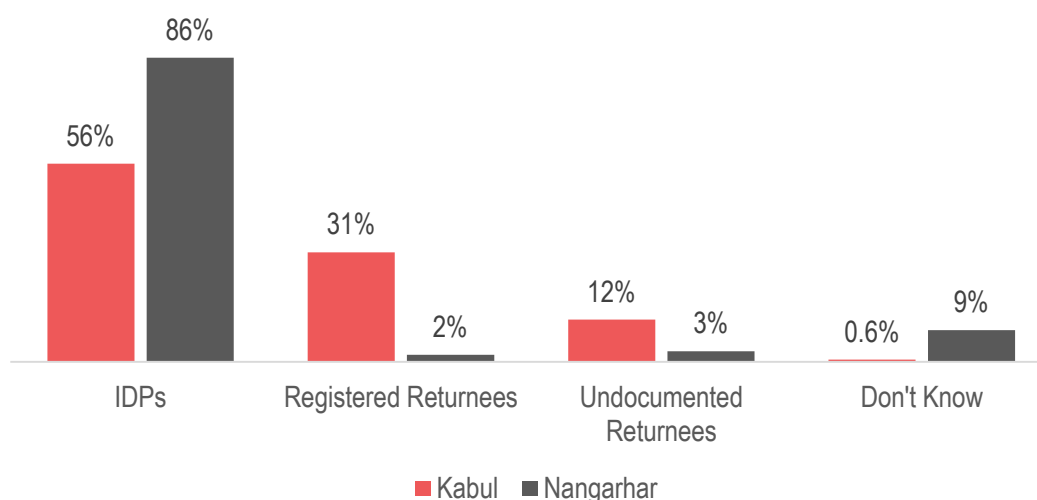
Priority Needs

While assistance received by households varies, however this may not necessarily reflect the needs of households. Despite lower levels of assistance in Nangarhar, 89% of these households reported requiring food assistance; the most required need in the province. In addition, 63% need employment assistance and 53% require health care interventions. In Kabul, 90% of households are in need of shelter support, 79% require food assistance and 68% seek employment support. The primary needs of IDPs and returnees reflect the findings for the provinces overall, with both groups prioritising food and employment assistance. As such, regardless of location or displacement status, food is consistently regarded as a priority need, further strengthening the requirement for targeted food-based interventions in informal settlements.

Displacement

Across the provinces, most the populations living in informal settlements (68%) were IDPs and 28% were returnees, including 20% UNHCR registered and 8% undocumented returnees. As seen in Figure 4, a statistically significant difference between the two provinces was identified, with a higher proportion of IDPs in Nangarhar (86%) than Kabul (56%).¹⁴ Across the two provinces, the proportion of undocumented returnees (3%) was found to be about the same as registered returnees (2%).

Figure 4: Displacement status in each province



¹² P-value = 0.000 for the three t-tests; breastfeeding, pregnant and chronically ill household members.

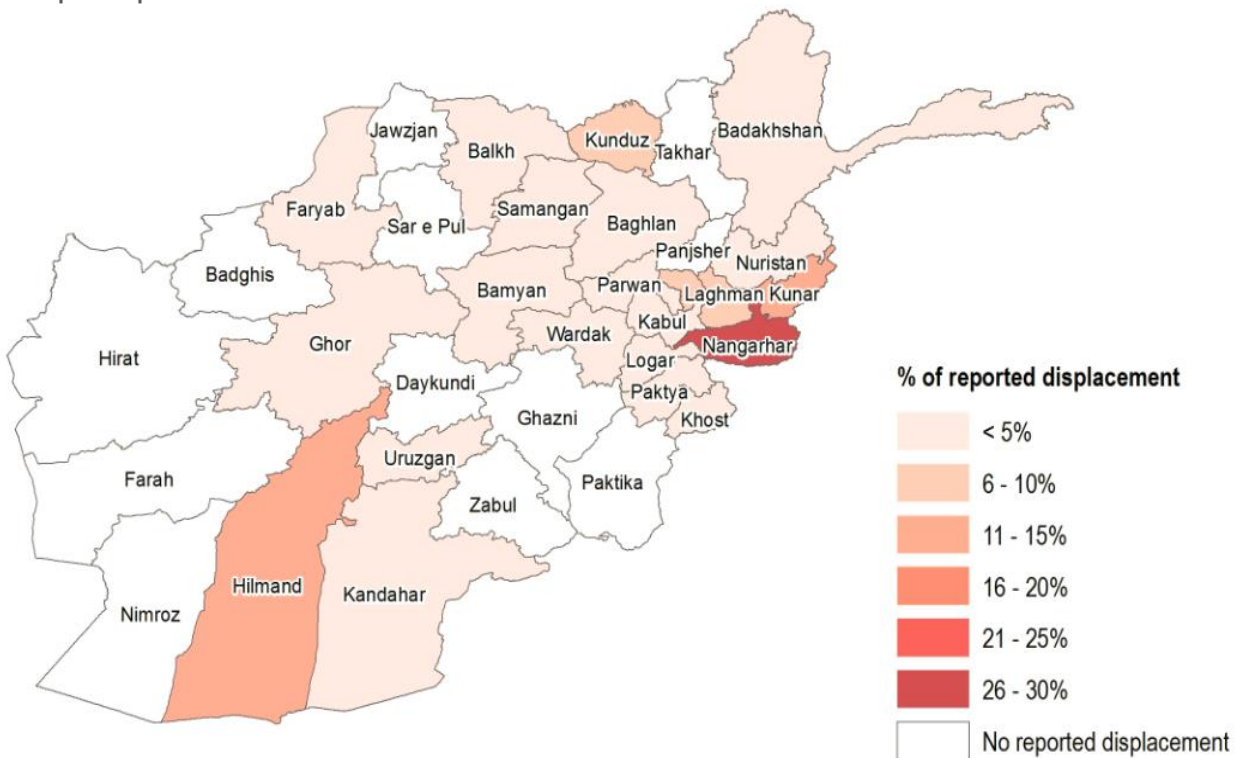
¹³ Disabled household members t-test = 0.141.

¹⁴ Displacement status in each province: Pearson's chi-squared test p-value = 0.000.

There is also an identified difference between household average length of stay in their current location in Kabul and Nangarhar.¹⁵ In Kabul, the average number of years since the first household member arrived in their informal settlement was six, while in Nangarhar this average was found to be three years. Despite a small number of the settlements in Nangarhar dating as far back as 1980, large influxes in the last year have distorted the average length of residency, while in Kabul waves of arrivals have been more consistent over the last 15 years. Regardless of these differences, the modal year of arrival in their current informal settlement in both Kabul and Nangarhar was 2016, emphasizing the high level of movement during the last year. Interestingly, length of stay is significantly higher for returnees (average of six years) than IDPs (average of four years).¹⁶

Amongst surveyed households, the locations from which IDPs have travelled from varied, as displayed in Map 2 below. In Kabul, the largest proportion of IDPs were found to have moved from the southern province of Helmand (28%), followed by the northern province of Kunduz (17%) and the neighbouring province of Laghman (12%). In Nangarhar, the greatest number of IDPs travelled from other areas of Nangarhar province (30%), Hilmand province (11%) and the neighbouring province of Kunar (13%). The most reported reason for northern and southern province displacement was armed conflict. Reasons for movement from neighbouring provinces were found to be more diverse, and included armed conflict, natural disasters and land disputes.

