

# RECOVERY, REINTEGRATION & RESILIENCE (R3) CONSORTIUM AFGHANISTAN

## *Endline Evaluation and Learning Report*



April 2023

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	3
LIST OF FIGURES	4
LIST OF ACRONYMS	5
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	6
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	7
<b>I. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>12</b>
<i>The choice of a resilience and multi-actor approach in Afghanistan</i>	12
<i>Evaluation purpose</i>	17
<b>II. METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>18</b>
<i>Methods and tools</i>	18
<i>Piloting, training, quality control</i>	21
<i>Methodological limitations and mitigations</i>	24
<b>III. FINDINGS</b>	<b>25</b>
<i>WHY – Relevance</i>	25
<i>WHO – Targeting</i>	30
<i>HOW – Synergies and adaptability</i>	34
<i>WHAT FOR – Outputs and outcomes</i>	42
<i>AT WHAT COST? Efficiency and VfM</i>	60
<b>IV. Recommendations and Learning</b>	<b>62</b>
<i>Recommendations to the donor (FCDO)</i>	62
<i>Recommendations to any future resilience Consortium in Afghanistan</i>	64
Annex 1: Terms of Reference	67
Annex 2: Evaluation Framework	69
Annex 3: Theories of change	70
Annex 4: Risk Register at Inception (2020)	73
Annex 5: Research Tools	90
Annex 6: Bibliography	91
Annex 7: List of stakeholders interviewed	93
Annex 8: Additional charts	94
Annex 9: SH Duty of Care Guidelines Afghanistan	97
Annex 10: Use and Influence Plan	100

## List of Tables

Table 1: R3 Lead NGOs by sector and province (2019-2020) .....	13
Table 2: Evaluation questions .....	17
Table 3: Research methods and tools.....	19
Table 4: Surveys conducted.....	20
Table 5: Methodological limitations and mitigations .....	24
Table 6: Protection output indicators – target versus achieved.....	43
Table 7: NRC ICLA Beneficiaries interviewed over the three stages of the evaluation .....	43
Table 8: shelter indicators – target versus achieved.....	45
Table 9: NRC shelter beneficiaries interviewed at each phase.....	45
Table 10: AAH and WVI - Health and nutrition programming outputs .....	47
Table 11: AAH and WVI – FSL target versus achieved .....	49
Table 12: FSL beneficiaries interviewed over the three phases.....	49
Table 13: AAH and WVI – WASH indicators targeted and achieved.....	54
Table 14: WASH beneficiaries reached over the three phases.....	54
Table 15: CARE indicators – target versus achieved .....	57
Table 16: CARE GBV beneficiaries reached.....	57

## List of Figures

Figure 1: R3 Organisational Structure	14
Figure 2 R3 timeline in context	16
Figure 3 Quantitative sample covered, baseline vs endline	20
Figure 4 Piloting the survey	21
Figure 5 Extract of Samuel Hall's Safeguarding Training	22
Figure 6 Relevance indicators (traffic light system)	25
Figure 7: Total number of IDPs in Afghanistan	26
Figure 8 WV Cash-for-work project under FSL workstream	28
Figure 9 Theory of change pre-pivot	29
Figure 10 Theory of change pivot	29
Figure 11: Targeting indicators (traffic light system)	30
Figure 12: Reduction of the accessible programmatic perimeter (Fall 2020 - July 2021, by number of accessible communities)	31
Figure 13 Shelter in Jahandosti (Badghis province), March 2023 (Samuel Hall)	33
Figure 14: Coherence and organisation (traffic light system)	34
Figure 15 Indicative frequency of coordination meetings	35
Figure 16 One of many information sharing mechanisms: the R3 dashboard	36
Figure 17 Taliban surge in 2021	40
Figure 18: Outputs and outcomes of the Consortium (traffic light system)	42
Figure 19 Having someone to turn to : ICLA beneficiaries vs control	44
Figure 20 Assistance requested by ICLA beneficiaries	44
Figure 21 Shelter beneficiaries living in tents, midline vs endline	46
Figure 22 Perceived tenure security among NRC shelter beneficiaries	46
Figure 23 Measles vaccine, AAH beneficiaries	48
Figure 24 Child malnourishment, AAH beneficiaries	48
Figure 25 Goats distributed by CARE in Herat (March 2023)	50
Figure 26 Food insecurity among FSL beneficiaries	50
Figure 27 Having a source of income : FSL vs de facto control	51
Figure 28 Income stability among FSL beneficiaries	51
Figure 29 Not having enough to eat, FSL beneficiaries	52
Figure 30 Sustainable impact or survival? CARE distribution of food baskets to vulnerable people in Herat	52
Figure 31 Recipient of FSL aid, Herat (March 2023)	53
Figure 32 Satisfaction with FSL assistance	53
Figure 33 Access to clean water, WASH beneficiaries	55
Figure 34 Availability of handwashing facilities, WASH beneficiaries vs de facto control	55
Figure 35 Satisfaction with WASH assistance	55
Figure 36 Kahm Abbasy Village, Muqur district. WVI and R3 logo displaced on new water installation	56
Figure 37 Special services for women: GBV beneficiaries vs non beneficiaries	58
Figure 38: Outputs and outcomes of the Consortium (traffic light system)	60
Figure 39: Average duration of resilience programmes (authors' assessment)	62
Figure 40: Site of NRC ICLA work, Herat, March 2023	66

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAH	Action Against Hunger
AFN	Afghan Afghani
CCU	Consortium Coordination Unit
CMU	Consortium Management Unit
CFRM	Complaints response and feedback mechanism
DFA	De facto Authority
DQA	Data Quality Analyst
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FSL	Food security and Nutrition
GBV	Gender-based Violence
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
HAG	Humanitarian Access Group
ICLA	Information, Counselling, and Legal Assistance
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IP	Implementing Partner
IWD	International Women’s Day
KII	Key Informant Interview
LID	Legal identification and documentation
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Nongovernmental Organisation
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
PIP	Project Implementation Phase
PSS	Protection and Psychosocial Support
R3	Recovery, Reintegration, and Resilience
RI	Relief International
RO	Reverse Osmosis
ToC	Theory of Change
VSLA	Village savings and loans
WASH	Water Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
WVI	World Vision International

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Samuel Hall would like to thank first and foremost the research participants who generously gave their time and shared their stories for this study, as well as Implementing Partner/NGO staff who took the time to explain their programming at all three stages of the evaluation – baseline, midline, and endline. As researchers, we are aware of the many competing pressing demands on their time in this challenging context. Many thanks in addition to our fieldwork leads and enumerators, who visited hard-to-reach communities to collect data, led in-person interviews with key informants, and ran a call centre staffed by courageous Afghan women. We thank the FCDO team for their guidance and unwavering efforts to ensure that the many lessons learned from the R3 experience could be documented, hopefully for the benefit of the wider community of practice. Research for this study was led by Hervé Nicolle and supported by Stefanie Barratt, Marta Trigo da Roza, and Saba Aslam.



Samuel Hall is a social enterprise that conducts research, evaluates programmes, and designs policies in contexts of migration and displacement. Our approach is ethical, academically rigorous, and based on first-hand experience of complex and fragile settings.

Our research connects the voices of communities to changemakers for more inclusive societies. With offices in Afghanistan, Germany, Kenya, and Tunisia and a presence in Somalia, Ethiopia, and the United Arab Emirates, we are based in the regions we study. For more information, please visit [www.samuelhall.org](http://www.samuelhall.org).

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## CONTEXT

The R3 consortium in Afghanistan was born in October 2020 and designed to run until March 2024. Its objective was to address the needs of the population in a context of significant displacement and chronic fragility, bridging the gap between short-term humanitarian response in the early months of displacement, and longer-term sustainability and development. The three dimensions of resilience are thus deliberately included in the title of the Consortium itself: Recovery (absorptive); Resilience (adaptive) and Reintegration (transformative). R3 programming was implemented by a consortium of NGOs led by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) with the participation of Action Against Hunger (AAH), CARE, and World Vision International (WV). Across eight provinces in western and southern Afghanistan, programming spanned a range of sectors in line with the consortium’s planned holistic approach: Water, Sanitation & health (WASH), Healthcare, Food Security & Livelihoods (FSL); Shelter, Legal Assistance, Psychosocial Support, Gender-Based Violence (GBV).

From the onset, the consortium was plagued by major disruptions: conflict and insecurity hampering access in the first half of 2021 were followed by the collapse of the previous government and consolidation of Taliban power as the de facto regime. This first led to a near-stop of R3 activities before a programme "pivot" towards humanitarian and lifesaving (rather than resilience-building) activities. Coordination and accountable reporting proved challenging. High staff turnover plagued all parties involved and led to a loss of institutional memory. For those reasons and others, it was announced in October 2022 that the R3 consortium would be terminated one year early (in March 2023). This report is designed to serve as an accountability mechanism to the donor and to R3 beneficiaries, assess programme delivery and results, and provide lessons and insights on consortia working in the humanitarian / development space in complex environments. Its intended audience are the donor, the implementing partners themselves, but also the wider public interested in the challenges of planning and implementing impactful programming in a context as complex as Afghanistan.

## METHODOLOGY & OBJECTIVES

The review focuses on the assessment of the following main areas:

<b>WHY?</b> <i>The relevance of the original project design, its implementation mechanisms and the adaptability of R3 in a context of upheaval</i>	<b>WHO?</b> <i>The targeting of communities and beneficiaries</i>	<b>HOW?</b> <i>The coherence between different programming streams and geographic operational focus areas</i>
<b>WHAT FOR?</b> <i>The difference R3 made in the lives of its beneficiaries, and its alignment with intended outcome trajectories</i>	<b>AT WHAT COST?</b> <i>The overall cost-effectiveness and efficiency of its implementation</i>	

Mixed methods were designed to obtain complex and diverse perspectives in creating credible evidence for R3 stakeholders. Quantitative data collection was carried out remotely via telephone owing to the various access constraints faced by the learning team at different times in the consortium’s life cycle. The evaluation was conducted in three stages: a baseline in January 2022, a midline in June 2022 and an endline in March 2023.

The following methods and tools were applied:

Methods	Objectives	Baseline	Midline	Endline
<b>Beneficiary surveys</b>	Assessing individual / household level needs and trends over time, understanding beneficiary perspectives on programming	1,047	765	2,158
<b>“de facto” Control surveys</b>	Gaining a high-level understanding of the situation of households in R3 communities who did not benefit from programming under the consortium. This understanding is indicative only.	625	NA	588
<b>Key informant interviews</b>	Obtaining information from those involved in planning and implementation at the IP and donor level, along with context gleaned from official counterparts in Afghanistan itself.	9	NA	18
<b>Community Observations</b>	Having a community-level overview of socio-economic dynamics and changes over time.	3	NA	7
<b>Community member semi-structured interviews</b>	Gaining depth, context on displacement journeys, programme interactions, perceptions at the individual level.	24	NA	11
<b>Focus group discussions</b>	Gaining depth, context on displacement journeys, programme interactions, perceptions at the group level for different demographics.	12	NA	11

## KEY FINDINGS

### 1. NO QUESTION AS TO WHY: HIGH RELEVANCE AND ADAPTIVE CAPACITY

R3’s contextual analysis was well aligned with the Afghan reality at the time: It offered an absorptive and adaptive perspective to complex and chronic humanitarian problems. Each of its programming streams / components was relevant in its own right, as was the planned-for synergy in delivery. These synergies did not manifest, but the planned causal pathways were not unreasonable. After the pivot to short-term emergency assistance following the fall of Kabul (a pivot which was also relevant), the partner organisations reverted to delivering in line with their profoundly humanitarian identity. The objectives of coordination, coherence, long-term outcomes took second place to the delivery of immediate assistance.

### 2. CONTEXTUAL OPPORTUNISM IN TARGETING AT THE COST OF SYNERGY

The consortium had from the start planned on implementing in areas (geographic and thematic) where partners were already active. This contradicted a more normative logic but was pragmatic in an operational context marked by a drastic reduction in the space available for humanitarian and development aid. However, by not setting as a precondition for the choice of provinces / communities the presence of several combined interventions, the consortium set itself up for partners working in silo, at the cost of the hoped-for multiplier effect. The selection of beneficiaries was originally designed to be based on a comprehensive multi-sectoral needs assessment survey. The deployment proved too complex, and partners reverted to targeting for their sector only, using their own targeting criteria rather than the agreed-upon common approach.

### 3. LIMITED INTERNAL COHERENCE AND COORDINATION

For many reasons both contextual and structural, the multiplier effect written into the initial Theory of Change (ToC) only appeared marginally and in an ad hoc manner. Partners mainly considered coordination from the point of view of information sharing - not operationalisation, reporting, cost sharing or learning. The synergies in terms of hosting “surge staff” from other Implementing Partners (IPs) covering a given sector in a given province did not manifest despite obvious cross-sectoral needs. This is illustrated by the fact that many of the activities R3 is currently funding will continue after its early closure. The high turnover within the different IPs as well as within the CMU led to a lack of continuity in decision-making on long-term issues or topics of common interest to all members. The CMU under NRC failed at providing a coordination hub. In the face of multiple disruptions, partners could not find a common voice. This is illustrated by the aftermath of the withdrawal of one implementing partner, but also coordination during the surge resulting programmatic changes, and managing De facto Authority (DfA) interference and gatekeeping.

### 4. NO MEASURABLE IMPACT CAN BE EXPECTED UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES



No counterfactual is available to ascertain the impact of different programming streams under R3. But limited significant impact / measurable outcomes can be expected from a few months of resilience programming within a considerably reduced intervention perimeter (pre-August 2021). The humanitarian focus of the pivot (post-December 2021), in response to the acute crisis in the intervention communities, makes analyses in terms of impact or outcomes hypothetical. Furthermore, different programming streams overlaid the original ones following the pivot, and programming over time started to change categories. In this context, reporting follows a logic of outputs rather than outcomes, and rather than re-constructing a ToC for the R3 consortium, one might imagine an exercise of “de-constructing” the ToC for each individual programming stream.

## 5. SHELTER HIGHLY RELEVANT, ICLA ARGUABLY LESS SO

85% of protection beneficiaries interviewed for this study do not remember having benefited from legal assistance, counselling, HLP, etc. It is possible that this type of service might not be considered “assistance” in the current context. Key indicators such as having a *tazkira* or turning to courts for legal matters did not evolve between the different rounds of data collection. In what might be a sign of a lack of immediate relevance in the current crisis, ICLA figures very low on the list of priorities of R3 beneficiaries listing their current needs. For shelter, we find that fewer beneficiaries were living in tents and makeshift shelters at the endline stage compared to the baseline. Satisfaction with the shelter assistance is high. Shelter remains one of the largest needs expressed by beneficiaries of other programming streams, underlining both the relevance and the importance of the missed opportunity of the multi-sectoral approach originally planned for R3.

## 6. HEALTH AND NUTRITION: TEMPORARY BANDAIDS

The pivot meant that much of the overall programming under R3 turned into nutrition programming, making it difficult to isolate nutrition beneficiaries. For health beneficiaries, contact information was not provided by WVI. For AAH beneficiaries, we find that most (83%) feel that medical services in the area had not improved in the past six months. Vaccination rates did slightly improve. That said, qualitative data suggest that mobile health assistance was highly relevant and direly needed. As was pointed out by Afghans consulted for this study, it is unfortunately doubtful that any long-term impact of this life-saving aid will persist.

## 7. FSL: RELEVANT, DIVERSE; IN THE SPIRIT OF THE ORIGINAL VISION

Food Security and Livelihoods programming covers a wide range of programming streams. We find little sustained effect of FSL activities at the aggregate level. Respondents are more food insecure at the endline than the baseline stage, showing more severe levels of food insecurity and implementing more severe food-related coping strategies. While more respondent households report having a source of income at the endline, possibly owing to work done by IPs under the FSL header, such as providing inputs and giving trainings to establish and improve livelihoods and strengthen value chains. We see however that despite working more, the respondents’ economic situation continues to deteriorate. The assistance provided under the FSL workstream was however extremely relevant and diverse, with an important focus on women and resilience-building, as well as the right idea of building on local value chains.

## 8. WASH: EMPHASIS ON SUSTAINABILITY

Both AHH and WVI beneficiaries are more likely to report having handwashing facilities available at endline than at baseline. It is likely that this reflects the impact of WASH programming under R3. Qualitative data collected suggest that the work done by the WASH teams was highly impactful with a plethora of positive effects. Satisfaction with WASH inputs was high, and the emphasis on sustainability particularly appreciated.

## 9. GBV: NO MATCH FOR UNPRECEDENTED DETERIORATION IN CONDITIONS

GBV programming was one line of programming which underwent important changes. Originally focused on GBV prevention mitigation advocacy and awareness raising, it became increasingly untenable under the new regime. By the time of the endline, it had mostly switched to other types of assistance targeting women. Among GBV respondents, we do not find more services for women's support to be available at endline in comparison to baseline. GBV endline respondents are less likely to report that there are spaces available for women to socialize at endline than at baseline. These findings suggest, unsurprisingly, that the situation has deteriorated for Afghan women since the baseline.

## 10. VALUE FOR MONEY: POTENTIAL WASTED

The added value of different organisations in an R3 consortium meant that resources such as well mobilized staff in fieldwork sites, project staff, technical staff as well as support staff originally should have been shared with another partner that didn't have field presence in the same geographical region. This objective largely remained unachieved leaving implications such as higher costs, operational inefficiencies, and uneven integration of programmatic activities at the field level. While individually,

partners did seek and find innovative ways to optimise inputs, the overall promise of R3 in terms of maximising the impact of each GBP spent to improve Afghans' lives through the consortium approach did not come to fruition.

## RECOMMENDATIONS & LEARNING

We find that the idea behind R3 was sound, and that the approach was relevant in the Afghan context at the time during which it was conceived. There are many reasons the R3 vision failed, many of them out of the control of the donor and the implementing partners. That said, the following lessons should be taken on board by those hoping to implement a programme whose sums is greater than its parts, in Afghanistan and beyond:

### 11. RECOMMENDATIONS TO FCDO

- Developing a more analytical reading of crises, with a better understanding of contexts and situations and a real capacity for anticipation, in order to avoid future hotbeds of multidimensional vulnerability, affected both by systemic crises and the effects of violence, forced population displacements as well as the weakness of governance models in these areas.
- Integrating climate change into the analytical and operational grid, as the consequences of climate change (especially floods and droughts, in the case of Afghanistan) are among the main causes of displacement, socio-economic disruption and conflict.
- Adopting a pragmatic approach to governance, according to a decentralised, non-pyramidal, localised model, including all actors (province, community, district, public, private, professional, community-based) and understanding local power dynamics.
- Sanctuarising funding for resilience programmes: by establishing certain (revisable) red lines in terms of outputs, outcomes and accountability, in order to clarify expectations, rationalise decisions and limit uncertainty for implementing partners.
- Imposing a real gender transformative analysis on consortia, especially in contexts like Afghanistan where women play an invisible but essential societal role, using on a robust and rigorous analysis of gender dynamics in order to put this issue at the heart of both the analysis and the programmatic solutions.
- Clarifying the meaning and requirements of VfM with partners by defining with implementing partners what VfM can mean in a context like Afghanistan, in order to come up with a mutually agreed pragmatic framework and indicators).

## 12. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE R3 CONSORTIUM AND ITS MEMBERS (NGOs / IPs)

- Ensuring the independence (role, function and contract) of the CMU to speak more independently to the donor and avoid any perceived or actual conflicts of interest.
- Developing skills and internal capacity (staff, assistance modalities) to move from a humanitarian model to a resilience/reintegration model, with the support of HQ.
- Systematising the analysis through the prism of the multiplier effect: by considering possible synergies, coordinated interventions in the same communities - instead of operating contiguously with a minimum of 3-4 activities (and/or implementing partners) per targeted community.
- Improving the transparency of the selection process, aligning it with resilience objectives through the harmonization of the standards and vulnerability criteria used to select beneficiaries, and a geographical selection that is not only based on the pre-existing presence of NGOs (opportunistic/pragmatic) but also on an assessment of the geographical areas (provinces, districts, communities) that present the best potential for resilience, recovery, return and reintegration issues.
- Considering the recipients of assistance in a multiscalar way according to a micro (household), meso (community), macro (governance structures) through a diagnosis of the gaps or needs felt by households from a broader sociocultural (community) and institutional (governance) perspective.
- Unifying red lines within the consortium (especially regarding gender), using coordinated responses and common red lines, as well as centralized responses to the DfA.
- Streamlining the use of the dashboard as a practical and operational platform to ensure that: 1) real-time updates are made; 2) data collection is carried out; and 3) aligned and consistent indicators are produced.
- Including a specific budget line for communication, advocacy and outreach, in order to communicate on the project throughout its implementation.

## I. INTRODUCTION

### The choice of a resilience and multi-actor approach in Afghanistan

The Recovery, Resilience and Reintegration Consortium (R3) in Afghanistan started in October 2020, after several months of discussions and adjustments between FCDO (DFID) and R3 implementing partners. It was designed to run until March 2024. With UK funding of £22.5 million, its objective was to address the needs of the population in a context of significant displacement and associated chronic fragility in the country. One of the original motivations for R3 was to improve the coherence between the short-term humanitarian response in the early months of displacement and longer-term sustainability and development. The three dimensions of resilience are thus deliberately included in the title of the Consortium itself: Recovery (absorptive); Resilience (adaptive) and Reintegration (transformative). In Afghanistan, such a resilience<sup>1</sup> approach was both innovative and necessary.

Innovative, first. Resilience programmes were still quite unusual in a country<sup>2</sup> where political crises and natural disasters often called for a chronic humanitarian approach. In contrast, the so-called development and humanitarian approaches were tightly separated with an emphasis on macro programmatic aspects (e.g., *NSP, Citizen Charter, with the support of GIROA, WB, UNDP, GIZ, EU*), on military-development stabilisation (e.g., *USAID, FCO, etc.*), or on more rooted and local initiatives funded by international donors (e.g. *AKDN, MADERA, DACAAR, GERES, etc.*). As highlighted by a DFID respondent in 2018, there was a real desire for change on the part of donors, based on feedback from the field and the lack of real value for money in development interventions, coupled with the very high cost of humanitarian interventions: *'We keep receiving the same proposals from humanitarian actors (...) – they window-dress emergency activities and relabel it as 'resilience'. It is not what we are looking for. (...) What is the exit strategy?'*<sup>3</sup>. Since 2010, the UK Government's Humanitarian Policy, *Saving lives, preventing suffering and building resilience*, had put resilience at the centre of its approach to addressing disasters, both natural and man-made. This included commitments to embed resilience-building in all DFID country programmes by 2015, integrate resilience into DFID's work on climate change and conflict prevention and bridge the gap between development and humanitarian work.<sup>4</sup> To a large extent, the R3 Consortium was the application of this conceptual framework to the Afghan context.

And necessary as well. In an environment of *'remarkably scattered, inefficient, uncoordinated aid with no lasting impact'* but with a *'cost per household far above the averages of the Yemeni, Syrian, or Somali humanitarian contexts'*<sup>5</sup>, there was a problem of critical size and scale, which the multi-stakeholder consortium could solve over several years, guaranteeing a large-scale action while reducing operating costs (procurement, management, coordination) for the donor. The gap between the humanitarian and development types of approach, at a time of stagnation of the socioeconomic and political situation (2018-2019, i.e., four years after the withdrawal of international troops<sup>6</sup>) urgently required new approaches to generate cost-effectiveness on a large scale: *'Most consortia are cumulative: 1+1+1=3. We want to see the multiplier effect. 1+1+1 = 4 or 5 or more.'*<sup>7</sup> R3 was therefore originally conceived as a bridge between humanitarian and development work to address the complex issue of internal mobility, considered a societal time-bomb<sup>8</sup>- particularly in southern and western provinces.

### Geographical and thematic scope

The programme targeted returnees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host communities. It was implemented through a consortium led by NRC, with the participation of Action Against Hunger (AAH), CARE International (CARE), World Vision International (WVI), and Relief International (RI)<sup>9</sup> as well as a number of downstream partners.<sup>10</sup> The R3 consortium's area of

---

1 Defined by DFID in 2011 by its absorptive, adaptive and even transformative capacities of households and communities in the face of repeated socio-economic or climate shocks: 'Disaster Resilience is the ability of countries, communities and households to manage change, by maintaining or transforming living standards in the face of shocks or stresses - such as earthquakes, drought or violent conflict - without compromising their long-term prospects.' DFID (2011), *Defining Disaster Resilience: A DFID Approach Paper*. London, Crown Publishing.

2 By contrast, at the same time, a country like Somalia already had multiple complex resilience consortia, with multi-year MEAL mechanisms and inter-consortia coordination: SomRep, BRCiS, Acted-Adeso, FAO-WFP-UNICEF, etc.

3 Interview with DFID, London, December 2018.

4 UKAID (2011) *Defining Disaster Resilience: A DFID Approach Paper*, DFID, London, Crown Publishing.

5 Interview with ACBAR, Kabul, June 2019.

6 On 31 December 2014 coalition combat operations, including the US Operation Enduring Freedom, ended. On 1 January 2015 the Afghan National Security Forces assumed responsibility for security in Afghanistan and NATO transitioned to a new, non-combat, mission called Resolute Support.

7 Interview with DFID, London, December 2018.

8 NRC and Samuel Hall (2018) *Escaping War: Where to Next? A Research Study on the Challenges of IDP Protection in Afghanistan*, Thematic Report, Afghanistan, Kabul.

9 Originally, the NGO Relief International was also part of the consortium. Its early departure was the first of many adaptations the consortium had to make, and will be discussed in greater detail on the following pages. RI was present in Farah and Nimroz, with a main focus on healthcare.

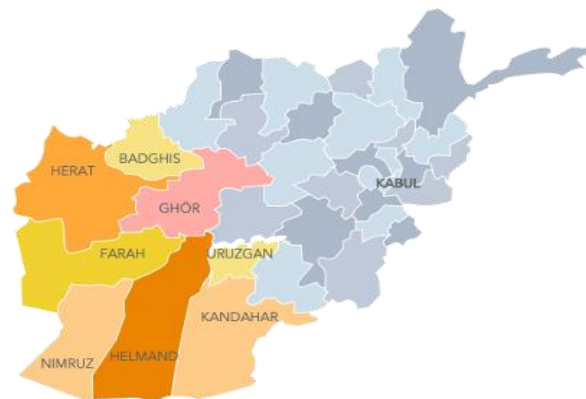
10 Samuel Hall as learning agents, Coordination of Relief and Development Services for Afghanistan (CRDSA), Development and Humanitarian Services for Afghanistan (DHSA), and the Women and Children's Legal Research Foundation (WCLRF).

intervention spanned eight provinces in western and southern Afghanistan. In line with its ambition to take a holistic approach to the needs of its target population, the implementing partners (combined) conducted programming across a range of sectors: Water, Sanitation and Health (WASH); Healthcare; Food Security & Livelihood (FSL); Nutrition; Shelter; Information, Counselling, and Legal Assistance (ICLA); Health, Psychosocial Support (PSS); and Gender-Based Violence (GBV).<sup>11</sup> Each of these sectors had a “sector lead”, an NGO focusing on this line of programming. The extent to which IPs also conducted programming across different sectors was limited.<sup>12</sup>

Table 1: R3 Lead NGOs by sector and province (2019-2020)

Lead Organisation	Intervention focus	Targeted provinces
NRC	– Protection: Information, counselling, and legal assistance	Herat, Kandahar, Badghis, Uruzgan
CARE	– Food Security and Livelihood (FSL) – Protection: Gender-Based Violence (GBV)	Herat, Kandahar
WVI	– Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)	Badghis
ACF-AAH	– Nutrition – Protection: Psychosocial Support (PSS)	Ghor, Helmand
Relief International	– Access to healthcare	Nimroz, Farah

Map 1: R3 area of intervention by province (2019-2020 only)



## Organisational arrangements

R3 was organised through an Advisory Group / Steering Committee operating alongside a series of working groups.<sup>13</sup> The R3 Steering Committee was the main decision-making body<sup>14</sup>. A visual representation of the original organisational structure is provided below. The primary organising vehicle was the Consortium Coordination Unit (CCU), accountable to the donor to ensure contractual commitments are being met and that FCDO requests and questions are addressed. The CCU was housed within NRC but with (theoretically) separate functions and independent staff for finance, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), complaints response and feedback mechanism (CFRM)<sup>15</sup>, consortium coordination, and consortium management. The consortium manager

11 For R3, three activities are categorised within the umbrella of “Protection”: Information, Counselling, and Legal Assistance (ICLA); Health, Psychosocial Support (PSS); and Gender-Based Violence (GBV).

12 An example includes World Vision in Badghis implementing their core WASH activities but also limited FLS, health and nutrition activities.

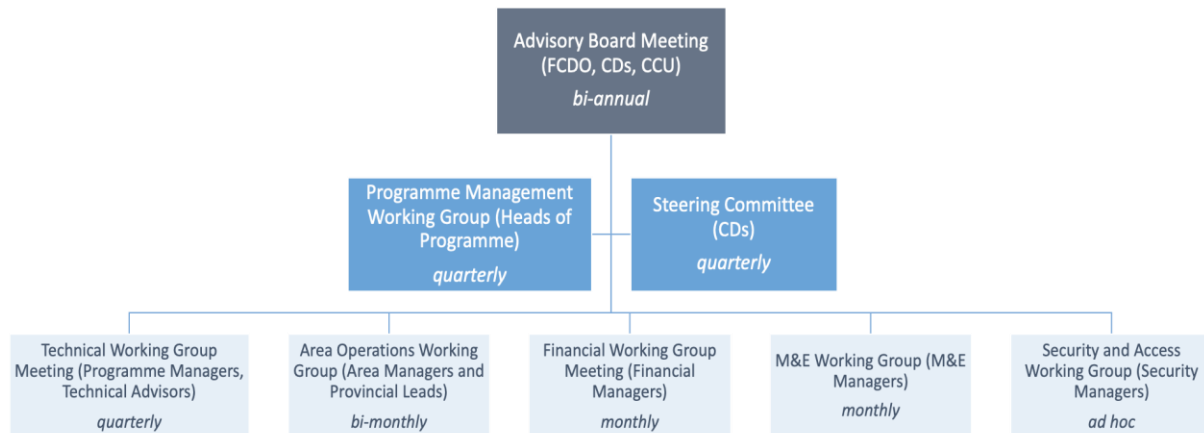
13 KII3 [CCU / NRC]

14 The Advisory Board and Steering Committee is primarily comprised of implementing partner country directors and the donor. The Steering Committee is responsible for joint decisions related to the R3 consortium's strategic direction.

15 The R3 has a dedicated CFRM process. There are CFRM standard operating procedures (SOPs) and an R3 hotline. CFRM also supports referrals, such as to the Awaaz hotline at UN OCHA.

was specific to R3 and worked on strategic coordination with the IP country directors, the steering committee, and the donor. Five working groups under R3 originally sought to bring together the various partners: technical; MEAL; Area Coordination, Financial and Security/access.

Figure 1: R3 Organisational Structure



### A historically unfavourable intervention context

The R3 Consortium was an innovative approach that drew its strength from the accuracy of its diagnosis of the country; but this diagnosis came very late, at a time of great political and socio-economic upheaval. The period from July to October 2020 was devoted to the launch phase of R3, including consortium preparations, government approvals and the organisation of the governance and financial structure. After the official launch in October, the opening meeting of the R3 exchange was held on November 2, 2020.

The situation in Afghanistan deteriorated significantly after the launch of R3, starting with significant project delays caused by COVID-19. For operational, but also administrative and legal reasons, partners ‘could not go to the field for 3 or even 6 months, which made it difficult to carry out needs analyses, meetings with the community’.<sup>16</sup> In March 2021, Relief International (RI) withdrew from the consortium, due to revelations of its involvement in paying anti-government (Taliban) forces. Although this acknowledged fact occurred before R3 was implemented, it still led to RI's expulsion from the country and immediate exclusion from the Consortium - as requested by the donor. Hygiene and health activities were particularly affected, as was R3's scope of intervention (losing Helmand and Nimroz as well as 30-35% of targeted rural communities). The IR episode was, however, only a symptom of an underlying phenomenon, namely the inability of aid agencies to operate in a growing number of districts and localities without financial compensation.

With the announcement of the planned withdrawal of the last US soldiers from the country, ‘the situation has become unmanageable. (...) By giving a date, the Americans helped the Taliban and stunned the government forces. For us NGOs, this has made our work more complicated every day. In terms of access, operation, ethics.’<sup>17</sup> Partners' operations were suspended between July and mid-December 2021 during which time a programme pivot was agreed to respond to the fast-emerging emergency and humanitarian needs in Afghanistan. Under the pivot, R3 would shift programming to further focus on emergency, humanitarian programmes.

