

# Afghanistan Research & Evaluation Unit (AREU)

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Research for a better Afghanistan

## Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit



## Chronic Poverty Advisory Network



# About the Study

Part of the Covid Collective  
Research in Afghanistan

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

The time frame for the study  
was 2019- July 2021

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

Data analysis also included  
previous data sets from 2010  
and 2015 on the same sites.

# Poverty rate increased

- The poverty rate rose from 43.7% in Autumn of 2019 to 51% in Spring of 2021
- October - March 2020-21 Income Losses:
  - Market closure and disruption of transport due to Covid19
  - Lockdowns
  - Economic downturn
  - Lack of demand for goods to the disrupted export market
  - Higher cost of business
  - Border Closures

# Health & Food security

Directly effected by COVID19

Treatment cost and transportation disruption impacted people seeking treatment

Treatment Cost affected people's food security

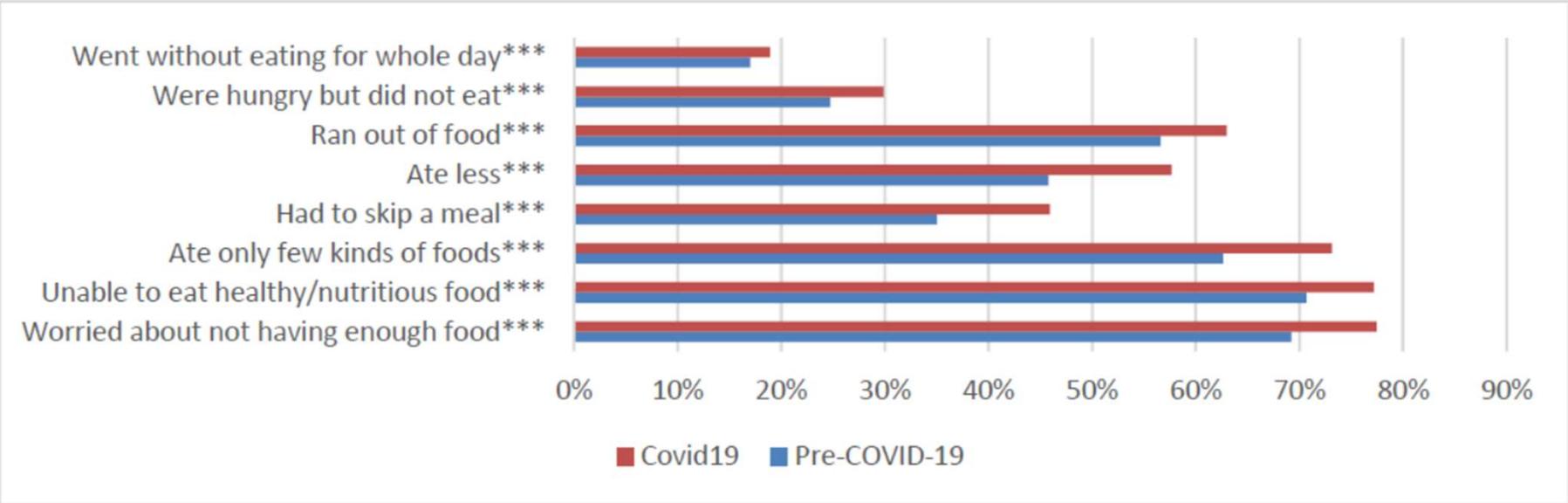
Other reasons for food insecurity

- Protracted years of conflict
- Severe drought and
- Impact of COVID19

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

This figure rose to 76% in April – Sept 2021

**Figure 9: Food Insecurity, by COVID-19 Period**



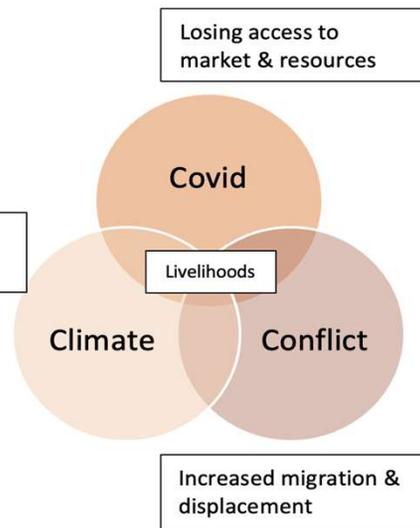
\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

## Quotes from the field

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

[Interview with a young male IDP in Herat]

# Concerns overlapping with COVID19



## Climate Change

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

## Political Instability and Insecurity

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

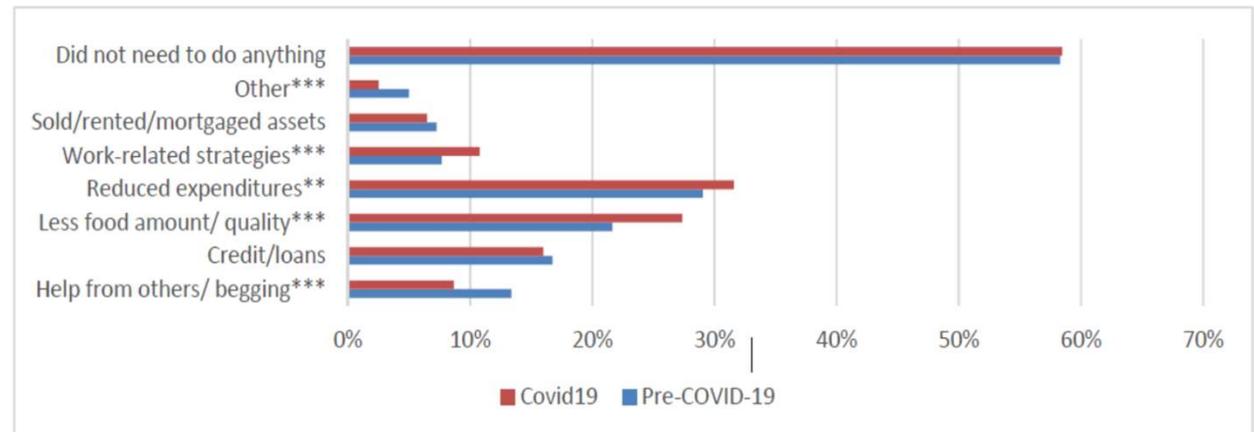
## Quotes from the field

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

[Interview with Female IDP in Herat]

# Coping strategies

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



\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

## Coping Strategies

Loan and Long term debts

Migration, Displacement and Remittance

Support by Government

## Quotes from the field

*“However, when displaced to Herat province, everything has changed. I don’t know anyone in this place. Therefore, in the time of need, I cannot ask for help or a loan. In the last five or six months that we came here, I only knew the Malik of this village. Sometimes, when he finds a daily wage, they ask me to go and work. Apart from him, no one knows us in this area, and they are not aware of our financial situation”.*

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# Policy/Program Implications

**First, there is a need for acknowledging the overlapping crisis and a collective crisis management and response to the issues**, especially when dealing with humanitarian crises in the context of protracted violence and instability such as Afghanistan.

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

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

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

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

Thank you  
Q & A