Map 2: Displacement location of IDPs



This assessment found that whilst moving once was the most likely displacement frequency, comprising 59% of the surveyed population, these figures again differ for Kabul and Nangarhar. In Kabul, 66% of households have been displaced only once, compared with 49% in Nangarhar. However, in Nangarhar, 46% of the surveyed population did not know how many times they had been displaced, compared to 22% in Kabul. This perhaps indicates multiple moves over a long period or that households were not inclined to disclose this information. A potential reason for relative stability in Kabul could be the increased likelihood of finding employment and a perceived sense of security in the large city, preventing households from moving further.

For returnees in the assessment, the clear majority previously lived in Pakistan, comprising 100% of all returnees in sampled households in Nangarhar. In Kabul, 93% of sampled returnees previously lived in Pakistan. This high

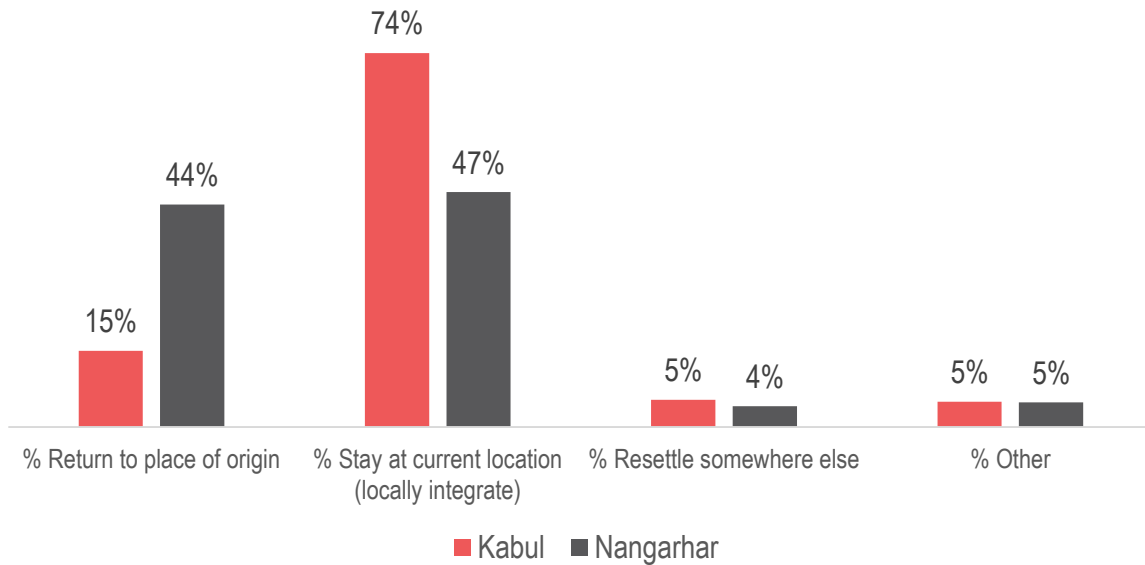
¹⁵ T-test p-value = 0.000.

¹⁶ T-test p-value = 0.000.

returnee rate from Pakistan could be expected given the recent mass exodus from the country. The remaining households in Kabul returned from Iran (7%) and just one household moved from Tajikistan.

Despite a strong fear of eviction, particularly in Kabul, the majority of households in both provinces intended to stay in their current location – 74% in Kabul and 47% in Nangarhar, as seen in Figure 5. This could indicate that households would remain in their current location until faced with eviction, which may then generate a high precedence of secondary displacement, increasing the vulnerability of these households. In Nangarhar, 44% of the settlement population intended to return to their place of origin within Afghanistan. This could be expected as returnees possibly travelled across the border from Pakistan and temporarily settled close to the border, with the intention of returning to their home when possible.

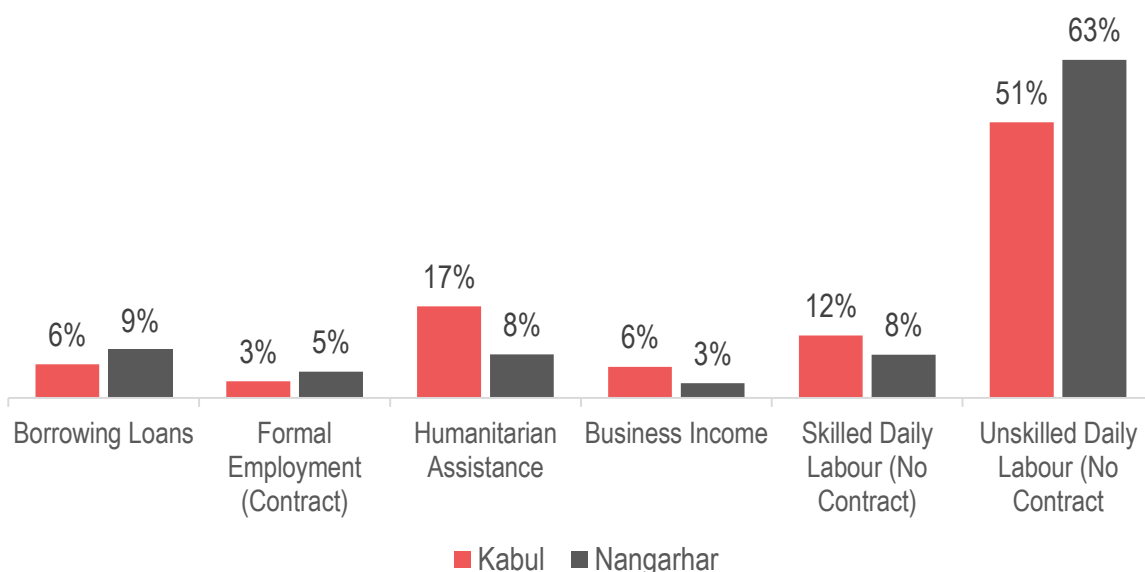
Figure 5: Household’s future intentions by province



Livelihoods and Assistance

This section details the economic characteristics of surveyed households in this assessment, by identifying the primary livelihood sources of households. Findings in this section are not statistically significant, though they do provide insight into possible sources from which households expend either commodities or finances within settlements.

Figure 6: Most common livelihood sources of assessed households



Sources from which households expend goods or finances vary across surveyed households. Figure 6 displays the six most common income sources in each province, in which non-contracted unskilled daily labour clearly comprises the greatest proportion of household income in both Kabul (51%) and Nangarhar (63%). High proportions of unskilled daily labour in Nangarhar could be expected as it was found that many households chose to stay near the Pakistan border to obtain daily work helping families move their belongings across the border. It is also worth noting that humanitarian assistance is a more significant source in Kabul than in Nangarhar.