After the Taliban takeover, the need for adjustment was multi-faceted. The effective collapse of the financial system, including bank transfer and withdrawal limits, necessitated changes in financial transfers to fund R3 implementation. High inflation led to both increases in humanitarian needs and higher prices for R3 inputs. An unstable exchange rate and delayed procurements due to vendors' rejections of payment in local currency made it difficult to source inputs. Cash programming could not continue due to operational risk and logistical hurdles. Moreover, access assessments became redundant as areas that had been considered

16 KII with NRC, March 2021.

17 KII with AAH, May 2021.

inaccessible suddenly became accessible, while returns of IDPs accelerated and hundreds of thousands of IDPs were found returning to their areas of origin.<sup>18</sup> It was therefore necessary to add a category of "returning IDPs" to the original beneficiary categories. Finally, the original concept of government liaison, capacity building and handover also became redundant, due to the presence of the Taliban in national and sub-national power and the gradual replacement of officials from the previous regime in key administrations. Finally, it became increasingly difficult for NGOs to work with female staff, due to dozens of decrees and edicts implemented by the new regime between August 2021 and December 2022.<sup>19</sup>

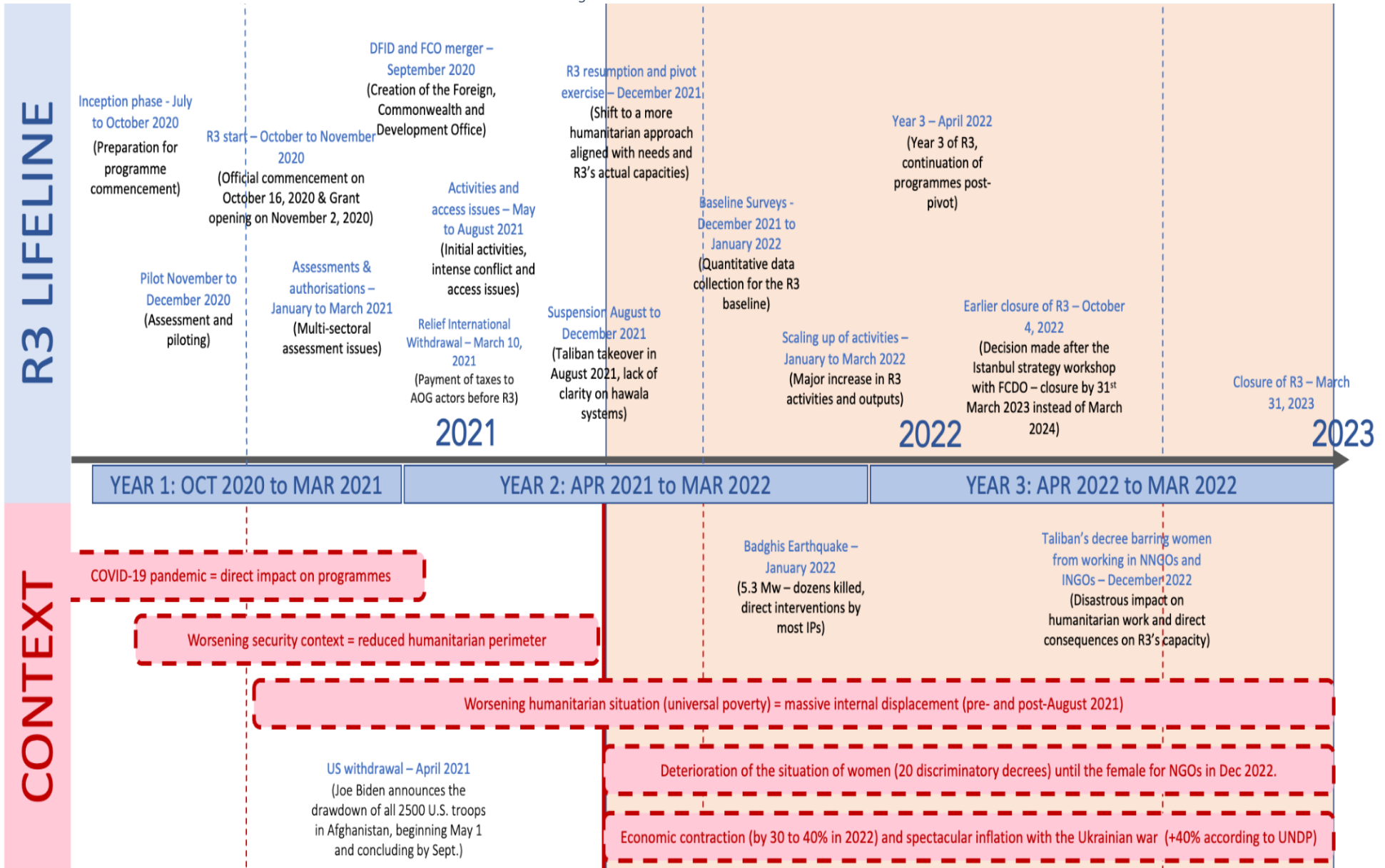
While partners struggled to deliver in historically challenging circumstances, reporting by partners to the donor was a constant point of contention. After a short-lived project improvement phase (PIP) which saw an improvement in reporting standards, in October 2022, it was announced that the R3 consortium's project completion deadline would be brought forward by one year, with an anticipated end date of 31 March 2023.

---

<sup>18</sup> IOM. 2021. Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) - Emergency Event Tracking. EET Round 2, October 12 - November 15.

<sup>19</sup> The ban on NGOs hiring female staff on 24 December 2022 was a logical continuation of successive bans (travel outside the home without mahram, gatherings, access to hammams, markets, university, secondary and primary education).

Figure 2 R3 timeline in context





## Evaluation purpose

This endline evaluation aims to assess R3's programme delivery and results and provide lessons and insights on consortia working in the humanitarian / development space in complex environments. The review focuses on the assessment of the following main areas:

- WHY? Relevance of the original project design, its implementation mechanisms and the adaptability of R3 in a context of upheaval.
- WHO? Targeting of communities and beneficiaries.
- HOW? Coherence of the organisation between different programming streams and geographic operational areas of focus?
- FOR WHAT? The difference R3 made in the lives of its beneficiaries, its alignment with intended outcome trajectories, and the overall cost-effectiveness and efficiency of its implementation.
- AT WHAT COST? Overall cost effectiveness and efficiency of implementation.

*Nota bene: Using the OECD-DAC criteria would be inadequate and possibly misleading, as these criteria apply to impact and outcome measures for development projects and programmes. In practice, while R3 was supposed to be a resilience consortium, it quickly became a multi-sector humanitarian intervention in an acute crisis context. Going back to the initial raison d'être of R3, some fundamental questions were therefore selected in an attempt to gather lessons from R3, over the whole period: from 2019 (initial proposal based on an environmental scan), to 2020 (inception during the pandemic), 2021 (implementation, reduction of the humanitarian scope and return of the Taliban, 'humanitarian pivot'), 2022 (project improvement plan and termination): 1) Was the 3 R's (Resilience, Return, Recovery) approach and the humanitarian pivot relevant in the Afghan context at the time when the decision was made by the different stakeholders?, and 2) Did working in a consortium have a multiplier effect, based on a synergistic approach, or did each IP (or NGO) simply work individually based on a logic of coexistence?*

Table 2: Evaluation questions

<b>WHY - Relevance &amp; Theory(ies) of Change</b>
How relevant is the Theory of Change (in its different iterations)? To what extent has the R3 programme been consistent with the priorities of the people it aimed to serve (displaced people and local communities in western and southern Afghanistan); stakeholders within Afghanistan in a context of upheaval; and FCDO with its shifting focus and priorities?
<b>WHO? – Targeting</b>
How well did R3 partners target communities of intervention and beneficiaries?
<b>HOW - Coherence &amp; Organisation</b>
How did partners coordinate and communicate? Were the organisational arrangements (advisory group, steering committee, CCU) appropriate? What has been the coherence between R3 and other humanitarian and development initiatives? What has been the coherence of different programming streams under R3?
<b>FOR WHAT – Outcomes and Impact</b>
What are the foreseen and unforeseen impacts of the R3 intervention, whether positive or negative?
<b>AT WHAT COST? – Efficiency and VfM</b>
What lessons can be learned in terms of value for money?

## II. METHODOLOGY

The research approach adopted for this study aims to highlight the impact of the support and assistance provided to the Afghan population, both in the first phase ('resilience') and in the second ('pivot'). The volatile and unfavourable context of the intervention is taken into account to refine the results and allow for a nuanced analysis.

*Caveat: No significant measurable outcome or impact can be expected from a few months of resilience programming within a considerably reduced intervention perimeter (pre-August 2021). The 'humanitarian' focus of the pivot (post-December 2021), in response to the acute crisis in the intervention communities, makes analyses in terms of impact or outcomes hypothetical.*

In order not to limit learning to an ex-post and ex-ante evaluation of humanitarian assistance, particular attention was paid to putting R3 into a learning perspective.

### Panel approach

Mixed methods were designed to obtain complex and diverse perspectives in creating credible evidence for R3 stakeholders. The evaluation was conducted in three stages: a "baseline" in January 2022, a midline in June 2022 and an endline in March 2023.

- At the baseline stage, a phone-based quantitative survey was administered to a representative cohort of R3 beneficiaries<sup>20</sup>, using contact information as shared by IPs. In selected "qualitative deep dive locations", focus groups, community observations were carried out.
- The midline data collection consisted of a re-survey of those baseline beneficiaries who could be reached again telephonically in addition to the constitution, via snowballing methods, of a de-facto "control" sample of people in the community who did not receive assistance.<sup>21</sup>
- At the endline stage, the team re-interviewed baseline and control respondents who were reachable again via telephone and added additional phone surveys with beneficiaries not previously interviewed to account for additional cohorts and locations covered in the meantime by IPs. The communities visited at the baseline were visited again, in addition to two new locations where programming had in the meantime commenced. As for the baseline, focus group discussions were held along with transect walks.

### Methods and tools

The research team reviewed documentation relevant to the project including original proposal documents, data submitted by implementing partners as part of programme monitoring, and quarterly progress reports as shared with FCDO. In addition, the following data were collected:

---

<sup>20</sup> In-person surveying was not an option at the time due to access constraints and COVID-19 regulations.

<sup>21</sup> While those households may not constitute a perfect counterfactual, they can still be useful in "setting the scene" for the R3 communities and allow to distinguish, albeit at a high level, potential impact of programming in different communities and for different partners.

Table 3: Research methods and tools

Methods	Objectives	Baseline	Midline	Endline
<b>Beneficiary surveys</b>	Assessing individual/household level needs and trends over time, understanding beneficiary perspectives on programming	1,047	765	2,158
<b>“de facto” Control surveys</b>	Gaining a high-level understanding of the situation of households in R3 communities who did not benefit from programming under the consortium. This understanding is indicative only.	625	NA	588
<b>Key informant interviews</b>	Obtaining information from those involved in planning and implementation at the IP and donor level, along with context gleaned from official counterparts in Afghanistan itself.	9	NA	18
<b>Community Observations</b>	Having a community-level overview of socio-economic dynamics and changes over time.	3	NA	7
<b>Community member semi-structured interviews</b>	Gaining depth, context on displacement journeys, programme interactions, perceptions at the individual level.	24	NA	11
<b>Focus group discussions</b>	Gaining depth, context on displacement journeys, programme interactions, perceptions at the group level for different demographics.	12	NA	11

The **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)** were semi-structured interviews in which the researchers were not restricted to using the questions verbatim. Where the evaluator was not able to meet the respondents in person the informants were interviewed remotely via Google meet. With respondents’ permission, interviews were recorded. All interviews, including the informed consent process, were carried out in the language preferred by the interviewee – English, Dari or Pashto. Key stakeholder interviews were conducted based on a typology of major stakeholders: DFID/FCDO, consortium implementing partners (including HQ, past and present staff), downstream partners, local stakeholders (NNGOs, CSOs, local experts and researchers) and external stakeholders (academic experts, researchers).

The **household survey** was administered telephonically using beneficiary information as shared by the IPs. It primarily gathered quantitative data through close-ended questions, along with some open-ended questions. The survey was carried out using KoboCollect, a mobile data collection platform. The tool, revised based on IP feedback in order to be as comprehensive as possible, covered crucial aspects of programming priorities by all partners. It focused on drawing a portrait of the sample in terms of household profile, migration history, housing and infrastructure, health, social and political situation, livelihoods and self-reliance. The household survey questionnaire (baseline) has been provided in Annex. A modest incentive was granted to research participants in the form of phone credit.

At the **baseline stage**, the survey was administered remotely to selected R3 beneficiaries. The cohort was representative at the partner/programming level, and the sample selected with an eye to respecting the gender distribution of the beneficiary population for each partner. Sampling was random from lists of beneficiaries provided by the partners to the Samuel Hall team. Care was taken to achieve a sample representative at 95% confidence with a 5% margin of error.

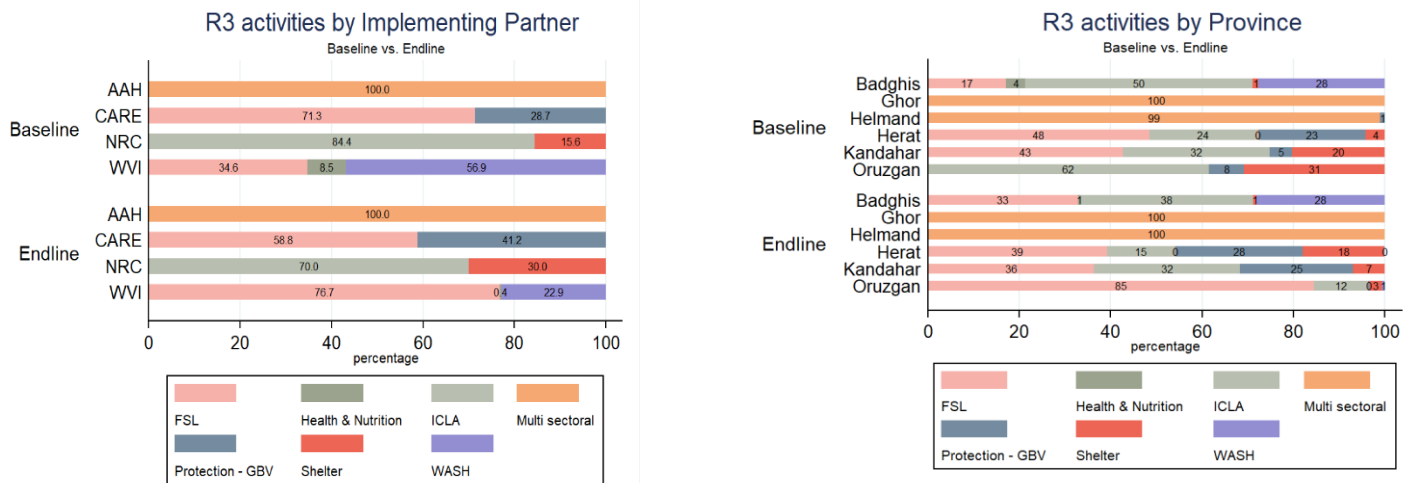
At the **endline stage**, Samuel Hall from its Kabul-based call centre attempted first to re- contact all participants of its original panel, before further complementing the respondent sample with other beneficiaries drawn from IPs beneficiary lists in order to arrive at a sample representative of the partner/programming level at 95% confidence with a 5% margin of error. The call centre was staffed by male and female enumerators (who worked as separate teams and did not have physical contact with one another). In order to allow for this separation, call lists were separated into male and female target groups.

Table 4: Surveys conducted

		Total beneficiary population (as of November 2022)	Beneficiary surveys
CARE	FSL	3,188	416
	Protection - GBV	1,614	292
NRC	Protection - ICLA	23,265	397
	Shelter	20,592	170
WVI	WASH, FSL	60,838	485
	Health & Nutrition	89,706	0
AAH	Multi-sectoral	92,758	398
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>291,961</b>	<b>2,158</b>

**Incentivising survey participation.** Ultimately, the decision to participate in an often-lengthy survey questionnaire is the respondents' time alone, and will be based on 1) a desire to be helpful, or lack thereof; 2) a certain level of curiosity in the research and questions; and 3) the desire to tell one's story. The most important motivating factor however may be the perceived costs, time and burden associated with the survey, in other words the opportunity cost of participation. In a setting such as Afghanistan, the opportunity cost may be low in financial terms since potential respondents would likely not be earning money if they had not taken the time to respond to the questionnaire. In such a case, incentivizing participation could do more harm than good given the possibility of remuneration may deprive the potential survey participant of the freedom to refuse participation. It might also lead to tension in communities where many are in difficult circumstances. It was considered by the research team that a non-monetary incentive in the form of phone credit was appropriate to manage these risks.

Figure 3 Quantitative sample covered, baseline vs endline



Qualitative research was conducted with R3 beneficiaries of all four implementing partners. Data was collected with NRC beneficiaries in Herat province, CARE beneficiaries in Herat province, World Vision beneficiaries in Badghis province, and with AAH beneficiaries in Helmand province.

- Focus group discussions: Held separately with men and women<sup>22</sup>, FGDs were designed for small groups of between 5 and 8 respondents. The facilitator explained the purpose of the evaluation and actively encouraged informants to share their experiences and opinions about the support they received. Participants were informed that at any point of the discussion they could refrain from answering questions. With the respondents' permission, discussions were recorded to allow the interviewer to focus on facilitation rather than taking notes. The questions in the FGDs focused on understanding how and why programme activities had, or had not, achieved their objectives as well as whether there were any unintended outcomes. The focus group discussion guide has been provided in Annex 5.
- Community observations were carried out across target communities together with local community members to summarise local conditions in the area and to explore the small-scale mitigation measures put in place by the Consortium. The transect walk guide has been provided in Annex 5.

Research permits were sought and granted by the relevant authorities for all fieldwork.

**Inclusivity:** Opting for a remote quantitative data collection methodology, while disadvantageous in terms of tool length and primary observation, allowed to contact women and ensure their voices were heard. Our female enumerators were trained in the administration of surveys, building trust while also respecting safeguarding principles designed to be respectful of the local context. In person data collection also ensured that women were included in the focus groups, along with other marginalized groups in the communities visited.

**STATEMENT OF DUTY OF CARE:** Samuel Hall confirms that it accepted full responsibility for security and duty of care (including any personnel and subcontractors) throughout the life of the contract. The Duty of Care guidelines are presented in Annex 9.

## Piloting, training, quality control

The call centre was staffed by male and female enumerators (who worked as separate teams and did not have physical contact with one another). Enumerators were trained in separate sessions for male and female enumerators over the course of two days to give them time to familiarize themselves with the goal of the research, the research framework, tool, and target population. Special emphasis was placed on do-no-harm considerations.

*Figure 4 Piloting the survey*



Prior to embarking on data collection in the field, during a four-day training exercise in Kabul, the field enumerators were trained in recording information and conducting interviews. The enumerators learned how to communicate with participants to elicit relevant responses and how to navigate the survey process. Training was also provided to ensure the data was collected in an ethical way. The field enumerators were instructed to emphasise the anonymity and confidentiality of the surveys, and to conduct the surveys in an environment in which the respondents felt safe.

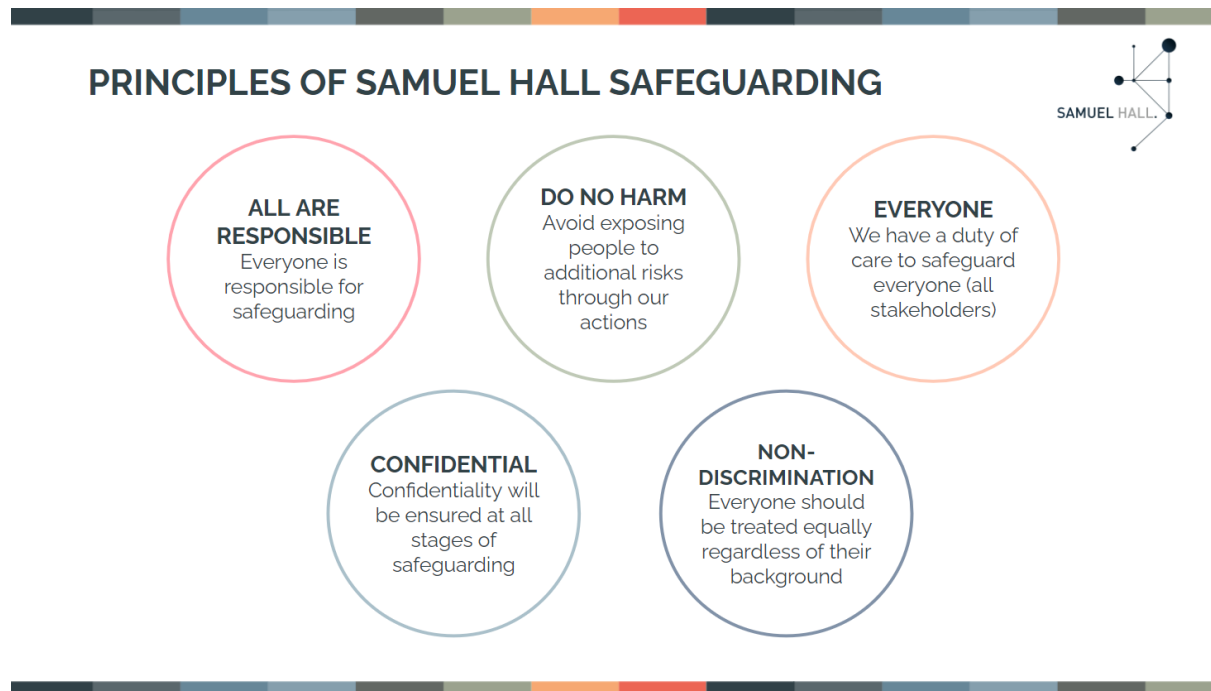
**Safeguarding.** Samuel Hall recognises that by the nature of our work, our operations may pose a risk to research participants. The protection and well-being of those involved in our research is our first priority. We thus developed a safeguarding policy and training to proactively work to assess and mitigate those risks and institutionalise measures for doing so. We are committed to conducting our work in a way that is safe for those with whom we come into contact. Our full safeguarding policy is available upon request.

<sup>22</sup> It was not possible to hold FGDs with women in Helmand province at the endline stage. Individual interviews were conducted instead.

The following basic principles were developed by the learning partner and abided by throughout the research process:

- Do not harm children, young people, vulnerable adults, or anyone they come into contact with during the course of engagement with R3, via action or omission.
- Not expose others to risk of discrimination, neglect, harm or abuse.
- Work in accordance with health, safety and security guidelines and avoid behaviour that creates unnecessary risk to themselves and others.
- Not engage in physical relationships or activity with members of the community in which they are working.
- Aim to promote a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, sexual harassment, and abuse in work environments.
- Develop relationships with stakeholders based on equality, trust, respect, and honesty.
- Prioritise the safety and welfare of children and vulnerable groups.
- Report concerns regarding the welfare of a child or vulnerable person as described in the guidelines for reporting.
- In situations where staff are one-on-one with a child or young person, another adult must be informed of the interaction, where it is occurring, and its purpose.
- Follow local and customary protocols to ensure the sustainability of partnerships.

Figure 5 Extract of Samuel Hall's Safeguarding Training



The training session was followed by a pilot test of the survey questionnaires, with ongoing supervision provided by Samuel Hall’s dedicated data quality analyst (DQA).

In order to allow for this separation, call lists were separated into male and female target groups.



A process involving the scanning of QR codes to retrieve information (name, location, IP, gender) was used for call list management and keeping track of call attempts. Three attempts were made to reach every selected respondent, on different days and at different times of day.

Throughout the field survey, Samuel Hall’s dedicated data quality analyst (DQA) monitored the quality of the interview data using a number of quality control procedures including:

- Assessing interview length;
- Outlier checks through dedicated syntax;
- [Live-sheet](#) real-time monitoring and progress tracking by enumerator;
- List management.

## Data analysis

### Qualitative data

To support the identification of overarching theory areas, a thematic framework was developed to categorise the interview data. Major themes were identified based on their usefulness in answering the evaluation’s main research questions. In addition, cross-cutting themes such as sustainability, ownership, and gender were cross-coded to facilitate overlapping areas of analysis.

### Quantitative data

Responses from the household survey were downloaded into a Microsoft Excel format from the web-based platform, cleaned, and then analysed using Stata. Initial frequencies were plotted to identify potential outliers. Data was analysed using bivariate analysis to compare results between key sub-groups of the population, including gender, literacy and province as well as by some key programme-related variables: Means, ranges and percentages were calculated for various categorical variables.

### Data management

For the purpose of this project, Samuel Hall rolled out a dedicated data management system (DMS) on the firm's own proprietary cloud, hosted on Google’s cloud architecture. All software and data, upon submission, resided at Google’s europe-west3 location in Frankfurt, Germany, subject to German and EU privacy laws, throughout the duration of the project. The DMS remains isolated from all other Samuel Hall systems by default.

## Methodological limitations and mitigations

Certain limitations were faced with this methodological approach. These are presented in Table 5 along with mitigating factors:

*Table 5: Methodological limitations and mitigations*

Limitation	Mitigation
The insecurity from January - July 2021 hampered efforts to conduct coordinated baseline data collection across all areas of R3 implementation. The baseline was only conducted after programming had commenced.	Prior experience with programming were limited in light of the suspension of R3 programming from August to December 2021, but respondents to qualitative data collection were encouraged to reflect on past experience with R3 beyond the snapshot of the survey itself.
Inability to access to field for an in-person large scale quantitative data collection at the baseline stage. Necessity to have a shorter survey tool to account for remote data collection.	Samuel Hall's well-established call centre is staffed with trained enumerators who have ample experience conducting remote research. The tool, tested at length, allowed to collect data on key indicators with a statistically significant sample size, and to include women in the study at all stages.
Without a control group, it is not possible to attribute change to the programme	The evaluation team has drawn upon the data to look for plausible contribution rather than attribution.
Complexity of the intervention: Even prior to the pivot, R3 involved multiple partners carrying out multiple activities in multiple provinces. Outcomes are difficult to measure at the aggregate scale.	The team mapped out potential impact pathways to ensure the full range of programme interventions (as originally intended) were assessed.
The pivot added a further layer of complexity to the evaluation as different programming streams now overlaid the original ones making it difficult to ascertain where pivot vs non-pivot R3 programming had originated, and what its effects had been.	The team focused data collection and reporting here on non-pivot activities with the intention of reporting back on the originally intended theory of change and impact pathways.
Difficult to conduct impact analysis following the original logframe and ToC given that programming streams blend into each other: GBV activities took on more of an FSL character as operating conditions became more challenging, and FSL itself overlaps with nutrition programming.	The analysis relies on the classification provided by the IPs themselves.



### III. FINDINGS

#### WHY – Relevance

Figure 6 Relevance indicators (traffic light system)



**STRONG SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS (2019),** which justifies the thematic choice (IDP, returnees) and the absorptive and adaptive approach (resilience and reintegration)



**ADAPTIVE THEORIES OF CHANGE,** in a context of multidimensional crises, including internal ones (Relief International), marked by a successful shift of the Theory of Change – from a "resilience" approach to strict humanitarian assistance. .

When R3 and DFID (later FCDO) defined the objectives of the project, the contextual analysis – in terms of risks, population needs and priorities – was well aligned with the Afghan reality. In a socially, politically and economically chaotic environment, there is no doubt that R3's proposed response made sense – albeit belatedly. The original proposal clearly identified the ambition at the heart of the R3 Consortium: *"Five international humanitarian and development organisations with significant operational experience in Afghanistan will collaborate as partners in this consortium to deliver multi-sector responses for early recovery and resilience building (...) complementary and coordinated lines of interventions – linking emergency, resilience, and sustainability – to provide relevant responses. provision of a holistic package of services, including: protection, shelter, health, food security and livelihoods, WASH, and nutrition; reinforced with a strengthened and accountable referral system."* The following section provides an analysis of the relevance of the R3 Consortium with regard to the analysis of the security and political context, the theories of change put in place, the populations receiving assistance, and the preferred areas for assistance.

#### Contextualised, evidence-based situational analysis

A first step in assessing the relevance of R3 is to go back to the initial narrative and the situational analysis proposed by the Consortium. This analysis appears to be relevant in the context of 2019-2020 in particular: it is about offering an absorptive and adaptive (= resilience) perspective to complex and chronic humanitarian problems. As clearly highlighted by NRC Country Representative in 2019: *'R3 is a matter of common sense. Everyone has thought for many years that this approach, through resilience, is lacking in Afghanistan. The same humanitarian bandaid approaches are being repeated, whereas there is also a need for better coordination between NGOs and for interventions that make a lasting difference. This is how we can give people real agency and start a virtuous cycle.'*<sup>23</sup>

How exactly can this virtuous cycle be set in motion? The analysis was based firstly on the chronicity and complexity of the humanitarian situation. According to the different iterations of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) between 2018 and 2021, the four main drivers of the chronic and worsening humanitarian situation in Afghanistan were: 1) armed conflict and risks to the civilian population; 2) population movements and forced displacement; 3) slow and sudden-onset natural disasters (droughts, floods, earthquakes), and; 4) a limited and often discriminative (gender, ethnicity, migration profile) access to basic services.<sup>24</sup>

According to analysis prepared by the Consortium's learning partner (Samuel Hall, who had published numerous reports and studies on internal displacement and returns in Afghanistan), the second of these determinants had interconnections and

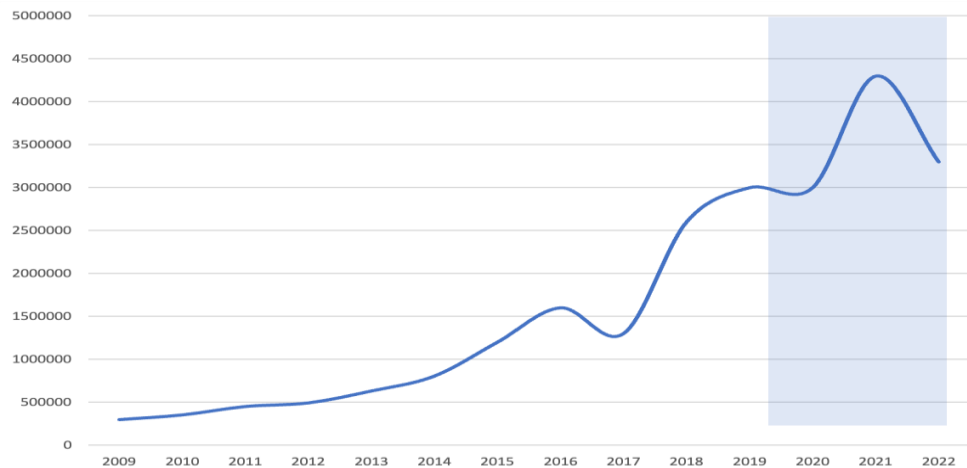
<sup>23</sup> NRC Country Director, July 2019.

<sup>24</sup> In particular: [Humanitarian Response Plan \(HRP\) 2019](#), December 2018.

correlations with the other three, making it a particularly relevant target for promoting resilient systems at the community and household level: *'With the exception of the food security needs of populations affected by slow-onset natural disasters in Afghanistan, humanitarian cases of displacement and 'limited access to basic services' constitute the largest group of 'people of concern' targeted for assistance: 2.22 million people out of 4.5 million.'*<sup>25</sup>

In this context, it also made sense for NRC to take over the technical and managerial leadership of the project, knowing the expertise of the NGO on the issue of return but also on climate- and conflict-induced displacement issues (IDPs). The graph below shows the criticality of the phenomenon of internal displacement (conflict and climate) since 2010, thus fully justifying the analysis of the Consortium members, who saw in the DFID/FCDO funding an opportunity to tackle a problem at the heart of the issues at stake in the Afghan crisis and the progressive socio-economic degradation, social fragmentation and political implosion of the country (internal displacement and return) by applying a more global model (Consortium) according to a more sustainable temporality (resilience).

Figure 7: Total number of IDPs in Afghanistan<sup>26</sup>



## Theories of change in a worsening operational context

Annex II presents the different iterations of the theory of change discussed with the donor and approved by the implementing partners. The versions adjusted over time show appropriate contextual knowledge informing assumptions, and plausible causal pathways. Adaptability, discussed below, is demonstrated by the rapid transition from a ToC #2 to a ToC #3 shortly after August 2021. At the beginning of the intervention (technical proposal submitted to DFID on 11 July 2019) as well as during the start-up phases (autumn 2020), the focus was on the coordinated themes of resilience, recovery and return. Each of these components was relevant in its own right. ToC #1 focuses on the causal links between outputs and outcomes and the interactions between interventions and actors. In line with the initial technical proposal, the focus is clearly on synergies: *'the objective, as we saw it, was to create collaborations almost everywhere, thematically but also in the communities.'*<sup>27</sup>

The question of synergies is more central to the ToC finally adopted by the FCDO (ToC #2), whose visual representation reflects several exchanges between the donor and the Consortium as well as between the members of the Consortium themselves: *'At this point, somewhat because of the context, somewhat because of the capacities or the culture of each NGO, we realised that each one is working on its own. We know that we have to change this, the donor says so, we know it, but we are caught up in the emergency, the crises, the lack of capacity or access. So, the ToC is more about what we lack. It captures our problem: we don't work together'*<sup>28</sup>. In other words, in line with the humanitarian mandate and DNA (especially in Afghanistan), NRC, WVI, CARE and AAH worked in silo. Clearly, the ToC #2 model, which is the result of several drafts discussed between the learning partners, the

25 R3 Consortium Proposal (Narrative) submitted to DFID on July 11, 2019.

26 Sources: IDMC (2009-2021) and UNHCR (2022) available at <https://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/afghanistan> and <https://reporting.unhcr.org/afghanistansituation>

27 KII with former NRC Afghanistan team (2018-2020)

28 KKI with former NRC Afghanistan staff (2020-2021)

NGOs and the donor, shows that the Consortium's impact must come from synergies, from operational coordination leading to outcomes; in contrast, most of the NGOs acknowledged that they were in a logic of outputs, with no real synergies at community or even provincial level. The ToC thus captured a vision rather than the operational reality. This is particularly evident in the difficulty organisations have in differentiating between long-term, medium-term, and short-term outcomes and outputs, for a range of multi-sectoral activities.

After August 2021, the pivot was agreed to allow the partners to accelerate the targeting and frequency of assistance interventions, in a context of humanitarian crisis where access was still easy. In this regard, community observations unambiguously corroborate the economic reports of UNDP<sup>29</sup> or the World Bank<sup>30</sup>: *"The economic situation of the population is deteriorating. Prices are rising under the Islamic Emirate regime. For example, the price of a bag of flour is about 7,000 Pakistani rupees. It is difficult for a family to earn such an amount to buy a bag of flour. Moreover, there is no work. We are waiting for Allah's mercy."*<sup>31</sup>

Designed to last six months, the pivot was intended to cover the winter period, and reflect the change in priorities from resilience/return to humanitarian crisis management. It also reflected the understanding that the de facto authorities perceived development interventions as intrusive but were more open towards humanitarian activities. *'We do not tolerate development as it is interference. On the other hand, we know that humanitarian aid can help a population that has been hit by poverty and conflict.'*<sup>32</sup> ToC #3 presents the causal pattern of this six-month humanitarian intervention. However, its overall logic differs little from the original ToCs (#1 and #2) in programmatic terms, although the outcomes and impact aspects are of course more limited in the context of a humanitarian emergency mission. NRC and R3's shelter programming navigated the pivot period differently to other sectors and leads. The initial transition to short-term emergency assistance during the pivot period would have left NRC low on beneficiaries, so after inter-organisational discussion, NRC resumed its original activities, but with additional activities providing emergency shelter in line with the pivot.

