GROUND TRUTH
SOLUTIONS

World Humanitarian Summit

FIELD SURVEY AND ANALYSIS

Survey of Affected People & Field Staff
in Afghanistan

June 14, 2017

OECD

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Affected People Survey

This report covers two separate surveys. The first focuses on the perceptions of four distinct groups of affected people in Afghanistan: documented and undocumented Afghan returnees, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), and Pakistani refugees. It provides a baseline on how displaced people experience humanitarian aid by looking at programme performance against a set of themes related to the quality of services and engagement. These performance dimensions link to affected people's views on progress towards the attainment of the goals set out in the Grand Bargain and other efforts intended to improve the effectiveness of humanitarian action. Subsequent surveys will track how affected people's perceptions evolve over time. Data collection took place April 21-26, 2017. Face-to-face interviews were conducted in seven regions of Afghanistan.

Field Staff Survey

This report analyses data collected from 405 humanitarian staff working in Afghanistan for UN agencies, international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) and local NGOs. It covers the perspective of field staff on a range of topics linked to the performance of the humanitarian system. Data was collected using an online survey tool between 26 April and 16 May 2017. Some 21 organisations participated and distributed the online survey among a convenience sample of their staff. See the section on methodology and sampling for more details.

Background

OECD donors and humanitarian actors made a series of commitments at the world humanitarian summit in May 2016 to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian aid. The OECD secretariat seeks to assess how policy changes in the global humanitarian space, including commitments made in the Grand Bargain, affect the quality of humanitarian action. As part of this exercise, Ground Truth Solutions has been commissioned by the OECD, with the support of the German Federal Foreign Office, to track the way people affected by humanitarian crises and field staff experience and view humanitarian activities.
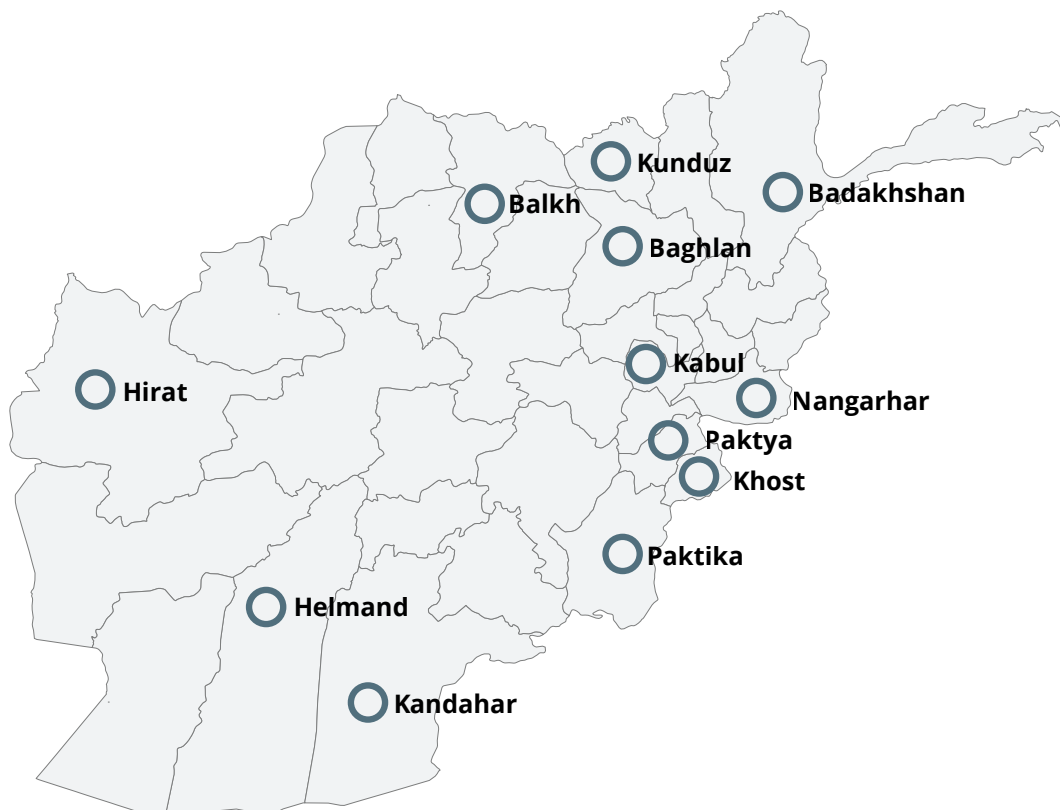
SECTION 1 - AFFECTED PEOPLE SURVEY

Summary Findings

Overall, affected people interviewed across seven regions* in Afghanistan express limited satisfaction with the humanitarian support they receive.

Humanitarian Services

There is only limited awareness of the kind of aid available (Q1). Respondents voice the need for more precise and accurate information about the aid and services available to them and suggest that this could be disseminated via radio, households, and TV.

Less than one-third of respondents feel that the aid they currently receive covers their basic needs (Q2). The most pressing unmet needs are housing, electricity, food, water, and financial aid.

Many respondents do not feel that aid is reaching those who need it most and believe that many people are being excluded from support (Q3).

Engagement

People generally feel treated with respect by aid providers (Q4).

Less than half of those interviewed indicate they know about existing complaints mechanisms (Q5).

In general, most respondents do not believe their opinions are taken into account with regard to aid provision (Q6). Responses to this question align with people's perceptions of fairness of aid.

Outcomes

Just over half the respondents feel safe in their place of residence (Q7). Those in the northern, western, and eastern regions report a greater sense of safety.

Less than a third of respondents feel that the aid they receive is empowering them to live without support in future (Q8).

Most people interviewed do not have a sense that life is improving for displaced people in Afghanistan (Q9).

OVERVIEW OF MEAN SCORES PER QUESTION

Question	Mean Score
Q1. Awareness	2.6
Q2. Relevance	2.8
Q3. Fairness	2.9
Q4. Respect	3.7
Q6. Participation	2.6
Q7. Safety	3.4
Q8. Empowerment	2.7
Q9. Progress	2.7

Scale: 1 (negative) to 5 (positive)
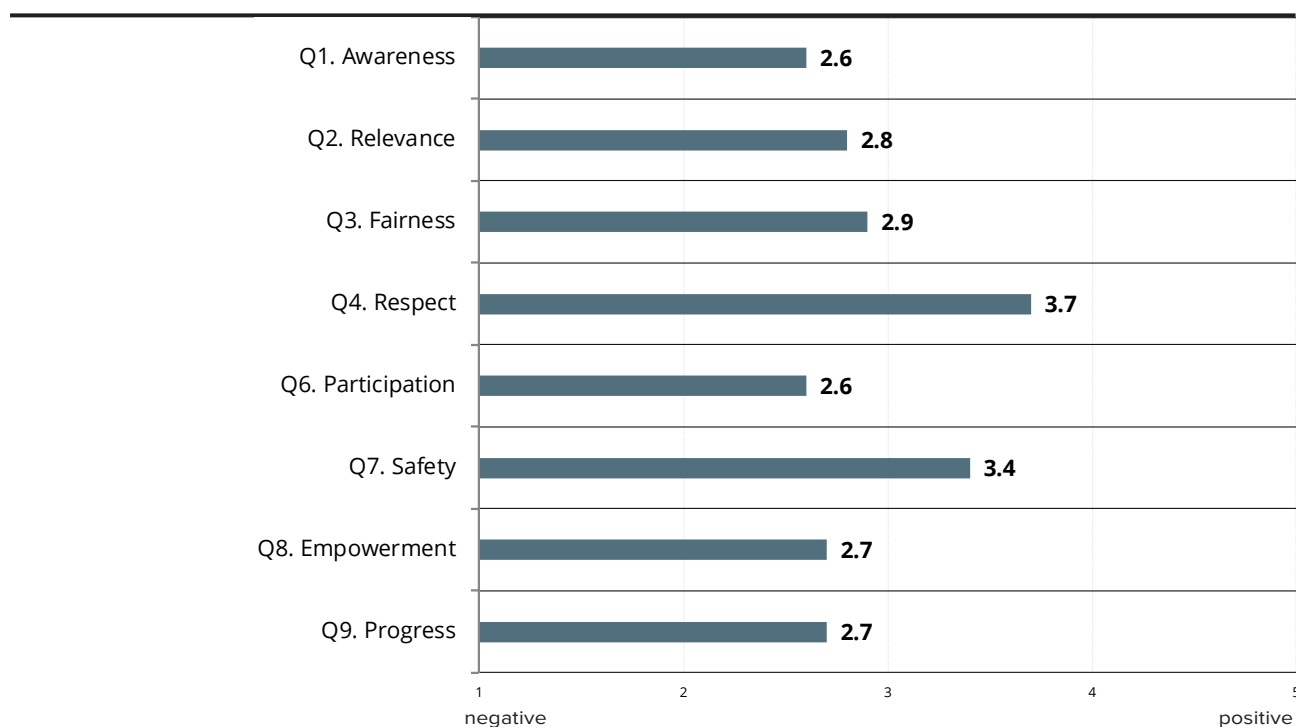
*See the demographics section on page 17 for the provincial breakdowns for each region.