Regarding assistance received by households, a significant difference was found between the two provinces. In Kabul, 76% of households receive assistance, again supporting the potential effectiveness of the drive to increase assistance in the province.¹⁷ However, in Nangarhar only 13% of households received assistance.¹⁸ By displacement status, a significant difference was identified between IDPs and returnees, with 52% of returnees receiving assistance compared to only 21% of IDPs.¹⁹ It can thus be concluded that whilst IDPs arguably need more direct assistance, the greatest discrepancy comes from location, with more targeted assistance required in Nangarhar.

Shelter and Land

Firstly, it was identified that across Kabul and Nangarhar, most households are renting (29%), implying that money is exchanged for use of land or property, despite no written contract. More specifically, in Kabul, the greatest proportion of shelters, comprising 36% throughout the sites, are owned without documentation. On the other hand, only 10% of houses in Nangarhar are owned without documentation compared to 40% which are rented. Despite the high risk of eviction, households with some element of agreement, in this case a rental agreement, are more likely to have some household stability. Consequently, this potentially provides a slightly higher level of security to households in Nangarhar compared to those in Kabul.

However, regardless of this potentially perceived level of security, a prevalent concern in Afghan informal settlements is fear of eviction. By nature, since informal settlement residents do not have a formal, written agreement for their residency, all households risk being evicted. When asked if they fear eviction, 93% of surveyed households overall said that they do fear eviction. This fear is higher in Kabul (98%) than in Nangarhar (85%). This number may be slightly lower in Nangarhar as informally rented, concrete houses provide more security than other accommodation arrangements.

The crowding index enables to identify the average number of people per indoor living room within the household. A higher index indicates a poorer living standard, highlighting more vulnerable households. A significant difference was identified between the two provinces with Kabul generating a slightly lower crowding index of 5.2 compared to 5.7 in Nangarhar.²⁰ This is a relatively high crowding index in both provinces, emphasizing the need for shelter assistance, intended to increase the amount of space available to households.

Houses in informal settlements in Kabul and Nangarhar have a variety of structural types, with two main categories emerging: mud brick and tents. Partial or full mud brick houses comprise 66% of all surveyed informal settlement houses. This was followed by tarpaulin tents (14%) and concrete houses (13%). Concrete houses generally provide the most structural security, whilst tarpaulin offers little protection. Consequently, tented communities may be more in need of shelter support, although this is a requirement for all households in informal settlements.

Land tenure of households also differed between Kabul and Nangarhar.²¹ Overall, the greatest of households had verbal permission to use the space (30%). Following this, in Kabul, most households had no rental agreement (27%). In Nangarhar, households were then more likely to not know of their land tenure (17%). These agreements perpetuate the fear of eviction as they provide little or no credible right to use the land, thus furthering household vulnerability.

¹⁷ Welthungerhilfe, Winter Assistance in the KIS Winter 2015/16 – Summary of Assessment Results, Approach and Interventions, January 2016.

¹⁸ Assistance by province: Pearson's chi-squared test p-value = 0.000.

¹⁹ Assistance by displacement status: Pearson's chi-squared test p-value = 0.000.

²⁰ T-test p-value = 0.030.

²¹ Land tenure by province: Pearson's chi-squared test p-value = 0.000.

Food Security Analysis

This section of the report presents findings which specifically contributes to further the understanding of the food security situation in informal settlements. Typical food security analysis tools have been implemented to identify key vulnerabilities associated with lower food security. Much of this analysis is presented in a way that makes comparison between the findings of WFP's Kabul Informal Settlements Winter Needs Assessment and this study possible, identifying changes between November 2015 and January 2017.²²

Due to the small sample size in this assessment many of the findings were found to not be statistically significant. This implies that the extent to which findings can be generalised to the whole informal settlement setting is reduced. As such, many of the following sections are broken into two parts; statistically significant findings and other findings. This first part outlines findings which can be generalised to the settlement population. Most of these findings refer to the overall result for the whole sample. When statistical limitations prevent this, tentative comparative findings are given in the second section; other findings. These cannot be generalised for the wider population and simply reflect the findings of this assessment. These can be used as indicative but are not conclusive. Where possible, comparisons are made with WFP's assessment mentioned above

Food Consumption

Frequency of consumption of different food groups is considered an integral element of food security. To measure this, the FCS has been calculated. The FCS is a measure of food consumption in each household in the last seven days. It is deemed a suitable proxy indicator by WFP for identifying calorie intake and diet quality at the household level²³. The measure combines food consumption frequency with weighted nutritional importance of food groups.

The number of days each food group was consumed in the last week is multiplied by the universally recognised weight. The food groups and respective weights are as follows: Cereals and Tubers (2), Pulses and Nuts (3), Vegetables (1), Fruits (1), Meat and Fish (4), Dairy (4), Sugar and Honey (0.5), and Oil and Butter (0.5). For each household, these weighted food group scores are summed to produce the FCS. These FCSs are classified by three categories: Poor Consumption (FCS = 1.0 to 28), Borderline (FCS = 28.1 to 42) and Acceptable (FCS = >42)²⁴.

Across all surveyed informal settlements, 55% of the population were found to have poor food consumption and a further 36% had borderline acceptable food consumption levels. In Nangarhar, 56% of households had poor food consumption, while around half (51%) of Kabul's population fell into this category. This finding indicates that the food security level within Kabuli informal settlements has worsened since November 2015, with the proportion of poor food consumption households having risen by 9%. However, those which exhibited borderline food consumption fell from 54% to 43% and the proportion of acceptable food consumption households has rose by 3%.

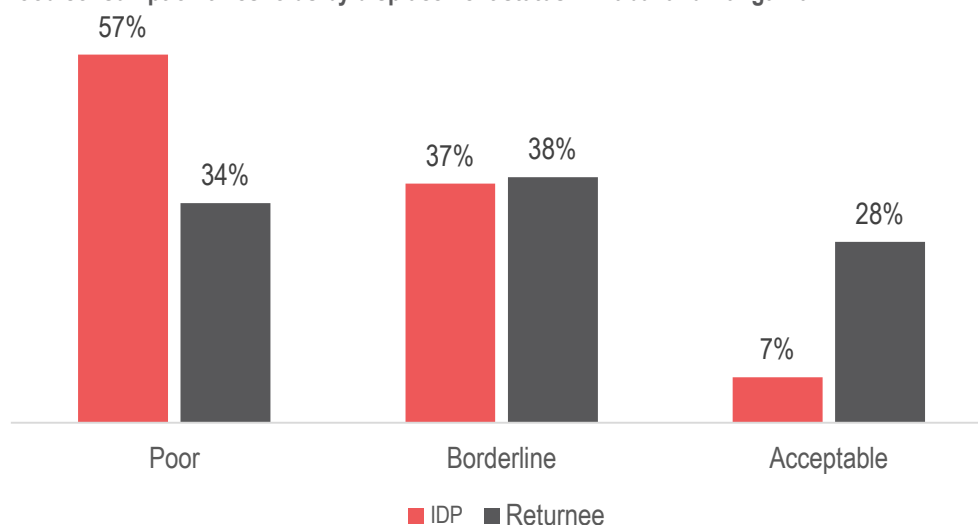
When establishing FCSs of IDPs and returnees, it was found that returnees generally had healthier consumption levels than IDPs. This is possibly due to the availability of food assistance targeting returnees, given that programs were introduced as a pull factor, encouraging Afghan nationals to leave Pakistan.²⁵ As can be seen in Figure 7, IDPs had a poorer FCS than returnees. Alternatively, the majority (57%) of IDPs had poor food consumption and only 7% had an acceptable food consumption level. From these food consumption findings, it can be deduced that food-based interventions ought to target Kabul and Nangarhar settlements equally, however IDPs display a particular vulnerability and thus may require more focused assistance.