The incremental approach, essential to the resilience agenda, was no longer a priority after the pivot but had not been put in place prior. This suggests that the NGO and IP members of the Consortium had only ever had the predisposition, mandates, capacities and operational habits of humanitarian agencies. They were in fact *'more comfortable in an emergency assistance operation (...) than in a longer-term model, resilience, even if we understood the logic, because the operational, reporting, collaboration, did not follow.'*<sup>33</sup> The different IPs all have a profoundly humanitarian profile and identity (with the exception of a few very specific interventions, such as ICLA for NRC), which has implications in terms of operational approach and modality, but also in the positioning in relation to other organisations: in a logic of humanitarian assistance, the objectives of coordination, coherence, long term, outcomes, take second place to the fact of delivering immediate assistance to populations in need and whose existence is threatened: *'For us, culturally, it is about understanding the needs, delivering assistance, saving lives. Resilience, adaptation, transformation, this is quite new. And it involves changes in the way we work but also in the way we think about our work.'*<sup>34</sup>

29 UNDP (2022) "One Year in Review: Afghanistan Since August 2021" (New York, Kabul, October 2022). Available at: <https://www.undp.org/press-releases/undp-report-paints-grim-picture-afghanistan-year-after-transition>

30 World Bank (2022) "Afghanistan Development Update October 2022 - Adjusting to the new realities" <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/d7d49962c0c44fd6bb9ba3bfe1b6de1f-0310062022/original/Afghanistan-Development-Update-October-2022.pdf>

31 KII33, Kochini Karez, Helmand (AAH) - Community Observation.

32 KII101, MoRR, DfA, November 2021.

33 Interview with former NRC-CMU staff, September 2021.

34 Interview with former RI staff, 2020.

Figure 8 WV Cash-for-work project under FSL workstream



### Assessment of the theory of change

The ToC agreed upon before the humanitarian pivot is conceived on the basis that seven intervention streams (protection, shelter, WASH, health/nutrition, FSL and GBV) would work hand in hand to achieve long-term resilience and reintegration outcomes. This in turn would lead to the impact statement: lives saved, civilians protected, resilience built & people’s agency rebuilt at household and community levels. Assumptions and risk for each stage in the causal chain are described at a very high level. Interactions between interventions and their intended effects are not captured. No revised ToC diagram was designed to better reflect, in hindsight, the interactions between different programme variables at the micro, meso and macro levels for a simple reason: there were not many interactions between different programme variables. Indeed, only a “deconstructed” Theory of Change for the different activities implemented would prove allow to adequately map out pathways for change. It is however worth pausing on the assumptions for a moment, notably the first among them: *‘Security and political (...) conditions allow activities to take place.’* Indeed, when this most basic of assumptions no longer held true, the programme was not able to continue as planned. After the fall of Kabul to the Taliban and operational pause, another ToC was designed to guide activities for the humanitarian pivot. Shown below, it provides an illustration of how the “humanitarian pivot” did not fundamentally change most partners’ basic activities. Simply put, the intermediate outcomes changed without a further explanation of how these would be achieved.

Figure 9 Theory of change pre-pivot

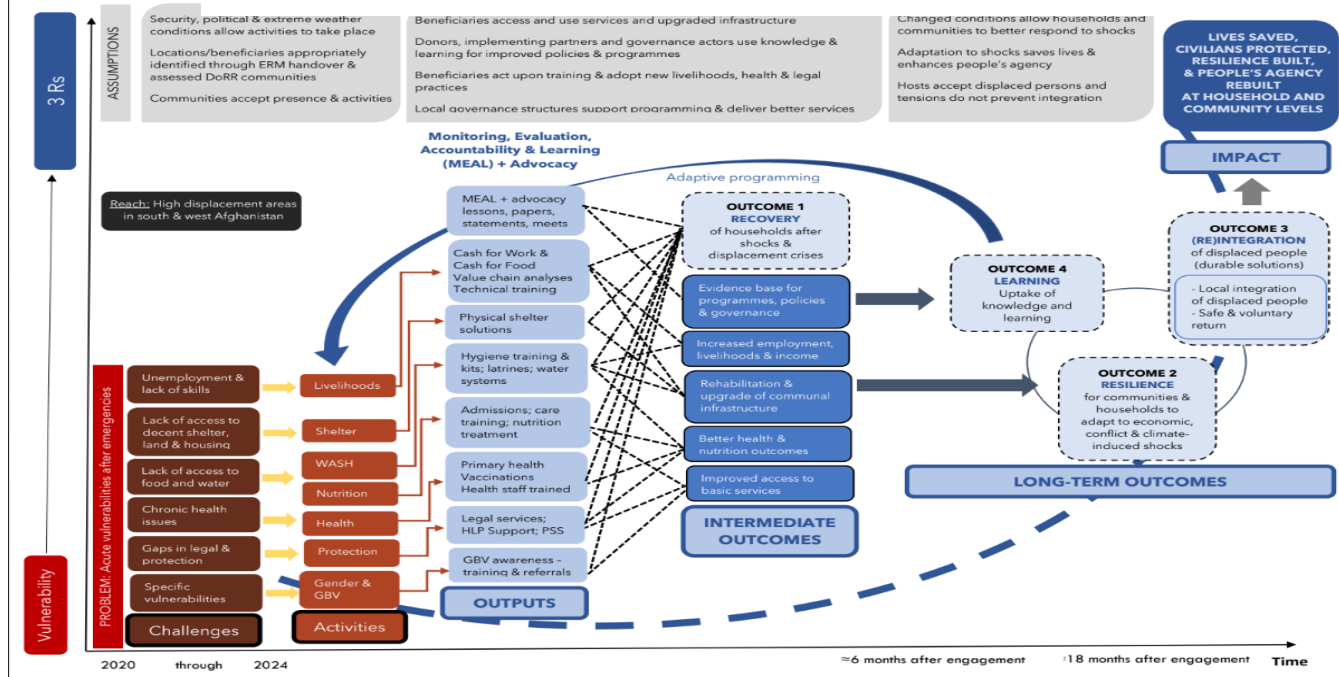
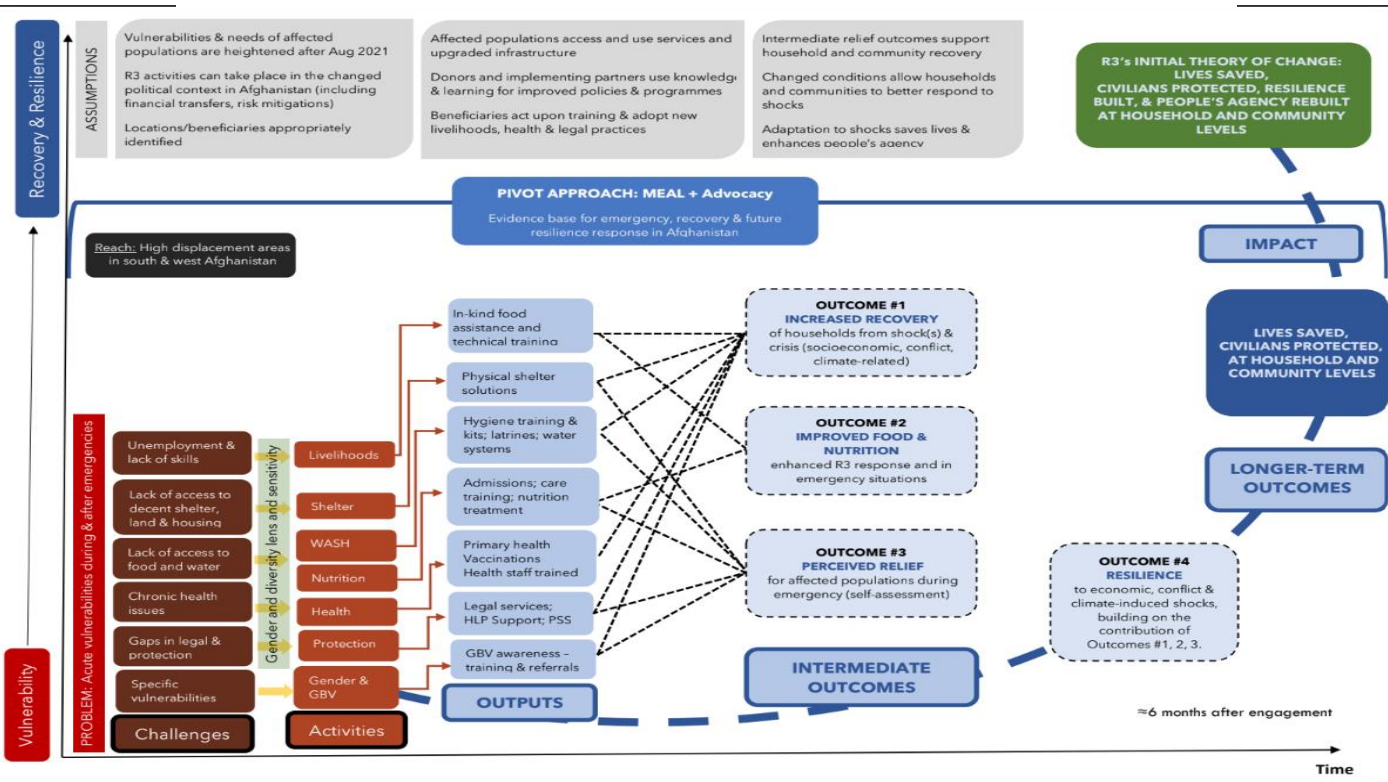


Figure 10 Theory of change pivot



As will be discussed in the section "What For" on measurable outcomes, evidence supporting the cause-and-effect relationship of most pathways could not really be established: the direct causalities and likely inferences often put forward in terms of outcomes are in reality not very well developed or substantiated. The IPs do not venture to mention or consider their intervention from an angle that goes beyond relief or emergency output.

## WHO – Targeting

R3's targeting approach could best be described as pragmatic. In an operational context marked by a drastic reduction in the space available for humanitarian aid, the R3 approach 1) to control the "start-up" cost by favouring locations already known and identified by the field teams; 2) to use teams, partners and community contacts that were often already identified; 3) to limit security risks by working with communities and networks familiar to each NGO.

Figure 11: Targeting indicators (traffic light system)



**AD HOC GEOGRAPHICAL SELECTION,** mainly based on prior knowledge of NGOs in the target areas, which has advantages (security, access) but does not guarantee relevance to needs



**INCONSISTENT SELECTION CRITERIA,** despite attempts at standardisation and in an operational context (pandemic, security, humanitarian crisis) which has made needs & vulnerability assessments very uncertain.

At the same time, the choice of provinces and communities was based on contextual opportunism rather than the contextual analysis. In a context of rapid political deterioration and societal fragmentation, the aggravating factors of the pandemic, the reduction of the accessible humanitarian perimeter and large-scale internal displacement finally highlighted certain structural weaknesses of the targeting approach.

### Limited synergies in choice of locations

As explicitly stated in the original proposal, the provinces selected by the Consortium were based on the pre-existence of activities by the different IPs in each of the provinces in 2018-2019: *'The proposed project will be implemented in western and southern Afghanistan, namely in Badghis, Ghor, Herat, Farah, Nimroz, Helmand, Kandahar, and Uruzgan Provinces. These are parts of the country with disproportionately high numbers of displaced and returning Afghans, and different drivers of displacement, but also where humanitarian response is currently unable to adequately address the needs. It also capitalises on the consortium partners' sectoral expertise, long term experience and geographic footprint, which includes the relationships established with government and local actors.'*<sup>35</sup>

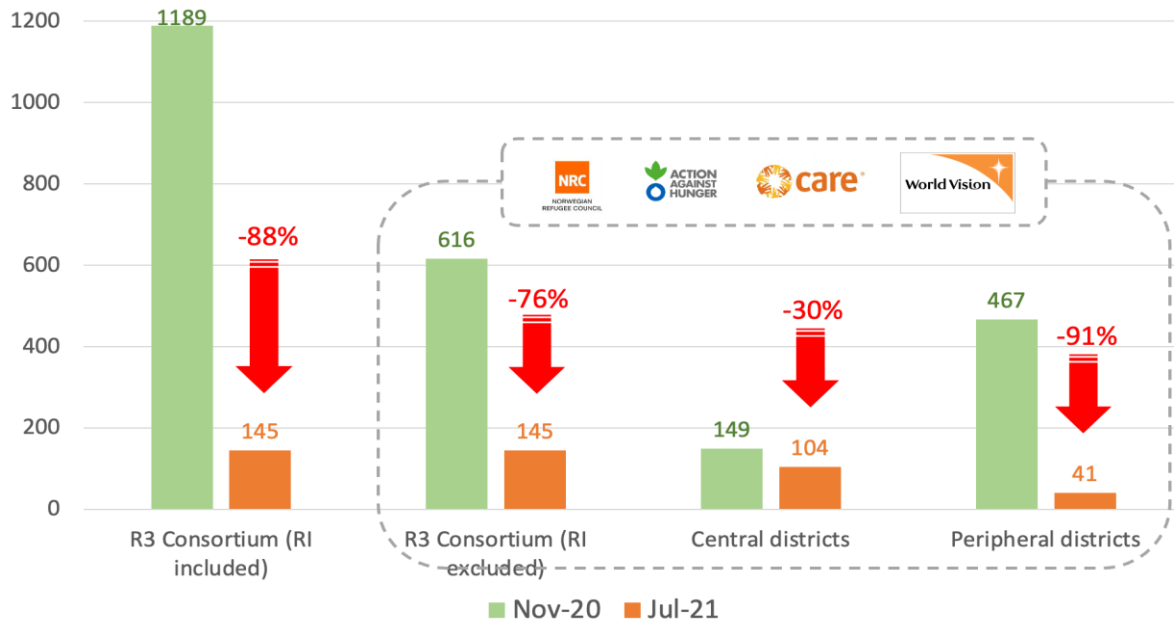
By proceeding in an opportunistic manner (in the sense that operations were conducted in areas of proven presence of the IPs), the Consortium contradicts in some way a more normative logic better aligned with humanitarian principles. Similarly, by not setting as a precondition for the choice of provinces and communities the presence of several combined interventions (2 at least, but rather 3 or 4), the IPs put themselves in a situation of silo and business as usual, instead of trying to agree - together - on areas of co-intervention. Only the inclusion of areas where several interventions were implemented in concert (and over several years) would have made it possible to really talk about the 'resilience' and 'multiplier effect' of a Consortium. In provinces such as Ghor and Helmand, for example, key informants underscored the importance of moving beyond health and nutrition services and expanding interventions into shelter, gender-based violence, as well as ICLA. These were unmet needs in these provinces. This crucial point is further discussed in the 'coherence' sub-section.

This approach was more or less repeated when the humanitarian space was extended following the return of the Taliban. In the context of the gradual deterioration of the security situation in all Afghan provinces, the access of the IPs to the targeted communities gradually reduced to a trickle. Two important elements in particular were highlighted by the learning partner in July 2021, based on the documents provided by the IPs on their capacity for real access to communities between November 2020 (effective start of interventions) and July 2021:

- Compared to the initial agreement (Fall 2020), R3 was no longer confident they could access more than 11-12% of the targeted communities;
- Programmatically, from a 30/70 district split between centre and periphery, aligned with the emphasis on rural resilience, R3 had to shift to focusing on the remaining accessible urban or peri urban communities.

<sup>35</sup> R3 Consortium Proposal (Narrative) submitted to DFID on July 11, 2019.

Figure 12: Reduction of the accessible programmatic perimeter (Fall 2020 - July 2021, by number of accessible communities)



### Inconsistent community and household targeting

The selection of beneficiaries was often conducted empirically, building on pre-existing knowledge from the IPs themselves or other organisations present in the targeted districts or provinces. This is a rather pragmatic approach in a context where it is difficult to access the people of concern, to verify their needs and vulnerabilities, to monitor and evaluate the expected benefits. So, depending on their geographic presence, partners relied on existing humanitarian organisations for identification of beneficiaries. AAH, for example, relied on a prior assessment from IOM and other government stakeholders to get the addresses of potential beneficiaries who were labelled as IDPs. Referral cases for health beneficiaries were also being received from actors that were already operating in the regions. AAH followed the procedure of reaching out to organisations working in the same sectors.

Partners were also invited to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment survey. This survey, designed centrally by NRC, included multi-sectoral questions to allow for integrated programming. Each of the partners had to analyse whether a beneficiary was eligible for an intervention in a particular sector. Each theme had a set of specific indicators. For example, the technical assessments for food insecurity produced specific scoring criteria in relation to those for health and nutrition<sup>36</sup>. Teams were deployed to conduct these assessments, while the analysis was carried out by MEL focal points. The deployment proved complex. Partners reported that it was difficult to identify a beneficiary who met the criteria in the diverse range of interventions.

The process was detailed and technical, and deemed too time-consuming for the communities for whom it disrupted in their routines and workflows: *“The questionnaire took more than 1 hour, so it became very difficult. This process should have been simplified!”*<sup>37</sup> The process of identifying beneficiaries was also a source of frustration common among some communities. For example, one community representative explained that *“The CARE office interviews the deserving people five times; however, they reject them on the fifth time, saying that they do not deserve help. This would naturally annoy the people.”*

Operational criteria were different from one sector to another, with, for instance, WASH assessments focused on the community ecosystem/neighbourhoods, while health and nutrition assessments targeted households and individuals. While understandable, this absence of harmonisation, often debated during internal R3 technical meetings, was quickly identified as an obstacle to developing synergies at the community level: *“If Relief International or CARE have specific requirements in their assessments of health or food security, they will probably expect their partners to present assessments that are harmonised with their criteria and frameworks. But in areas where NRC or WVI are present, they may not focus on the same type of assistance and probably don’t*

<sup>36</sup> Moreover, the health and nutrition sectors (Ghor, Helmand, Badghis) in particular worked with local organisations and institutions that were already active in particular regions and coordinated with the local Ministry for Health services.

<sup>37</sup> KII, Program Manager, AAH.

*use the same tools. So, in the end, there is no collaboration because IPs don't speak the same language.*<sup>38</sup> In the end, partners reverted to targeting for their sector only, using their established targeting criteria, different tools, methodologies and quality standards - thereby abandoning most of the synergies promoted in the original project proposal.

In addition to defining appropriate variables to select households likely to receive assistance, it is also necessary to promote the right community ecosystem. *From a resilience and return/reintegration perspective*, addressing vulnerabilities and promoting real resilience requires an ecosystem analysis, taking into account different variables beyond the immediate needs expressed by households: What are the structural problems of the community? What are the variables that most influence the lack of absorption and adaptation to shocks? What are the physical, climatic, infrastructural and material, as well as social, economic, political and cultural, dynamics that can prevent or enhance the success of assistance and multiply its positive externalities?

This lack of understanding of the interactions between the different resilience variables (at both community and household level) probably explains why individual interventions have had little success in moving beyond the output and short-term stage - particularly in the initial project phase. In this regard, a common criticism among community members interviewed was that, while NGOs provided assistance, they did not address the core issue that could make a difference from the community's perspective: *"We don't have access to natural water sources like rivers or streams. Most people have drilled deep wells, but unfortunately the well water is salty. It is not safe to drink. The water is not usable. We have a huge problem with water (...) The first major need is clean water supply. The lack of access to clean water has led to many health problems for the population. (...) Secondly, if a clinic was built for us, it would be appreciated."*<sup>39</sup>

This analysis of the lack of overall vision of the problems is lucidly shared by the NGOs operating in the areas: *"When we interviewed beneficiaries, they came up with many questions. They felt that they might suffer from lack of income, loss of jobs, lack of income generation. So, there was a need for planning around vocational training, cash for work programmes, etc. Also, the food basket package unfortunately, we couldn't cover all of the area with just 500 packages!"* The problem was therefore not so much a lack of contextual or needs analysis as the fact that, faced with a situation of chronic and multi-faceted vulnerability, the R3 model was unable to move beyond a rather mono-sectoral and mono-geographical logic, particularly in the selection of beneficiaries.

## Transparency and perception

It is worth noting that a theme emerged during the focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews that should serve as a cautionary tale regarding distribution. Beneficiaries were often unable to perceive a clear and transparent needs-based logic according to which aid was distributed. This reality is summed up quite well in a 2020 interview with the Deputy Country Programme of WFP: *"You always have the same problem with targeting, regardless of the community. If you are helping the very poor among the very poor, say the bottom quintile in assets and income in the community, the others don't understand. Especially in rural communities where almost 90% of households are in near poverty. (...) So what counts is not the criteria, the vulnerability variables, even if it is necessary. What counts is pedagogy, explanation, acceptance. And few NGOs or humanitarian agencies know how to do that (in Afghanistan)."*

Two anecdotes confirm the difficulties of operating in contexts where humanitarian needs fuel both immense expectations, which NGOs fail to meet, and where the lack of transparent communication generates conflict within the community and negative perceptions of NGO intervention.

- In Helmand, one community member emphasised that the rules are often clear, depending on the NGO or the assistance modality. In particular, he argues that the priority, co-decided by the NGO and the community, is to support orphans and people with disabilities. The problem arises when it comes to the selection of beneficiaries on the basis of socio-economic needs: *"The problem was that one organisation wanted to provide aid to 6 families. But there are about 200 families living here. The number of applicants was too low because we are all in need. The aid workers said they could only help 6 or 7 families. This created a problem among the villagers (...) As this issue created a problem among the villagers, I would have preferred that the organisation never came to our village to help us."*<sup>40</sup> By contrast, in the same community, some very positive feedback was shared on the same NGO, showing how pedagogy and transparency are both needed and complex: *"AAH also provided aid to widows, orphans and very poor people. They made a list and then visited each person's house. They closely inspected the situation of each person on the list. The list of AAH helpers was not made in the mosque or in any house. They started visiting each person's house. They would enter each person's house, carefully examine a person's*

38 R3 Technical and M&E Working Group, Minutes of the Discussions, Thursday 4, February 2021.

39 Observation from the Kochini Karez (Helmand) community (beneficiaries of the AAH nutrition programme but also in need of washing and health care).  
40 KII #34 Kochini Karez, Helmand (AAH).



situation. After a thorough inspection, the candidate would receive the aid card."<sup>41</sup> What is at stake is not so much whether the NGO did well or could have done better, but that the extreme criticality and volatility of the situation makes issues of transparency, do-no-harm, accountability, particularly central, as perception often matters more than reality when people experience themselves as disadvantaged.

- In Badghis, where extreme insecurity and the earthquake had socially fragmented already very vulnerable populations, accusations of nepotism and corruption cannot be substantiated in the context of this study. Such perceptions, whether real or imagined, show the extent to which the contextual deterioration makes it more difficult and necessary to work on pedagogy and transparency around the selection of communities and beneficiaries: *"Sometimes there are tensions and conflicts between people regarding the aid provided by these organisations. Those who have strong connections receive more help, while those who don't are left helpless. Despite our efforts, we could not get a water purification project in our village, as proposed by the World Vision office. (...) Although we tried to get help from all the agencies that came to our district, we were not successful because people with authority influence some agencies. These people advise and guide the aid agencies."*<sup>42</sup> This, combined with the dependence of implementing partners on a community representative for distribution, led to several allegations of corruption, exacerbated by a perceived lack of transparency and accountability. A clearly defined distribution system, based on transparent criteria and an accessible accountability mechanism, might have alleviated some of the concerns and frustrations expressed by interviewees, while providing a mechanism for reporting credible allegations.

With the Pivot Exercise, jointly decided between FCDO, R3 Consortium members and the learning partner, the intervention was reoriented towards humanitarian assistance. The question of community and beneficiary selection thus took a back seat to the question of immense overall community needs to which aid could only provide a temporary response and with no real long-term outcomes: *"Unfortunately, most of the people's needs still need to be covered. The lifesaving approach (post pivot) is to reach those who severely need support and have not received response from any other sectors. We cannot limit life savings on nutrition and health. (...) R3 covered only part of the realities and vulnerabilities of the area, mostly within the recovery and resilience aspects. (...) Their target was not to cover all families. Only some families were targeted based on the availability of the funds."*<sup>43</sup> At this point, in the areas targeted by the various NGOs, almost all the populations were likely to be legitimate beneficiaries of the assistance.

Figure 13 Shelter in Jahandosti (Badghis province), March 2023 (Samuel Hall)



41 KII32 Kochini Karez, Helmand (AAH).

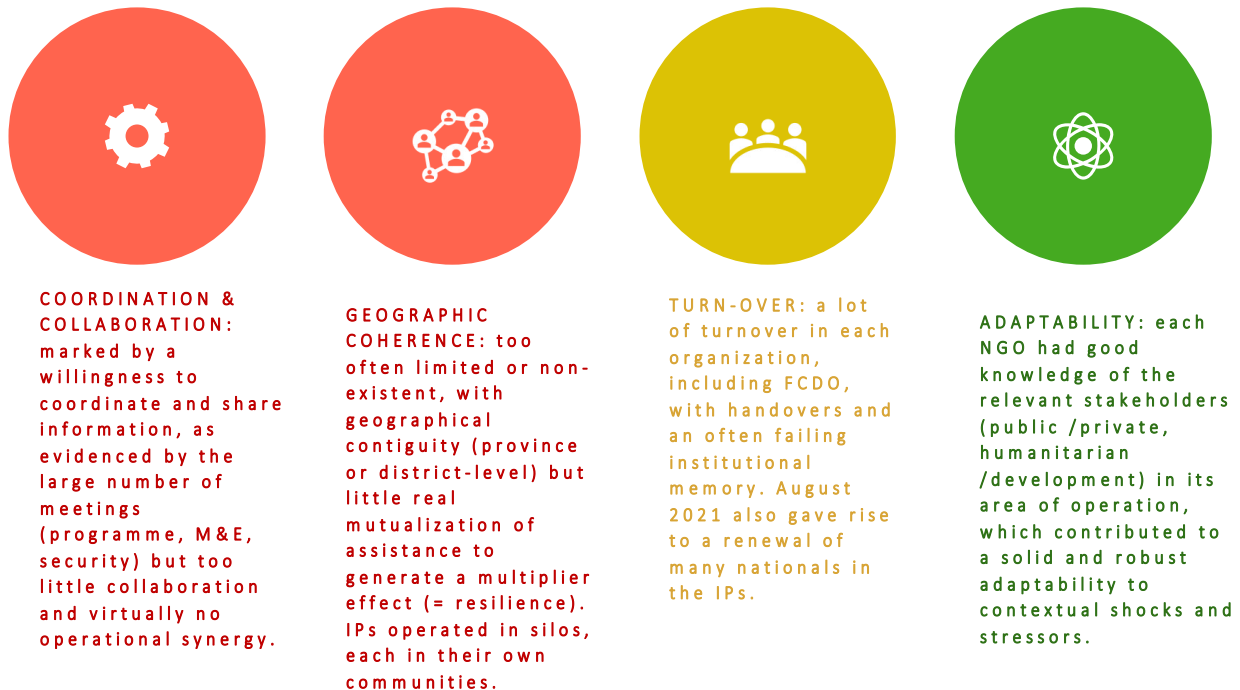
42 KII Jahan Dosti, Badghis (WVI).

43 KII3, Program Manager, AAH.

## HOW – Synergies and adaptability

Only good operational synergies within the Consortium and with the other social, economic and political stakeholders could have made it possible to: 1) optimise the consortium's multiplier effect and its value for money, through territorial and thematic synergies; 2) decrease the consortium's exposure to political or socio-economic risks, through better integration of the sometimes-contradictory logics and common dynamics of the different stakeholders. This strategic and programmatic "coherence" operates at two levels: internal (within R3) *and* external (with other stakeholders).

Figure 14: Coherence and organisation (traffic light system)

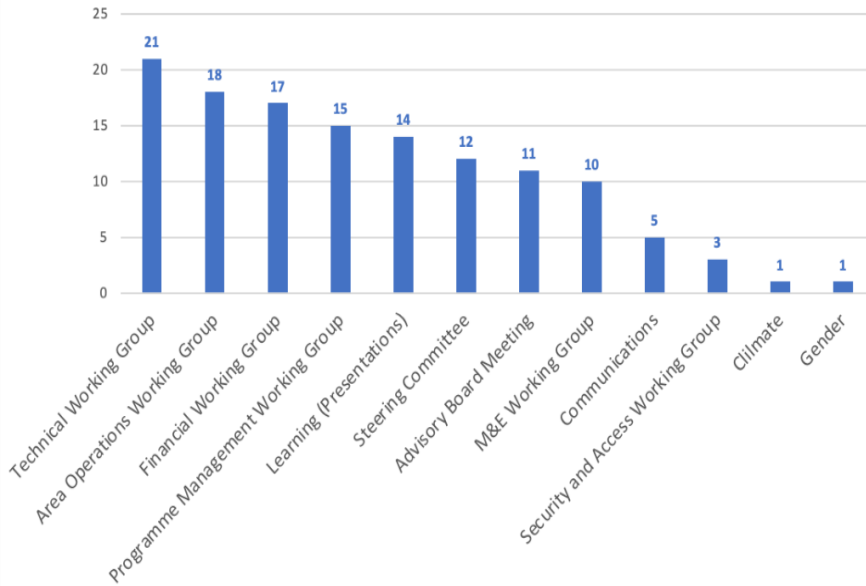


A fundamental working assumption of the initial ToC was the synergy between IPs, according to their specific areas of intervention. For many reasons both contextual and structural, this synergy/multiplier effect written into the initial ToC did not take place, or only marginally and in an *ad hoc* manner. Partners worked mainly in silo and without seeking any coordination, because they only considered coordination from the point of view of information sharing - not operationalisation, reporting, cost sharing or learning.

### Information sharing, coordination or collaboration?

At the internal level, coherence involves understanding how, in the field, the IPs of the R3 Consortium operated together in order to generate more combined impact than by operating separately (= uncoordinated and non-collaborative). In other words, is the Consortium structure a mere opportunistic coexistence or a real programmatic coherence generating additional positive externalities (including unintended)? If we look at the number of meetings between members of the Consortium, in an indicative way and on the basis of meetings confirmed by triangulation of agendas since 2019, we observe a remarkable frequency of internal meetings (21, with multi-thematic agenda), which does not take into account the many informal bilateral meetings, ad hoc meetings organised following crises that have imposed operational changes (e.g., earthquake in Badghis in January 2022). This particularly high frequency reflects the desire for coordination within the Consortium.

Figure 15 Indicative frequency of coordination meetings



However, as partners interviewed indicated, such frequency does not mean that the coordination meetings led to effective collaboration: *"It is all very well to talk to each other. But if everyone just says what they are doing, without looking at how we can work better together, it doesn't really add up. I know more about CARE or WVI or NRC than about other non-partner NGOs like DRC or DACAAR. That's for sure. But that doesn't mean that this information sharing makes us partners."*<sup>44</sup> In practice, the agendas rarely led to actual operational choices. NGOs had little to share in the field since they almost never worked in the same areas and were often reluctant to do so when they had the opportunity.

This assumption is validated by the interviews and assessments at the provincial level. While programme managers at the IP level maintained some level of coordination, district

and field teams had limited communication with each other. AAH's programmatic and field staff in Helmand were, for example, not familiar with the implementation and methodology of the activities that were being implemented in Ghor province. AAH's programme team identified this as a key gap during implementation and incorporated this structure into their meetings. Team meetings across colleagues in Helmand and Ghor ended up providing a platform for sharing of knowledge and information around the implementation and methods: *"Most of our meetings are related to the program activities that how we can implement the activities in a better way, to deliver the services transparently in a good quality and in a good manner to the beneficiaries."*<sup>45</sup> The focus of regular coordination meetings between IPs was on budgetary review, timelines for implementation, and work plan targets. These meetings did not focus on cross-learnings, thematic exchanges about multi-sectoral representation and lessons being learnt from the same geographies where partners were delivering.

The caveat, therefore, was that there was no structure providing field teams to discuss challenges around technical matters. More so, the key informant interviews for the endline report suggest that technical advisors were assigned at a much later stage to each thematic aspect. The usefulness of advisory groups was also questioned by key informants from various partner organisations. Technical advisors were expected to troubleshoot technical aspects at various stages of project implementation. Important decisions relating to programmatic changes were undertaken by program managers with no involvement of provincial managers and field representatives/staff. This indicates that internal cohesion at the partner level was not optimal.

At the level of external coherence, it is a question of seeing to what extent the provincial or local intervention is part of a logic of assistance (development, resilience, recovery) in collaboration with other programmes or projects implemented by other consortia, international or Afghan NGOs, international agencies or the UN, but also with the government (pre- and post-August 2021). In other words, to what extent did the Consortium or its members act in strategic and programmatic harmony with other actors in order to optimise the outcomes of the assistance for the population in the target areas? Coordination with other implementing agencies in the geographic areas targeted by R3 was generally seen as satisfactory by the IPs, both in Kabul and at the provincial level. The general feeling was that each actor knew what was happening in the province, who was operating where, and how: *"The issue of coordination is not a problem. The exchange of information is quite good. We know who is doing what"*<sup>46</sup>, a CARE counterpart suggested in July 2021, at a time of shrinking accessible humanitarian space.