Reading This Report

This report uses simple bar charts for both open and closed questions on the Likert scale. The bar charts show the distribution (in %) of answer options chosen for a particular question – with colours ranging from dark red for negative answers to dark green for positive ones. The mean or average score is also shown for each question on a scale from 1 to 5.

For each question we indicate the main conclusion drawn from the data. Some issues require further exploration or inquiry. This can be done either by comparing the perceptual data with other data sets or clarifying directly with people surveyed what lies behind their perceptions through, for example, focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and other forms of dialogue.
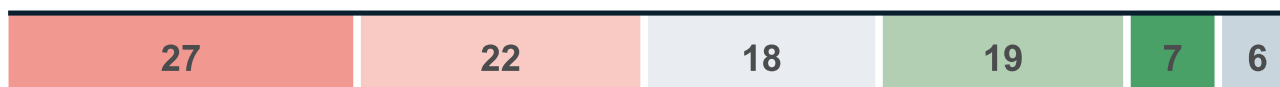
SURVEY QUESTIONS

Q1. Awareness

Do you feel informed about the kind of aid available to you?

1 = Not at all	
2 = Not very much	
3 = I know about some services	
4 = I am informed about most services	
5 = I am well informed about the aid available	
No opinion	
Do not want to answer	

(values in %)   **Mean: 2.6**

27	22	18	19	7	6

Respondents indicate that there is only limited awareness among affected people about the aid that is available to them, with almost half answering in the negative.

Scores vary considerably across regions. Respondents in Western Afghanistan are most negative about the lack of information. Those in the Northeast, on the other hand, appear most informed, with 50% of respondents answering positively.

Region					Mean
West					**1.7**
57	23	13	7		
Southwest					**2.3**
24	38	21	17		
North					**2.7**
31	18	10	31	9	2
South					**2.7**
31	15	10	26	10	8
Central					**2.6**
33	13	4	21	11	18
East					**2.5**
24	23	30	14	3	7
Northeast					**3.4**
12	19	11	24	26	7
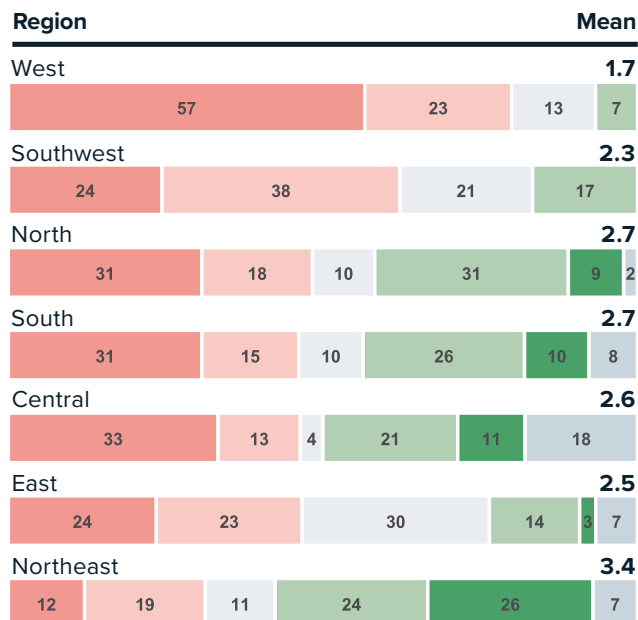
Awareness is lowest amongst IDPs compared to returnees and refugees.

It would be useful to further investigate how information about aid can be better disseminated.

Affected Population					Mean
Undocumented Afghan returnees					**2.6**
24	27	17	20	8	5
Documented Afghan returnees					**2.6**
25	22	22	17	7	6
IDPs					**2.4**
34	23	12	20	6	5
Pakistani Refugees					**3.0**
19	9	23	23	12	14
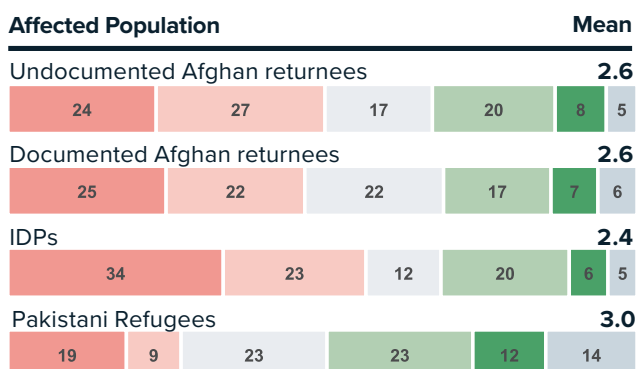
Follow-up question to those who responded 1, 2, or 3 to Q1:

What information do you need?

Types of aid/servcies — **39% (184)**
Housing/electricity — **3% (13)**
Awareness about rights — **3% (12)**
Education/school — **2% (8)**
Water/food — **2% (8)**
Health — **1% (7)**
Aid for refugees — **1% (6)**
Cash/work — **1% (5)**
Other* — **2% (9)**
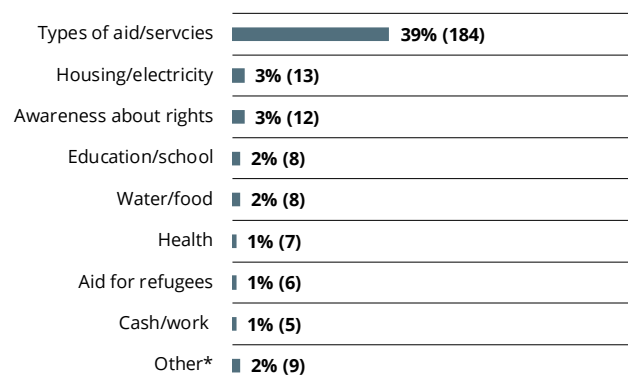
*"Other" includes information about aid organisations, aid for villages, government aid, aid for children, women-employees, and safety.

Radio — **21% (99)**
Through household — **14% (67)**
TV — **6% (29)**
House elders — **4% (20)**
Through mosque — **1% (4)**
Provincial shura/malik — **1% (4)**
Aid office — **1% (4)**
Through telephone — **1% (3)**
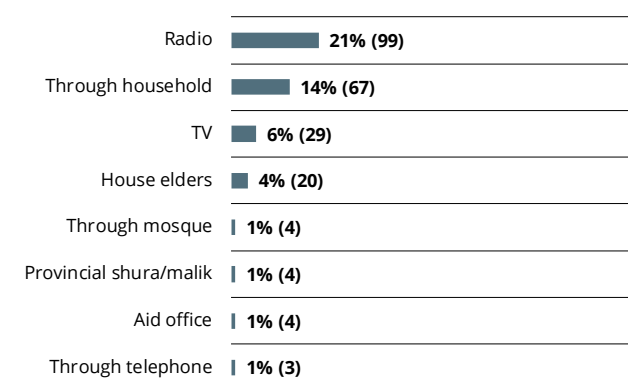
Respondents indicate they need more precise and accurate information about all types of aid and services available. Nearly half answer the question by explaining how they currently receive or would like to obtain information. The main information channels displaced people in Afghanistan appear to use—or offer as sug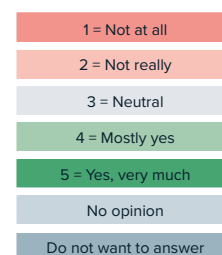gestions for aid providers to disseminate information— are radio, direct communication with the household (family, friends, neighbours, etc.), and TV. These suggestions are supported by the Asia Foundation's survey in which radio is identified as the most common source of information among Afghans, followed by TV sets.[1]

The graph shows the most common responses to this open-ended question. The figures indicate the percentage/number of people who gave this answer. Percentages do not total 100% because respondents could give multiple answers.

Q2. Relevance

Does the aid you currently receive cover your basic needs?

| 1 = Not at all |
| 2 = Not really |
| 3 = Neutral |
| 4 = Mostly yes |
| 5 = Yes, very much |
| No opinion |
| Do not want to answer |

(values in %)   **Mean: 2.8**

17	20	33	21	8
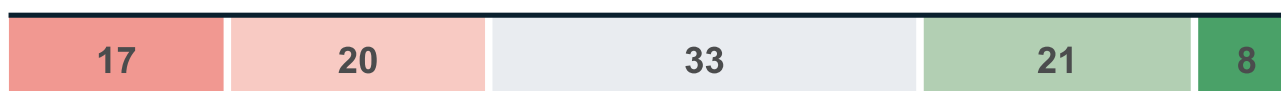
Opinions are divided as to whether the aid is sufficient in meeting people's basic needs.

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[1] The Asian Foundation, "Afghanistan in 2016: a Survey of Afghan People", p. 134.