²² WFP, Kabul Informal Settlement Winter Needs Assessment, November 2015.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ WFP, VAM Guidance Paper, 2014.

²⁵ WFP, *IR-EMOP Humanitarian Support to Afghan returnees from Pakistan*, September 2016.

Figure 7: Food consumption thresholds by displacement status in Kabul and Nangarhar²⁶

Another relevant food consumption component is the relative cost of food items. Correlations were identified between the average cost of a given item of food and consumption by the household of that particular food. Cereals and tubers, beans and pulses, and oil were included in this analysis. It was found that overall across the two provinces, there was no correlation between cost and consumption of neither cereals and tubers,²⁷ nor beans and pulses.²⁸ However, there was a negative statistically significant correlation between the cost of oil and consumption.²⁹ As such, it can be deduced that within informal settlement populations, cereals and tubers, and beans and pulses are inelastic goods, meaning the items are essential to a weekly diet and consumption is not affected by price. Thus, if the price should increase, FCS would likely remain the same, having negative consequences for household FES. On the other hand, oil is an elastic good which is thus not considered essential to a diet and is only bought at a lower price. In this case, should the price increase, consumption of the oil would likely decrease, potentially lowering household FCS.

Dietary Diversity

Related to food consumption, dietary diversity presents another analysis tool for understanding food security. The DD score is a food security measure which indicates the variety of food groups consumed by a household. Rather than looking at the frequency by which a particular food type is consumed, DD simply observes the variety of food groups consumed in a given week. Those with financial vulnerabilities are more likely to spend money on macronutrient dense staples, thus lacking nutritional variety in their food intake. As such, WFP identified that a more varied diet provides greater nutritional value.³⁰ Therefore, DD counts how many of the eight food groups outlined in the FCS are eaten by a household in the past week. A score of four or fewer reflects low DD while a score of five to eight indicates sufficient DD.

Despite the above findings indicating that food consumption within informal settlements is low, it was found that most of the populations across the two provinces had sufficient DD. Overall, 64% meet the sufficiency standard, with many of these households consuming seven or eight food groups in the past week. As can be seen in Figure 8, Nangarhar has a slightly lower proportion (63%) of households with sufficient DD than Kabul (68%), while the remaining population had low DD. By displacement status, it was found that IDPs (61%) were less likely to have sufficient dietary diversity than returnees (82%), again indicating that IDPs are more vulnerable in terms of food consumption.

²⁶ FCS by displacement status: Pearson's chi-squared test p-value = 0.000.

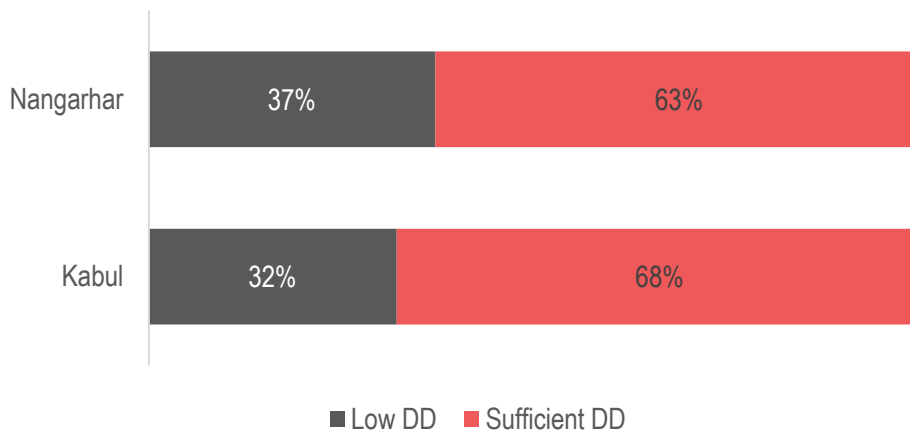
²⁷ Correlation between cost and consumption of cereals and tubers: $r = 0.026$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.417$.

²⁸ Correlation between cost and consumption of beans and pulses: $r = 0.42$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.188$.

²⁹ Correlation between cost and consumption of oil: $r = -0.1$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.002$.

³⁰ WFP, VAM Guidance Note – Calculation of Household Food Security Outcome Indicators, December 2012.

Figure 8: Households by DD in each province



Food-Based Coping Strategies

Initial analysis identified that in both Kabul and Nangarhar, consuming less preferred or less expensive food was the most used strategy, implemented on average four days a week. Secondly, households chose to limit portion sizes during meals three days a week on average, followed by reducing meals eaten in a day on an average of two days per week. Use of these coping strategies is extremely prevalent, with 100% of surveyed households relying on at least one of these strategies during the week prior to assessment.

In order to determine the dependency of households on negative food-based coping strategies, the reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI) has been used. The rCSI is a proxy indicator for food insecurity in that it attributes a score to each household based on the implementation of food-based coping strategies in the last seven days. The five short-term coping strategies, typically used in Afghanistan's food security assessments and recommended by WFP, are weighted based on negative severity to indicate the issues associated with not having the means to buy sufficient food in a given week.³¹

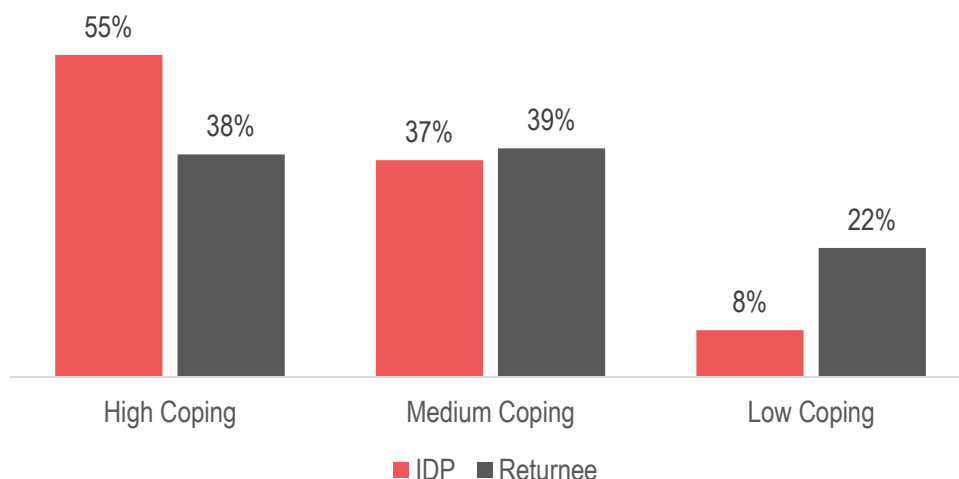
The number of days each strategy was used in the last week is then multiplied by the universally recognised weight. The five strategies with their respective weight are: Relying on less preferred and less expensive food (1), Limiting meal portion sizes (1), Reducing the number of meals consumed in a day (1), Borrowing food from family and friends (2), and Lowering adult consumption to feed small children (3). The sum of the weighted number of days each strategy is used is then summed to produce a household rCSI which can be categorised by Low Dependency on coping strategies (rCSI = 0-9), Medium Dependence on coping strategies (rCSI = 10-17) and High Dependence on coping strategies (rCSI = 18+).³²