Key informants indicated that duplication of efforts was avoided in implementation. In this regard, AAH teams ensured that they delivered FSL, WASH, health and nutrition, MHPSS in areas where other implementing agencies operating outside of R3 had not provided interventions. There was some level of coordination with other implementing agencies that were undertaking sectoral activities such as FSL, WASH, nutrition and health and MHPSS in Ghor and Helmand in order to avoid duplication of services in the same locations. Coordination teams with the government stakeholders were included in meetings and discussions around

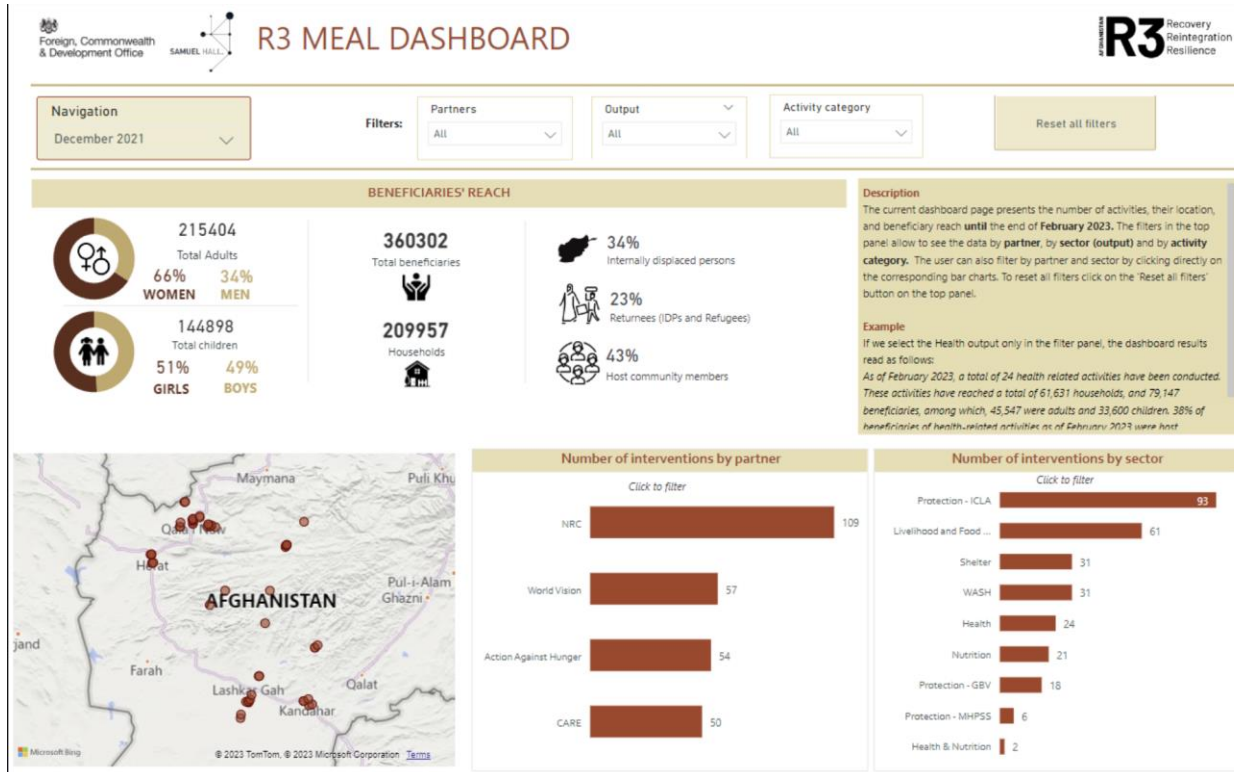
44 Interview with AAH staff, 2021.

45 KII9, Program Manager, AAH, Helmand.

46 Interview with CARE, July 2021.

target areas. “We would inform each other that we have this kind of activity at this village, and this is our target, and the quantity of the assessment and everything. So, it was clear for everybody. And we were able to prevent duplication of services.”<sup>47</sup> This desire to avoid duplication at all costs in order to reach as many people as possible reflects a humanitarian approach from the onset, to the detriment of longer-term impact, cost sharing, and the resilience agenda.

Figure 16 One of many information sharing mechanisms: the R3 dashboard



47 Interview with CARE International, 2022.

## UNMET EXPECTATIONS: THE MEAL DASHBOARD

### Objectives

The MEAL coordination dashboard for the R3 consortium was a tool designed to increase communication and coordination between the implementing partners and FCDO. It was brainstormed and designed in the end of 2021 during the pivot period, which was a moment for the IPs to shift their activities towards the rapidly emerging new emergency needs of the country, and to pick up on reporting which had been lacking.

The dashboard was primarily intended as an internal coordination tool, composed of an output tracking page that visualized progress on activities. This page showed interventions by partner, sector, and geographic area, as well as the number of beneficiaries reached through such activities. It was also discussed that the dashboard should also ideally allow to track progress of outcomes over time, to allow FCDO to have a more continuous view of the impact of the programme.

The process of the dashboard design was led by Samuel Hall but intended as a participatory exercise: IPs and FCDO were all consulted on what the dashboard should look like, and how it could be the most useful for their work.

### Data inputs

Samuel Hall was responsible for the design, development and upkeep of the dashboard, including verifying the data and fixing errors in the IPs inputs. IPs in turn were responsible for compiling the necessary data on a monthly basis and sending it in a coordinated manner to Samuel Hall under the oversight of NRC.

To facilitate the work of IPs and ensure harmonized data, Samuel Hall developed a data input reporting template to be filled by IPs. The implementation of the template proved to be a challenge for the IPs MEAL teams, and the template was revised and simplified a number of times to reduce the reporting burden placed on IPs.

Each organisation shared output level data (albeit with some delays) in early 2022. No data was received in April, May, July and November 2022, nor for January 2023. The last month of data, February 2023, was received on March 28th, 2023.

The irregularity and sometimes delay in the data inputs received made it difficult for the dashboard to serve its initial purpose of showing a quasi-real-time picture of the activities and reach of the R3 consortia. Moreover, until mid-2022, there was still confusion among partners on whether to report the monthly number of beneficiaries or cumulative number of beneficiaries, how to measure reach (beneficiary vs. household level), and how to ensure no double-counting of activities and beneficiaries between IPs. Some of the challenges mentioned above could have been mitigated by the assignment of a specific dashboard data manager within NRC, a solution suggested multiple times by Samuel Hall to the consortium.

In mid-2022, Samuel Hall added a static dashboard page on the outcomes. However, because the outcomes' reporting was based on data collected during the baseline / midlines / endline data collections, it was not possible to obtain a more continuous view of those indicators, usage being thus limited to a static reporting of indicators, no different from the logframe.

### Usage

Usage metrics in PowerBI only show viewers of the past 30 days, making it hard to make a precise analysis of how much each stakeholder made use of the dashboard tool. Samuel Hall on occasion checked these metrics and found that FCDO consulted the dashboard from time to time, but that most of the time IPs were not consulting the dashboard at all.

This indicates that, despite the efforts, the dashboard was not a useful tool for the coordination of activities between IPs. Indeed, the information in the dashboard was mostly ex-post. While it did serve its reporting objective it did not contribute to more coordination between the different IPs/locations/sectors.

This suggests that while a dashboard might be useful in the future to help consortia coordinate and report to the client, its objectives and design must be discussed before the beginning of activities and fully included in the MEAL strategy as a tool to inform the planning of activities and make sure learnings are integrated into each new programme phase. Each organization needs to engage a MEAL focal point in the dashboard design process, to make sure it translates the needs of every partner and accounts for the data collection limitations of each. It is also recommended that a consortia level dashboard data manager be engaged full-time.

## Geographic and programmatic coherence?

Although by design, the R3 programme's ToRs state that in instances when a response was required in a sector where the provincial lead has presence and field offices, the sectoral lead would be responsible for providing 'surge staff' to be hosted by

the provincial lead organisation.<sup>48</sup> In practice, however, R3 programme was not compatible with partners' geographical presence and multisectoral needs that needed to be addressed in specific regions. In Ghor and Helmand provinces, where partners reported a high prevalence of ICLA and Shelter needs, there wasn't any organisational presence of NRC which was the sectoral lead. AAH's long-term presence in these regions should have been leveraged to ensure that synergies existed between the two organisations' technical expertise and geographical presence. *"It has to be structured at the design level. (...) You know, for example, if AAH cannot implement Shelter in Ghor and Helmand and NRC knows it does not have field presence in these districts, so in this case, the consortium lead has to have a structure to come up with an approach to perhaps ask for the local organizations to implement in the provinces that require these interventions."*<sup>49</sup>

In Badghis, World Vision cited the large numbers of people that were displaced where R3 targets their interventions as part of the longer-term cost-effectiveness and impact on poverty reduction. Despite overwhelming needs, there were no real synergies between implementing organisations (NRC and World Vision) in the province. Questions about how a comprehensive set of services was going to be delivered and conveyed to potential beneficiaries remained unaddressed during beneficiary identification, assessment and distribution stages. NRC and WVI did not have specific meetings relating to these aspects. *"Let's say if they (NRC) do shelter or some other activities that we don't do the same, then how are we going to make sure that beneficiary is benefiting from the whole package, no matter which organization is implementing? (...) If we could only go back to when this project started. (...) this could have been handled and managed better. In terms of complementarity, we could have done a better job."*<sup>50</sup> Many similar examples were mentioned by IPs, in all the provinces of intervention. In Herat, for instance, there was an acute need for cross sectoral collaboration - in the health and WASH sectors in particular, as they were reported to be extremely high: *"Partners needed to work together. But we find that only NRC and Care were mandated to deliver protection, FSL, and GBV awareness raising needs."*<sup>51</sup>

In the Afghan context of 2020/21, there is no doubt that the implementation of a program for an NGO in a province where it has no historical roots involves operational difficulties, real security risks as well as a significant financial cost. This is precisely the area where R3 should or could have proposed an innovative operational approach to optimize the methods of intervention within the Consortium: 1) by removing barriers and harmonizing standards specific to each organization; 2) by pooling costs when NGOs set up outside their geographical area; 3) by creating cross-organizational training systems or delegating technical staff to other provinces or IPs and ensure more adaptable assistance modalities. But in the context of a pandemic and political crisis, it would have been ambitious to ask this of organisations that were focused on what they knew best and that the environment increasingly required: emergency.

The objective of the "pivotal" approach was to ensure that partner NGOs followed their expertise and flexibility. However, as the pivot phase commenced, instead of agreeing on a coherent strategy for efficient utilization of funds, partners were found to be implementing their own plans, albeit with tweaking and adjustments according to R3 objectives. The extent to which this siloed approach has taken shape can be gauged by the fact that some of the partners have plans to continue their activities even after R3 closure. *"I think that when they pivoted to emergency activities, it reduced coordination on those operational aspects even further. (...) each partner was using the R3 funds to finance their own activities and their own program plans."*<sup>52</sup>

## Turn-over and handover: gaps in institutional memory

The high turnover within the different IPs as well as within the CMU led to a lack of continuity in decision-making on long-term issues or topics of common interest to all members: *"Each one first tried to quickly understand the emergencies of his or her NGO (...) Six months later, the interlocutors changed, everything had to be re-explained, there was never any real coordination, only basic exchanges of information on intervention areas that only concerned one or two actors."*<sup>53</sup> This problem is cited by all stakeholders. The NGOs recognize this and highlight the difficulty of integrating international staff in a highly volatile Afghan context. Pre- and Post-August 2021, some handovers were not properly made, which raises some concerns on the level of preparation and anticipation on the part of the IPs, at a time of extreme political crisis and volatility in Afghanistan. While the exact date of the Taliban's return was undoubtedly difficult to anticipate, it was clear from the announcement of the date of the

48 R3 Consortium Proposal (Narrative) submitted to DFID on July 11, 2019.

49 KII3, Program Manager, AAH, February 2023.

50 KII12, Resource Development Manager, World Vision, February 2023.

51 KII2 with Care, February 2023.

52 KII7, FCDO, Feb 2023

53 Interview with AAH staff, 2021.

American withdrawal<sup>54</sup> that the transition into chaos would be inevitable. An Afghan ACBAR representative, for example, points out that *"August 2021 did not come as a surprise, but it is as if none of us had really anticipated the interruption and possible resumption of activities. NGOs, both Afghan and international, were astonished. We probably didn't want to believe it. So, the handovers, the transitions, happened in a very uneven way."*<sup>55</sup>

A similar criticism is levelled by the NGOs at the donor, whose counterparts varied over the course of the intervention, which had consequences in terms of involvement, expectations and field of expertise: *"It takes six months for people to understand their work, another six months to begin to understand the basics of a very complex context, and then they focus on their next assignment. It's often difficult to build in that context (...) We had the same problem with FCDO, the team changed a lot, with very different levels of involvement and knowledge of the context."*<sup>56</sup> Generally, NGOs (especially CARE, AAH, and WVI) complained that they did not have direct, unfiltered contact with the funding agency, which key informants felt was important for programs of this nature and amount. The CMU was considered a "filter" or "screen". The reasons it did not play its intended role included the fact that the coordinators were employed by NRC (real or perceived conflict of interest).

The coordination role was also too weak, with coordinators lacking any legitimacy beyond passing on information and organizing meetings. (*"we were a pass-through between the donor, NRC and the NGOs"*<sup>57</sup>.) Paradoxically, the CMU was therefore too weakly invested and not independent enough... while constituting a screen between the FCDO and the PIs (with the exception of NRC). A certain resentment towards NRC was thus evoked, with the feeling that the unquestionable leadership of the Consortium by NRC had sometimes led to a mixing of roles - *"this mixing of genres did not benefit anyone, and even less so NRC, because we were often in the front line"*<sup>58</sup>.

Finally, although the learning partner had the same core team for the whole period, the lack of continuity and institutional memory within the NGOs implied a constant pedagogical work. Repeated legitimization and justification were required at the expense of a more fruitful collaboration on the learning content and on possible co-design of the research.

## Adaptability to (risks of) disruption

The organisational and structural coherence of a consortium can provide a better capacity to absorb and adapt to crises and unforeseen events in a context as volatile as Afghanistan. This sub-section presents quick analyses of R3's resilience to contextual, structural, or systemic crises that occurred between the start and year 3 of the intervention.

- RI (Relief International) withdrawal

After Relief International withdrew from R3 in March 2021, the following risks were immediately identified by the CMU: 1) Gaps in delivery, to be mitigated via either finding another partner or dividing the funds among the remaining partners; 2) Reputational risks for partners on DfA taxation, to be mitigated via DfA engagement and partner expense verification; 3) Increased risk of denial of access, to be mitigated via awareness raising, coordination with elders, and DfA engagement; 4) Risk of delays as consortium needs to re-compose itself and possibly re-negotiate authorizations, to be mitigated through outreach to government officials; and 5) Increased cost/administrative burden on partners, to be mitigated via coordination with the donor. The risk assessment, also presented in full in the annex, illustrates an appropriate assessment of risks, possible scenarios and preferred options. However, the four remaining partners and the FCDO have been in discussions about replacing or absorbing the budget originally allocated to IR (£3 million). No real decision was made, which had implications for the geographical and thematic coverage of the Consortium. This episode especially highlighted the distance between the "entrepreneurial" logic of the NGOs, eager to benefit from an additional grant, and the "contractual" logic of the donor, anxious to reallocate the planned funds, at a time when the objectives of the Consortium were becoming increasingly unrealistic. The rapid reduction of the accessible perimeter, which was at the heart of IR's withdrawal, showed that it had become impossible to work effectively (let alone within rural communities) in Afghanistan.

---

54 On April 14, 2021, U.S. President Joe Biden announced that it was "time to end the forever war" and that all troops would be withdrawn from Afghanistan by September 11 of that year. This announcement sharply accelerated the original timetable for Taliban conquest and further destabilized Afghanistan's fragile governance structures.

55 ACBAR staff member, February 2022.

56 Former R3 coordinator.

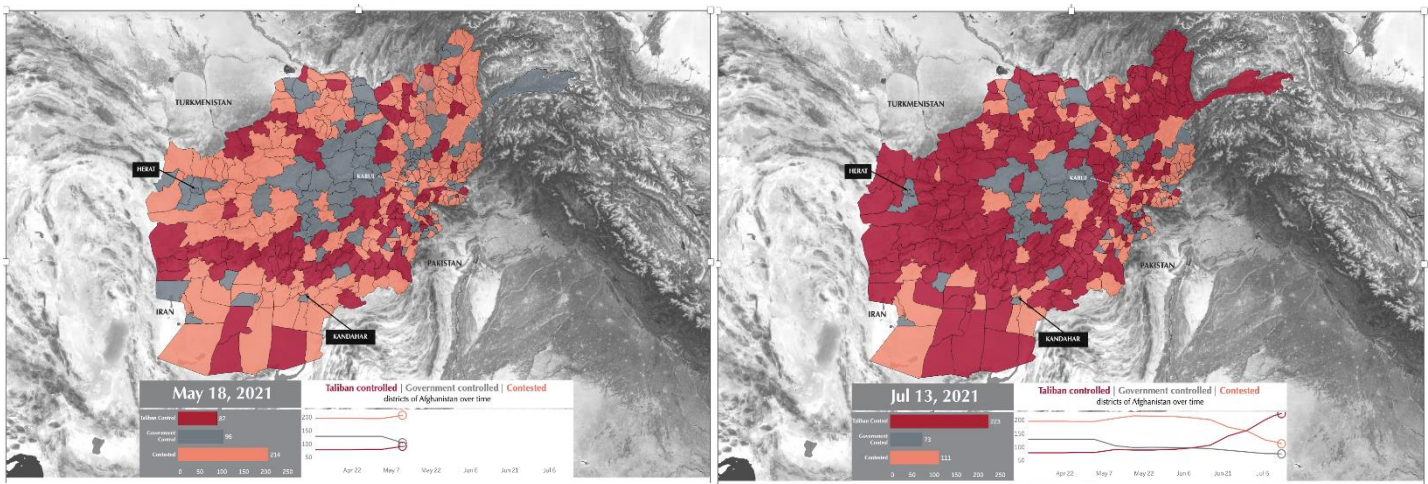
57 Interview with R3 Consortium lead, September 2021.

58 Interview with former R3 Consortium lead, March 2023.

- Taliban surge and political chaos

During the first phase of the R3 consortium implementation phase, the Taliban insurgency made massive territorial gains, amassing control of the country with the seizure of one provincial capital after another, and then finally Kabul, in a sweeping surge over just nine days. Areas of insecurity led to multiple suspensions of programme implementation. This aligned with the wider loss of access across Afghanistan. The Humanitarian Access Group (HAG) cited that across Afghanistan, there were 2,016 incidents restricting NGO access in 2021, almost double the 1,095 incidents in 2020, and nearly six times the 444 incidents reported in 2019. Changes in territorial control also impacted implementation, with the need to renegotiate access but also the resultant changes in programming. A plurality of R3 implementing partner key informants noted that the escalation in conflict was one of the major factors precluding programme progress.

Figure 17 Taliban surge in 2021



Security meetings were generally organised between security focal points as brief updates on the situation in each province. These showed a willingness to exchange information, but presentations were generally mainly descriptive rather than solutions oriented. Minutes of these meetings very basic and country representatives minimally involved. Again, this shows adaptation in silo rather than as a team. Given the worsening security situation and rapidly changing environment in August 2021, the FCDO requested more regular updates and information on the topic of access and security. NRC led the discussions, collected the information, and shared it with the donor in two main components: 1) Security discussions to be led by the NRC Security Officer on a bi-weekly basis to align security triggers around Consortium operations, harmonize contingency plans, and report any security incidents and/or risks at project sites; and 2) Access Constraint Tracking, led by the NRC Access Coordinator, to record any access constraints or issues on a weekly basis, and share summaries with the donor on access constraints in the target provinces. Although this decision came rather late, its implementation significantly improved the level of awareness and coordination. It was very well received by the IPs in a period of social and political chaos.

- Working under the Taliban regime

The regime change programmatically resulted in the pivot discussed above. The Taliban's distrust of 'development' activities (considered interference) long before their return was confirmed with demands to stop any assistance identified as development or resilience. The pivot was also a way to circumvent this prohibition. In reality, however, the November 2021 humanitarian pivot did not change much in the field, given that many activities and modalities of intervention were in fact primarily humanitarian. When financial services collapsed, cash-based interventions had to undergo a complete overhaul. Partners had to rework the modalities of specific interventions. New budgets were forecasted and new MoUs had to be signed with relevant authorities. Getting approvals from FCDO was also a time-consuming process. Cash was replaced with in-kind support. Procurement processes were also affected. Fluctuations in market prices also impacted the prices of construction materials, non-construction material, food items, non-food items. Therefore, with the change of regime, prices of outputs changed drastically. *"For example, if one item was in \$20, it is increased to \$40. So, everything became costly in the current period."*<sup>59</sup>

59 KII11, Field Manager, Ghor, AAH



DfA counterparts in some regions now sought to 'participate' in operations, to accompany teams, to supervise distribution, which is contrary to the principles of NGOs. In practice, such tensions were often resolved through pragmatic, case-by-case negotiations with counterparts who were often close to the power structures or community decision-making models of the previous period. *"They know that they need us, because we deliver services to the population, which is in great need. They see us and have accepted us for a long time. So it's possible to get along without too much difficulty, but it's case by case."*<sup>60</sup> However, there are also numerous accounts of interference and gatekeeping by DFAs and other local actors causing diversion of aid. Interference by local actors in provision of food assistance was cited as one of the biggest challenges by implementing partners. DFAs interfered in beneficiary selection, often offering their own vehicles to load items. It was and likely remains a well-known practice to redistribute aid through the community development councils, head of the communities – who became gatekeepers in the process – by recollecting the assistance and redistributing to the communities. Partners such as AAH worked extensively in sensitizing beneficiaries against these local influences. Another response by AAH was to include community leaders and elders in discussions about the impacts of aid distribution to individuals through gatekeepers. The extent of aid diversion in Ghor became one of the reasons for OCHA to blacklist the province for humanitarian assistance<sup>61</sup>.

- The Taliban's 24 December 2022 decree barring women from working in NGOs

The twenty or so edicts issued by the new government against women (in both the private and public spheres) had a profound impact on access to women, whose role is central to distribution and awareness of nutrition, hygiene, etc. The gradual exclusion of women from the Afghan public sphere made the task of NGOs ethically and operationally more complex, which ultimately called into question the relevance of certain interventions, due to the impossibility of involving the female population in the distribution of assistance and the implementation of programmes. The female ban also gave rise to distinct debates and different approaches among NGOs. Care's interventions in Kandahar came to a halt, specifically around GBV and psychosocial support. Provision of dignity kits which aimed to protect women's hygiene were banned in Kandahar along with GBV awareness raising session (turned into public health trainings). In Herat, much of these activities had already been implemented before the ban led to activities being stopped. World Vision realigned the project design to include mobile health clinics and nutrition services in certain areas of Badghis. FSL activities were implemented with minor adjustments. Changes such as inclusion of Mahram field staff meant that budgets had to be revised. Program structures also changed into segregated trainings. AAH sought permission to continue programme activities and attempted to influence counterparts with outreach on humanitarian principles. Following the ban, NRC issued a joint statement with Save the Children and CARE International temporarily suspending programs that provided lifesaving assistance to millions of Afghans.

---

60 KII67, Field Manager, Care

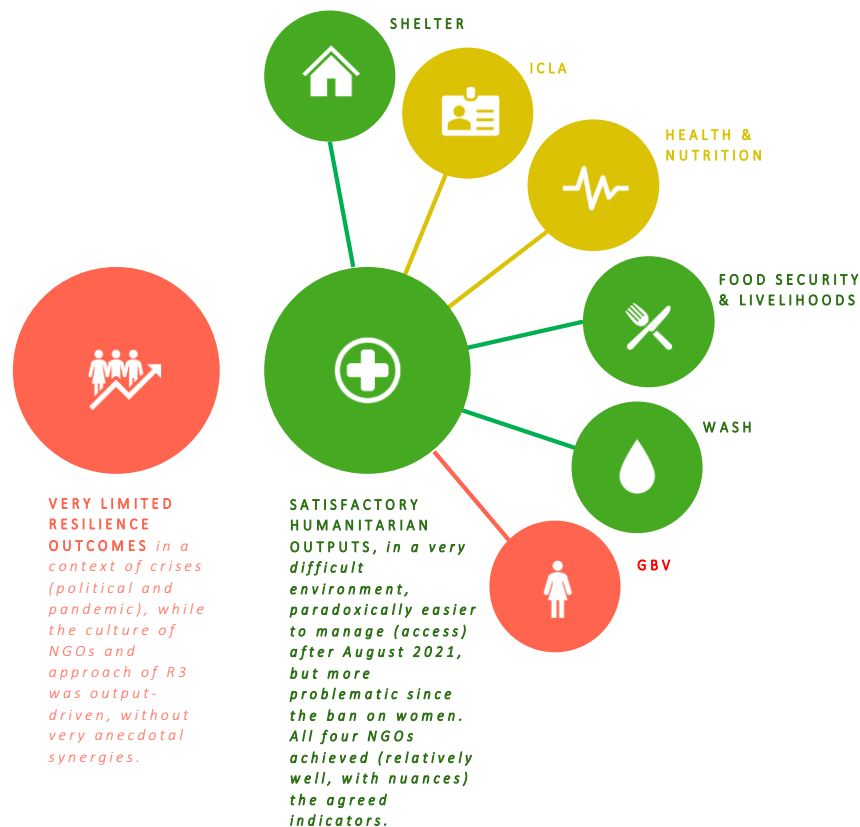
61 Partners note that Taliban counterparts would certainly have been among the beneficiaries of aid distributed by R3, if only because they were de facto indistinguishable from other potential beneficiaries in a crowd. Where this was (too) obvious, however, accounts exist of work being stopped: 'The Taliban stays with us only as guards, apart from that, not a word of them was being accepted. I told you that they brought around 4 or 5 petitions, and the NGO staff checked them. The staff stopped their work and left the place and said that if this goes on there were be only Taliban on the list. They also didn't go to the place they were invited for lunch. They then counseled their leaders and came back. They said that they are not going to include the Taliban in the list because it was for widows and ones in need only. We were guided in the station to only escort the staff and not to interfere in their work and let them decide everything themselves. They would tell the same thing to every community leader.' (Community leader, Sofia village, Helmand, March 2023)

## WHAT FOR – Outputs and outcomes

The following section presents programme outputs by workstream, following the logic of the R3 logframe. For purposes of summarizing programming delivered, we use the official information provided by IPs in their beneficiary listings, rather than what the beneficiaries report as the actual aid received. Where appropriate, we present some data collected from a de-facto control group. This artificial “control” group was constituted by asking surveyed beneficiaries for the contact information of others in their community who had not benefited from the same type of R3 programming as themselves. This should not be considered a true counterfactual but rather indicative of the situation among the general population.

The diagram below summarises the main findings of the endline analysis. Firstly, there is no need to consider R3's externalities in terms of outcomes or impact. This was the case before August 2021, not only because of a very unfavourable context but also because of a dysfunctional organisation, with NGOs that were mainly conceptually and operationally equipped for humanitarian assistance and failed to create real synergies; it is still the case after the humanitarian pivot in November 2021, since it is difficult to think of humanitarian assistance in terms of outcomes or impact, especially in a context of chronic crisis and universal poverty. On this basis, outcomes in terms of resilience (adaptive or long-term transformative) are therefore very weak and often non-existent; in contrast, NGOs have - each in their own field and province of operation - often succeeded in delivering effective humanitarian assistance, thus helping to save lives and give hope - albeit momentarily - to entire communities. In the context of the gradual eradication of women from the public arena, however, GBV activities have not been able to achieve their objectives.

Figure 18: Outputs and outcomes of the Consortium (traffic light system)



## Protection

NRC was the organisational lead for Information, Counselling and Legal Assistance (ICLA). ICLA activities include the provision of legal counselling - such as for housing, land and property (HLP) issues, for instance those related to inheritance. It also included information sessions on ICLA and HLP issues. The funding for legal identification and documentation (LID) activities was reinstated after the pivot. LID activities support people in accessing identification including the national *tazkira* ID, essential for accessing additional services.

Table 6: Protection output indicators – target versus achieved

	IP	Year	Indicators	Target	Achievement	% difference
PROTECTION	NRC	1-3	# LCD / HLP beneficiaries	22951	15386	33%
	AAH	1	# training for duty bearers (LCD / HLP)	10	19	90%
	NRC	1	# counselling LCD / HLP beneficiaries	1613	824	49%
	NRC	1	# solved legal assistance cases	725	2203	204%
	NRC	1-3	# of beneficiaries receiving psychosocial care	7815	6717	14%
	NRC	3	# of individuals receiving counselling on LID, HLP	1405	967	31%
	NRC	3	# of beneficiaries whose legal cases are solved	4666	3666	21%
	NRC	3	# training for duty bearers (LCD / HLP)	380	438	15%

To assess the effects of NRC's protection programming, beneficiaries were interviewed by the learning partner at the baseline, midline and endline stages.

Table 7: NRC ICLA Beneficiaries interviewed over the three stages of the evaluation

Province	Baseline	Midline	Endline	Total
<b>Badghis</b>	157	118	147	422
	51%	55%	37%	46%
<b>Herat</b>	90	56	114	260
	29%	26%	29%	28%
<b>Kandahar</b>	46	32	101	179
	15%	15%	25%	19%
<b>Uruzgan</b>	16	9	35	60
	5%	4%	9%	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>921</b>
	100%	100%	100%	100%

*Nota bene:* The phone numbers were provided by the IP. It was not possible from the information provided to further distinguish between different types of protection programming administered.

The data suggest that protection services as administered under this workstream were not considered assistance by a large number of those benefiting from them. Indeed, only 15% of the respondents interviewed at the endline that figured on the NRC - ICLA list of beneficiaries say that they benefited from ICLA training. When asked about what assistance they received in the past two years, these respondents mention a wide range of other types of assistance that are not ICLA-related. This suggest that ICLA trainings and legal assistance might not have been the most relevant R3 programming under the circumstances (a DfA regime).

Respondents who do remember having benefited from ICLA training explained that most of the training received focused on information on how to obtain legal documents such as *tazkira*, marriage certificates, passports, and others, as well as information sessions on land and property rights, heritage and house building for those who already owned land. Given that most respondents have little understanding of what the protection programming administered was, it is challenging to ascertain a clear impact. We find that almost all survey respondents report having a *tazkira*, with no apparent differences between baseline, midline and endline, and with no differences compared to the control group. One could assume that protection programming would have made respondents more likely to turn to the courts for legal matters. We find that ICLA beneficiaries were less likely to turn to

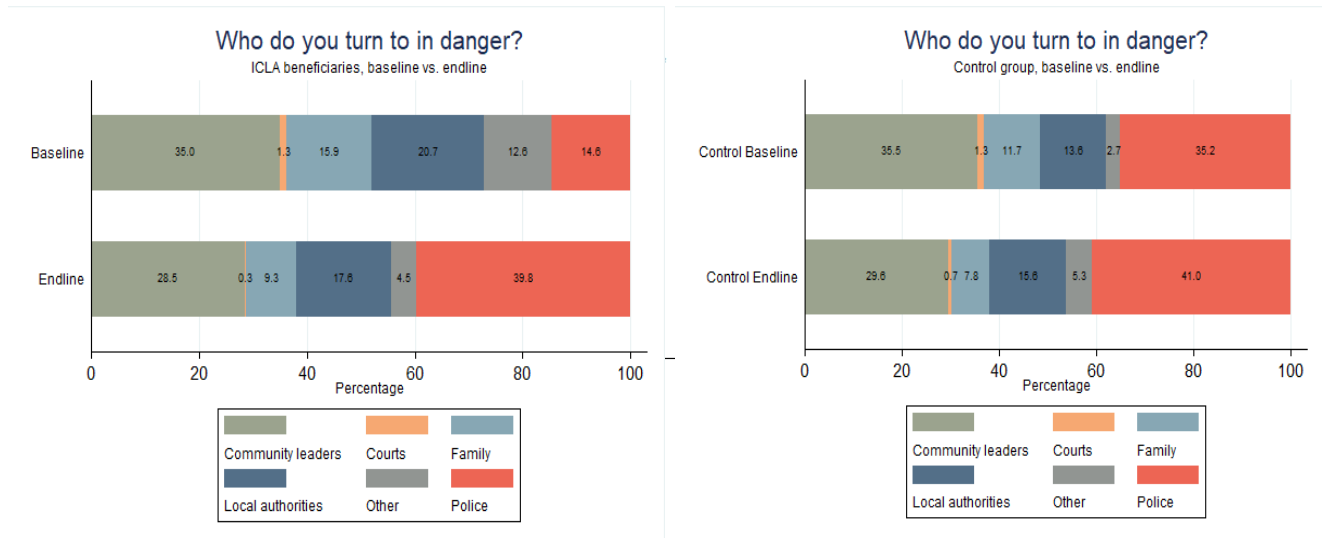
the police and more likely to turn to family members or “others” at baseline, while at endline the data suggests they are more likely to turn to the police and less likely to turn to family or “others”. This cannot easily be linked to ICLA programming.

The vast majority of those who confirmed receiving ICLA training at the endline deemed the training useful: 94%, 93% and 100% in Badghis, Herat and Kandahar respectively, with no significant differences between male and female beneficiaries. One respondent stressed that: *“Thanks to those trainings we got more awareness and can now raise our voices for our rights.”*

Figure 20 Assistance requested by ICLA beneficiaries

Still, it seems clear that ICLA is not currently the most relevant programming stream in the eyes of the target

Figure 19 Having someone to turn to : ICLA beneficiaries vs control



population: When asked about what other assistance they needed which they were not currently receiving, only a very small percentage mentioned information sessions related to the topics covered by NRC. In turn, and as expected with the current on-going humanitarian crisis in the country, the majority receiving ICLA report to be in need of emergency food and cash assistance. We conclude that, using the indicators designed to assess the outcomes of R3 protection programming, no durable effects can be proven with the methods used. Only a targeted investigation with a counterfactual or difference-in-differences approach could have allowed to show impact. It is likely however that legal counselling for instance on inheritance or HLP, or pathways to obtaining a *tazkira*, would not remain particularly relevant under the new regime/changing rules. While ICLA may thus be a relevant line of programming in other times, it was particularly vulnerable to contextual changes and might arguably have been discontinued earlier (particularly given its high cost as will be discussed in a later section).

## Shelter and housing

NRC was the organisational lead for shelter within the R3 Consortium, operating in Herat, Kandahar, Badghis and Uruzgan. Under the remit of shelter, NRC provided new shelter, shelter upgrade and/or winterisation assistance, as well as provision of emergency shelter, usually in the form of tents. This programming stream is closely linked with the protection work mentioned above.

*‘Anybody can do shelter, except we (NRC) do shelter with HLP (housing, land and property). And it works. It looks at the ability of people to achieve their rights. And therefore, enhance their ability to enjoy whatever other basic services or other assistance is being given to them because not only are they receiving that assistance, but their right to that assistance is guaranteed.’*

KII15, Country Director, NRC, March 2023

Table 8: shelter indicators – target versus achieved

	IP	Year	Indicators	Target	Achievement	% difference
SHELTER AND HOUSING	NRC	1	# individuals provided with temporary shelter	1400	1066	24%
	NRC	1-3	# individuals receiving durable shelter solution	6960	7786	12%
	NRC	2-3	# reiving winterization shelter assistance	8298	11740	41%

*Nota bene: The unit of measurement is individuals. Where entire households benefit, such as in the shelter category, this means multiplying by eight the number of households reached.*

The table below shows the number of interviewed NRC shelter beneficiaries at each survey round. A total of 170 households receiving shelter assistance were interviewed at the endline, of which the majority (81%) were located in Herat. Most were assisted by NRC with temporary shelter constructions, shelter upgrades, and winterization.