Respondents in the West and North are overwhelmingly negative about their needs being met. The Northeast and South are the only regions where more than one-third of respondents feel that humanitarian aid meets their basic needs.

Region					Mean
West					**1.9**
48	17	32		3	
Southwest					**2.6**
10	27	51		10	1
North					**2.2**
47	12	23	12	6	
South					**3.2**
6	15	39	31	10	
Central					**2.8**
20	26	24	16	14	
East					**2.9**
8	25	40	24	3	
Northeast					**3.6**
11	12	11	39	28	

The majority of respondents who live in shelters experience problems meeting their needs with aid. Our data suggests, that provision of shelter support has positive effects on the people's feeling that their urgent needs are met.
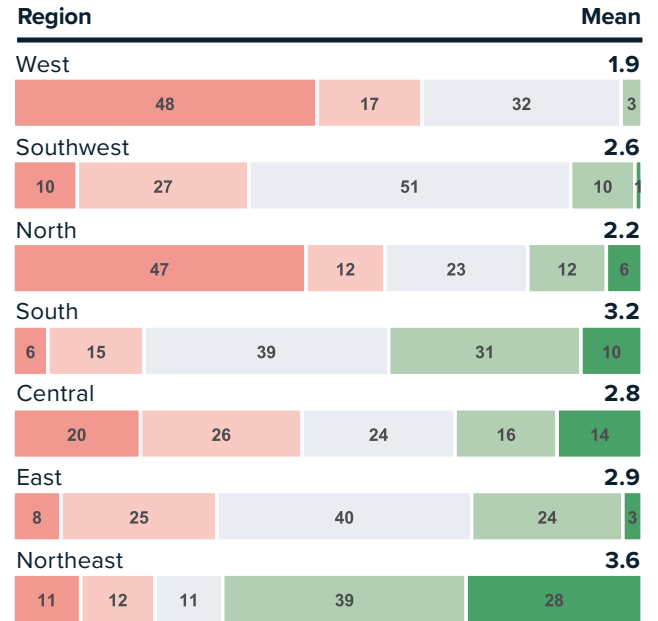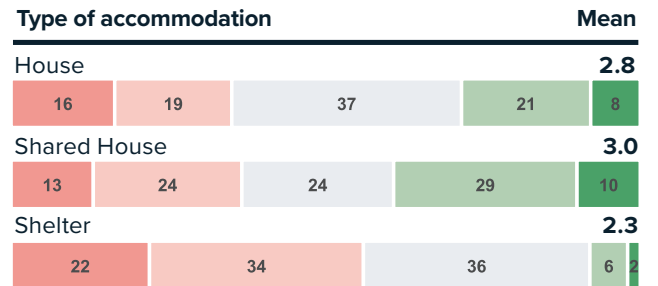
Type of accommodation					Mean
House					**2.8**
16	19	37	21	8	
Shared House					**3.0**
13	24	24	29	10	
Shelter					**2.3**
22	34	36	6	2	

While most respondents receive mutipurpose one-off cash, those reporting to receive vouchers score more positively than respondents receiving other kinds of cash-assistance.

Cash support					Mean
One-off multipurpose cash					**2.9**
10	21	37	27	4	
Regular multipurpose cash					**3.5**
12	35	46	8		
Vouchers					**3.9**
5	5	19	38	33	
Cash for work					**3.5**
9	4	31	36	20	
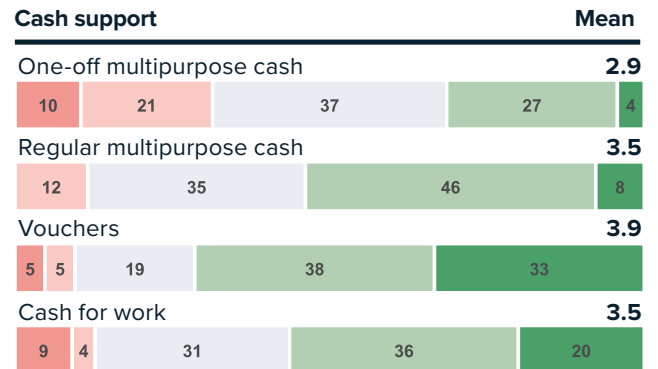
Follow-up question to those who responded 1, 2, or 3 to Q2:

What are your most important needs that are not met?

House/shelter/rent	**89% (469)**
Electricity/solar/battery	**37% (194)**
Food	**28% (145)**
Water/water pump	**27% (142)**
Cash/financial aid	**24% (126)**
Jobs	**19% (99)**
Education/schools	**17% (88)**
Healthcare/clinic	**17% (87)**
Security	**6% (29)**
Fan	**4% (21)**
Mosque/Madrasa	**4% (21)**
Infrastructure	**3% (18)**
Clothes	**3% (14)**
Other*	**7% (35)**
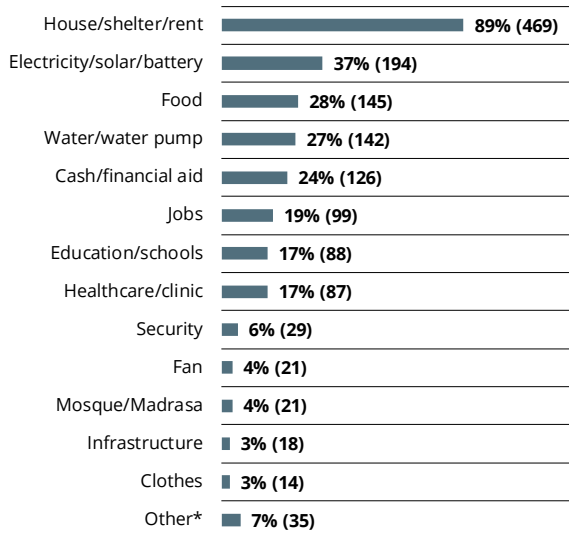
Affected people in Afghanistan overwhelmingly indicate that they have unmet needs with regards to housing, energy supply, food, water, financial aid, and employment. Education and health care are also mentioned as important needs that are not currently being met. These needs are also mentioned in OCHA's Humanitarian Needs Overview, identifying WASH, protection, Emergency/NFI, food security, and health as top emergency needs. They considered it critical for displaced people to establish secure living arrangements and viable means to support their households.[2] A socio-economic survey of undocumented returnees indicated similar priorities for shelter, financial support, and help in starting businesses.[3]

*"Other" includes life needs, economics, wedding costs, aid for disabled, orphans, and people in need, transport, toilets, public awareness, wood, winter supplies, and justice.

The graph shows the most common responses to this open-ended question. The figures indicate the percentage/number of people who gave this answer. Percentages do not total 100% because respondents could give multiple answers.

Q3. Fairness

# Does aid go to those who need it most in Afghanistan?

1 = Not at all
2 = Not really
3 = Neutral
4 = Mostly yes
5 = Yes, very much
No opinion
Do not want to answer

(values in %)   **Mean: 2.9**

14	24	22	23	11	6

Respondents are uncertain about the fairness of aid distribution. The data suggests an even split between positive and negative perceptions on whether aid reaches those most in need.

Women are less convinced of the fairness of aid provision than men.

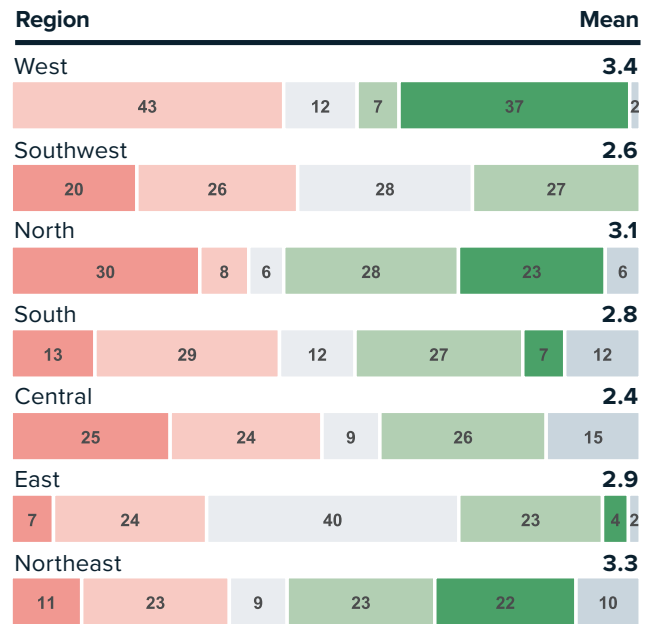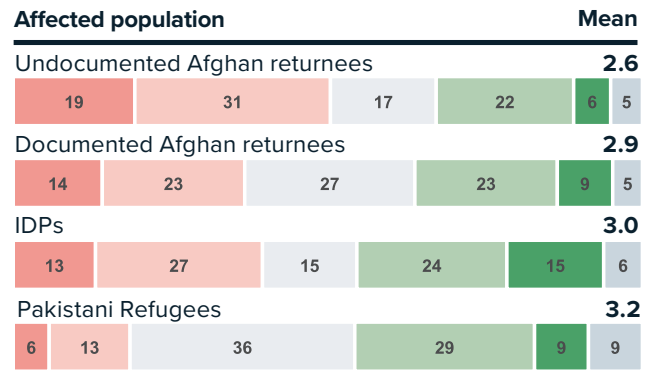| Gender					Mean
Men					**3.2**
10	20	20	30	14	6
Women					**2.6**
18	29	24	16	7	5