Throughout the two provinces, there is a relatively even distribution of households across the three threshold groups, with 38% highly dependent on coping methods, 40% medium dependence and 22% low dependency. In Kabul, distributions were closer to equal proportions, with highly dependent households rising from 29% in November 2015 to 38% in January 2017. In Nangarhar, 52% of the population had a high dependence on coping strategies and only 7% had low dependency.

When assessing the use of coping strategies by IDPs and returnees separately, the findings were in line with the FCS. Again, as seen in Figure 9, returnees in both provinces had a lower proportion (38%) of households highly dependent on coping strategies compared to IDPs (55%). In contrast, 22% of returnees had little dependency on coping strategies compared to only 8% of IDPs.

³¹ Ibid.

³² WFP, Kabul Informal Settlement Winter Needs Assessment, November 2015.

Figure 9: Reduced Coping Strategies Index by displacement status in Kabul and Nangarhar³³


Food Access

Another relevant component of food security analysis is food access, primarily determined in this assessment by distance in kilometres and time in minutes, by their usual mode of transport, to the nearest food market. In Kabul, it was found that the average distance to food markets was 1.3 km, taking an average time of 16 minutes to get there. In Nangarhar, these distances and times were a little bit longer, with an average distance of 1.9 km, taking 20 minutes on average.

It was supposed that the distance to a market may affect food consumption or the frequency by which food-based coping strategies are used. As summarized in Table 2, this was found to be the case overall in the assessed provinces, when correlating FCS with distance to markets, indicating that the distance to a market reduced FCS.³⁴ This was also the case in Nangarhar, where again the further a market was, the lower the FCS.³⁵ In Kabul, a significant relationship between the time to reach a market and FCS was identified.³⁶ These findings do not indicate causation, although it is proposed that distance and time negatively influence food consumption.

In contrast to the above findings, no significant correlation was identified between the distance of a market and the FCS of households in Kabul, potentially indicating that other factors, such as the provision of food assistance, ensure food is accessible in this province.³⁷ Alternatively, in Nangarhar there was no significant correlation between the time it takes to reach a market and the FCS.³⁸ There was also no correlation found between FCS and time to markets for Kabul and Nangarhar overall.³⁹

Table 2: Summary of FCS and time and distance correlation coefficients in Kabul and Nangarhar

	Correlation coefficient: FCS and distance to market	Correlation coefficient: FCS and time to market
Kabul and Nangarhar	-0.217**	-0.099*
Kabul	-0.048	-0.038
Nangarhar	-0.237**	-0.051

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

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

³³ rCSI by displacement status: Pearson's chi-squared test p-value = 0.000.

³⁴ Correlation between FCS and distance to markets in Kabul and Nangarhar: $r = -0.217$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.000$.

³⁵ Correlation between FCS and distance to markets in Nangarhar: $r = -0.217$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.000$.

³⁶ Correlation between FCS and time to markets in Kabul: $r = -0.099$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.016$.

³⁷ Correlation between FCS and distance to markets in Kabul: $r = -0.048$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.241$.

³⁸ Correlation between FCS and time to markets in Nangarhar: $r = -0.038$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.448$.

³⁹ Correlation between FCS and time to markets in Kabul and Nangarhar: $r = -0.051$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.104$.

Similarly, as can be seen in Table 4, time and distance to markets were correlated with the frequency of coping strategy usage in households. It was hypothesised that the further away or less accessible a market is, the more inclined households may be to use strategies such as eating fewer meals or reducing portion sizes. However, when the rCSI was correlated with distance to markets in Kabul and Nangarhar,⁴⁰ and it was correlated with time to markets in the two provinces,⁴¹ there was found to be no significant relationship. It can be concluded that coping strategies are used to mitigate other issues, such as being unable to afford food items, rather than accessibility to food.

Table 3: Summary of rCSI and time and distance correlation coefficients in Kabul and Nangarhar

	Correlation coefficient: rCSI and distance to market	Correlation coefficient: rCSI and time to market
Kabul and Nangarhar	-0.039	-0.041
Kabul	-0.078	0.072
Nangarhar	-0.056	-0.090

Overall Food Security Status

The above findings of FCS and rCSI can be triangulated to determine the overall food security status of households. WFP provided a useful capturing of the interaction between these two indicators allowing for a deeper understanding of the food security level in informal settlements⁴².

This matrix outlines three overall food security statuses: Severely Food Insecure, Moderately Food Insecure and Food Secure. These levels can be derived for each household using the following table.

Table 4: Overall food security status⁴³

Food Consumption Group (based on FCS)	Coping Strategy Group (based on rCSI)		
	High Dependence	Medium Dependence	Low Dependence
Poor	Severely Food Insecure	Severely Food Insecure	Moderately Food Insecure
Borderline	Severely Food Insecure	Moderately Food Insecure	Food Secure
Acceptable	Moderately Food Insecure	Food Secure	Food Secure

Summary of Food Security Status

Overall in Kabul and Nangarhar, 68% of households were found to be severely food insecure (FI) compared to only 11% food secure. However, as seen in Figure 10, it was found that the informal settlement populations in Nangarhar have a lower overall level of food security, with 91% defined as food insecure, including 70% classified as severely food insecure. Thus, only 9% can be considered food secure. In contrast, 81% of Kabul’s informal settlement populations were food insecure, including 55% severely insecure. Here 19% were food secure. However, despite being comparatively more food secure than Nangarhar, the situation seems to have worsened in Kabul since November 2015. Severe food insecurity has risen by 7% in this time period.