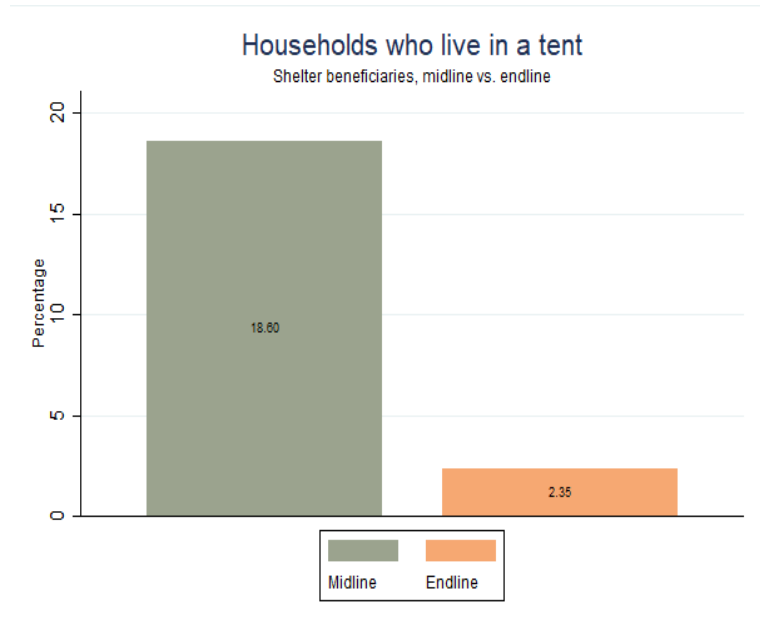
Table 9: NRC shelter beneficiaries interviewed at each phase

Province	Baseline	Midline	Endline	Total
<b>Badghis</b>	4	4	3	11
	7%	9%	2%	4%
<b>Herat</b>	16	13	137	166
	28%	30%	81%	61%
<b>Kandahar</b>	29	19	22	70
	51%	44%	13%	26%
<b>Uruzgan</b>	8	7	8	23
	14%	16%	5%	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>270</b>
	100%	100%	100%	100%

We find that close to one in five shelter beneficiaries were living in tents in April of 2022 (midline). This dropped to 2% at the time of the endline data collection in March 2023. Moreover, fewer respondents lived in makeshift shelters. 11% of NRC shelter respondents report that as a result of negative shocks the household had had to move to cheaper housing.

Around 20% of NRC shelter respondents report having received specific winter shelter assistance in the past winter. The most common form of winterization seems to have been in the form of cash, usually for windows, doors, or other repairs and construction materials. Some respondents also reported receiving wood for fire, house building, and blankets and heaters as part of the winterization assistance received. Satisfaction with the shelter assistance is high, with 97% of interviewed beneficiaries having a positive or very positive opinion of it.

Figure 21 Shelter beneficiaries living in tents, midline vs endline

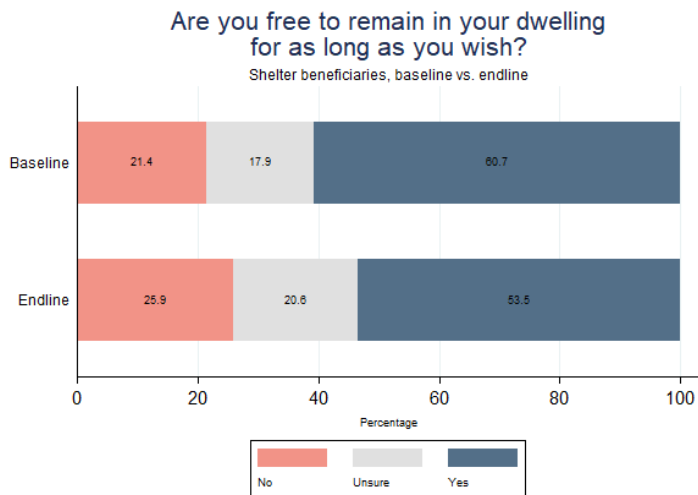


*"The shelter project came, they saw my living situation and they helped me. We now have a door and a window. In the winter, my home was warm. This is the home that NRC built for us. Now, if we make a stove, no one will tell us anything because this is our home. It had a great impact on us and took a heavy weight off of our shoulders for the rest of our lives."* FGD with female respondents in Qaderabad, Herat, March 2023

*"NRC built my house in this community two years ago. There are two rooms and a hall in my house which is enough for my family. Previously, I lived in tents and rental houses for one year."* FGD with males, participant 4, Nasim Abad village, Engil district, Herat province, March 2023

*"NRC built my house in this community two years ago. There are two rooms and a hall in my house which is enough for my family. Previously, I lived in tents and rental houses for one year."* FGD with males, participant 4, Nasim Abad village, Engil district, Herat province, March 2023

Figure 22 Perceived tenure security among NRC shelter beneficiaries



Nonetheless, undoubtedly due to the harsh context, fewer NRC shelter beneficiaries are certain to be able to remain in their dwelling in the spring of 2023 than in the winter of 2021. A similar drop was observed for the non-beneficiaries (pseudo control). Both groups were less likely to be able to cover their rent without struggling at the time of the endline data collection.

Again, we find durable effects of shelter programming hard to establish quantitatively, but qualitative evidence speaks to its relevance.

Providing hundreds of households with shelter solutions, whether temporary or durable, along with winterization shelter for thousands, was undoubtedly a humanitarian imperative in the midst of a crisis and will continue to remain an urgent need. Such programming would undoubtedly continue beyond R3 programming, illustrating the disconnect between the original vision and the programming it turned into.

## Health and nutrition

Health and nutrition programming was delivered by WVI and AAH. Under the remit of health and nutrition assistance, AAH and WVI provided beneficiaries with access to healthcare facilities, vaccinated children, provided communities with diarrhea treatments, trained health staffed, sensitized people on early childhood care practices, and gave nutrition aid to those in need.

Table 10: AAH and WVI - Health and nutrition programming outputs

	IP	Year	Indicators	Target	Achievement	% difference
HEALTH	AAH, WVI	1	# beneficiaries accessing primary health	13500	6209	54%
	AAH / WVI	1, 3	# transported to referral facility	1562	606	61%
	AAH /WVI	1-2	# children vaccinated for measles	9052	611	93%
	AAH	1	# children treated for diarrhea	0	0	
	AAH / WVI	1-3	# health staff trained	529	400	24%
	AAH / WVI	2-3	# beneficiaries accessing health systems	159561	72680	54%
NUTRITION	AAH/ WVI	3	# children vaccinated for measles / BCG / Penta	1675	2081	24%
	AAH / WVI	3	# women / girls vaccinated for TT	3654	2605	29%
	AAH / WVI	1-3	# people sensitized on care practices	106365	79483	25%
	AAH / WVI	1-3	# women / children reached with nutrition aid	54679	26807	51%

It is challenging for the research team to assess the impact of this programming stream for several reasons. Firstly, the research team was unable to obtain contact information for World Vision health beneficiaries who often live in remote areas without a cell phone network. Secondly, the pivot meant that much of the overall programming turned into nutrition programming, making it difficult to isolate nutrition beneficiaries. Finally, emergency nutrition programming does not tend to have a long-term impact one might be able to assess several weeks or months after the fact.

*'The assistance has positively impacted my family. We need 210kg of wheat in a month. They gave me 70 kg. It means I have to find another 140 kg. Before, I had to borrow money to buy 210 kg wheat... but now I only have to borrow money for buying 140 kg. This is a big support for me.'* Male FGD 7, participant 4, Trikh Nawar, Helmand, March 2023

That said, the qualitative data suggest that mobile health teams brought assistance (services related to malnutrition, childbirth, vaccinations), which was highly relevant and dearly needed.

*'Before the clinic arrived, the people had limited knowledge about vaccinations and their benefits. Thanks to the doctor's presence, the people became more informed. I assisted the doctors in educating people about childhood vaccinations and malnutrition. As a result, all children in the area were vaccinated within one year. (...) the outcomes are positive. It is important to note that our village is located in the furthest point of Badghis province, so we require more cooperation. We are concerned about what will happen if the mobile clinic were to leave our area. How will we transport our patients and where will they receive medical attention?'* KII community elder, Sena Urdu village

For Action Against Hunger, the beneficiaries' lists received did not differentiate between the different type of aid received and were all under the umbrella category of "multi-sectorial" assistance. It is thus not possible to disaggregate between those who specifically received health and nutrition assistance and other types of aid. However, we can assume that many if not most of them should have received health and nutrition assistance under AAH multi-sectoral approach to aid delivery. Given the above, the quantitative analysis below looks at health and nutrition indicators for all AAH beneficiaries contacted and excludes WVI.

We find that 91% of AAH beneficiaries sought medical treatment in the six months previous to the endline survey. Among those, 62% report being satisfied or very satisfied with the treatment received. This figure stands higher than that of the quasi-control group (55%).

However, most interviewed AAH beneficiaries (83%) are of the opinion that, in the six months prior to the endline survey, medical services in the area had not improved. Among those who report an improvement in the medical services, increased attention by the doctors is widely mentioned, as well as more medicine available, and to a lesser extent, better overall quality and provision of nutrients for malnourished children and vaccination programmes.

Figure 23 Measles vaccine, AAH beneficiaries

While the percentage of households reporting that children in their household have received any type of immunization has remained relatively constant since the baseline (81% full, and 15-17% partial immunizations), we observe that there is a slight increase among AAH beneficiaries in those who report that the children under five in their households have received the vaccine against measles. The same cannot be observed for the quasi-control cohort. 63% and 61% of AAH beneficiaries interviewed at baseline and endline respectively, report that good treatment against diarrhea is available in their area.

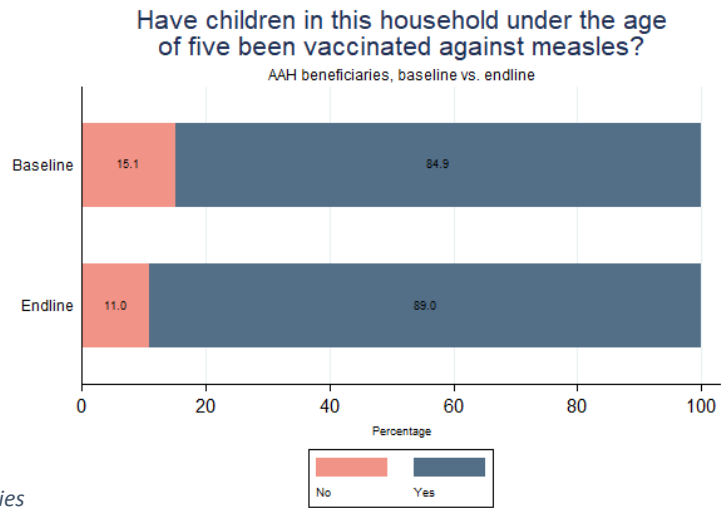
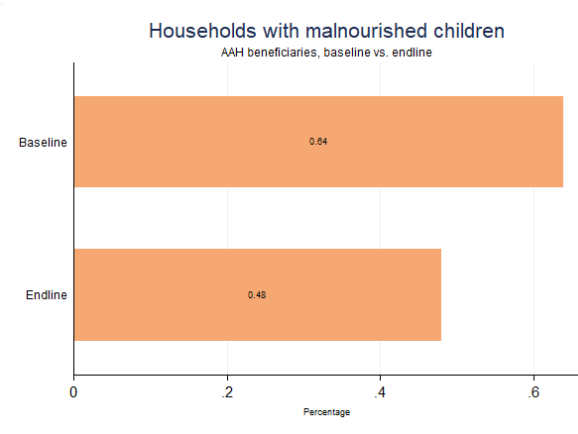


Figure 24 Child malnourishment, AAH beneficiaries



There is a positive development to be recognized in the percentage of malnourished children. Between the baseline and endline, there was a significant decrease in the percentage of children suffering from malnutrition, dropping from 64% to 48%. The drop for the quasi-control cohort is not as pronounced, from 44% to 41%, illustrating a probably effect of AAH programming.

We conclude that both health and nutrition programming by WVI and AAH were crucial in the Afghan context. It is unfortunately doubtful that any long-term impact of this life-saving aid will persist:

*The major problem with the assistance we received was that they were insufficient and could not satisfy our needs. Also, some of the households received assistance while the rest of the households could not succeed to benefit from the aid. We are in deep need of foodstuffs and cash assistance with which we can pay our healthcare expenses. The assistance has not had a major positive impact on our living conditions because they were insufficient. For example, we cannot resolve our problems with 12 kg of wheat and 100 to 200 AFN cash assistance.*

*Male FGD participant, 2, Jahandosti village, Muqur district of Badghis province*



## Food Security and Livelihoods (FSL)

Led by CARE as lead IP, FSL covers a wide range of programming streams from internships to cash-for work, trainings, distribution of livestock and food aid, tailoring workshops and distribution of sewing machines, etc. CARE also conducted village savings and loans (VSL) programmes and vocational trainings specifically targeted at women. With the pivot, a lot of programming melted into emergency aid under the FSL header, specifically with regard to the distribution of food and livestock.

Table 11: AAH and WVI – FSL target versus achieved

	IP	Year	Indicators	Target	Achievement	% Difference
FOOD SECURITY & LIVELIHOODS	CARE / AAH / WVI	1	# extremely vulnerable households receiving cash for food	521	252	52%
	CARE / AAH / WVI	1	# households who received technical support for livelihoods in area of displacement	535	0	100%
	CARE / AAH / WVI	1	# households who received technical support for livelihoods in areas of origin	1021	0	100%
	CARE	1	# of people with better income / livelihoods	0	448	
	CARE / AAH / WVI	2-3	# people reached with humanitarian assistance	48354	38755	20%
	CARE / AAH / WVI	2-3	# beneficiaries reached with technical LH inputs	521	252	52%

A large number of current or former FSL beneficiaries by the three IPs who were active in this space were reached telephonically in the different survey rounds.

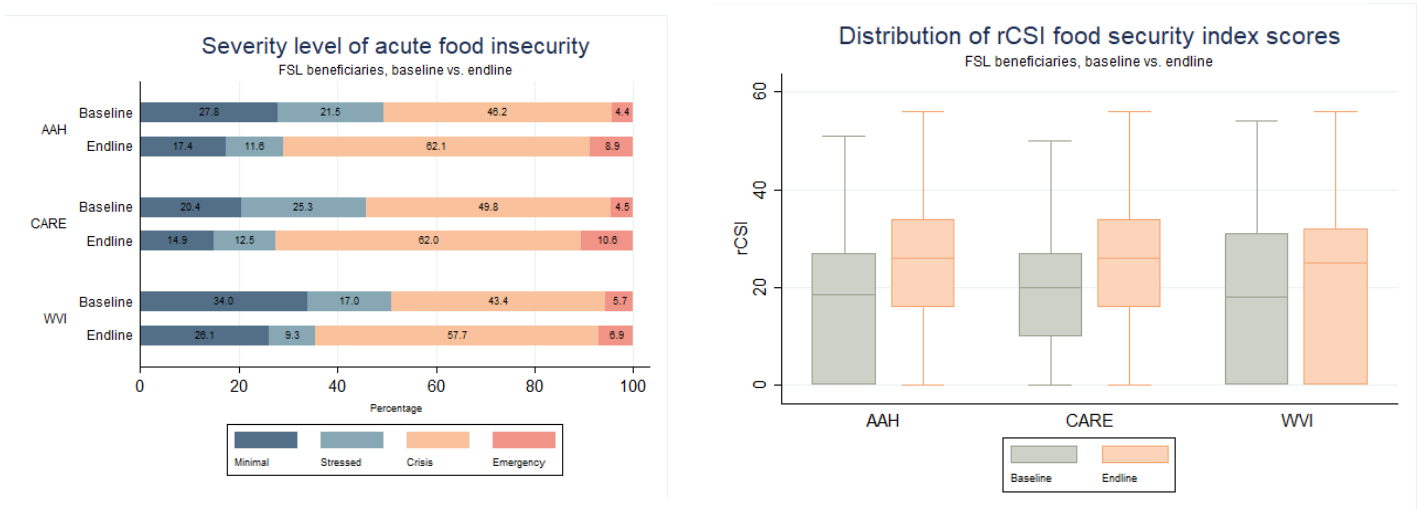
Table 12: FSL beneficiaries interviewed over the three phases

	FSL - CARE					FSL - WVI					FSL - AAH			
	BL	ML	EL	Total		BL	ML	EL	Total		BL	ML	EL	Total
Herat	184	149	301	634	Badghis	53	45	127	225	Ghor	80	59	198	337
	75%	77%	72%	74%		100%	100%	34%	47%		51%	5315%	61%	57%
Kandahar	61	45	115	221	Uruzgan	0	0	249	249	Helmand	78	52	129	259
	25%	23%	28%	26%		0%	0%	66%	53%		49%	47%	39%	43%
Total	245	194	416	855	Total	53	45	376	474	Total	158	111	327	596
	100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	100%	100%	100%

Figure 25 Goats distributed by CARE in Herat (March 2023)



Figure 26 Food insecurity among FSL beneficiaries



At its most basic, FSL was meant to do two things: provide better food security and livelihoods. We find little sustained impact of FSL activities at the aggregate level. Respondents are more food insecure at the endline than the baseline stage, showing more severe levels of food insecurity and implementing more severe food-related coping strategies. The same is the case for the quasi-control cohort, whose propensity to score in the crisis or emergency levels is not higher than that of the interviewed R3 beneficiaries.

We also find that respondents are poorer – their asset scores dropped between the baseline and the endline, attesting to an environment in which durable assets must be sold to afford feeding one’s family. More respondents report having a source of income at the endline, possibly owing to the work done by IPs under the FSL header, such as providing inputs and giving trainings to establish and improve livelihoods and strengthen value chains. The increase in respondents with a source of income is more pronounced among the R3 beneficiaries than the quasi-control cohort. Interviewed FSL beneficiaries are slightly more likely to own income-generating assets than the quasi-control respondents, but it generally remains a rare situation (<10% overall).

We see however that despite working more, the respondents’ economic situation continues to deteriorate in the current context of high humanitarian needs. The earner ratio increased from .16 to .18 from baseline to endline among FSL respondents.

Figure 27 Having a source of income : FSL vs de facto control

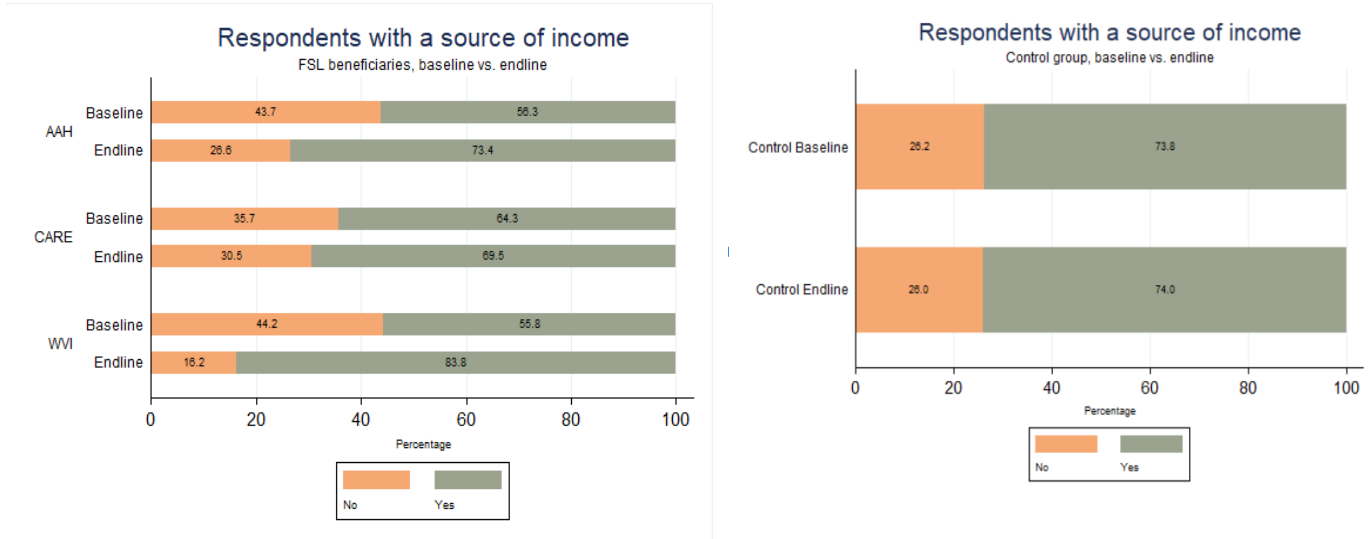
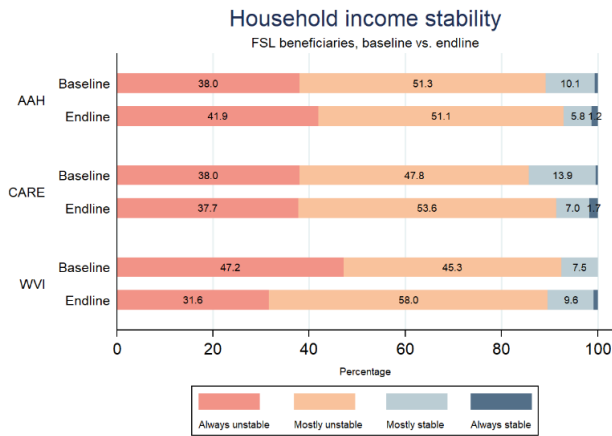
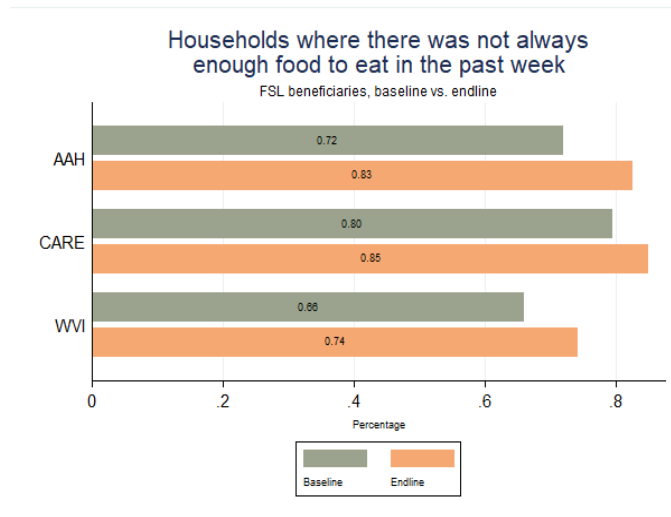


Figure 28 Income stability among FSL beneficiaries



Income stability remains extremely low, with the vast majority of FSL respondents reporting both at baseline and endline that their household income is either always or mostly unstable. The same situation is found for the quasi-control cohort.

Figure 29 Not having enough to eat, FSL beneficiaries



Respondents report in higher numbers that in their household there were times in the week previous to the endline where there was not enough food to eat. While less than 1% of FSL respondents reported at baseline and endline that their household had any savings, 95% and 98% at baseline and endline respectively report that the household holds debt, and for almost all, the debt level is concerning. The percentage of those who own assets used for an income-earning activity has remained constant at 10-11% among FSL respondents between the baseline and endline surveys: *'The AAH organization gave us two bags of animal feed, each 50 kg, one scythe, one hand fork, and one shovel. It was around 3 kg of fertilizer. A bottle of syrup for sheep and goat was also given. Yeah, the people did receive training on the use of the farming tools and syrup for the sheep.'*<sup>62</sup>

Figure 30 Sustainable impact or survival? CARE distribution of food baskets to vulnerable people in Herat



62 Community observation kochini karez helmand

The assistance provided under the FSL workstream was however extremely relevant and diverse, with an important focus on women and resilience-building, as well as the right idea of building on local value chains and fostering business linkages: “We established two food processing centres in Kandahar City in Y2. One is a bakery Food Processing Center where women are baking cookies and cakes etc. The other one is making jam and producing it and taking it to the market. We have two groups working in Kandahar where they have their own loan committee and association. They are gathering money and supporting each other through loans. They are promoting their businesses. Definitely these two interventions of R3 projects will last in the community. (...) So it was a very good idea to link small businesses with the market. People here are grateful, and DFAs are also appreciating this initiative.”<sup>63</sup>

Figure 31 Recipient of FSL aid, Herat (March 2023)

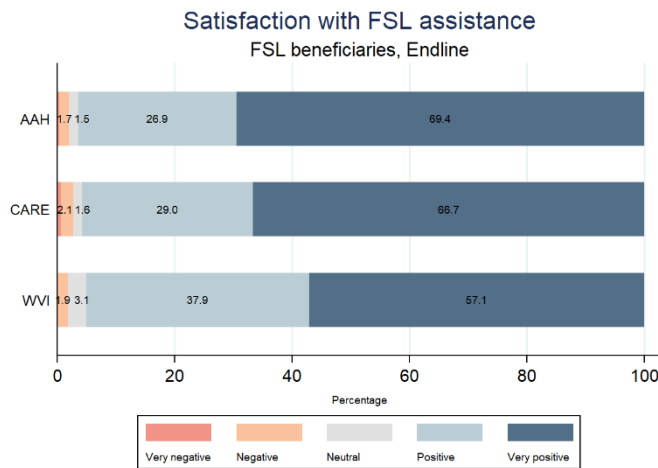
“We are satisfied with the aid we received. (...) I used to sew with a hand wheel, and now that I can sew any fabric, it has become much easier. (...) I can sew on any fabric with different designs now without any trouble. I've benefited from this. (...) The primary issue is that they still need to give us scissors and an iron.”

*Female FGD, Dah Tapa, Gurza, Herat (CARE)*



Satisfaction was very high with all types of FSL provided under R3, unsurprising in a context where all help is welcome and bitterly needed.

Figure 32 Satisfaction with FSL assistance



At the same time, many qualitative interviews tell the story of FSL inputs being sold and converted to other inputs, often related to shelter: ‘they provided us with cows, which we sold and used to build our house with the proceeds.’<sup>64</sup>

We conclude that FSL activities were so vast and diverse that it is difficult to summarise them under one header. They are however also probably the sub-stream of activities under R3 that stayed the truest to the consortium’s original ambitions. Naturally, in a context where the majority of Afghans is suffering through a major humanitarian crisis, most people are doing worse at the time of the endline data collection compared to the baseline. The increase in the share of respondents with a source of income, higher than that of non-FSL beneficiaries, provides indicative evidence that at least some of the FSL assistance provided might have had the intended effect. Even when it was converted into food or shelter, or used to re-pay debt, it provided crucial and relevant support in times of need.

63 KII1, Field Supervisor, Kandahar, Care, February 2023.

64 (FGD1, Female participant, 3, Dah Tapa, Gurza, Herat, beneficiary, March 2023)

## WASH

World Vision implement WASH activities for R3 in Badghis province and Action Against Hunger implement WASH activities in Ghor and Helmand. This workstream revolved around the construction of pipe networks, rehabilitation or construction of water wells, protection of water sources. For the survey, 145 WASH beneficiaries were reached at the endline stage, the majority from WVI.

Table 13: AAH and WVI – WASH indicators targeted and achieved

	IP	Year	Indicators	Target	Achievement	% difference
WVI	AAH / WVI	1-2	# individuals who receive hygiene kits / trainings	4212	547	87%
	AAH / WVI	1-2	# of people with sustainable access to clean water / sanitation	18949	34176	80%
	AAH / WVI	3	# individuals who receive hygiene trainings	7326	8083	10%
	AAH / WVI	3	# hygiene kits distributed	9208	9795	6%
	AAH / WVI	3	# water systems constructed / rehabilitated	59	70	32%
	AAH / WVI	3	# people with access to clean water	14044	19589	39%
	AAH / WVI	3	# people with access to sanitation	989	3032	207%

Table 14: WASH beneficiaries reached over the three phases

WASH - AAH					WASH – WVI				
Province	Baseline	Midline	Endline	Total	Province	Baseline	Midline	Endline	Total
Ghor	7	7	26	40	Badghis	87	58	109	254
	30%	37%	76%	53%		100%	100%	100%	100%
Helmand	16	12	8	36					
	70%	63%	24%	47%					
Total	23	19	34	76	Total	87	58	109	254
	100%	100%	100%	100%		100%	100%	100%	100%

The research finds that more WASH beneficiaries of AAH are receiving their drinking water from pipes at the endline stage compared to the baseline, but this same trend is not observed for WVI.

AAH WASH respondents more likely to report safe access to clean water at endline in comparison to midline. No differences are found for WVI WASH respondents, or the quasi-control cohort.

Both AHH and WVI respondents are more likely to report having handwashing facilities available at endline than at baseline. It is likely that this reflects the impact of WASH programming under R3, especially that for the quasi-control cohort a similar increase cannot be observed.

Figure 33 Access to clean water, WASH beneficiaries

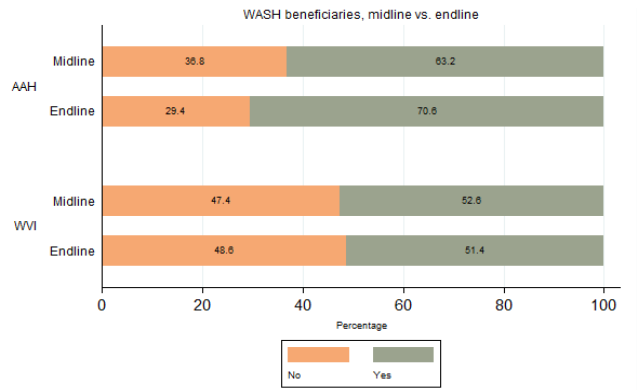
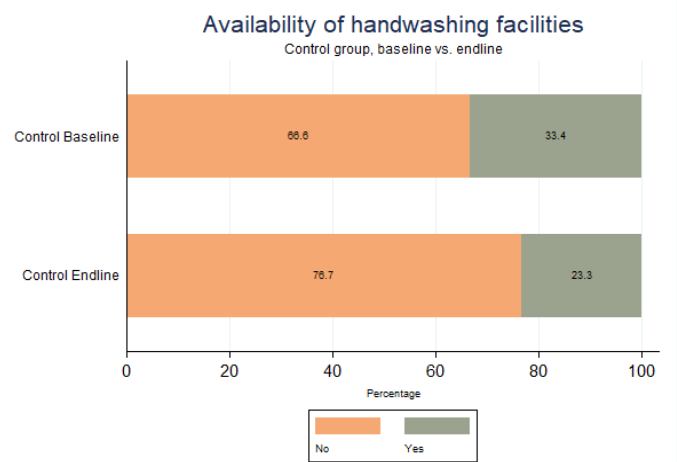
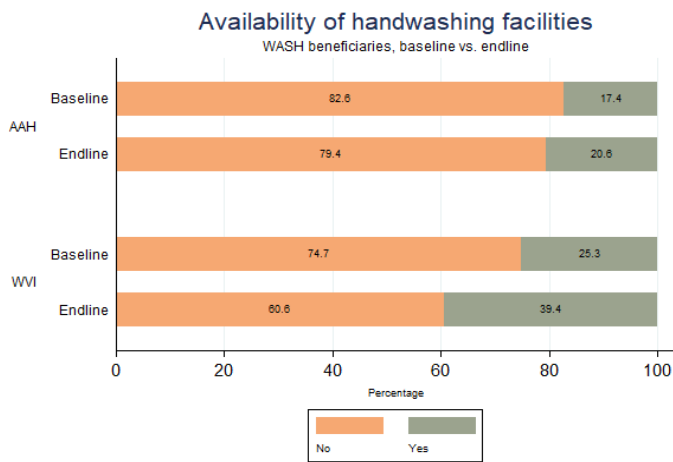


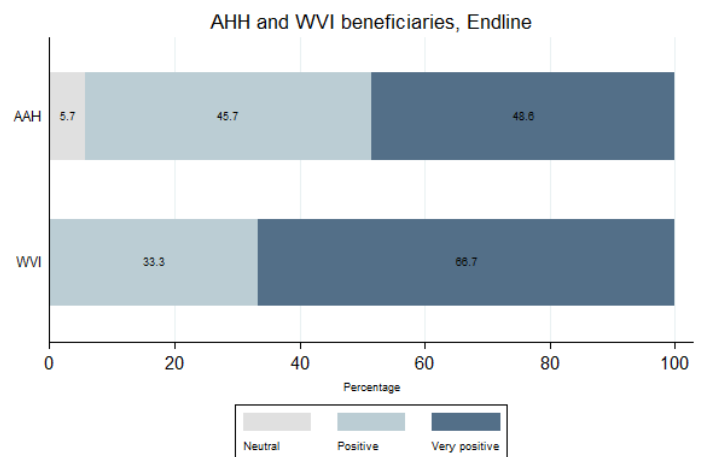
Figure 34 Availability of handwashing facilities, WASH beneficiaries vs de facto control



Satisfaction with WASH programming under R3 was very pronounced. Qualitative data collected suggest that the work done by the WASH teams was highly impactful with a plethora of positive effects: *‘Drinking water was provided to us through the efforts of World Vision. Their aid was very effective, they dug a well by the school. High-quality materials were used. They dug wells and built storage facilities which resolved our drinking water issue. We are now all benefiting from them. We face so many problems for agriculture here - our harvest depends on the rain and the snow. We require water supply networks. As long as we do not have them, most people will suffer from malnutrition.’*<sup>65</sup>

Finally, interviews with field staff at both AAH and WVI underscore the importance of resilience planning in programming. Both organisations put an emphasis on training community members on how to maintain the water networks, including through the provision of toolkits: *‘We established water sanitation user communities in locations where we had water rehabilitation. We selected five committee members, we trained them, and we distributed toolkits to these committees. If they face any problem with the water or pumps in the future, they can*

Figure 35 Satisfaction with WASH assistance



65 KII community elder, Sena Urdu village

*use the toolkits, they have a mechanic in the committee who can fix the water handpumps. This makes the activity more sustainable.’<sup>66</sup>*

We conclude that many of the activities grouped under the WASH header were well aligned with both the pre- and the post pivot R3 vision and implemented “to last”. Some quantitative evidence points to impact in terms of better access to water and sanitation. Perhaps more importantly, community elders interviewed in selected locations of implementation strongly stress the importance of such programming for the communities, as well as appreciation of the sustainability considerations that went into programming.