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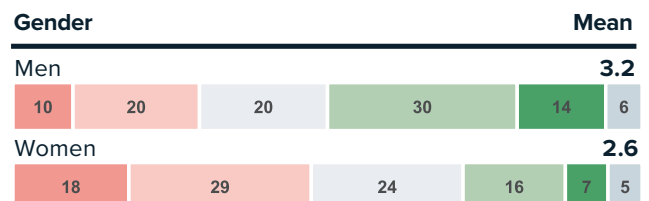
[2] OCHA, "Humanitarian Needs Overview", November 2016, p. 17, p.19.
[3] IOM Afghanistan, "Socio-economic Survey of Undocumented Returnees", February 2017, p.6.
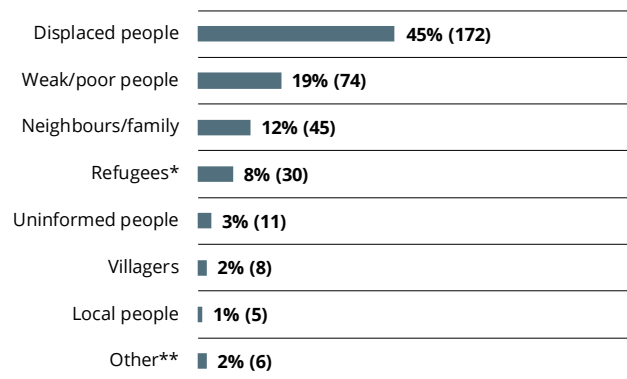
Half of the undocumented Afghan returnees do not believe that support goes to those who need it the most.

Affected population	Mean
Undocumented Afghan returnees	2.6
19	31	17	22	6	5
Documented Afghan returnees	2.9
14	23	27	23	9	5
IDPs	3.0
13	27	15	24	15	6
Pakistani Refugees	3.2
6	13	36	29	9	9

Respondents in the Central and Southwestern regions are the most negative about aid not reaching those who need it most.

Region	Mean
West	3.4
43	12	7	37	2
Southwest	2.6
20	26	28	27
North	3.1
30	8	6	28	23	6
South	2.8
13	29	12	27	7	12
Central	2.4
25	24	9	26	15
East	2.9
7	24	40	23	4	2
Northeast	3.3
11	23	9	23	22	10

Follow-up question to those who responded 1, 2, or 3 to Q3:

Who is left out?

Displaced people	45% (172)
Weak/poor people	19% (74)
Neighbours/family	12% (45)
Refugees*	8% (30)
Uninformed people	3% (11)
Villagers	2% (8)
Local people	1% (5)
Other**	2% (6)

Many displaced people are seen as excluded from support. Those who are weak, poor or without "relations" are also widely thought to be excluded. People in remote areas also appear to have problems accessing the support they need.

The graph shows the most common responses to this open-ended question. The figures indicate the percentage/ number of people who gave this answer. Percentages do not total 100% because respondents could give multiple answers.

* "Refugees" include returned refugees, refugees from Pakistan, and refugees from Iran.
** "Other" includes people without documents, people from closed houses, and complaints that there is not enough aid to support all displaced people who need it.

Q4. Respect

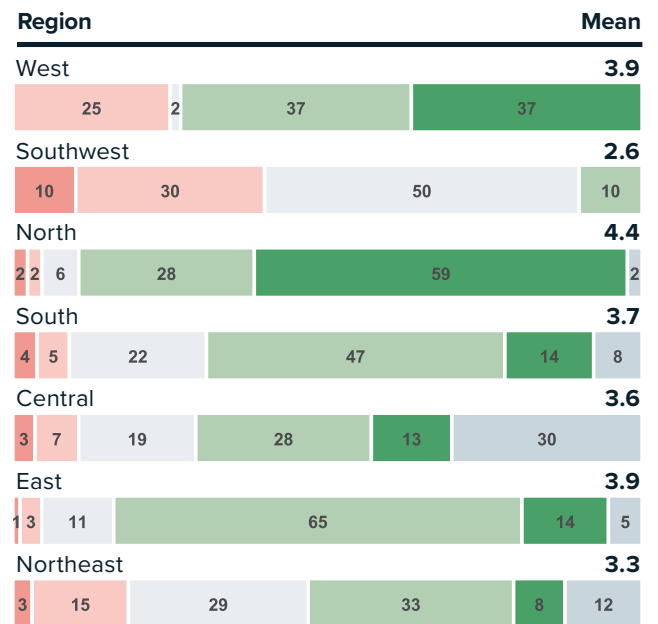# Are you treated with respect by the aid providers?

1 = Not at all	
2 = Not really	
3 = Neutral	
4 = Mostly yes	
5 = Yes, very much	
No opinion	
Do not want to answer	

(values in %)   **Mean: 3.7**

| 3	10	19	42	18	8

Most affected people feel that aid providers treat them with respect.

Respondents in the Southwestern region are the most critical of their treatment by aid providers, as only 10% answered positively. Affected people in the North, on the other hand, are overwhelmingly positive about their treatment.

Region	Mean
West	**3.9**
	25 / 2 / 37 / 37
Southwest	**2.6**
	10 / 30 / 50 / 10
North	**4.4**
	2 / 2 / 6 / 28 / 59 / 2
South	**3.7**
	4 / 5 / 22 / 47 / 14 / 8
Central	**3.6**
	3 / 7 / 19 / 28 / 13 / 30
East	**3.9**
	1 / 3 / 11 / 65 / 14 / 5
Northeast	**3.3**
	3 / 15 / 29 / 33 / 8 / 12

Q5. Awareness of complaints mechanisms (Participation)

Do you know how to make suggestions or complaints to aid providers?

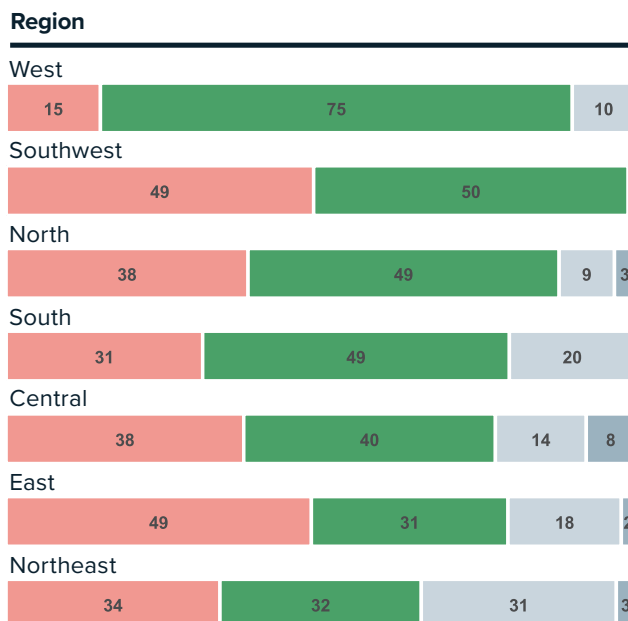|	
No	
Yes	
No opinion	
Do not want to answer	

(values in %)

40	42	16	2
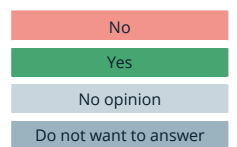
Knowledge about complaints mechanisms is limited among displaced people.
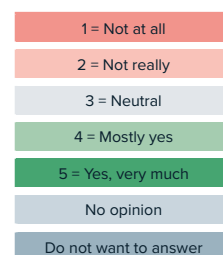
Respondents in the Western region are notably more informed about the opportunity to voice their concerns and suggestions to aid providers in comparison to the rest, with particularly low levels of awareness in Southwest and Eastern Afghanistan.
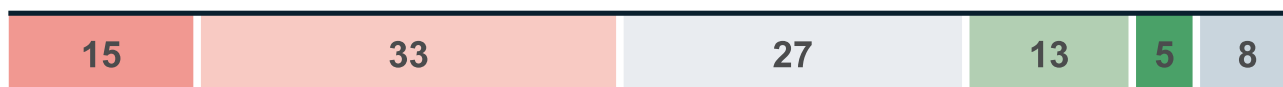
Region

West		
15	75	10

Southwest		
49	50	1

North		
38	49	9	3

South		
31	49	20

Central		
38	40	14	8

East		
49	31	18	2

Northeast		
34	32	31	3

Q6. Trust in complaints mechanisms (Participation)

Do you feel aid providers take your opinion into account when providing aid?