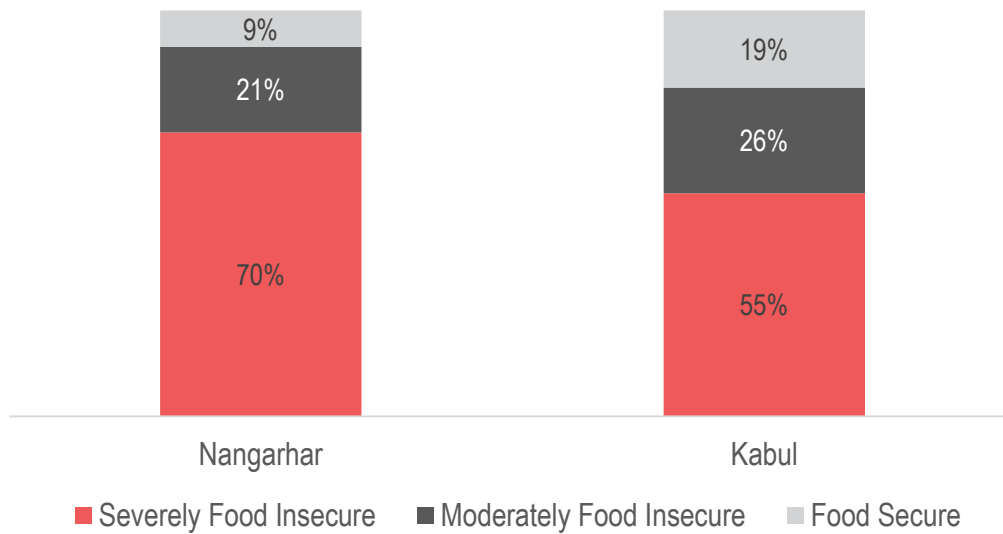
⁴⁰ Correlation between rCSI and distance to markets in Kabul and Nangarhar: $r = -0.039$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.219$.

⁴¹ Correlation between rCSI and time to markets in Kabul and Nangarhar: $r = -0.014$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.197$.

⁴² Ibid.

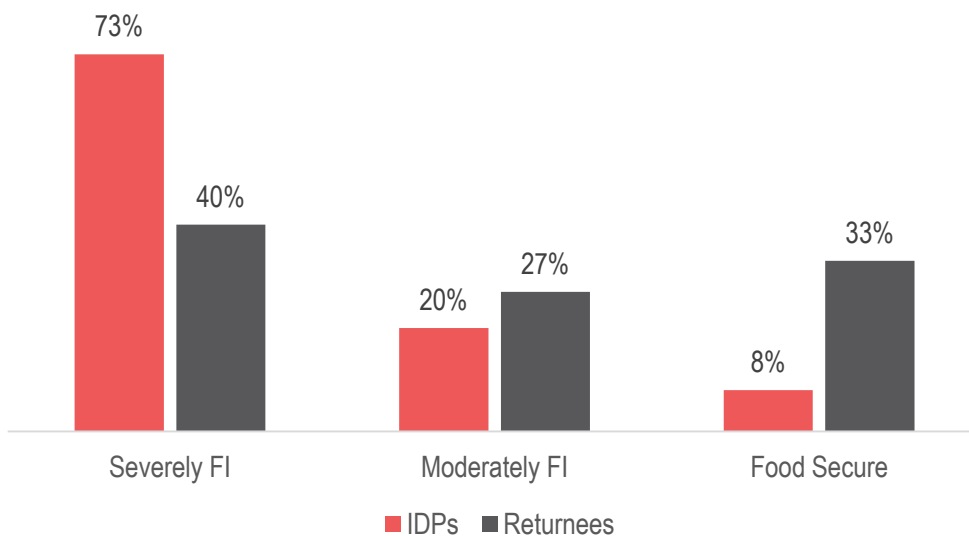
⁴³ Ibid.

Figure 10: Households by overall food security status in each province



The breakdown of food security statuses for different displacement groups, as seen in Figure 11, demonstrates that returnees have a healthier food security situation than IDPs. Across the two provinces, the majority (73%) of IDPs were severely food insecure and only 8% were food secure. As in other food security measures detailed above, returnees are more evenly distributed across the three food security groups, with 40% considered severely food insecure and 33% food secure. Again, this indicates that IDPs are more vulnerable and should be specifically targeted for food security assistance.

Figure 11: Overall food security status by displacement status⁴⁴



Household Head Characteristics

This section identifies key characteristics of household heads which tend to affect food security level; namely gender, and disability. The small sample size in this assessment prevents the data from being successfully disaggregated to these low levels, and so indicative findings have been outlined below.

⁴⁴ Food security status by displacement status Pearson's chi-squared test p-value = 0.000.

Indicative Findings

In Kabul, 67% of female headed households assessed were found to be severely food insecure while only 14% were food secure. This is compared to 45% of severely food insecure and 20% of food secure male headed households.⁴⁵ In November 2015, 55% of female headed households assessed were severely food insecure and 20% were food secure, indicating that the situation for women has likely worsened over the past year. In Nangarhar, 80% of female headed households were found in this sample to be severely food insecure compared to 69% male.⁴⁶ This reiterates the need for targeted assistance in Nangarhar. It also indicates that female headed households may be more vulnerable, although in Nangarhar the proportion of female headed households that were food secure is 0.3% higher, at 9%, than male headed households.

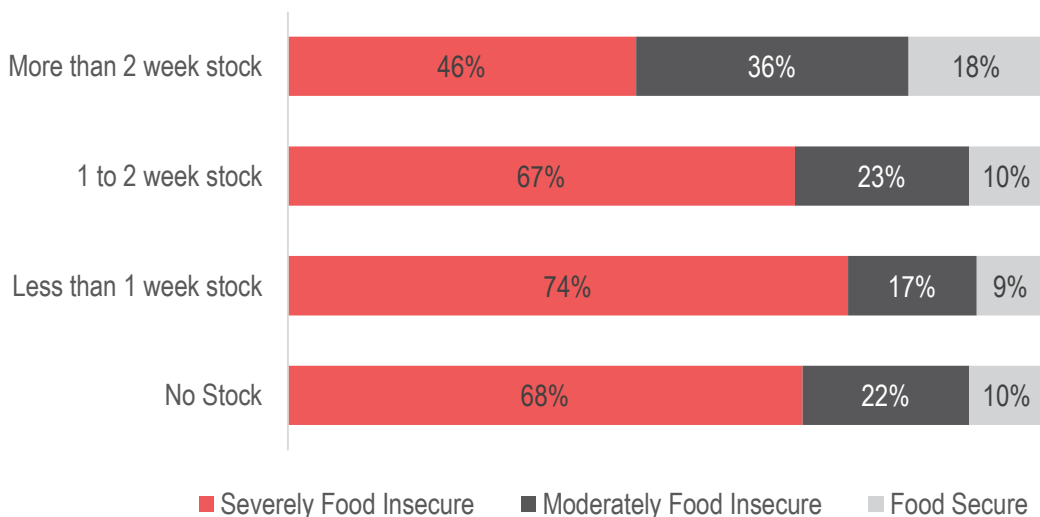
No statistically significant difference was found between the food security level of households with disabled heads across Kabul and Nangarhar.⁴⁷ For comparative purposes, in Kabul, this assessment found that 66% of disabled household heads are severely food insecure while 53% of non-disabled household heads fall into this group. Compared to November 2015, the situation for disabled headed households has worsened, when WFP's findings indicated that 100% of observed households were moderately as opposed to severely food insecure.⁴⁸

Cereal Stock

In food security analysis, cereal stock held by a household can be used as a proxy indicator for food consumption as it is a staple food in Afghan diet. Less cereal stock indicates an area of insecurity and thus the relationship between stock levels and food security status can highlight groups which need further assistance. All relevant findings in this section were found to be statistically significant. Findings specific to Nangarhar are not presented due to limitations in the sample size.