*Figure 36 Kahm Abbasy Village, Muqur district. WVI and R3 logo displaced on new water installation*




---

<sup>66</sup> KII11, Field Manager, AAH, Ghor base, February 2023



## Gender-based violence

GBV programming, led by CARE as sectoral lead, was one line of programming which underwent important changes between the baseline and the endline data collection. Originally focused on dignity Kits, Community Awareness and GBV training sessions, IWD Celebrations, GBV prevention mitigation advocacy, it became increasingly untenable under the new regime. By the time of the endline, as shown by the data collected for this study, it had mostly switched to other types of assistance focused at women (carpet weaving and tailoring, handicraft, cash for food, food baskets, goat distribution, women skill development trainings, in kind food assistance, distribution of beautician kits, shampoo kits, tailoring kits, public health awareness).

Table 15: CARE indicators – target versus achieved

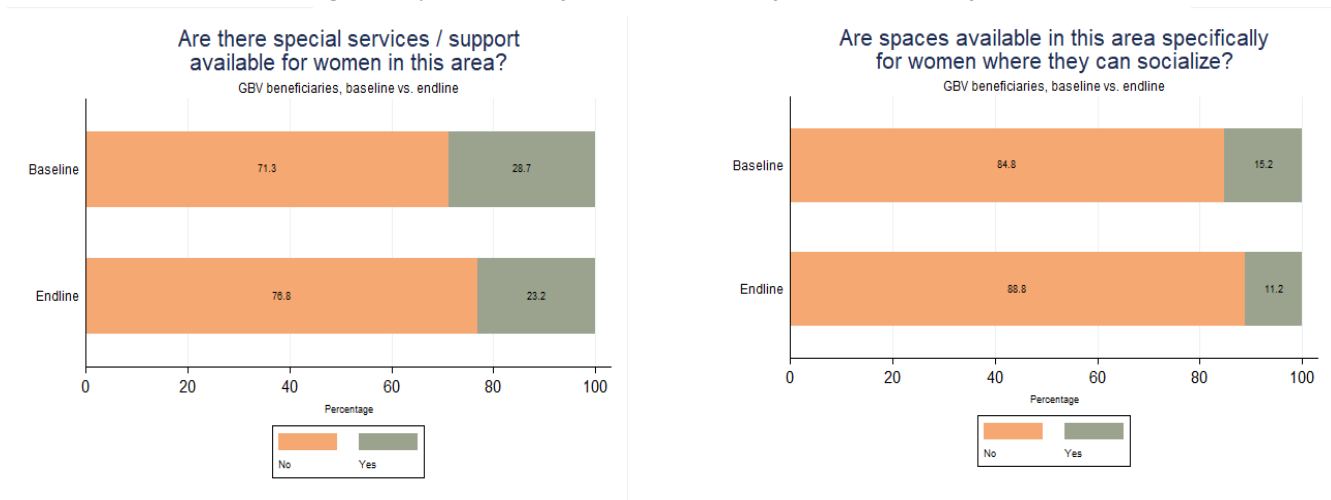
	IP	Year	Indicators	Target	Achievement	% Difference
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE	AAH / CARE	1	# individuals receiving information sessions on GBV	300	156	48%
	AAH / CARE	1	# training sessions delivered on gender equity / women’s rights	50	0	100%
	AAH / CARE	1	# GBV survivors assisted through livelihood / psychosocial support	230	22	90%
	AAH / CARE	1	# GVB referrals made / followed up	50	0	100%
	CARE	2-3	# individuals receiving information on women’s rights	502	853	70%
	CARE	2-3	# GVB survivors supported livelihood/psychosocial support	487	583	20%

While close to 300 GBV beneficiaries were reached at the endline, it was not possible to ascertain which type of programming they had received under the GBV header. Among GBV - CARE respondents, we do not find more services for women's support to be available at endline in comparison to the baseline. Similarly, GBV endline respondents are less likely to report that there are spaces available for women to socialize at endline than at baseline. A similar trend is observed for the quasi-control cohort.

Table 16: CARE GBV beneficiaries reached

GBV - CARE				
Province	Baseline	Midline	Endline	Total
Herat	89	51	214	354
	93%	86%	73%	79%
Kandahar	7	8	78	93
	7%	14%	27%	21%
Total	96	59	292	447
	100%	100%	100%	100%

Figure 37 Special services for women: GBV beneficiaries vs non beneficiaries



These findings suggest that overall, the situation in Afghanistan seems to have deteriorated for women since the baseline – unsurprising in light of the bans implemented by the DfA in the past year and a half and which disproportionately targeted women. In such a dire situation for women (in particular), it is not surprising that 97% of interviewed GBV support beneficiaries were satisfied with support provided, not only because of the absence of any alternative but also because of the intrinsic quality of the intervention: *'I am very interested in studying. I had been accepted to the law and political science faculty, but now I cannot continue my higher education. (...) I had mental problems. They have reduced, and my mind has improved.'*<sup>67</sup>

<sup>67</sup> 21-year old GBV survivor, Herat, Injil district (sourc: Care )

## Outcomes

	Baseline: December 2021			Midline: April 2022			Endline: February/March 2023			
	Outcome Indicator 1.1: % of households reporting hunger									
<b>RELIEF AND RECOVERY: INCREASED HOUSEHOLD ABILITY TO RECOVER FROM SHOCKS AND CRISIS POST DISPLACEMENT.</b>	% of respondents stating household did not have enough to eat in the past week: 26%			% of respondents stating household did not have enough to eat in the past week: 20%			% of respondents stating household did not have enough to eat in the past week: 21%			
	Outcome Indicator 1.2: Reduced coping strategies index category									
	No food urgency 1% Stressed 30% Crisis 64% Emergency 6%			No food urgency 0% Stressed 22% Crisis 66% Emergency 12%			Minimal 21% Stressed 11% Crisis 59% Emergency 9%			
	Outcome Indicator 1.3: % of households satisfied with support									
	85%			96%			96%			
<b>RE-INTEGRATION: LEVELS OF COMMUNITY COHENSION AND PHASED INTEGRATION</b>	Outcome Indicator 2.1: Integration analysis comparing displaced to non-displaced									
		Returnees	IDPs	Non-displaced	Returnees	IDPs	Non-displaced	Returnees	IDPs	Non-displaced
	own their home	24%	21%	40%				47%	32%	49%
	protected water sources	68%	71%	64%	72%	69%	65%	38%	39%	41%
	source of income	67	68	63	66	63	62	79	74	72
	viable financial situation	12	9	13	9	6	10	10	8	13
	feeling safe	92	91	91	90	94	91	98	97	96
	have someone to turn to if threatened	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
safe space for women	13	10	10	29	29	24	17	14	16	
<b>RESILIENCE: ADAPTIVE CAPACITY TO SHOCKS</b>	Outcome Indicator 3.1: Assets and income									
	Average asset-based wealth score: 0.427			Average asset-based wealth score: 0.421			Average asset-based wealth score: 0.417			
	% of respondents with a source of income: 66%			% of respondents with a source of income: 63%			% of respondents with a source of income: 74%			
	Outcome Indicator 3.2: Resilience analysis									
	Average resilience index score: 0.397			Average resilience index score: 0.419			Average resilience index score: 0.450			
% intending to move next year: 16%			% intending to move next year: 19%			% intending to move next year: 13%				
% expecting better financial situation next year: 10%			% expecting better financial situation next year: 17%			% expecting better financial situation next year: NA				

The above table presents the hoped-for outcomes as defined by the logframe. The entire sample of beneficiaries is considered. As discussed above, it is not possible to draw conclusions regarding possible causal pathways, linking these evolutions to R3 programming.

## AT WHAT COST? Efficiency and VfM

The issue of Value for Money is difficult to articulate for several reasons. On the one hand, the notion itself has remained extremely vague and the guidance given by DFID/FCDO has remained extremely generic and closer to a check-the-box exercise than a technical assessment; secondly, NGOs did not share the documents necessary for a real VfM assessment (in particular, current vs. planned budgets, as well as comparative elements in terms of equipment, direct and indirect costs); finally, after August 2021, the humanitarian pivot relegated VfM issues to the background, since it was a question of delivering humanitarian assistance as best as possible to the most needy<sup>68</sup>. The visual below summarises some of the issues partly developed in this section (and repeated as a recommendation).

Figure 38: Outputs and outcomes of the Consortium (traffic light system)



**COST SHARING** (one of the *raison d'être* of consortia). It was marginal, mainly for the lessor and in the contractual and procurement phases (signature and early termination). For the NGOs, the lack of operational, sectoral and geographical synergies has limited the possible benefits in terms of direct or indirect costs. The second sub-section below describes, however, some innovative cost sharing ideas.



**REPORTING**, VfM reporting, often requested by the donor, suffered as much from the donor's inability to provide clear guidelines, which should have been discussed with the NGOs prior to the start of activities, as from the NGOs' lack of VfM culture. A series of anecdotes was therefore collected by the learning partner to satisfy the donor, without the document being analytically sufficient.

### Potential wasted

The overall Value for Money (VfM) objective of FCDO and the R3 consortium was to maximise the impact of each GBP spent to improve poor people's lives. This objective stems from the duty to those living in extreme poverty in Afghanistan and globally, as well as to the British taxpayer supporting the R3 consortium programme. Central to achieving VfM required partners to leverage each others' strengths in their geographical areas, and reduce operational and administrative costs by taking advantage of their sectoral technical expertise. According to the R3 proposal, "the consortium model itself is intended to be a cost-efficient system of operations through inter-dependent and collaborative partners within the consortium. More specifically, the provincial lead organisation model intends to reduce operational costs by only supporting one lead partner, whom has pre-existing field offices (thereby minimising start-up costs and inefficiencies), and also promoting resource-sharing between all partners when implementing a response – including a shared consortium office, available facilities, and warehouse / forward logistics usage. Similarly, the model also only supports one organisation per sector for technical expertise and reduces costs of hiring technical specialists within the CMU. This combines to ensure efficiency in converting inputs into outputs."<sup>69</sup>

Therefore, the added value of different organisations in an R3 consortium meant that resources such as well mobilized staff in fieldwork sites, project staff, technical staff as well as support staff originally should have been shared with another partner that didn't have field presence in the same geographical region. This objective was largely not achieved, resulting in higher costs, operational inefficiencies and uneven integration of programme activities on the ground. Additionally, the lack of standardized approaches and gaps in coordination hindered the provision of services. The end outcomes for beneficiaries were, therefore, inconsistent with not just level of quality but also in terms of multisectoral interventions. "There was the

<sup>68</sup> Of course, humanitarian assistance - as opposed to resilience - has a far more significant long-term cost to the donor (7 times, according to a DFID report), but this makes little sense in Afghanistan given the motives of the current political crisis and the massive socio-economic setback to the potential benefits of 20 years of fragile pre-2021 development.

<sup>69</sup> R3 Proposal

*potential of added value, if partners had a standardised approach and coordinated to make sure they provide the same level of services. Otherwise, it's unfair for beneficiaries, as the quality was not consistent.”<sup>70</sup>*

In terms of utilisation of staff capacities across sectors, the advantages are in using subject matter experts and staff from the design phase through to implementation to increase the effects in people's lives.<sup>71</sup> World Vision for instance pointed to its WASH expertise and experienced staff in Badghis and the role this could play in making sure outputs have their intended effect. World Vision also cite knowledge of context and specific needs of communities stretching back years before R3 commenced which initially proved as strong case in supporting the effects of the R3 programme. The question therefore arises whether World Vision's technical and geographical expertise were leveraged by another set of partners in Badghis. In practice we found that each component of R3 looked like an independent programme since there was little to no overlap among organisations.

*“For me, it would have been more effective if in the same district we worked on health, WASH and nutrition with another organisation (who brought an additional value). Then it would have become more cost effective, and the impact generated would have been higher<sup>72</sup>.”*

The multi-layered and multi-scaled consortium also led to technical and operational delays, thereby adding to costs. The challenge of working within a consortium was that partners had to work around procedures and processes because of the multi-layered approvals which led to delays in their (tight) timelines.

## Cost structure

One important cost of the R3 activities were technical staffing. R3 implementing partners paid salaries in line with organisational procedures on national human resources (HR). This includes salary scales and matching to national labour standards. NRC maintains an allocation for project activities of 60% of the total budget, including monitoring and evaluation (M&E). Project staff comprises 31% of the NRC budget allocation. Within this 31%, staff are fairly compensated with adjustments on an annual basis following a Birches review comparing similar international non-government organisations (INGOs) in Afghanistan.<sup>73</sup> However, with greater staff turnover across partners, the consortium faced higher costs through greater staff time due to delays.<sup>74</sup>

The other main cost areas across the R3 consortium's operations were project materials (e.g. food and distribution; livelihood inputs such as livestock; shelter materials; water and sanitation system materials) and technical staffing costs. Project materials were the major cost driver for R3 especially in a time of wider, marked changes in costs for goods and services. The cost of food and essential goods increased significantly from June 2021 to January 2022: Wheat prices also increased 50%, cooking oil 39.2%, and diesel 41.9%.[12] Converse in direction for most R3 cost drivers, the depreciation of the Afghan Afghani (AFN) vis-à-vis Great British Pounds (GBP) and US dollars (USD) has been pronounced, down 30.8% from June 2021.<sup>75</sup> Apart from banking and transfer issues, procurement partners also struggled with provision of food assistance because of unstable exchange rates. *Monitoring of the budgets was also difficult given the fluctuating exchange rates<sup>76</sup>.*

Partners did seek innovative ways to save cost. Interventions in the WASH sector, such as construction works were seen as drivers of high cost because these were contracted out to suppliers. Therefore, in order to mitigate these high costs, World Vision built capacities of the communities for increasing their participation using mechanisms such as water management committees and maintenance committees. Other examples include IPs training water sanitation users' committees to conduct the operation and maintenance of their water and sanitation projects at the village level, which will be cost saving and impactful across the long-term.

ICLA (now not remembered by 85% of beneficiaries) was a particularly expensive undertaking with limited outreach and coverage. NRC spent 1,420,332.45 GBP (including inception phase) on 7,432 Information, Counselling and Legal Assistance (ICLA) and 2,994 Shelter beneficiaries. This equals a cost of 103.51 GBP per beneficiary up to and including the end of December, 2021.<sup>77</sup>

70 KII14, Country Director, AAH, February 2023

71 VfM report, 2022

72 KII13, Country Director, World Vision, February 2023

73 VfM report, 2022

74 VfM report, 2022

75 World Food Programme, 2022. Afghanistan, Countrywide Weekly Market Price Bulletin #89, 27 January 2022

76 KII2, Provincial Manager, CARE, Feb 2023

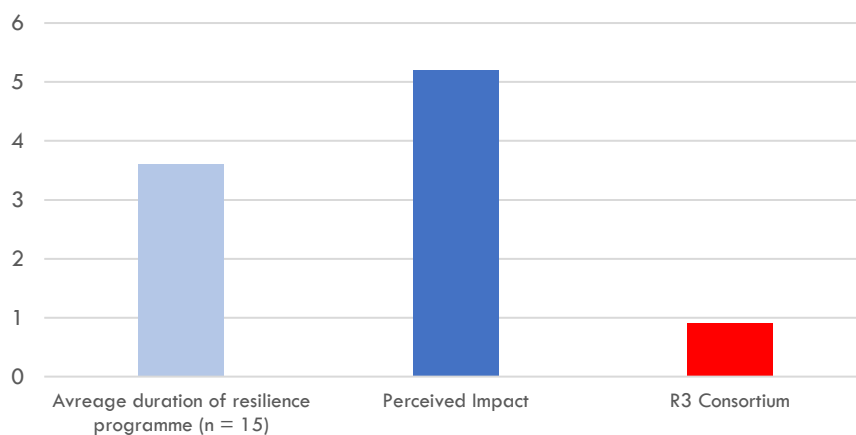
77 See VfM report, 2022

## IV. Recommendations and Learning

The very ideas of cost-sharing and multiplying effect have remained generally alien to organisations, which have only rarely adhered to this approach in practice: *"in essence, we agree with the consortium model and we understand the resilience approach, but in practice, we do not work in the same communities and we are doing emergency work."*<sup>78</sup> Such a gap is undoubtedly due to the context (Covid-19, reduced humanitarian space, return of the Taliban) but the institutional inertia of the IPs and their humanitarian DNA also had a role to play in the low collaborative capacity before August 2021. From this point of view, the humanitarian pivot was simply a way of acknowledging the strategic and operational limits of NGOs in their capacity to implement genuine collaborative work (= consortium) with absorptive, adaptive and transformative effects (= resilience).

However, it is important to compare what is comparable. Considering the average duration of resilience programmes (between 3.5 and 4 years), the actual duration of the R3 Consortium as a programme whose main objective is resilience appears very limited: from November 2020 to August 2021, with a drastic reduction in operational scope. Moreover, in other contexts<sup>79</sup>, when NGOs or donors are asked how long it takes to see real change in communities, it is not uncommon to get answers of more than five or seven years. In this context, it is well known that resilience requires several programme cycles: *'To develop real transformations in practices and customs, without repeating humanitarian band aids, it can take ten years. But NGOs must also think in new terms: multi-year, multi-sectoral, collaborative'*<sup>80</sup>.

Figure 39: Average duration of resilience programmes (authors' assessment)



From this perspective, it is difficult to make recommendations based on what the Consortium was never really able to be, due to a lack of time and a historically unfavourable context; however, based on interviews and observations, it can be argued that organisational weaknesses – irrespective of the context – strongly affected the performance and impact of the programme between 2020 and 2021. For the so-called pivot period, the issue is different as the pivot was clearly humanitarian, without a resilience or return label, and it was recognised that each organisation had to work in its own sector and province. The recommendations below are based on such caveats, with an emphasis on what could be done to optimise this type of consortium in a context like (or similar to) Afghanistan.

### Recommendations to the donor (FCDO)

1. Developing a more analytical reading of crises, with a better understanding of contexts and situations and a real capacity for anticipation, in order to avoid future hotbeds of multidimensional vulnerability, affected both by systemic crises (Covid-19, global inflation, etc.) and the effects of violence, forced population displacements and the weakness of governance models in these areas. It has become illusory and dangerous to isolate crises according to their political, economic, social, security or environmental nature. Entire regions are struggling to escape from fragility traps where social, economic and institutional determinants of crises combine – under the compounding effect of climate change, demographic transformations, mobility dynamics or macro elements (pandemic, global inflation, etc.). Such *crisis systems* require action at the scale of these crisis basins, in order to avoid future concentrations of extreme poverty, violence, forced population displacement and governance crises in these areas.

78 Interview with WV staff, Badghis, March 2021.

79 Based on 25 interviews with representatives from CESVI, NRC, DRC, ACTED, Concern, Oxfam, Diakonie, WHH, AAH, Care, REACH/IMPACT, Mercy Corps, and Adeso, in Afghanistan, Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia (2016-2022).

80 Interview with the Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia, DFID/FCDO, October 2019.

2. Integrating climate change into the analytical and operational grid, as the consequences of climate change (especially floods and droughts, in the case of Afghanistan) are among the main causes of displacement, socio-economic disruption and conflict. Breaking this vicious circle requires taking climate change (drivers, manifestations, impact, maladaptive practices, etc.) as the driving force to determine the framework of the consortium. In the case of Afghanistan, a resilience programme that does not aim to enable the communities and households covered by the assistance to better withstand foreseeable climate deterioration would simply be short term and superficial, given that the India-Pakistan-Afghanistan arc will be one of the most negatively affected by future changes. Moreover, in negotiations with the DfA, it should be noted that the climate issue is probably the only unifying one, as noted in a recent IOM report<sup>81</sup>.
  
3. Adopting a pragmatic and decentralised approach to governance: Beyond the impossibility for the donor to contribute directly or indirectly to technical training, awareness raising, logistical support or programmes of the current Afghan government (DfA), it must also be recognised that the extreme fragmentation of the country, in terms of governance and socio-economic relays, makes the government in Kabul rather 'secondary' in the implementation of large-scale programmes. In this logic, it is important to adopt a decentralised logic, using Elinor Oström's polycentric governance model, for instance<sup>82</sup> and assuming that the actual governance depends on diverse centers of partial authority, which collectively cover the full range of governance tasks. Without the buy-in, acceptance, and involvement of local political actors and provincial and community action relays, the achievements of resilience programmes appear fragile. It is therefore necessary for the FCDO to think – with the support of Afghan and international partners – according to a decentralised, non-pyramidal, localised model, including all actors (province, community, district, public, private, professional, community-based) and understanding local power dynamics.<sup>83</sup>
  
4. Sanctuarising funding for resilience programmes: funding a resilience programme in a volatile and politicised context such as Afghanistan is subject to many contingencies. The political consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic in the UK, political changes in government, and the consequences of Brexit are likely to have affected the continuity of support to R3, as well as the decision to close the programme a year before its end. On this point, it should be recognised that this reality is not a problem in itself and that a funder should be able to adjust or terminate a contract *"if it feels that the objectives are not being met or that the context, internal or external, is no longer the same"*<sup>84</sup>. However, when the ultimate goal is resilience - and therefore long-term adaptation and transformation, beyond short-term quick-fixes - some degree of security for resilience decisions and funding must be found by the different parties. Too often, since the early days of R3, NGOs have had the *"constant feeling of having to legitimise, prove and demonstrate to the donor the merits of a programme that the donor itself had decided to support"*<sup>85</sup>. In a sense, it can be said that the FCDO initially wrote a blank cheque to R3, without any real demand or counterpart in terms of results and accountability, before deciding to suspend the programme on the basis of results that were bound to be disappointing. We can recommend that the donor establish certain (revisable) red lines in terms of outputs, outcomes and accountability, in order to clarify expectations, rationalise decisions and limit uncertainty.
  
5. Imposing a real gender transformative analysis on consortia, especially in contexts of women's vulnerability and precarity: R3 has suffered from both anecdotal (limited to data disaggregation, GBV programmes and women's intervention niches) and qualitative (limited to women's rights and gender equality) approaches to gender. This is a lost opportunity and is largely due to the analytical limitations of most NGOs or donors on gender in the Afghan context. Gender is often reduced to women's issues and women's issues to GBV issues. These are important aspects, but they are visible symptoms of social realities and constructs that are more deeply embedded in the social, economic and political dynamics of Afghan communities. In rural areas, women play a key political role; they often decide on finances and allocate aid for household emergencies; they relay and share information and also form points of critical resistance to what is just and unjust, acceptable or intolerable; and they are often at the heart of decisions to diversify community incomes through the migration of sons or brothers to Iran or Pakistan. Considering women only as 'people of concern', 'people in need' or 'vulnerable' erases a whole range of agency, which is at the heart of social constructions of women's (and men's) roles in rural communities (in particular). In this sense, a consortium addressing resilience in Afghanistan should be based on a robust and rigorous analysis of gender dynamics in order to put this issue at the heart of both the analysis and the programmatic solutions.

81 Samuel Hall and IOM (2022) Research Brief Displacement Trends and Challenges in Afghanistan since August 2021 – Climate Change, Kabul, Afghanistan.

82 Ostrom, E. (2010). Beyond Markets and States: Polycentric Governance of Complex Economic Systems. *The American Economic Review*, 100(3), 641–672.

83 From this point of view, the legitimate exclusion of Relief International must be analysed in a non-dogmatic way by the FCDO (and other NGOs). In a sense, RI has done what many do without being caught: they have naively added a budget line "negotiation with Taliban", where others modestly write "Pashto classes". From another angle, it can also be argued that RI made a mistake in terms of modalities by failing to establish a collaborative (or mutually tolerant) relationship with informal actors. This is the kind of concrete discussion that the donor needs to have with NGOs: how to develop a governance model that is both politically neutral and operationally effective (as AKDN has been doing in Afghanistan or Pakistan for the last 20 years).

84 Meeting with FCDO, November 2022.

85 Interview with NRC Country Representative, June 2021.

6. Clarifying the meaning and requirements of VfM with partners: the question of value for money and cost-effectiveness is - rightly - an important issue for the CDFO, which has to ensure that taxpayers' money is used efficiently to achieve the desired impact. From this perspective, it is essential to clarify in context what VfM can mean, in very concrete terms, for the CDFO and its implementing partners. Three suggestions: 1) instead of constantly asking partners to "demonstrate value for money", which amounts to developing a series of anecdotes without any real structure or quantification, it is better to define with implementing partners what VfM can mean in the Afghan context at the time of the intervention (through a 1-2 day workshop, in order to come up with a mutually agreed pragmatic framework and indicators); 2) As soon as the initial budgets are in place, during the start-up phase, discussions could be held to identify possible synergies between actors in order to identify productivity and cost-effectiveness gains. Ex-post, asking actors to demonstrate their VfM makes no sense, other than as a 'check the box' exercise; finally, 3) a very clear distinction must be made between resilience (and a fortiori development) programmes and humanitarian programmes, for which VfM objectives are not absent but subject to very different ethical variables (life-saving).

## Recommendations to any future resilience Consortium in Afghanistan

7. Ensuring the independence (role, function and contract) of the CMU: A challenge in a programme of this scale, targeting a wide range of contexts with multiple partners, is the consistent measurement of resilience and performance across the programme, with appropriate and minimally harmonised tools, methodologies and indicators, while taking into account and maintaining the specificities of each context. From this point of view, it is important to safeguard the independence of the CMU, in order to allow for better dialogue and neutral decision making, in the interest of the consortium. For R3, the members of the CMU were all employees of NRC, which certainly had advantages (contractual and salary) but also impoverished the ability of the CMU to: 1) speak independently to the donor; 2) impose standardisation and harmonisation choices on NGOs. Conflicts of interest are bound to arise, on such important funding for NGOs and in such a particular context as Afghanistan.
8. Developing skills and internal capacity (staff, assistance modalities) to move from a humanitarian model to a resilience/reintegration model, with the support of HQ: Expertise in the fields of resilience or return cannot be decreed; it obeys specific temporal, multisectoral and collaborative logics and requires specific skills on the part of the NGO and its staff. In this area, it is often illusory to think that national offices can manage themselves without the proactive support of HQs, in coordination with the international donor. The Somali experience (BRCIS or SomRep) confirms this point: *"overnight, money came pouring in after the 2011 famine. Everything had to be done under the resilience label. It was the right thing to do. We all agreed. But in practice, how can we reprogramme the logic and functioning of local or international NGOs that have functioned for thirty years as humanitarian service providers, paid to deliver aid in situations of chronic crisis? We did not have the logic, the culture or the people to do this. The donor and our HQ did not understand this. It took five years and many of us are still not there."*<sup>86</sup> It takes time to understand that resilience is not just a matter of coordinating humanitarian action with that of others, but one that involves new practices, modalities of intervention, temporal dynamics, and methods of relationship building and accountability. But it is also essential.
9. Systematising the analysis through the prism of the multiplier effect: whether it is a question of recovery, resilience, reintegration or return, support for communities is part of long-term, multi-sectoral and multi-actor logics. In this logic, it is important to consider possible synergies, coordinated interventions in the same communities - instead of operating contiguously and without real synergy, as the R3 partners did. In this respect, a minimum of 3-4 activities (and/or implementing partners) per targeted community seems a minimum to verify any sustainable impact, according to a logic of virtuous multiplier effect.
10. Improving the transparency of the selection process, aligning it with resilience objectives: the near-universal poverty situation in which provinces and communities find themselves makes the idea of selecting beneficiaries (households and communities) very inconvenient in practice. How can one family be favoured over another? After the humanitarian pivot, of course, NGOs operated on an emergency basis and tried to provide aid in response to chronic and acute needs. In contrast, to achieve a resilience agenda, several simple recommendations arise from the R3 experience (particularly in the initial and pilot phase). In particular, it is appropriate to:
  - a. encourage a geographical selection that is not only based on pragmatic/opportunistic criteria and the pre-existing presence of the NGO in the region, but also on an assessment of which geographical areas (provinces, districts, communities) have the best potential for resilience, recovery, return and reintegration issues<sup>87</sup>;

<sup>86</sup> Interview with Somali programme manager of international NGOs working in Somalia (2014-2022) - CESVI, Concern, NRC.

<sup>87</sup> In other words, the poorest, most vulnerable areas should not necessarily be prioritised, as they seem to be more eligible for chronic poverty or humanitarian interventions; similarly, the 'historical' areas of NGO intervention are not necessarily the most likely to produce a resilience 'trigger effect'.



- b. harmonise the standards and vulnerability criteria used to select beneficiaries between NGOs (e.g. triangulation between community-based approaches and situational assessments);
  - c. consider the selection criteria in relation to the desired multiplier effect (e.g. one family should be able to benefit from several assistance modalities, the poorest quintile should not necessarily be designated if a more pronounced and sustainable effect of the assistance is to be achieved, etc.);
  - d. communicate these standards in a public manner in order to transparently clarify the determinants of the assistance; and
  - e. regularly audit the hotline and complaint mechanisms to understand their recurrence and to point out possible dysfunctions in the selection process
11. Considering the recipients of assistance in a multiscalar way according to a micro (household), meso (community), macro (governance structures) triad to maximise the dividends of interventions and improve their impact. An intervention in favour of households (e.g. latrines) must be matched by awareness raising at community level (e.g. hygiene and sanitation kits and training) as well as advocacy work with the main institutional actors (and even the private sector and other donors working on the subject). This micro-meso-macro ecosystem approach avoids a simple needs-based or demand-driven approach and proposes a more global logic, which diagnoses the reasons for the gaps or needs felt by households and acts on them in sociocultural (community) and institutional (governance) depth. This does not mean that diagnosis should not start from households and their needs, but remedies must be provided at different levels - beyond the domestic immediacy.
  12. Unifying red lines within the consortium (especially regarding gender): the bargaining power with the Taliban authorities is weak, as the rationality and motives of their decisions cannot always be anticipated by NGOs. However, it is certain that this situation is even more unfavourable without coordinated responses and common red lines. A centralisation of interactions from the Consortium with the DfA could be envisaged.
  13. Streamlining the use of the dashboard: One of the failures of R3 has undoubtedly been the very low use of the dashboard by Consortium members. Considering the time taken to create the dashboard at the start of the programme, and the time taken to collect the data, this suggests that it was a waste of time for many stakeholders. Perhaps the tool was too incomplete or not precise enough for operational use by the field teams; conversely, the absence of a real knowledge management platform (planned in Y3 and Y4) may have been a hindrance to use by the HQs and the donor. In the future, however, it is important to repeat the experience by strongly encouraging NGOs to use a single database for storing, analysing and processing monitoring and evaluation data (relating to Consortium interventions), while ensuring that: 1) real-time updates are made; 2) data collection is carried out; and 3) aligned and consistent indicators are produced. The aim is not to constrain NGOs – which may have reservations due to their own data protection policies – but to foster effective collaboration through data analysis and sharing. Creating a genuine knowledge hub is essential from this point of view, which can also improve transparency and accountability vis-à-vis the donor and other stakeholders (e.g. restricted access).
  14. Including a specific budget line for communication, advocacy and outreach: Considering the amount of money involved and the political sensitivity of the Consortium, it is important to develop a real communication strategy from the inception phase. For R3, the total absence of any communication, outreach (or even advocacy) objectives and ideas led to the learning partner being subcontracted to create the dashboard and templates for the Consortium. But a dedicated (and untouchable) budget line must be put in place, in accordance with the standards in force, in order to communicate on the project throughout its implementation. Two remarks to keep in mind: 1) in contexts such as Afghanistan or Somalia, it is important to communicate transparently in order to justify the economic commitment and explain the expected results; 2) the multi-scalar and long-term logic of the resilience consortia lends itself perfectly to ongoing and pedagogical communication and suggests multiple deliverables (academic papers, policy papers, thematic analyses, blogs, podcasts) but also harmonised and clearly legible reporting modalities on the activities.

*Figure 40: Site of NRC ICLA work, Herat, March 2023*



# Annex 1: Terms of Reference



## Annex 1 Terms of Reference

### 1. Consultancy assignment background

Five international humanitarian and development organizations with significant operational experience in Afghanistan will collaborate as partners in this consortium to deliver multi-sector responses for early recovery and resilience building for Afghans affected by displacement, through conflict and disaster. Working with three downstream national organizations, the consortium – led by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) – potentially blends altogether the comparative strengths of strategic geographic presence, technical quality, accountability, and a distinctive learning approach. Action Against Hunger, CARE International (CARE), NRC, Relief International (RI), and World Vision (WV).

NRC, as the organization leading R3 Consortium in Afghanistan, aims to contract one specialist research and evaluation social enterprise to provide ongoing learning and MEAL expertise on the Consortium activities.

R3 Consortium partners will be able to utilize the services of the research and evaluation services through the creation of a consortium dashboard, participation in the MEAL working group, dissemination of findings.

The assignment which is third party monitoring will be throughout the 4.5 years starting from 15<sup>th</sup> May to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

The consultancy should be embedded in the R3 consortium throughout the 4.5 years of inception and implementation.

- Contribute to advocacy messaging, in line with the R3 advocacy strategy (48 months)
- Creation of an interactive dashboard that can add to the overall consortium strategy (6 months)
- Co-Chair and provide strategic/technical inputs for the M&E Working Group (48 months)
- Input on the creation of the M&E related tools such as but not limited to: beneficiary tracking, referral mechanisms, response tracking systems (54 months)
- Capturing and measuring consortium synergies and value for money – providing technical capacity at the VFM workshop (48 months)
- Providing Consortium learning and presenting outcomes at the SC/Advisory Board level (48 months)
- Providing dissemination of learning from the R3 Consortium through a robust communications plan (24 months)

### 3. Institutional and organisational arrangements

NRC will own the intellectual property rights to all materials submitted by the consultants under the contract. The consultants must therefore ensure that they have possession of any materials provided to NRC as a part of the deliverable. The rights to reproduce the reports will fall to NRC and its contracted agents. NRC will be free to reproduce the materials at will and to grant reproduction rights.

### Duties of the consultant

This may include specific requirements of methodology, standards etc.; responsibility for providing, managing and paying appropriately qualified and experienced support staff; providing insurance; etc. If there will be support staff who will work under the consultant's responsibility, the TOR should clearly indicate the hours that the staff will work; that they will be under the consultant's supervision; and they will not be paid under the consultant's contract.

Reports should be submitted in Microsoft Word format, in UK English. All text should be unformatted. Graphs or other graphical devices should be editable (i.e. not pictures). All references must be cited according to convention, and detailed in a bibliography, using the Harvard system as set out in the [UNESCO Style Manual](#). All verbatim quotations must appear in quotation marks, and must not be of excessive length. All data

HN  
AS



collected under the consultancy must be submitted with the deliverables, in a widely recognised format such as Microsoft Excel.

Everything submitted to NRC must be the original work of the consultants. Any plagiarism in any form, or any other breach of intellectual property rights, will automatically disqualify the consultant from receiving any further payments under the contract by NRC, and NRC will seek to recover any payments already made.