1 = Not at all	
2 = Not really	
3 = Neutral	
4 = Mostly yes	
5 = Yes, very much	
No opinion	
Do not want to answer	

(values in %)   **Mean: 2.6**

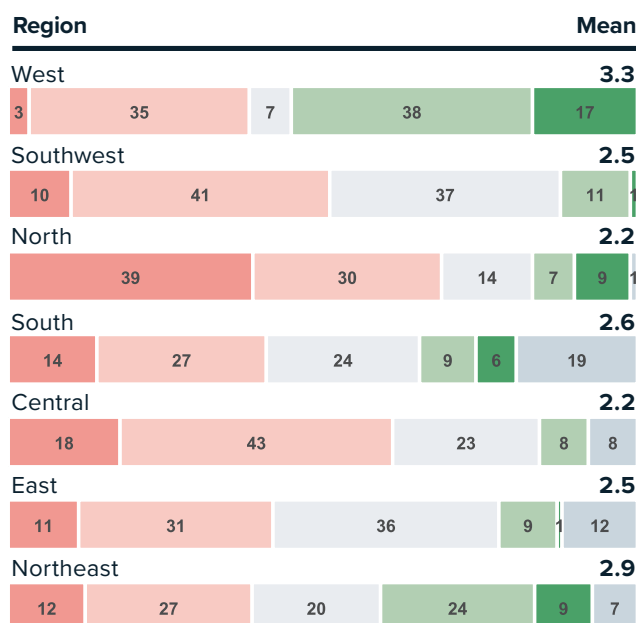| 15	33	27	13	5	8

Respondents are sceptical about whether their complaints and suggestions are taken into account by aid providers.

The West is the only region where a majority of respondents feel that their opinions are taken into account by aid providers.

It would be productive to look at the ways in which aid providers and affected people can better exchange information about the humanitarian response in Afghanistan. Raising the awareness of complaints mechanisms and closing the feedback loop by responding to suggestions and complaints could help to foster better relations between aid providers and affected populations.

Correlations between questions suggest that respondents who feel their opinions are considered by aid providers are also confident that aid is going to those who need it most.
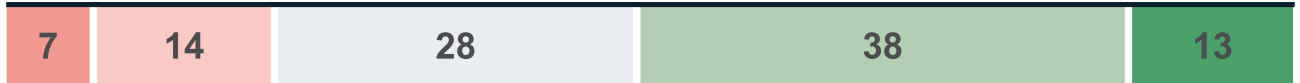
Region					Mean
West					**3.3**
3	35	7	38	17	
Southwest					**2.5**
10	41	37	11	1	
North					**2.2**
39	30	14	7	9	1
South					**2.6**
14	27	24	9	6	19
Central					**2.2**
18	43	23	8	8	
East					**2.5**
11	31	36	9	1	12
Northeast					**2.9**
12	27	20	24	9	7

Q7. Safety

Do you feel safe in your place of residence?

1 = Not at all	
2 = Not really	
3 = Neutral	
4 = Mostly yes	
5 = Yes, very much	
No opinion	
Do not want to answer	

(values in %)   **Mean: 3.4**

7	14	28	38	13

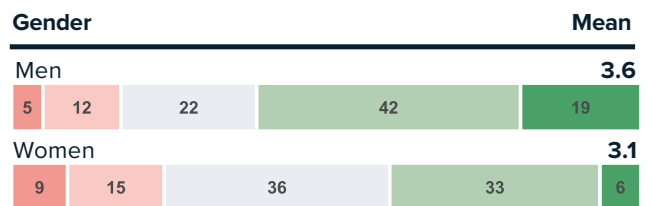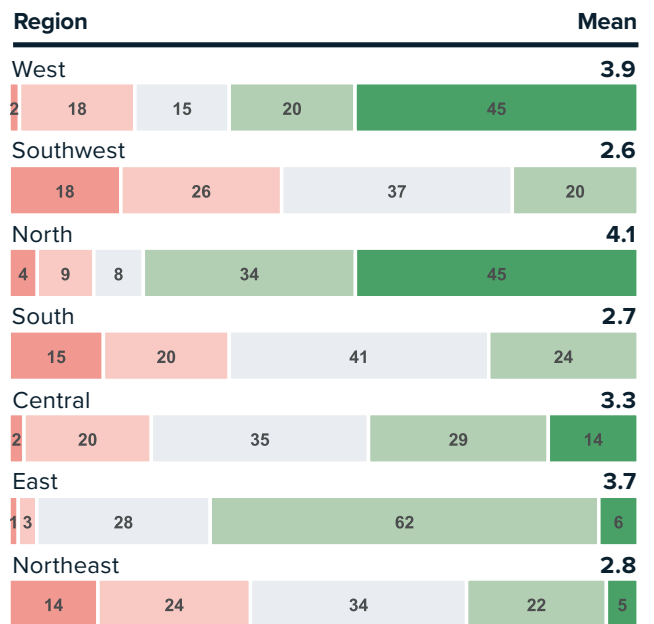**Just over half of the respondents feel safe in their place of residence, although a significant proportion indicate that they do not.**

Women are more concerned about safety than men.

Gender	**Mean**
Men	**3.6**
5	12	22	42	19
Women	**3.1**
9	15	36	33	6

There appears to be a greater sense of safety among those living in the North, West and East than in other surveyed regions.

Region	**Mean**
West	**3.9**
2	18	15	20	45
Southwest	**2.6**
18	26	37	20
North	**4.1**
4	9	8	34	45
South	**2.7**
15	20	41	24
Central	**3.3**
2	20	35	29	14
East	**3.7**
1	3	28	62	6
Northeast	**2.8**
14	24	34	22	5

Q8. Empowerment

Do you feel the support you receive prepares (empowers) you to live without aid in the future?

1 = Not at all	
2 = Not really	
3 = Neutral	
4 = Mostly yes	
5 = Yes, very much	
No opinion	
Do not want to answer	

(values in %)   **Mean: 2.7**

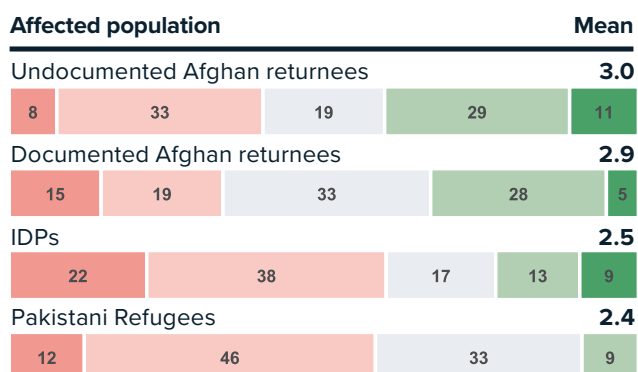| 16	30	26	22	7

Respondents do not feel that the support they receive will enable them to live without aid in the future. Only one-third of respondents feel that they are on a trajectory towards self-reliance.

Affected people in the Northern and Western regions of Afghanistan are resoundingly negative, with over 80% and 60% of respondents respectively not feeling empowered by the aid they are receiving.

Region	Mean
West	**2.5**
20 / 42 / 12 / 20 / 7	
Southwest	**2.8**
1 / 43 / 26 / 30	
North	**1.7**
64 / 20 / 6 / 3 / 7	
South	**2.8**
7 / 35 / 35 / 15 / 7	
Central	**3.0**
11 / 41 / 8 / 20 / 20	
East	**2.9**
8 / 23 / 39 / 29 / 2	
Northeast	**2.9**
15 / 26 / 24 / 18 / 16	
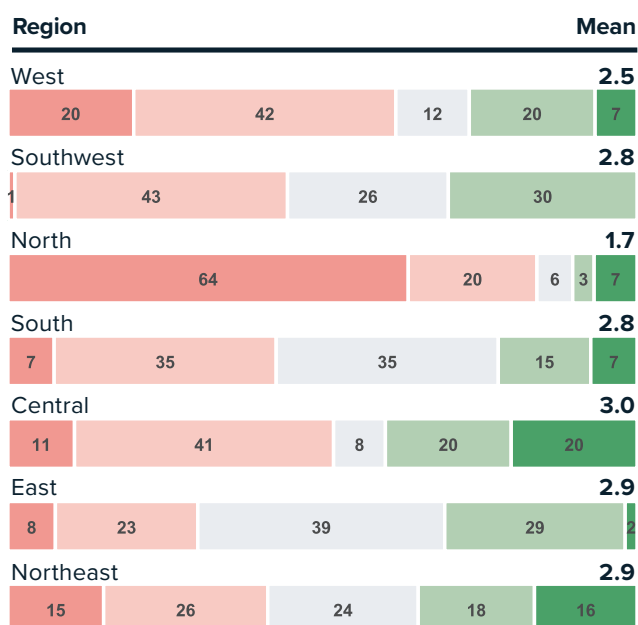
Afghan returnees are more optimistic than other affected people.