It was found that across Kabul and Nangarhar, as displayed in Figure 12, cereal stock had limited impact on food security. Within each cereal stock category, the highest proportion of households fell into the severely food insecure category. For instance, 68% of households with no stock were severely insecure and 67% of households with 1 to 2 weeks were also in this group. More specifically, as can be seen in Figure 13, in Kabul 69% of households with no stock were severely food insecure, while only 7% could be considered food secure. Compared to November 2015, 35% of households with no stock were severely food insecure and 42% were food secure. These unclear relationships indicate that the gathering of food stocks may not be a priority for households, with sums of money better used for daily food requirements as opposed to forward planning.

Figure 12: Households by cereal stock and food security level



⁴⁵ Kabul food security and household head gender: Pearson's chi-squared test p-score = 0.297.

⁴⁶ Nangarhar food security and household head gender: Pearson's chi-squared test p-score = 0.260.

⁴⁷ Kabul and Nangarhar food security by disabled household heads: Pearson's chi-squared test p-score = 0.487.

⁴⁸ WFP, Kabul Informal Settlement Winter Needs Assessment, November 2015.

Food Expenditure

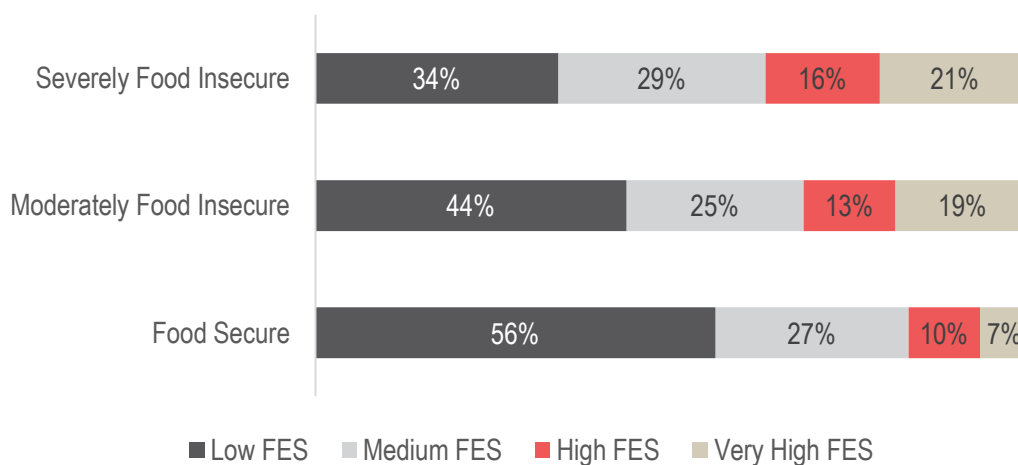
In addition to the measures above, analysis in this assessment extends beyond the CARI model to include other relevant tools. An example of this is FES, which is the percentage of total household expenditure spent on food. A higher percentage reflects poorer food security, since necessary food expenditure leaves little money for other commodities and essential services, while a lower percentage reflects a more acceptable expenditure share. As such, FES can be categorised as Very High (75%+), High (65-74.9%), Medium (50-64.9%) and Low (<50%). This indicator allows for relationships to be identified between food insecurity and food expenditure.⁴⁹

A higher FES reflects a poorer food security situation as necessary food costs drain a larger portion of a household’s limited funds. This is reflected in Figure 10, where severely food insecure households had the highest proportion of households with both very high and high FES.

In Kabul, average FES of households was 56% while in Nangarhar households had an average FES of 50% average FES. This difference was found to be statistically significant.⁵⁰ The average FES in Nangarhar just places it in the low FES category, considered a food secure situation, and Kabul’s FES reflects a medium level of food security. When disaggregated by displacement type, it was found that location rather than the IDP-returnee divide more accurately influenced FES since the average FES for IDPs in Kabul was 57% and returnees 51%, while the average FES for IDPs in Nangarhar was 49% and returnees 37%. Clearly Kabul informal settlement households have higher FES, while returnees do have a slightly lower FES than their IDP counterparts, although a reason for this is not known.

Moving beyond averages, the proportion of households in each FES group (low to very high) for each food security status was identified and can be seen in Figure 13. In Kabul, the proportion of households with a very high FES who were severely food insecure rose from 10% in November 2015 to 21%. However, the proportion of households with low FES and were food secure rose by 16 percentage points, from 40% to 56% in this time period. This possibly supports the previously suggested argument that inequality in the settlements has likely increased.

Figure 13: Households by FES and food security status in Kabul and Nangarhar



A negative, statistically significant correlation between FES and food security for IDPs⁵¹ and returnees was identified in Kabul.⁵² This indicates that targeted interventions to improve FES of households in Kabul could impact the overall food security level of informal settlements in the province.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ T-test p-value = 0.001.

⁵¹ Correlation between FES and food security for IDPs in Kabul: $r = -0.216$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.000$.

⁵² Correlation between FES and food security for returnees in Kabul: $r = -0.134$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.031$.

Intentions

The remaining sections present statistically significant findings which do not relate to the Kabul Informal Settlements Winter Needs Assessment and thus do not have a comparative baseline, but which do provide insight into the food security situation of households.

Food security can relate to the future plans of households. It was found that across Kabul and Nangarhar, the highest proportion of severely food insecure households intend to return to their home of origin in Afghanistan (49%). Alternatively, food secure households most commonly plan to stay in their current settlement (56%). Many households tend to move to a new site with the intention of seeking employment or convenient access to services, including access to food.⁵³ As such, the high proportion of food secure households intending to stay in their current location may partly be attributed to the certainty of some level of food access in their current location compared to the ambiguity of moving encourages them to stay.

Assistance

Very few findings provided statistically significant insight on the level of assistance received by households. A relevant finding indicated that receiving assistance did not have a significant impact on a household's food security status.⁵⁴ However, one relevant finding detailed the main issues faced by households when receiving assistance in informal settlements. In Kabul, receiving too little assistance, despite household needs, was the most common concern, of which 85% were severely or moderately food insecure. In addition, of the households which received no assistance as they did not have a tazkira,⁵⁵ 84% were severely or moderately food insecure. It was also found, that in Kabul the majority of severely food insecure households which felt that they received too little assistance were IDPs, again indicating that IDPs are in need of targeted assistance.

Food Expenditure

Since a higher FES indicates a higher likelihood of having a poor security status, it could be expected that households with a higher FES would be more likely to receive food assistance. In this research, questions pertaining to the receiving of food assistance and expenditure on food referred to the 30 days prior to assessment. As such, it would be hoped that households that received food assistance would be less likely to have a high FES, which was indeed found to be the case in Kabul and Nangarhar. Of the households which had recently received assistance, 44% had a low FES while only 15% had a very high FES. This is consistent with the motivation behind providing assistance and potentially implies the effectiveness of interventions throughout the surveyed informal settlements.

⁵³ Samuel Hall, *Sustaining the Working Poor in Kabul Informal Settlements*, commissioned by Solidarités International, December 2012.