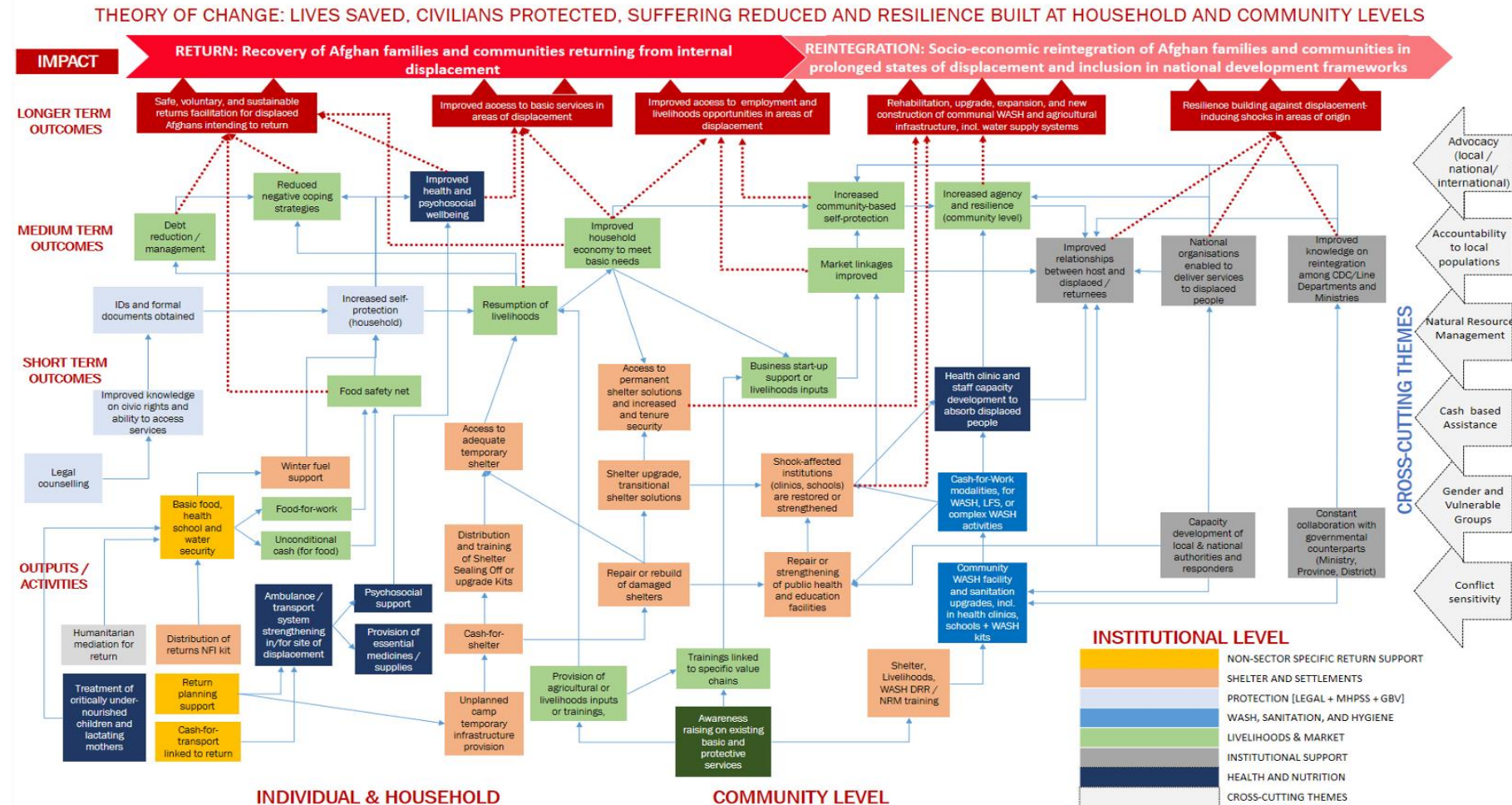
The consultant will follow [Ethical Research Involving Children](#) guidance on the ethical participation of children. In addition, all participants in any study or other interaction will be fully informed about the nature and purpose of the interaction and their requested involvement. Informed consent must be obtained for any photographs, audio or video recordings, etc., in accordance with NRC's policy on consent.

## Annex 2: Evaluation Framework

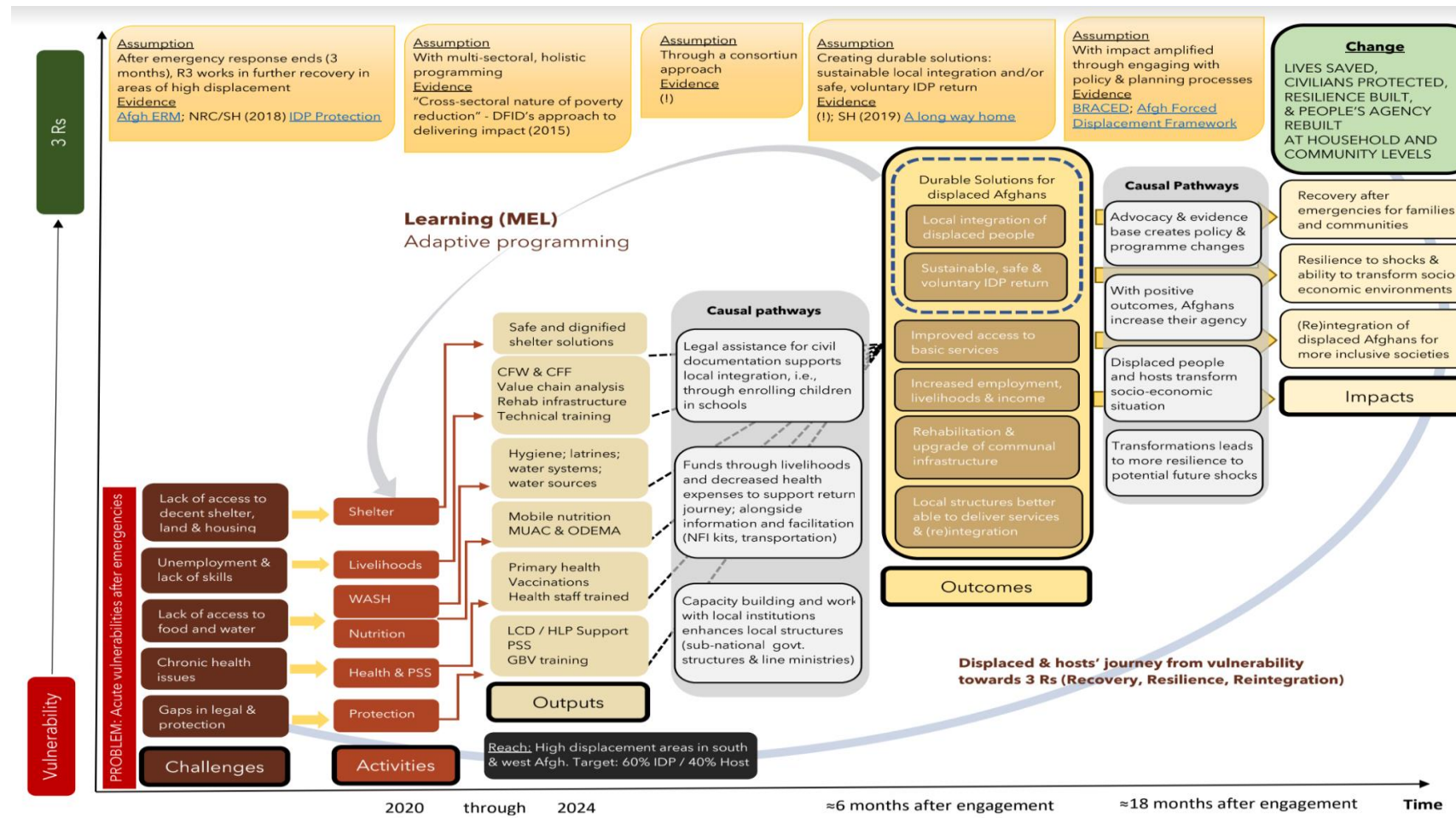
Evaluation questions		Source
<b>1. Relevance:</b>		
1.1.	To what extent has the R3 programme been consistent with the priorities of: The people it aimed to serve (displaced people and local communities in western and southern Afghanistan), Female beneficiaries, National stakeholders within Afghanistan in a context of upheaval, FCDO with its shifting focus and priorities	Surveys, community observations, FGDs, KIIs
<b>2. Coherence:</b>		
2.1.	What has been the compatibility between R3 and other humanitarian and development initiatives?	Project documentation, KIIs, FGDs, community observations
2.2.	What has been the compatibility of different programming streams under R3?	
2.3.	What has been the coherence between objective, expected results, activities and assumptions?	
2.4.	What has been the coherence in terms of the geographic locations of programming by different partners?	
<b>3. Effectiveness:</b>		
3.1.	What results did R3 deliver?	Surveys, KIIs, FGDs, community observations
3.2.	To what extent have R3 objectives been achieved, both by the individual partners and for the consortium as a whole?	
<b>4. Efficiency:</b>		
4.1.	To what extent does R3 deliver results in an economic and timely way in order to yield planned results?	KIIs, project documentation
<b>5. Impact:</b>		
5.1.	What are the foreseen and unforeseen impacts of the R3 intervention, whether positive or negative? What is the situation from prior to R3 interventions to the situation after?	Surveys, KIIs, FGDs, community observations, project documentation
<b>6. Sustainability:</b>		
6.1.	What are the net benefits, and are they likely to continue over time?	Surveys, KIIs, FGDs, community observations, project documentation
<b>7. Coordination:</b>		
7.1.	How have partners coordinated in advancing multi-sectoral collaboration? Did R3 generate a multiplier effect (if any) compared to more traditional siloed approaches?	KIIs, project documentation
7.2.	How have partners coordinated and communicated with the donor? Were the organisational arrangements (advisory group, steering committee, CCU) appropriate?	
<b>8. Adaptability:</b>		
8.1.	How has the consortium met the challenge which forms its raison d'être: quickly adapting to changing circumstances in a most challenging environment, to deliver maximum impact to those the most in need of its services?	KIIs, project documentation
8.2.	How have partners negotiated access and navigated interference by the DFA?	KIIs, project documentation
<b>9. Learning:</b>		
9.1.	What lessons can be learned to the benefit of future programming in Afghanistan in the current context, specifically of consortia?	KIIs, project documentation
9.2.	Given the national and local contexts, how does the accountability system set up by the Consortium meet minimum standards vis-à-vis all stakeholders (households, communities, civil society, partners, consortium members, governmental counterparts, donors, etc.)?	KIIs, project documentation

# Annex 3: Theories of change

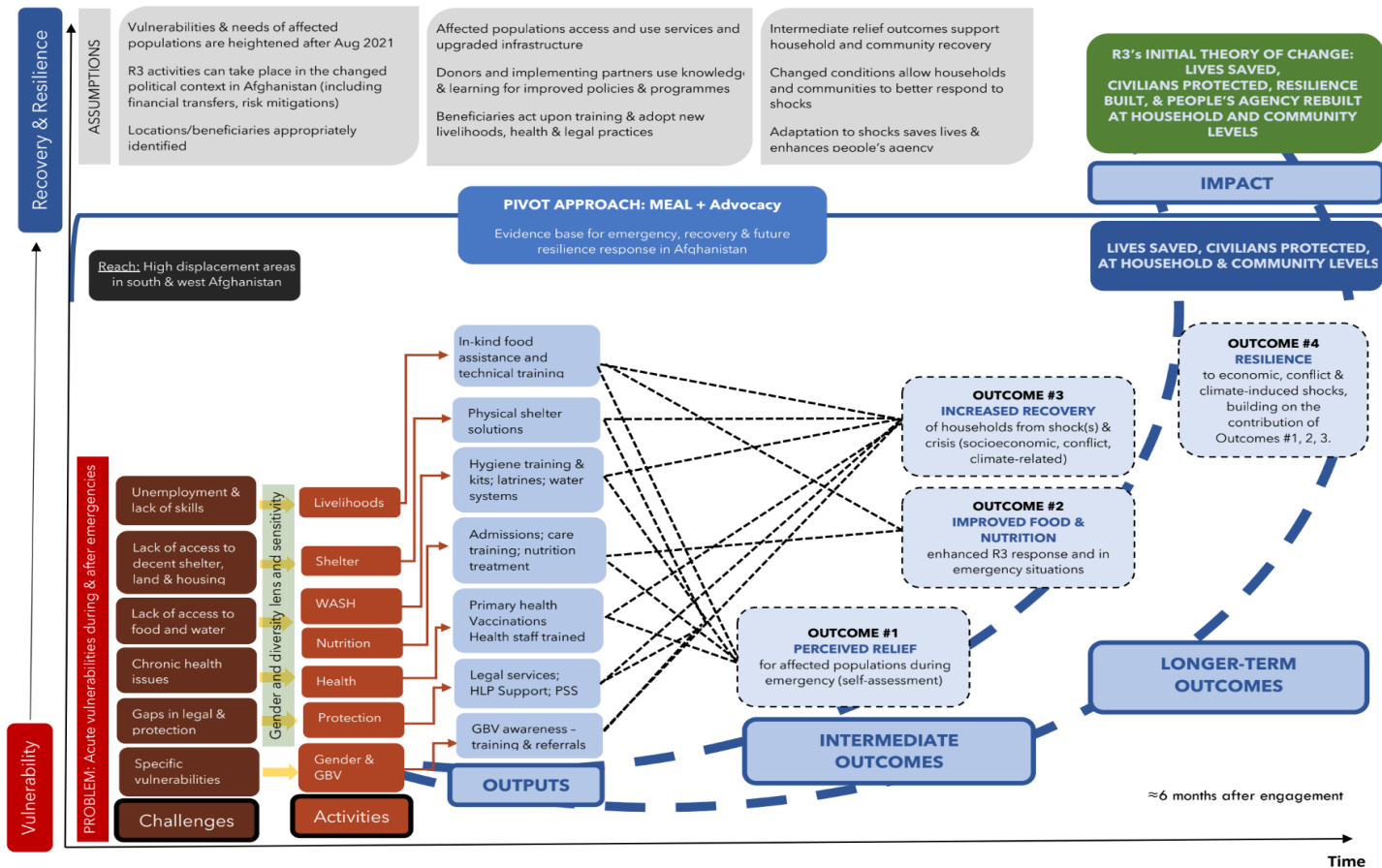
## Theory of Change # 1 (proposal sent to DFID/FCDO in July 2019)



Theory of Change # 2 (proposal adopted by DFID/FCDO in November 2020).



**Theory of Change # 3 - pivot (adopted by DFID/FCDO in December 2021).**





## Annex 4: Risk Register at Inception (2020)

Category	ID	Title	Risk Description	CAUSES			EFFECTS				Did this happen?	
				Risk Causes	Gross Probability	Mitigation Actions	Net Probability	Risk Effect	Gross Impact	Mitigation actions		Net Impact
Fiduciary	1	Funds are diverted or appropriated at a local level	There is a risk that finances will be appropriated rather than being spent on the programme activities	opportunism amongst those staff handling funding, weak financial systems	Possible	Strengthened financial systems and audit checks at downstream partner level	Unlikely	<b>Which could result in: Fewer beneficiaries reached with programme assistance, reputational impact for partners and DFID</b>	Major	Enhanced Due Diligence of financial systems; regular audit of programme expenditure;	Moderate	UNCLEAR
Access	1	Political imperatives affect acceptability of proposed activities	Restrictions by local authorities on use of proposed interventions; National or local authorities do not allow programming	* IDP policy of government, * Increased pressure on host communities, * Increased tension between displaced and hosts over resources.	Almost certain	Joint advocacy with DFID on appropriate responses; Maintain a continuous coordination with national or local authority and advocacy for the project.	Unlikely	Suspension of activities	Severe	* Previous linkage of consortium members with government authorities, * Joint meetings with the government.	Minor	YES
Access	2	Weak coordination at the provincial level	The government at provincial level does not have the capacity to support the project in a way that it requires.	Lack of staff, resources, and prioritisation.	Likely	* Having an MoU at central level, * Having MoU at provincial level, * Having regular meetings. * Build engagement.	Possible	* Lack of access, * Delay in activities results, * Low quality programming, * Potential duplication of activities,	Major	* Having inclusive stakeholder analysis, * Planning, Early coordination, * Re-assessment, * Contingency plan,	Minor	YES

Data	3	Data collected suffers from quality issues	Data collected will suffer from quality issues	Alternative prioritisation by partners, inconsistent data collection methods, lack of data harmonisation across consortium partners, challenges in developing cross-cutting tools	Possible	Data monitoring steering committee, joint tool validation, capacity building by learning partner	Unlikely	Difficulties in evaluating programme as well as limiting ongoing learning opportunities	Major	Joint planning and coordination around data, strong ongoing data monitoring mechanisms, regular assessments of incoming information	Minor	NO
Access	4	Government authorisations delayed for research	The consortium will face delays in receiving governmental authorisations for research	Unrelated programming impacting relationship with government, governmental concerns around consortium focus, tensions between kabul and provincial offices	Likely	Early engagement with relevant governmental partners around research permissions	Possible	Inability to directly access field	Severe	Utilise partner permissions for specific projects to carry out more targeted research assessments.	Moderate	NO
Data	5	Research and assessment fatigue	Potential beneficiaries in the planned areas of programming will be implicated in more than one assessment and thus not wish to participate	Multiple past assessments, previous assessments with little perceived changes	Possible	Coordinated assessments and research	Unlikely	Decreased participation in research and assessments, lower quality data with research fatigue	Minor	Early coordination and planning within the consortium on research and assessments, along with coordination and planning with other agencies and research actors in areas of intervention	Insignificant	NO

Data	6	Situational changes limit appropriateness of MEAL approach and tools as refined during the inception phase	Rapid situational evolution (natural disasters, governmental / AOG fighting) will severely impact planned activities and/ or access that the MEAL approach and tools as refined during the inception phase will no longer be as relevant	The primary needs of the beneficiary population changing so drastically or access limitations or structural partner changes due to aforementioned situational changes meaning that planned research cannot be conducted, or is not as applicable	Possible	Built in flexibility in research approach to allow for adaptation due to situational changes	Unlikely	Which could result in: more limited information and ability to adapt approaches	Moderate	Implement contingency plans; early coordination if situation changes	Minor	YES
Programming	7	Timely government approval	Approval from relevant authorities for project implementation is not possible	The government is unwilling to approve programming in a timely manner through MoUs and other key agreements, postponing the start date	Unlikely	- Ongoing relationship with key authorities; - programmatic flexibility	Rare	Project implementation is delayed	Major	Joint advocacy with DFID on appropriate responses; Maintain a continuous coordination with national or local authority and advocacy for the project.	Minor	YES
Programming	8	Inability to recruit and retain appropriate staff; International staff are unable or unwilling to work in Afghanistan	Unavailability of experienced and professional trainers in the target area will be high in number	Deteriorating security situation in operational areas; insufficient compensation to attract willing and qualified non-local staff	Possible	Prioritise recruitment of national staff whenever possible and ensure capacity-building	Unlikely	Deteriorating security situation in operational areas; insufficient compensation to attract willing and qualified non-local staff	Moderate	Prioritise recruitment of national staff whenever possible and ensure capacity-building	Minor	YES

Programming	9	Changes to legal system	There is a risk that the legal system deteriorates, and interventions take longer than planned	Significant political changes in Afghanistan result in dramatic changes to the functioning of the formal and informal justice systems. Taliban Peace Talks are still ongoing in Qatar.	Rare	Dual programming in formal and informal justice systems ensures that even if one system is significantly impacted by changes, programming can continue in the other	Rare	Significant political changes in Afghanistan will result in dramatic changes to the functioning of the formal and informal justice systems	Major	Programme works in both formal and informal systems; the failure of both simultaneously is extremely unlikely and even if the formal system became inaccessible because of political changes or intensified conflict, the informal community justice system is expected to continue.	Moderate	YES
Programming	10	Poor coordination or engagement with or by other humanitarian actors, including UN, NGOs and authorities	Sustainability/ exit strategy of the project will be affected due to weak stakeholder commitment	Lack of commitment and involvement or availability of nutrition stakeholders and targeted communities	Possible	Engagement of stakeholders through established forums (Cluster, PPHD Meetings) at local and central levels - Project action plan presented and discussed with communities Signing of MoUs to define roles and responsibilities and sustain commitment Taking into account and adapting to agricultural calendar	Unlikely	Decrease participation of key stakeholders and inability to reach all targeted populations	Major	Close collaboration with other actors, meetings set pro-actively and continuation of coordination efforts at field and national level. Clear communications channels established.  Organization of initial, mid-term and final workshops with stakeholders	Minor	YES

Logistic	11	Disruption in supply chain	Risk that supply chains could break and hinder / delay response	Disruption in UNICEF / WFP supply chain or more broadly related to closing of borders with Iran/Pakistan earlier this year	Likely	Regular updates of nutrition stock in targeted communities Advocacy towards BPHS for close follow-up on all nutrition stocks Advocacy at national level for timely delivery of nutrition commodities	Possible	Inability to fully treat targeted beneficiaries and acceptance by population could be challenged	Major	Utilization of a buffer stock Try to get other supply partners	Moderate	YES
Access	12	Restricted access	Temporary or permanent blockage of access can happen if the situation deteriorates	Insecurity and temporary restricted access to some areas of operation	Likely	Close follow up of security situation through local networks Ad-hoc updating and permanent enforcement of local security plan and protocols for all ACF field staff (esp. movement & evacuation plans) Employ local staffs whenever possible for purpose of acceptance	Possible	Restricted access to some areas of interventions leading to inability to reach all targeted populations	Major	Ensuring preparedness for remote management and/or control of activities Have a plan to go through local partner if our access is badly restricted	Moderate	YES

Programming	13	Seasonality	Gaps in implementation in certain intervention areas	lack of seasonal access during the winter months in some areas (Ghor in particular)	Almost certain	Plan activities in accordance to seasonal calendar Ensure regular communications with 'isolated' staffs to keep them motivated to continue program activities in their respective areas during winter (incentives when possible; reliable comms equipment)	Possible	Restricted access to some areas of interventions leading to inability to reach all targeted populations	Moderate	Plan response based on seasonal calendar; Mobilise resources, including communications equipment, for enabling remote management for areas with no seasonal access	Moderate	YES
Programming	14	Selection of Beneficiaries	Risk of inaccuracy or manipulation of beneficiary selection and lists	Inclusion / exclusion of beneficiaries - politicization of interventions by local government	Possible	Involvement of communities in the selection process Clear and precise criteria for selection of beneficiaries, those criteria being shared with the communities as well Prior to and throughout the Project, coordination with local authorities and communities, including reminder on ACF mandate and humanitarian principles	Unlikely	Inability to reach the targeted population, decrease of acceptance of the project, political and security restriction	Major	Feedback and complaint mechanisms functional and available to all beneficiaries and communities Verification surveys of beneficiaries selected and exclusion of non-eligible beneficiaries	Minor	UNCLEAR BUT LIKELY

Reputational	15	Partnering/engaging with partners, suppliers and staff who might be affiliated with organizations labelled as terrorists.	Potential risk of financing terrorism, which lead to discontinuation of funding	Insecured situation and volatile context of the country.	Possible	Compliance with DFID's Supply Partner Code of Conduct; reference to DFID's Supply Partner Handbook; screening all suppliers/ partners prior to engagement/ awarding the contract through BPS (Black Party Screening) and WatchDogPro. WV undertakes BPS before any engagement with external parties. Conducting police background checks Seeking district security head clearance	Rare	Which could result in: Fewer beneficiaries reached with programme assistance, reputational impact for partners and DFID	Severe	Ensuring that due diligence checks and screening is done before engagement with any third parties (partners, suppliers and staff)	Moderate	YES
Programming	16	Child Safeguarding	Exposure of children to various forms of abuse and exploitation during project implementation	Either directly or inadvertently some activities could expose child to harm and exploitations	Unlikely	Requirement of all staff to sign Code of Conduct	Rare	Exposure of children to risk and abuse	Moderate	Prospective employees with a history of child abuse are not hired. Documentation of processes for reporting and responding to concerns and an international team of Child Protection Officers to lead on investigations if required. Child-friendly and community friendly beneficiary feedback mechanism will allow beneficiaries to make confidential complaints and the consortia will also ensure that all staff are aware of confidential whistle blowing procedures.	Insignificant	UNCLEAR

Financial	17	Currency exchange fluctuations	Foreign exchange fluctuations are greater than that which can be absorbed by any member or the consortium overall	Inability to deliver the programme as the costs of interventions become higher	Likely	Monitors the gains / losses analyses on a quarterly basis as per donor recommendations and the agency Financial Policies. Significant changes in the exchange rates that have impact on the project implementation will be discussed with the donor and remedial measures put in place to offset any losses or gains during any period in the implementation	Possible	Significant exchange losses or gains that have an impact on the project.	Major	Conservative FX rate used in budgeting which incorporates an element of contingency; frequent financial monitoring; reallocation / renegotiation of targets if necessary.	Moderate	YES
Programmatic	18	Significant rapid onset and/or chronic emergency events related to climate change (drought, flooding etc)	Rapid onset and or chronic emergency events that require urgent humanitarian and life saving assistance in programme locations may take place	Global climate change, seasonal natural disaster and continuation of conflict in country.	Possible	Develop a detailed contingency plan in the event that operations were to be disrupted, delayed or stopped and mitigation options. Exit strategy plan in the event of non-continual of operations for any given length of time.	Unlikely	Disruption of programming	Major	Agencies continue to be part of coordination mechanism organised by UNOCHA where information will be shared to develop targeted response to meet humanitarian imperatives and maintain programming continuity. Build in a crisis modifier and early warning mechanism for the project	Moderate	YES



Access	19	Suspension of activities in AGO-controlled areas	Project areas fall under AOG's control, who might enforce specific rules than the project can accept	Increasing presence of AOGs in almost all over the country and difference in plan.	Possible	Having improved access department, having strong linkage with AOGs to have better access.	Unlikely	This can delay and at times stop activities.	Severe	Having an inclusive stakeholder analysis, continuous access activities in the areas.	Moderate	YES
Organisational	20	Corruption within organisations	Inadvertent recruitment of corrupted staff	Inability of organisations to evaluate candidates before they are hired and favouritism by existing staff. Also Sexual harassment by NGO workers take place.	Likely	Having robust rules and regulations for staff employment, having whistle blowing system and compliance department in the organisation.	Rare	It is possible that the corrupted staff harm the organisation's respect and dignity.	Severe	Having robust rules and regulations for staff employment, having whistle blowing system and compliance department in the organisation.	Insignificant	UNCLEAR
Access	21	Safety and security of project staff	Potential abduction/kidnapping of an NGO staff member	Increased violation and continuous war in the country.	Unlikely	Having strong safety / security section in the organisations. Consortium members' security departments work together.	Rare	The activities might stop in some specific areas. Vulnerable beneficiaries might be left aside due to insecurity.	Severe	Following security rules as NGO staff.	Severe	NO

Aid Diversion	22	Fraud, aid diversion, and loss of assets	Assets and aid might be confiscated or destroyed by armed groups	Influence of armed groups on humanitarian aid programs and corruption of local councils and relationship with armed groups. These bodies seek to control of assets and supplies in their areas.	Possible	Visibility Policy: The consortium maintains a low visibility policy on the use of its own logo and the donor logo. The reasoning behind this is that the delivery of foreign aid is suspicious for most parties in the conflict and goods marked as foreign aid are hence more prone to be confiscated or diverted. However, it is still important to mark aid to avoid that armed groups claim distributions to enhance their profile. The consortium will also avoid locations where councils are unlikely to support a vulnerability based approach and negotiations will take place with them to ensure the independence of humanitarian aid delivery.	Possible	Which could result in: - Loss of materials or assets - Inflation of prices - Harm to reputation of the consortium - Inappropriate selection of beneficiaries (not based on vulnerability)	Major	Consortium work through communication networks to determine when and how they can most safely move items and program inputs inside the targeted areas in order to avoid confrontations with armed groups. In addition, the consortium will work with local stakeholders, including local authorities, and local communities to maintain and increase (in existing locations) and build (in new locations) acceptance for the project and thus decrease the risk of theft or looting. In the event that any items are lost or stolen, the CMU will report this to DFID immediately and work through the appropriate processes to deal with the loss or theft. In the event that equipment or supplies are damaged by barrel bombs, shelling or similar acts of unpredictable violence/destruction, the consortium would consider this a force majeure case and inform DFID immediately to discuss any necessary modifications to the grant agreement.	Major	UNCLEAR BUT LIKELY
Operational	23	Huge influx of IDPs into the project implementation area	A large number of IDPs are pushed into the project implementation area where long-term programs are being implemented	As a result of open conflict, aerial bombardments or shelling of nearby locations.	Possible	Close monitoring and coordination with all relevant actors and stakeholders	Possible	Which may result in: Increased tension between host communities/IDPs and refugees  Irrelevance of proposed activities to certain community groups	Major	The consortium will closely monitor population movements through rapid response mechanisms (established by other projects and continued and this one) and with UNOCHA to track possible influx to target project areas. It will also liaise with donors to raise attention to the population	Moderate	YES

						<p>(e.g.: new IDPs)</p> <p>Need and/or request by local councils and new IDPs to provide life-saving, emergency assistance</p> <p>Extreme needs of IDPs places pressure on the host community, their resources and their coping strategies</p>	<p>movements and related increased needs in the area in an effort to mobilise additional support to address immediate needs, through our contingency planning. At the same time, the project will take deliberate efforts to include new arrivals – identified as a particularly vulnerable group - in program activities. A number of project activities have been specifically designed for IDPs (temporary income, basic needs support), including a preparedness activity to sensitise the community to the possibility of additional IDP influxes and help them plan their response. Partners will work closely with community leaders to ensure that community members understand the project and the selection process. IDPs and host community members will both be eligible for inclusion based on set and agreed vulnerability criteria to avoid creating tensions between different population groups.</p>	
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	---	--

Operational	24	Unintended negative consequences: social tensions	Provision of inputs to a relative small number of targeted vulnerable households creates conflict within targeted communities.	A limited number of inputs to be shared within resource-starved communities creates a risk of conflict	Possible	<p>The consortium will work closely with community leaders to ensure that community members understand the project's activities and the selection criteria and process. IDPs and host community members will both be eligible for inclusion to avoid creating tensions between different population groups.</p> <p>Inputs, such as cash for work, are defined by specific criteria, such as current income levels, and contextualised for the location. Providing beneficiaries with approximately the same amount as other families are already earning will reduce likely conflict and ensure no distortion in the local economy due to inputs. Where possible, inputs will be in cash/ vouchers, to increase purchasing power and contribute to the local economy.</p> <p>The consortium will train its staff and conduct Do No Harm analysis at the beginning of the project to identify dividers and connectors and develop an action plan to manage such tensions. This will be used throughout the project to monitor the context and risk factors</p>	Unlikely	Which could result in: - Exploitation, abuse, injury or death of direct beneficiaries - Harm to reputation of Consortium members	Major	Grievance procedures will be set up within the local community to settle any disputes arising internally as a result of the programme. Complaints, feedback and follow up processes in place to respond to any such abuse. Strong relationships to be built with a community and key stakeholders, to ensure their support in the event of reports of conflict due to inputs	Moderate	YES
-------------	----	---	--	--	----------	---	----------	--	-------	--	----------	-----

Operational	25	Beneficiaries are unable to confirm their identities	Beneficiaries are unable to provide identification to the <i>Hawala</i> agent in advance of or during distributions	the loss of documentation or the lack of systems to generate new documentation	Likely	ICLA department of NRC will support in providing IDPs IDs, Review beneficiary identification documents during beneficiary selection. If it is missing or insufficient, work with the household to identify another household member with sufficient documentation to receive funds. If the household is unable to provide any identification, it might be necessary to exclude them from cash-based activities.	Possible	Which could result in: refusal to pay a beneficiary for activities already undertaken. Loss of reputation and trust for partners, as seen as unable to implement effectively.	Moderate	Ensure the wider community understands the type of identification accepted and the reason for this. Be clear from the start of the project.	Minor	UNCLEAR
Operational	26	Women and men cannot be mobilized to participate as beneficiaries and/or project staff and volunteers	Both men and women are not able to participate in activities and/ or apply for voluntary/ paid work	the current security environment, people might be unwilling to participate in activities which requires them to travel and discuss potentially sensitive topics	Likely	The project will be comprehensively introduced to the community with the benefits emphasised, to encourage support. Consortium members will work with women to ensure they are comfortable in any roles they take on, including employing a male staff member if necessary to facilitate travel.	Possible	Which could result in insufficient staff and volunteers to implement the project; lack of trust from female beneficiaries; lack of access to female-headed households	Moderate	Work closely with local stakeholders and beneficiaries to encourage engagement with the project.	Moderate	YES

Operational	27	Economic shock	Due to several factors, the economy may slow down or collapse, which would affect the MSME development and plan	uncertain political situation in Afghanistan considering an upcoming presidential election	Possible	During the project design, certain alternative activities in order to make sure the livelihoods activities can be carried forward with changes in the political situation.	Possible	Which could result in: Delays to project implementation and requirement for changes of activities	Moderate	Regular review of the situation at macro and community level to assess possibility of implementing the proposed activities. Contingency planning for alternative activities to be in place.	Minor	YES
Operational	28	Humanitarian principles compromised	One or more of the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence is compromised during programme implementation	the restrictions placed by armed groups, aid diversion or clearly visible biases in decision making and beneficiary selection by local authorities and other key decision makers.	Likely	During the inception phase of the project, the consortium will conduct careful risk assessments factoring in the political and social context to determine the level of risk in each location; activities will be designed factoring in these risks; awareness raising on the stated objectives of the programme including the four humanitarian principles and their practical implications will be conducted amongst all stakeholders; the support of respected community members including representatives of CBOs will be enlisted for the project; the consortium will clearly inform all stakeholders including beneficiaries that the humanitarian principles cannot be compromised	Possible	Which could result in: delays to project implementation or a complete close down of project operations in the area	Major	During risk assessment stage, establishing clear red lines including in relation to the compromise of humanitarian principles; proactively informing local authorities and community members about the red lines; identifying alternative program locations in the contingency plan in the event of a major violation of humanitarian principles; ensuring a well thought through exit strategy based on the Do No Harm analysis to minimise the impact on the community	Major	UNCLEAR