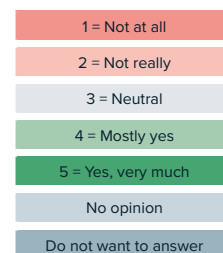| Affected population	Mean
Undocumented Afghan returnees	**3.0**
8 / 33 / 19 / 29 / 11	
Documented Afghan returnees	**2.9**
15 / 19 / 33 / 28 / 5	
IDPs	**2.5**
22 / 38 / 17 / 13 / 9	
Pakistani Refugees	**2.4**
12 / 46 / 33 / 9	

Not all aid can foster a sense of empowerment, but this finding nonetheless warrants further consideration.

Q9. Progress

# Overall, is life improving for people in Afghanistan?

1 = Not at all	
2 = Not really	
3 = Neutral	
4 = Mostly yes	
5 = Yes, very much	
No opinion	
Do not want to answer	

(values in %)   **Mean: 2.7**

15	30	28	22	5

Only one-quarter of respondents feel that life is improving for affected people in Afghanistan.

Respondents in the Southern and Southwestern regions of Afghanistan are slightly less pessimistic than those from other areas, with affected people in the North giving particularly negative responses.
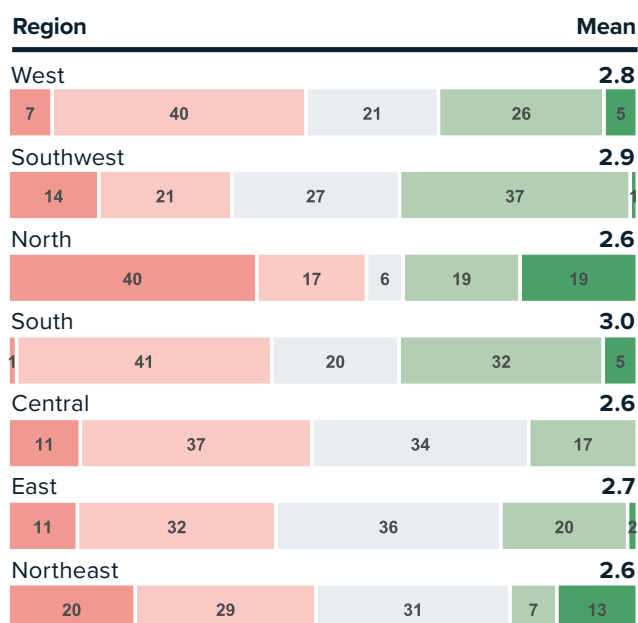
Scores are lowest among Pakistani refugees, with the vast majority not seeing any progress in people's lives.
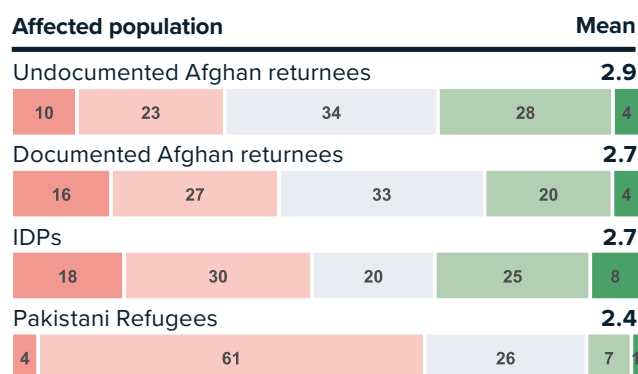
Respondents living in temporary shelters are more pessimistic about the outlook than those in houses.
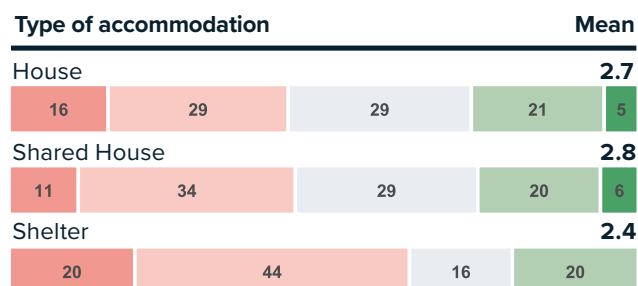
In a 2016 survey, the Asia Foundation registered a growing sense that household economies had worsened since the previous year because of shrinking employment opportunities, decreasing financial well-being, and a deteriorating security situation.[4] The survey also indicated degradation in electricity supplies between 2015 and 2016.[5]

Region					Mean
West					**2.8**
7	40	21	26	5	
Southwest					**2.9**
14	21	27	37	1	
North					**2.6**
40	17	6	19	19	
South					**3.0**
1	41	20	32	5	
Central					**2.6**
11	37	34	17		
East					**2.7**
11	32	36	20	2	
Northeast					**2.6**
20	29	31	7	13	

Affected population					Mean
Undocumented Afghan returnees					**2.9**
10	23	34	28	4	
Documented Afghan returnees					**2.7**
16	27	33	20	4	
IDPs					**2.7**
18	30	20	25	8	
Pakistani Refugees					**2.4**
4	61	26	7	1	

Type of accommodation					Mean
House					**2.7**
16	29	29	21	5	
Shared House					**2.8**
11	34	29	20	6	
Shelter					**2.4**
20	44	16	20		

[4] The Asia Foundation, "Afghanistan in 2016: a Survey of Afghan People", April 2017, p. 59.
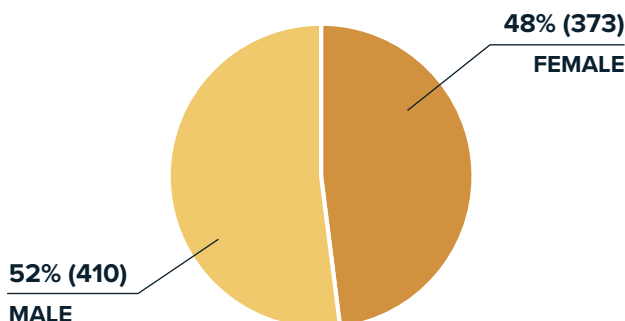[5] The Asia Foundation, "Afghanistan in 2016: a Survey of Afghan People", April 2017, p. 78.
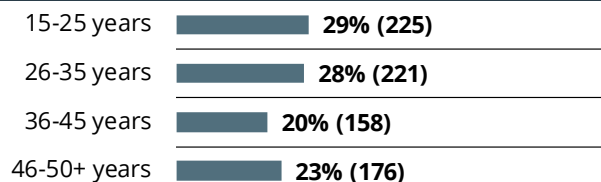
DEMOGRAPHICS

The graphs below depict the demographic breakdown of the 783 respondents. Each graph includes percentages, as well as the frequency in parentheses.
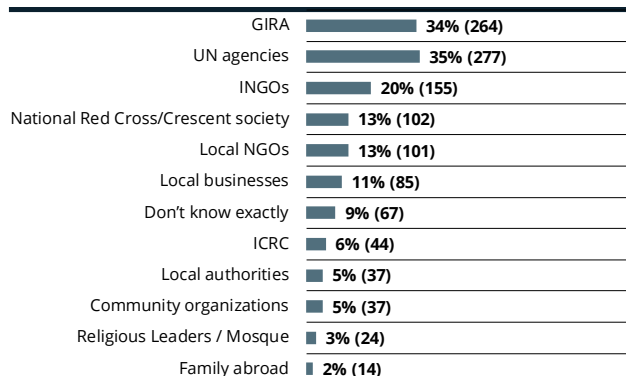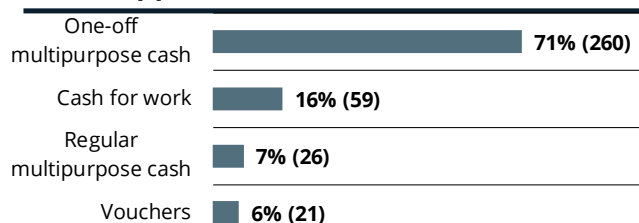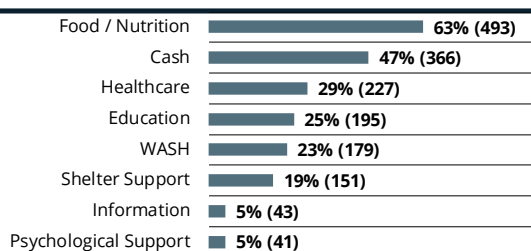
Gender

48% (373)
FEMALE

52% (410)
MALE

Age

15-25 years	**29% (225)**
26-35 years	**28% (221)**
36-45 years	**20% (158)**
46-50+ years	**23% (176)**

Cash support

One-off multipurpose cash	**71% (260)**
Cash for work	**16% (59)**
Regular multipurpose cash	**7% (26)**
Vouchers	**6% (21)**