⁵⁴ Kabul and Nangarhar food security and assistance received: Pearson's chi-squared test p-score = 0.076.

⁵⁵ A tazkira is the Afghan national ID.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this assessment was two-fold; to identify the main demographic characteristics of households in informal settlements in Kabul and Nangarhar, and to specifically outline the key food security vulnerabilities of these households, focusing on IDP and returnee populations where possible. This information is intended to guide the programming and specific targeting of severely food insecure households for food security interventions during 2017. Consequently, the following sections offer statistically significant conclusions of these assessment supplemented by tentative insights indicated throughout this report.

Demographics

Initially, it was found that household sizes are predominantly affected by location rather than displacement status, with households in Nangarhar having four more members on average. However, despite being larger, household dependency ratios are slightly lower in Nangarhar, implying that there are more adults of working age. It is possible that spatial constraints limit the physical size of houses in Kabul, thus reducing the total number of people residing in a household. As it was also found in this study that households in Kabul most commonly reported to require employment assistance, indicating that the lower dependency ratio may be a concern in informal settlements, and thus interventions to improve the economic and employment situation of these households could be beneficial.

In both provinces, the IDP populations (68%) are significantly higher than returnee populations (28%). It was also found that despite the establishment of some Nangarhar settlements in the 1980s, the average length of time in their current location is three years, compared to six in Kabul. A longer period of time in a settlement can provide a sense of stability, while a shorter time may indicate higher vulnerability, supporting the need for further interventions in Nangarhar. These average length of residence have been distorted by the recent exodus of Afghan nationals from Pakistan. Consequently, these returnees have joined already saturated settlements, straining the limited resources available in informal settlements, thus reducing the availability of these services for IDPs. The intricacies of overcrowding in informal settlements is not yet known, however this assessment provides initial insight into the critical situation, providing scope for further sector-specific studies.

One of the most significant findings of this assessment is that households in Nangarhar (13%) receive far less humanitarian assistance than those in Kabul (76%). Since there has recently been a drive to provide more humanitarian support to vulnerable households in Kabul, this finding firstly indicates that this push has been enacted. However, self-reported needs required in Nangarhar are high, with 89% identifying food as their priority need. This highlights a clear necessity for more targeted assistance in Nangarhar as well as an ongoing need for assistance in Kabul. It was also found that fear of eviction is very high in both provinces. However, since most households indicated that they would preferably stay in their current location, unwanted secondary displacement may be expected, increasing vulnerability and consequently furthering the need for assistance.

Additional Insights

It is also possible to highlight some of the identified trends found within this dataset which could be indicative of the broader situation in informal settlements. Therefore, whilst the surveyed households consist of an equal proportion of men and women, and boys and girls, female headed households remain the minority in both Kabul and Nangarhar. However, despite equal gender proportions between the two provinces, there was found in this assessment to be nearly twice as many breastfeeding women in sampled households in Nangarhar than Kabul. This could imply that women are choosing to breastfeed for longer, potentially improving the nutritional wellbeing of both male and female infants. Further assessments would be required to reach any definitive understanding of this matter, however it could be supposed that health assistance targeting breastfeeding mothers in Nangarhar could effectively improve infancy health.

It was also found that most households derive their main income from unsustainable sources, particularly unskilled daily labour. It was found that unskilled daily labour was higher in Nangarhar, where the higher proportion of IDPs live, while skilled daily labour was slightly higher in Kabul.

Food Security

Food security analysis within informal settlements was conducted using elements of the CARL model, focusing on food consumption, food-based coping strategies and food expenditure. By triangulating FCS with rCSI, an overall food security level for households was identified and is summarised in the tables below.

Table 5: Food security status summary in each province

	Overall Food Security Status		
	Severely Food Insecure	Moderately Food Insecure	Food Secure
Kabul and Nangarhar	68%	22%	11%
Kabul	55%	26%	19%
Nangarhar	70%	21%	9%

Table 6: Food security status summary by displacement status

	Overall Food Security Status		
	Severely Food Insecure	Moderately Food Insecure	Food Secure
IDP	73%	20%	8%
Returnee	40%	27%	33%

It appears that food insecurity is more severe in Nangarhar than Kabul, while IDPs are more likely to be severely food insecure than returnees. This analysis also found that informal settlements are slightly more likely to be severely food insecure in Kabul now (55%) than in November 2015 (48%). The exact reasons for these findings are not known, however it could be supposed that the situation has worsened since 2015 as the high number of arrivals strains the limited resources found within informal settlements.

Regarding food consumption, the majority of households in Kabul and Nangarhar (55%) have poor FCS. In Kabul specifically, 51% have poor food consumption, compared to 42% in November 2015. Whilst this indicates that the food security level may have deteriorated during this period, the proportion of food secure households has risen very slightly, by 3%. The rise in both households with poor food security and food security indicates food-based inequality within the settlement. However, this can likely be attributed to the rise in returnees, who tended to have higher food security statuses. As such, consumption-based interventions ought to target more IDP households.

Analysis also provided details of the most commonly used food-based coping strategies. Across the two provinces, 100% of households relied upon at least one coping strategy during the week prior to assessment. In both Kabul and Nangarhar, the most implemented strategy was consuming less preferred or less expensive foods. In Kabul, the overall proportion of households highly dependent on coping strategies has risen from 29% to 38% in the past year, while in Nangarhar, more than half of the population highly depend on these negative strategies. However, once again it was found that the IDPs had a greater dependence on harmful coping strategies, thus indicating that interventions should focus more on IDP populations.

Additional Insights

An interesting finding within this particular dataset found that dietary diversity was not a cause for concern within the informal settlements, despite poor food consumption overall, as most households consumed a sufficient variety of food groups in a given week. However, it was found that IDP dietary diversity was lower than returnees, again indicating that consumption-based interventions ought to consider prioritising IDP populations.

Another indicative finding of the study found that there was no correlation between food consumption or use of coping strategies and distance or time to markets, in either province. It had been supposed that the longer it took

to reach a market, or the further from a settlement the market was, that it might reduce consumption or increase use of coping strategies. However, it was found that factors such as distance and time to markets had no implication on food consumption, indicating that physical access to markets is not a concern.

Consequently, this assessment has identified food insecurity has a major concern across informal settlements in Kabul and Nangarhar. A self-identified need for food was identified as a key priority for the majority of food insecure households, further highlighting the clear need for humanitarian assistance. The demand for food-based interventions are required in both provinces, however this study outlined the significant worse food security situation of households in Nangarhar than Kabul. However, it was also noted that the proportion of severely food insecure households in Kabul has deteriorated since November 2015. As such, it can be deduced that food assistance must be increased in all informal settlements with a particular focus on sites in Nangarhar. The second intention of this assessment was to identify a difference between the food security situation of IDP and returnee households. In this regard, IDPs were found to be significantly more vulnerable to food insecurity than returnees consequently indicating the need for IDP-targeted assistance. Given this insight into the food security situation in informal settlements, it is recommended that future research consider the implications of the recent influx of returnees on the limited resources within informal settlements, as this would help targeted interventions provide appropriate assistance.