Programmatic	29	Data sharing and protection	Insufficient access to data and/or information held by other actors, timeliness and paucity of information sharing; passive resistance to collaboration; not responding to referrals	Passive resistance to collaboration; not responding to referrals	Possible	Establish data access agreements, as part of coordination and cooperation structures; referral outcome monitoring	Possible	Impact on timeliness and paucity of information sharing	Minor	Establish data access agreements, as part of coordination and cooperation structures; referral outcome monitoring	Minor	YES
Consortium Management	30	Consortium power dynamics / too much power in lead agency	Deterioration of working relationship between the consortium members	Unclearly from the start on the role and responsibilities among consortium members; lack of a governance structure to inform the consortium's decision making process	Unlikely	Established MoU between consortium members based on shared understanding, objectives and accepted roles and responsibilities	Unlikely	Deterioration of working relationship between the consortium members	Minor	Firewalling' the Consortium Management Unit; equal representation and voting power within the Consortium Steering Committee.	Minor	UNCLEAR
Access – COVID 19	31	Inability to deliver programming	Restricted access due to COVID 19 limits the partners ability to access and programme in parts of Afghanistan.	Insecurity and temporary restricted access to some provinces due to worsening outbreak of Covid 19	Possible	Inform donor; leverage consortium relationships with government to push for permissions;	Possible	Inability for programme to reach beneficiaries in areas hardest hit by COVID 19	Minor	Change implementation locations as a last resort	Minor	YES
Operational – COVID 19	32	Afghan economy collapses	Durable solution programming such as R3 relies on a somewhat functioning economy. Longer term programming would be effected by the collapse of the economy because of a state	Government mandated restrictions on the population mean that daily workers are unable to earn a wage. Restrictions on borders mean that goods and services are halted	Unlikely	Implementing alternative activities in which the scope could be limited within the community and rely less on the macro economy	Unlikely	Project implementation would require adaptation of activities. Procurement of certain supplies may not be possible or could be much more expensive than initially budgeted	Severe	Implementing alternative activities in which the scope could be limited within the community and rely less on the macro economy	Severe	YES



		mandated lockdown.											
--	--	-----------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--



Programmatic - COVID 19	33	Programme delays	The R3 Consortium could be delayed in programming due to administrative barriers with government counterparts. They may also be delayed due to insufficient information to base programme response mechanism off of	Due to closures of Ministries or overwhelmed government services. Difficulty in selecting beneficiaries (no ability for needs assessments)	Possible	Inform donor and consortium partners	Possible	Delays to programming will take place if MoUs are not signed. Delays to programming if beneficiaries are unable to be selected.	Minor	Inform donor and consortium partners. Partners would financially be using support costs without be able to spend programmatic	Minor	YES
Data Collection- COVID 19	34	Data collection halted	Partners would not be able to collect data for both health reasons and perhaps access reasons to understand both needs on the ground and collect baseline data	Inability to get approval to access provinces hardest hit by COVID 19. Inability for staff to assess beneficiaries for health reasons	Possible	Inform consortium; increase coordination and outreach with stakeholders such as IOM/ERM partners	Possible	Limited information on the needs. No baseline to work off of to measure future programming	Moderate	Inform consortium; increase coordination and outreach with stakeholders such as IOM/ERM partners	Minor	YES

## Annex 5: Research Tools

### I. Quantitative:

[r3\\_survey\\_endline\\_1\\_printable.docx](#)

### II. Qualitative:

[Endline FGD Tool](#)

[Endline Community Observation Tool: First Visit](#)

[Endline Community Observation Tool: Second Visit](#)

[KII Tool](#)

## Annex 6: Bibliography

- Alakbarov, Ramiz, 2022. 'Afghanistan: food insecurity and malnutrition threaten an 'entire generation'', UN News, 15 March 2022.
- Asian Development Bank to boost agriculture and food security', 26 January 2022, <https://www.fao.org/asiapacific/news/detail-events/en/c/1470150/>
- Buchanan-Smith, M, Cosgrave, J and Warner, A, 2016. Evaluation of Humanitarian Action Guide. ALNAP.
- Darcy, J and Dillon, N, 2020. Missing the point? Reflections on current practice in evaluating humanitarian action. ALNAP, December 2020.
- DFID (2011), Defining Disaster Resilience: A DFID Approach Paper. London, Crown Publishing
- FEWS Net, 2022. 'Central Asia: Afghanistan' country profile, March 2022, (accessed 26 April 2022) <https://fews.net/central-asia/afghanistan>
- Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, 2022. 'Afghanistan: FAO welcomes \$65 million contribution From Humanitarian Response, 'Afghanistan Drought 2021 - 2022', OCHA Services, 2022, <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/disaster/dr-2021-000022-afg>
- Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) 2019, December 2018.
- Human Rights Watch, 'Afghanistan: Hunger Crisis has Economic Roots', 1 March 2022.
- Human Rights Watch, 2022. 'Afghanistan: Hunger Crisis has Economic Roots', 1 March 2022, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/03/01/afghanistan-hunger-crisis-has-economic-roots>
- Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Report: IPC, 2022. Afghanistan, IPC Acute Food Insecurity Analysis. March – November 2022. Issues May 2022.
- IDMC (2009-2021) and UNHCR (2022) available at <https://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/afghanistan> and <https://reporting.unhcr.org/afghanistsituation>
- IOM. 2021. Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) - Emergency Event Tracking. EET Round 2, October 12 - November 15.
- Kimball, Kelly, 2021. Afghanistan Braces for a Brain Drain, Foreign Policy, 24 August 2021.
- Nader, Zahra and Amini, Nargis, 2022. The Taliban are Harming Women's Health, Foreign Policy, 2 March 2022.
- Menon, Shruti, 2022. 'Afghanistan: What humanitarian aid is getting in?', BBC News, 14 February 2022, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-59518628>
- NRC and Samuel Hall (2018) Escaping War: Where to Next? A Research Study on the Challenges of IDP Protection in Afghanistan, Thematic Report, Afghanistan, Kabul.
- NRC, IDMC and Samuel Hall (2018) Escaping War: Where to next? The Challenges of IDP Protection in Afghanistan - <https://www.nrc.no/resources/reports/escaping-war-where-to-next-the-challenges-of-idp-protection-in-Afghanistan/>
- NRC and Samuel Hall (2018) Returning to what? The challenges displaced Afghans face in securing durable solutions [https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/nrc-policy\\_brief-return-screen1.pdf](https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/nrc-policy_brief-return-screen1.pdf).
- Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and Samuel Hall, 2016. Access to Tazkera and Other Civil Documentation in Afghanistan.

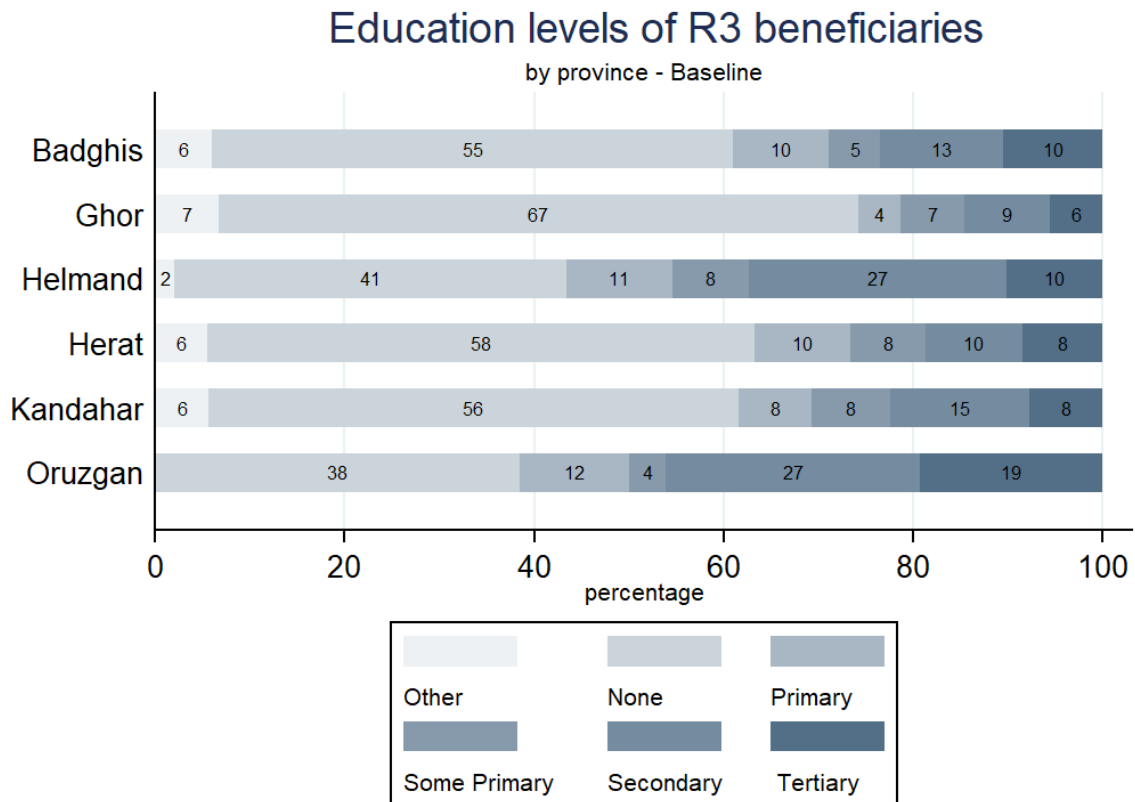
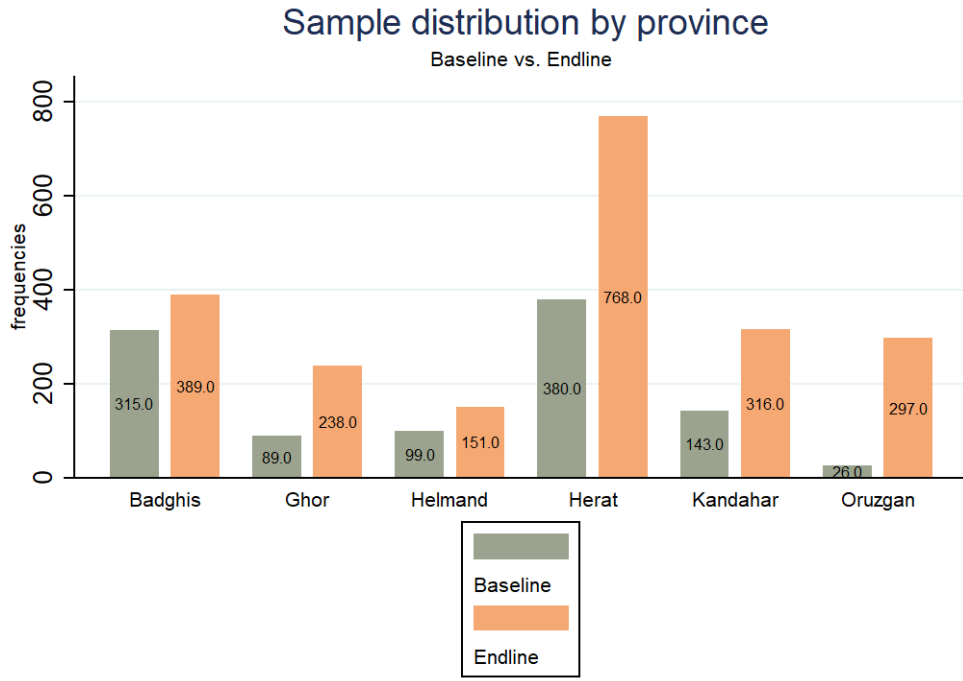
- OCHA, 2022. Humanitarian Response Plan - Afghanistan. Humanitarian Programme Cycle 2022. January 2022.
- O'Donnell, Lynne, 2022. 'Afghanistan's Hungry Will Pay the Price for Putin's War', Foreign Policy, 1 April 2022.
- R3, Samuel Hall, 2021. R3 Methodological Note - December 2021 Update. December, 2021.
- R3 Consortium Proposal (Narrative) submitted to DFID on July 11, 2019.
- Serhan, Yasmeen, 2021. The Women Burning Their Degree Certificates, The Atlantic, 3 September 2021
- UN OCHA, Humanitarian Needs Overview, Afghanistan: 2022.
- Shruti Menon, 'Afghanistan: What humanitarian aid is getting in?', BBC News, 14 February 2022,  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-59518628>
- Stancati, Margherita and Amiri, Ehsanullah 2022. Women in Afghanistan struggle with new Taliban rules. Wall Street Journal. April 5, 2022.
- United Nations OCHA, 2022. Humanitarian Response, 'Afghanistan Drought 2021 - 2022', OCHA Services, 2022,  
<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/disaster/dr-2021-000022-afg>
- United Nations OCHA, 2022. Humanitarian Needs Overview – Afghanistan. January 2022.
- UN Women, 2022. Press briefing: The situation of women and girls in Afghanistan. July 25, 2022. Also:
- UNDP (2022) "One Year in Review: Afghanistan Since August 2021" (New York, Kabul, October 2022). Available at:  
<https://www.undp.org/press-releases/undp-report-paints-grim-picture-afghanistan-year-after-transition>
- UN OCHA, 2022. Humanitarian Needs Overview – Afghanistan. January 2022.
- World Bank (2022) "Afghanistan Development Update October 2022 - Adjusting to the new realities"  
<https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/d7d49962c0c44fd6bb9ba3bfe1b6de1f-0310062022/original/Afghanistan-Development-Update-October-2022.pdf>
- WFP Afghanistan (2021), Afghanistan Food Security Update – 8 December 2021.
- World Bank statistics and UNICEF, 'Afghanistan: Education Equity Profile for Adolescent Girls', December 2019.
- World Bank Group, 2021. 'Climate Risk Country profile: Afghanistan', 2021.
- World Food Programme, 2022. 'WFP Afghanistan Situation Report', 22 April 2022.
- World Food Programme, 2022. 'Afghanistan Countryside Weekly Marketplace Bulletin', 21 April 2022.
- World Food Programme, 2022. Afghanistan, Countrywide Weekly Market Price Bulletin #89, 27 January 2022
- World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Afghanistan's National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA), 2016. 'Climate Change in Afghanistan - What does it mean for rural livelihoods and food security?', 2016.

## Annex 7: List of stakeholders interviewed

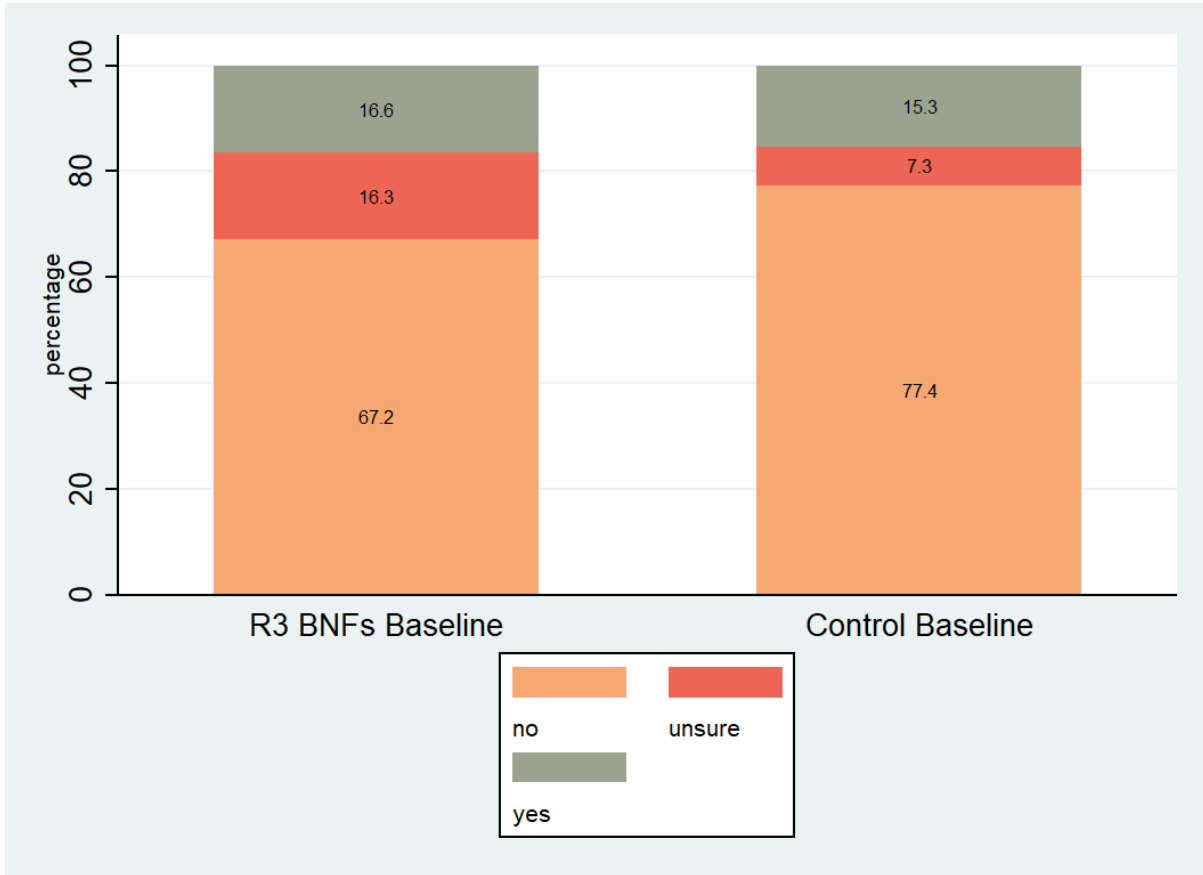
### Key Informant Interviews between February and March 2023

No.	Location	Region	Organization	Position	Date conducted
KII1	Afghanistan	Herat	Care International	R3 Field Supervisor	15-Feb-23
KII2	Afghanistan	Herat	Care International	Provincial Manager (Herat)	16-Feb-23
KII3	Afghanistan	Ghor	AAH	Multi-sectoral Program Manager R3	16-Feb-23
KII4	Afghanistan	Badghis	World Vision International	MEAL Manager for R3	20-Feb-23
KII5	Afghanistan	Kandahar	Care International	Provincial Manager (Kandahar)	21-Feb-23
KII6	Afghanistan	Herat	Care International	Project Manager (Herat)	21-Feb-23
KII7	Afghanistan	UK	FCDO	Humanitarian Advisor	17-Feb-23
KII8	Afghanistan	Kabul	Care International	MEL supervisor	23-Feb-23
KII9	Afghanistan	Helmand	AAH	Multi-sectorial program manager in Helmand base	27-Feb-23
KII10	Afghanistan	Kabul	DHSA (Development and Humanitarian Services for Afghanistan) (DHSA)	R3 Project Manager	27-Feb-23
KII11	Afghanistan	Ghor	AAH	Field Manager in Ghor base	28-Feb-23
KII12	Afghanistan	Kabul	World Vision International	Resource Development Manager	28-Feb-23
KII13	Afghanistan		World Vision International	Country director	28-Feb-23
KII14	Afghanistan		AAH	Country director	28-Feb-23
KII15	Afghanistan	Kabul	NRC	Former Consortium Manager	1-Mar-23
KII17	Afghanistan	Kabul	NRC	Head of Programme, NRC (former R3 Consortium Manager)	3-Mar-23
KII16	Afghanistan	Kabul	WCLRF	Project Manager	9-Mar-23
KII18	Afghanistan		Samuel Hall	Former researcher at SH, R3 Research Lead	22-Mar-23

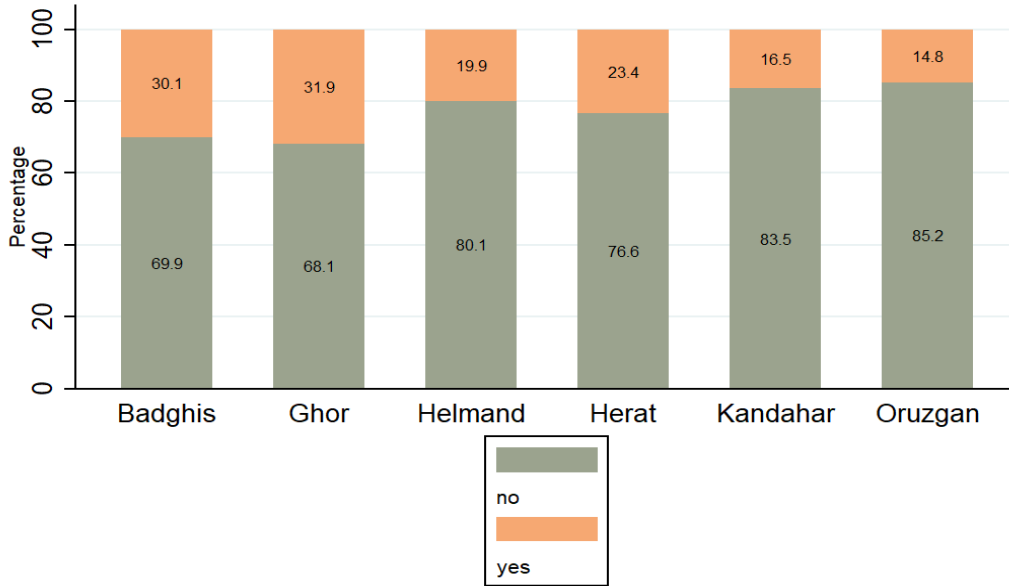
## Annex 8: Additional charts



*“Do you plan move away from this community over the course of the next 12 months, either to another country or within this country?”*

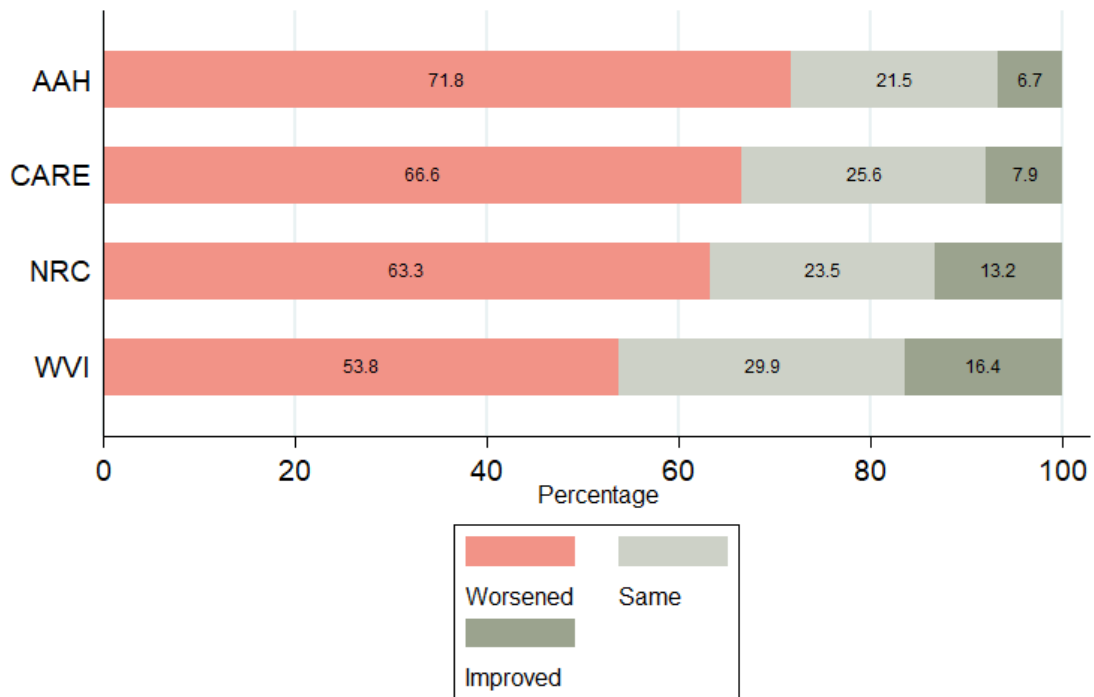


### % of R3 Beneficiaries who moved since the baseline by province



### Beneficiaries' perceptions in one year by IPs - Endline

Compared to this time last year, would you say that your life has improved, stayed more or less the same, or worsened, overall?





## Annex 9: SH Duty of Care Guidelines Afghanistan

### Duty of Care

Duty of care at Samuel Hall extends to both our national and international colleagues. International colleagues, whether based full-time in Afghanistan or visiting, will be accommodated in Samuel Hall's compound. This set-up includes a team of drivers and vehicles available 24/7 and all essential amenities. The Country Representative is responsible for the security of staff in country.

Samuel Hall has established crisis management procedures for its Afghanistan activities. Incidents are managed locally by the Country Representative and include escalation mechanisms with the Senior Management Team and Directors. Depending on the support needed, Samuel Hall can also ask for the assistance of the Humanist Risk Management Consultancy (HRMC), a leader in the sector. The Samuel Hall compound has a safe room for all colleagues and designated evacuation routes, and these are communicated to all staff upon arrival in country during the initial security briefing. If an evacuation is deemed necessary, the Country Representative will lead this with the support of other colleagues.

All staff travelling within Kabul and all Afghan provinces are required to comply with Samuel Hall's travel management procedures, which include risk assessing travel with the Country Representative, tracking movements through various mechanisms and providing personal details such as next of kin and full contact details in sealed HR documents. This naturally also applies to national and international staff in the field, who will have all project fieldworks assessed with the required security posture discussed ad hoc: low profile in most cases. National colleagues fall under the same Samuel Hall crisis management procedures, which include an insurance response with ICA (Insurance Corporation of Afghanistan). Now Health insures international colleagues.

We fully accept responsibility for the duty of care requirements for our staff and outline how we do this below. This document outlines how Samuel Hall has prepared a risk management system that fully adheres to best practice duty of care guidelines.

#### A. Risk Assessment

Samuel Hall completes an initial risk assessment for the delivery of projects before deciding to bid. The assessment is based on information from local contacts, desk reviews, public information and discussions with industry specialists, not to mention our excellent knowledge of the field, having worked across Afghanistan.

In line with our corporate management procedures, the decision to bid for a project is based on our confidence to deliver a technically robust research safely and effectively. Therefore, all further decisions on the selection of the candidates and approach proposed for this project were based on a thorough risk assessment.

For work in Afghanistan, we use a three-tier approach to risk assessment and risk management:

Tier 1 – An established network of local contacts across the main urban hubs and more rural areas providing regular and up-to-date information on potential, emerging and known threats and also on important socio-economic dynamics in various areas coupled with in-house knowledge and understanding of the evolving Afghan landscape.

Tier 2 – A travel risk management system operated by senior and junior support staff in Afghanistan and abroad involving the use of various types of telecommunications at different times of the day in order to ensure the location, safety and well-being of our teams.

Tier 3 – A globally recognised external security provider, Humanist Risk Management Consultancy (HRMC), who support us in our reading of various issues and help us improve our processes and responses in complex situations.

These three components work together to ensure that the risks we identify in our initial risk assessment, and who later form the backbone of our Comprehensive Planning Process (property of HRMC) which is regularly revised and updated, are managed in a way that is informed by but does not rely on non-Samuel Hall information.

#### B. Risk Management Plan

We prepare a detailed risk management plan for all projects and are confident in their effective implementation. All projects in Afghanistan follow the same protocols, which are also used in other complex environments such as Somalia, Mauritania, Ethiopia, etc. Our Comprehensive Planning Process also revisits and expands on this detailed risk management plan as a key element of our Project Management Cycle for all projects, and will be reviewed at the start of project and prior to any and all fieldwork during the project.

### **C. Staff Training**

We ensure that all staff working on projects in Afghanistan are adequately trained and are able to maintain themselves, their colleagues and the company safe through their actions. For this kind of project, our junior and senior colleagues are selected locally for language skills and area knowledge and undergo training and piloting of the research tools before going into the field and receive key information through the Research and Planning Teams (RPTs) working on the project. We also aim to have all staff, both national and international, receive regular first-aid and crisis communications training, as well as providing industry- standard HEAT (Hostile Environment Awareness Training) through accredited internationally recognised local providers to all of our Kabul-based international staff.

### **D. Risk Monitoring Mechanisms**

Samuel Hall has an appropriate mechanism in place to monitor risk on a live/on-going basis. Our field teams and local assets regularly relay information through calls and text messaging that supports our teams in making informed decisions in the field but also in the Kabul office. Processes for field communications are reviewed for appropriateness to the project, accounting for coverage and particular challenges in individual provinces or work types, prior to fieldwork as part of the Comprehensive Planning Process, and adapted as necessary. Our dynamic mechanism also takes into account other sources of trusted information used for triangulation purposes, developed through Samuel Hall's years of working across Afghanistan.

### **E. Provision of Suitable Equipment**

Samuel Hall colleagues are provided with suitable equipment based on the nature of the project and locations accessed. Minimum company requirements are such that all field teams are fitted with first-aid kits in vehicles and office locations, mobile phones on post-paid plans and GPS systems. Requirements may be reassessed for additional equipment during the pre-fieldwork Comprehensive Planning Process. This may include additional communications or tracking devices, or where necessary, additional safety and security equipment will be considered, such as body armour, helmets and armoured vehicles.

### **F. Emergency / Incident Management Systems**

We have appropriate systems to manage a crisis. Our Comprehensive Planning Process for Afghanistan covers various emergency responses and outlines the relevant staff that needs to be involved in an organised response.

A crisis management team is formed, including national and international staff, and appropriate members of the Senior Management Team, dependent on the situation, and deals with an emergency whilst enabling the rest of the office to pursue normal operations in order to ensure continuity. Should medical support be needed, Samuel Hall will only use a network of trusted healthcare providers in Kabul and in provincial hubs. All staff are briefed on appropriate responses in the field and on emergency contacts both for fieldwork and for Kabul-based staff on a day-to-day basis.

### **G. Professional Security Support**

Samuel Hall has contracted Humanist Risk Management Consulting (HRMC) to support and advise us in Afghanistan, but also Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia where we also operate. HRMC is not registered with the Ministry of Interior in Afghanistan but is with the governments of Kenya and Somalia. Samuel Hall senior management regularly meets HRMC's partners in order

to undergo training and mission support. We also employ a security provider in Afghanistan to provide security, safety and first aid training on a rolling basis.

As an organisation constantly connected to local realities, Samuel Hall puts strong emphasis on how staff is taken care of both in its various offices and in the field, especially in conflict zones or unstable environments. We take our responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of all our colleagues very seriously and have professional security protocols that take advantage of our low visibility, political impartiality and neutrality. All of our staff are knowledgeable in emergency procedures and participate in bi-monthly security drills. An SMS system also ensures that all staff is kept updated on security developments in urban and rural areas.

Before the start of each project, an initial assessment of potential risks associated with the specific context of the assignment is conducted and presented to the client. Based on the risks identified, Samuel Hall puts in place mitigation measures and security arrangements designed to prevent any foreseeable harm.

## Annex 10: Use and Influence Plan

The use and influence plan for the evaluation findings sets out a dissemination plan for the evaluation findings in order to maximise their value and impact in terms of sharing lessons learned for future resilience programming in Afghanistan.

### CONTEXT

The R3 consortium in Afghanistan was designed to address the needs of the population in a context of significant displacement and chronic fragility, bridging the gap between short-term humanitarian response in the early months of displacement, and longer-term sustainability and development. From the onset, the consortium was plagued by major disruptions: conflict and insecurity hampering access in the first half of 2021 were followed by the collapse of the previous government and consolidation of Taliban power as the de facto regime. Coordination and accountable reporting proved challenging. Economic contraction and spectacular inflation accentuated fast-emerging emergency and humanitarian needs. The R3 consortium illustrates the complexities and uncertainties of working in volatile contexts, where both the donor and implementers face significant obstacles that require rapid adaptation and flexibility.

The learning partner's outputs, including this endline evaluation, are designed to serve as an accountability mechanism to the donor and to R3 beneficiaries, assess programme delivery and results, and provide lessons and insights on consortia working in the humanitarian / development space in complex environments. The influence and use plan is designed to summarize how the lessons learned and recommendations from the evaluation will be communicated to different stakeholder.

### STRATEGY PRINCIPLES

The following set of principles based on good practice in communication will be respected:

1. Communicate openly and transparently
2. Two-way communication over one-way dissemination
3. Interesting, digestible findings communicated often and in manageable chunks
4. Recognition of the politicised nature of the findings

### KEY ACTORS TO ENGAGE AND INFLUENCE OBJECTIVES

The following stakeholders will be engaged and targeted, and prioritized based on the types of information of interest (including but not limited to methodological learnings, funding and policy recommendations, knowledge on what does not work, lessons learned on influencing policy in Afghanistan's current context). Three broad groups are relevant:

1. R3 implementing partners : provide evidence of the programmes progress towards stated objectives and any lessons learned;
2. FCDO and other funders : programme performance information to inform decisions about corrections, scale-up or closure of future activities in Afghanistan, specifically when organised in a consortium;
3. Policy audiences interested in evidence on what works in humanitarian and development programming in Afghanistan today: Share evidence of what works and what does not both in terms of programming and evidence generation.

Each should be targeted with the most appropriate and relevant evidence from the evaluation to meet their specific needs.

### PRODUCTS FOR DISSEMINATION

The main report was produced with an Executive Summary to enable those readers who are short of time to learn the key findings, impact assessments and recommendations quickly. The team will present headline findings to FCDO and the programme, using a slide deck that can be shared easily with others. A series of blogs is envisaged focusing on the challenges of evaluating complex programmes such as R3 in complex environments like Afghanistan. A policy note will summarize the evaluation's learnings and policy implications at different levels. These outputs will be promoted via Samuel Hall's website and social media platforms.

We will work with FCDO to continue to monitor how the evaluation outputs have been used and to monitor the impact of evaluation findings.

## ABOUT SAMUEL HALL

Samuel Hall is a social enterprise that conducts research, evaluates programmes, and designs policies in contexts of migration and displacement. Our approach is ethical, academically rigorous, and based on first-hand experience of complex and fragile settings.

Our research connects the voices of communities to changemakers for more inclusive societies. With offices in Afghanistan, Germany, Kenya, and Tunisia and a presence in Somalia, Ethiopia, and the United Arab Emirates, we are based in the regions we study. For more information, please visit [www.samuelhall.org](http://www.samuelhall.org).



[www.samuelhall.org](http://www.samuelhall.org)



[development@samuelhall.org](mailto:development@samuelhall.org)



[@Samuel\\_Hall\\_](https://twitter.com/Samuel_Hall_)