Aid providers*

GIRA	**34% (264)**
UN agencies	**35% (277)**
INGOs	**20% (155)**
National Red Cross/Crescent society	**13% (102)**
Local NGOs	**13% (101)**
Local businesses	**11% (85)**
Don't know exactly	**9% (67)**
ICRC	**6% (44)**
Local authorities	**5% (37)**
Community organizations	**5% (37)**
Religious Leaders / Mosque	**3% (24)**
Family abroad	**2% (14)**

Region

East	**35% (272)**
Northeast	**13% (100)**
North	**12% (91)**
Southwest	**11% (90)**
Central	**11% (90)**
South	**10% (80)**
West	**8% (60)**

Province

Nangarhar	**23% (181)**
Khost	**12% (91)**
Kabul	**11% (90)**
Balkh	**8% (61)**
Kandahar	**8% (60)**
Hirat	**8% (60)**
Paktia	**6% (50)**
Baghlan	**6% (50)**
Kunduz	**6% (50)**
Badakhshan	**4% (30)**
Paktika	**4% (30)**
Helmand	**4% (30)**

Services*

Food / Nutrition	**63% (493)**
Cash	**47% (366)**
Healthcare	**29% (227)**
Education	**25% (195)**
WASH	**23% (179)**
Shelter Support	**19% (151)**
Information	**5% (43)**
Psychological Support	**5% (41)**

*Respondents could choose multiple answer options, therefore percentages do not total 100%.

Displaced groups

	from Pakistan	from Iran
Documented Afghan returnees	**38% (298)**	**3% (27)**

	from Pakistan	from Iran
Undocumented Afghan returnees	**12% (96)**	**3% (27)**

IDPs	**34% (265)**
Pakistani refugees	**9% (70)**

Province per region

Region		
East	Nangarhar **67% (181)**	Khost **33%(91)**
Northeast	Kunduz **50%(50)**	Baghlan **50%(50)**
North	Balkh **67%(61)**	Badakhshan **33%(30)**
Southwest	Kandahar **67%(60)**	Helmand **33%(30)**
Central	Kabul **100%(90)**	
South	Paktya **62%(50)**	Paktika **38%(30)**
West	Hirat **100% (60)**	

OECD

SECTION 2 – FIELD STAFF SURVEY

Summary Findings

Humanitarian services

Staff see aid funds being used where the need is greatest (Q1). Some staff indicate problems reaching out to remote areas and issues with targeting.

Aid is considered well-managed by the humanitarian community (Q2). However, some respondents see gaps in the response, the short-term nature of some kinds of aid, and lack of cooperation and coordination between humanitarian agencies and local authorities.

Engagement

The majority of respondents believe enough support goes to local and national responders (Q3). Nevertheless, localisation of the response is complicated by security issues, limited resources, favouring INGOs compared to local organisations, and government barriers.

Respondents feel well-informed about people's perceptions of aid programmes (Q4). However, some respondents mention a lack of information due to insufficient evaluation efforts and feedback mechanisms, insecurity and lack of access, scarcity of qualitative data, poor community involvement, a top-down approach, and lack of inter-cluster coordination.

The majority of staff interviewed feel that affected people are able to influence programme design (Q5). Humanitarian actors should look into ways to conduct more accurate needs assessments before submitting a proposal, client satisfaction surveys, and programme adjustments according to the results, as well as to improve coordination with local stakeholders, field visits, and direct interaction with affected people.

Outcomes

The majority of respondents feel that cash programmes lead – in varying degrees – to better outcomes (Q6). Some believe that cash programmes can be more effective if there is access to the market; proper targeting, monitoring and implementation; an integrated approach; long-term programming; and NGOs involvement in aid management.

The majority of respondents see effective cooperation taking place between humanitarian and development actors (Q9). Cooperation could be improved by joint programming, especially in livelihood and emergency response; field and/or cluster level coordination fora; long-term sustainable programmes; joint financing; support to local NGOs; and enhanced humanitarian-development-government nexus.
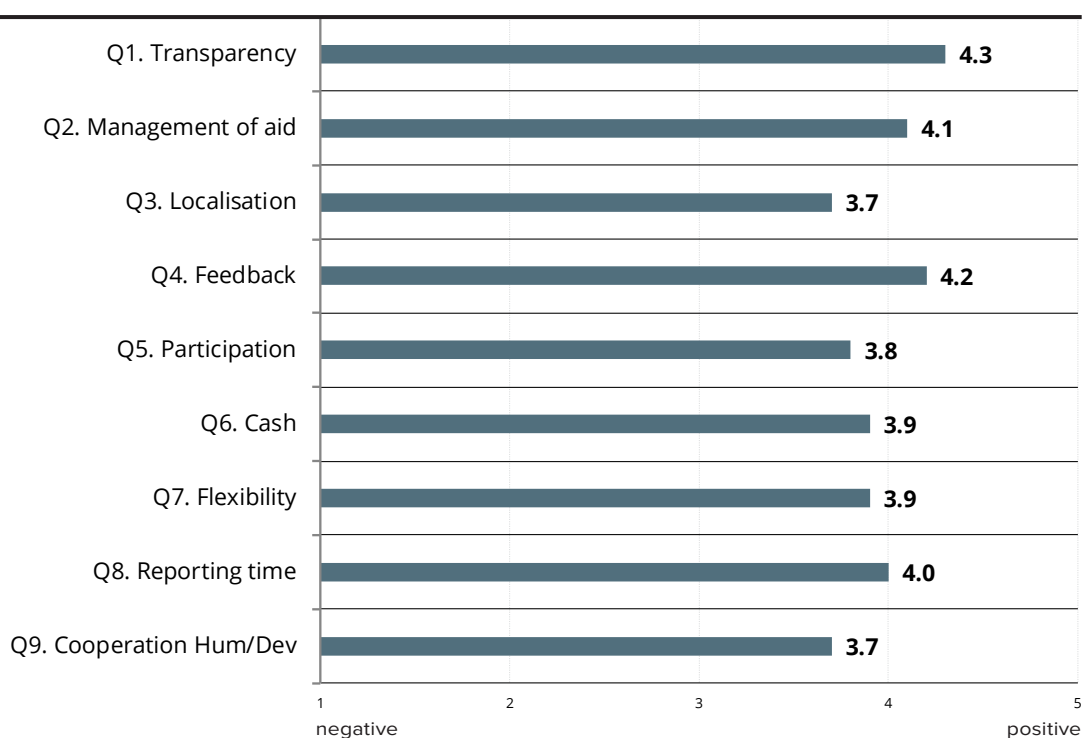
Donor related

Most staff are quite positive about the flexibility of programming (Q7).

The amount of time spent on reporting is seen as mostly appropriate (Q8). However, the burden could be lightened by harmonised and simplified reporting requirements by different stakeholders, on-line updates, deployment of more field staff, better division of tasks between team members, and less frequent reporting.

OVERVIEW OF MEAN SCORES PER QUESTION

Question	Mean Score
Q1. Transparency	4.3
Q2. Management of aid	4.1
Q3. Localisation	3.7
Q4. Feedback	4.2
Q5. Participation	3.8
Q6. Cash	3.9
Q7. Flexibility	3.9
Q8. Reporting time	4.0
Q9. Cooperation Hum/Dev	3.7

(Scale: 1 negative — 5 positive)

Reading this report

This report uses bar charts for closed Likert scale questions. The charts show the distribution (in %) of answer options chosen for a particular question – with colours ranging from dark red for negative answers to dark green for positive ones. The mean or average score is also shown for each question on a scale from 1 to 5. For each question we indicate the main take-away or conclusion drawn from the data.

Q1. Transparency

Do you feel aid funds go where they are most needed?

1 = Not at all	
2	
3	
4	
5 = Yes, I do	

(values in %)

Mean: 4.3

5	1	56	38
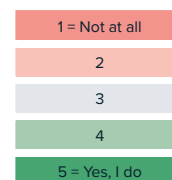
Aid funds are regarded as well-managed and used where need is greatest.

Respondents from local organisations are slightly more critical than international agencies of how the funds are allocated.

Type of organisation	Mean
INGOs	**4.3**

0	4	1	52	42

Local responders	**4.1**

3	15	3	29	50

UN agencies	**4.2**

3	68	29

Follow-up to those who responded 1, 2, or 3 to Q1:

Please explain why you answered that way.

Field staff indicate several problems of aid distribution, particularly reaching people in remote areas and issues related to targeting.

"Access is one of the most important issues in the region and the presence of organisations is limited to provincial capitals. Although most affected people in provincial capitals receive assistance, there are vulnerable families who can't afford to travel to the capitals, thus they remain unassisted. Meanwhile, donors have failed to fund programmes in inaccessible areas, believing it is logistically too difficult to implement them."

"Funds often go to the most "visible" crisis or populations and some people (IDPs, Pakistani refugees) are less-covered by funding."

Please give 1 or 2 examples of how this could be improved.

Field staff call for more consultations with affected people, joint needs assessments and coordination, flexibility of funds, programmes for remote areas, and better linkage to long-term needs.

"The field priorities are not taken seriously and the allocation of resources/aid is done centrally so some of the provinces are either favoured or the interventions are duplicated while on the other hand some of the provinces get less support."

"Provide flexibility to NGOs on which project they want to submit and which population to target, rather than making very specific calls for proposals."

"Contact directly with [affected populations] rather than completely relying on maliks *. Coordinate Humanitarian activities with others in the field or upper level."

* In tribal communities in Afghanistan, malik refers to a tribal leader or tribal chieftain.

Q2. Management of aid

Do you feel that aid is managed well by the humanitarian community in Afghanistan?

1 = Not at all
2
3
4
5 = Yes, I do

(values in %)   **Mean: 4.1**

1	5	5	63	26

Staff interviewed are satisfied with the way aid is administered.

Respondents from local organisations are less positive about aid management than other field staff.

Type of organisation	Mean
INGOs	**4.2**

0	3	5	63	28

Local responders	**3.8**

3	13	7	53	23

UN agencies	**4.1**

6	6	64	24

Follow-up to those who responded 1, 2, or 3 to Q2:

Please explain why you answered that way.

Staff see several problems in aid management: gaps in the response, short-termism in aid provision, and lack of cooperation and coordination among humanitarian agencies and local authorities.

"Instead of looking to compliment support, all humanitarian agencies are competing for the same caseload to provide food or non-food items. Further not all agencies report / co-ordinate with OCHA."

"Lack of coordination in some provinces, too much distribution (especially cash) without proper assessment and M&E [monitoring and evaluation]."

Please give 1 or 2 examples of how this could be improved.

A better humanitarian response would include: more flexible funds, accountability and M&E, better assessment of needs and crisis, reduced duplication and better coordination, and long-term programming with a focus on sustainability.

"Work in a way to channel the funds so that it is not for one-time use or "disposable" and wasted without return or value; these funds should be programmed in a way to help refugees to build assets and capital to survive in the long run. Likewise you can also achieve your goals beyond aid, like programme microfinance loans. There are many ideas and great potential for refugees to run small businesses. This will provide more value for donor money and help refugees; this is more strategic and long term than a one-off delivery of funds."

"Finally endorse an intersectorial assessment tool with a vulnerability index resulting from assessment in all sectors."

"Flexible funding could help to better plan programmes. Sometimes I have seen humanitarian organisations rush to spend the money before its expiry or deadline, which affects the quality and relevance of their programmes."

Q3. Localisation

Do you feel there is sufficient funding for local and national aid providers in Afghanistan?

	1 = Not at all
	2
	3
	4
	5 = Yes, I do
	I don't know
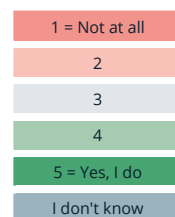
(values in %)   **Mean: 3.7**

2	14	7	54	15	7

Majority of respondents see enough support going to local and national responders.

Staff from local organisations are more sceptical about the sufficiency of support provided than those working in international organisations.

Type of organisation	Mean
INGOs	3.8
1 12 6 56 18 7	
Local responders	3.5
3 31 41 22 3	
UN agencies	3.6
3 14 11 54 9 9	

Follow-up to those who responded 1, 2, or 3 to Q3:

Please explain why you answered that way.

Localisation of the response is complicated by security issues in Afghanistan, limited resources, favoured treatment of INGOs over local organisations, and government barriers.

"In competitions for limited funds, UN and international NGOs have greater opportunities to get the funds while local and national aid workers do not have the capacity to compete with bigger organisations."

"Some partners (local) are good at implementation but due to their technical expertise and fund raising capacity they miss the opportunity of funding. International NGOs should include them as implementing partners to build their capacity."

Please give 1 or 2 examples of how this could be improved.

Suggested solutions to problems of localisation are more support from the government, capacity building, direct support to local organisations, long-term assistance, improvements in the security situation, and donor-INGO-local organisation nexus.

"1. Provision of long-term assistance – at least three to six years. 2. Integrated approaches are more sustainable and effective rather than a single, solid intervention."

"1. Good NGOs to be pre-qualified for [INGO] intervention in Afghanistan. 2. Donors need to support [INGO] local partners by provision of annual core funding. 3. Systems of local NGOs and policies to be developed. 4. Twinning programs and long-term work of UN with national NGOs needed. 5. Last, but not least, national NGOs have more acceptance, but aid management has failed to provide a balance between local NGOs and international NGOs; the presence of local NGOs is weak in the regional meetings of the UN."

Q4. Feedback

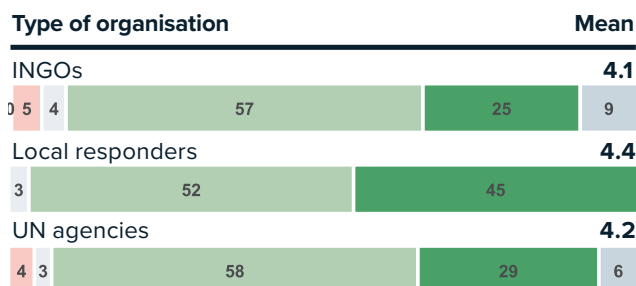# Do you feel that field staff like you have enough information about the way refugees see aid programmes?
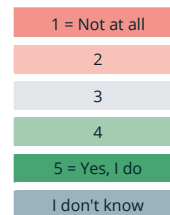
1 = Not at all	
2	
3	
4	
5 = Yes, I do	
I don't know	

(values in %)   **Mean: 4.2**

4	4	57	28	7

Respondents feel well informed about people's perceptions of aid programmes.

Respondents from local organisations are more convinced that field staff is informed about people's feedback than others.

Type of organisation	Mean
INGOs	**4.1**

0	5	4	57	25	9

Local responders	**4.4**

3	52	45

UN agencies	**4.2**

4	3	58	29	6

Follow-up to those who responded 1, 2, or 3 to Q4:

Please explain why you answered that way.

Lack of information among staff is due to insufficient evaluation efforts and feedback mechanisms, insecurity and lack of access, scarcity of qualitative data, poor community involvement, a top-down approach, and lack of inter-cluster coordination.

"Insecurity, lack of access, road blockages, broken communication system, lack of resources and others are the main barriers to reach affected populations. As mentioned, beneficiaries within secure areas could be reached to find out about their perception about the provision of aid. Meanwhile lack of sources (staff force) is another factor to reach to all beneficiaries."

"Current programmes are top-down without including the population's feedback."

"Because we [aid agencies] don't get enough information from assessments, only figures are shared, not perceptions or their [affected people's] ideas."

Please give 1 or 2 examples of how this could be improved.

Gaps in the feedback loop can be closed by creating practical feedback mechanisms, disseminating feedback results, informing displaced people about all available support, working closer with communities at the provincial level, as well as increasing funds and human resources.

"More in-depth community surveys and two-way communications and perception surveys."

"One example in assessment: people are in need of water but some organisations build them shelter and latrines while water is not available. Now they build shelters or latrines, for example, in Baghicha area in Shiekh Masri township. [INGO] built them permanent latrines where there was no water."

"Aid agencies / organisations should have strong relationship and awareness about each organisation and what resources / assistance are available in the province with full contact information. This list should be provided to returning refugees and IDPs."international NGOs; the presence of local NGOs is weak in the regional meetings of the UN."

Q5. Participation

Do refugees have enough say in the way aid programmes are designed and implemented?

1 = Not at all
2
3
4
5 = Yes, I do
I don't know

(values in %)   **Mean: 3.8**

2	12	6	52	17	11
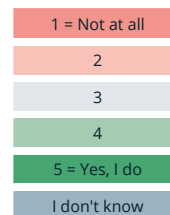
Respondents feel that affected people are able to influence programme design. This trend holds across all demographic breakdowns.

Follow-up to those who responded 1, 2, or 3 to Q5:

Please explain why you answered that way.

Some respondents point to the shortcomings of a centralised humanitarian system on the ground; a prevailing top-down approach; time constraints; issues within the community such as illiteracy, rights of women and children; a lack of awareness about the aid programmes among the population; and lack of consultation with communities.

"Most of the agencies / donors are in a race to do more. No one has time to listen to people's feedback and real needs. The accountability towards beneficiaries needs enhancement in all humanitarian programmes."

"The call for proposals and short deadlines often result in a lack of community consultation; consultation seems focused only on post-distribution activities (PDM [post-distribution monitoring], M&E [monitoring and evaluation])."

"Most of the organisations just want to achieve their target and do not care much about the impact of their intervention. So, the target group's comments are not involved in the way programmes are designed and implemented. In short, the aid might have not been allocated and channelled to reflect the affected people's most serious needs."

Please give 1 or 2 examples of how this could be improved.

Humanitarian actors should look into ways to set up a more accurate needs assessments before submitting a proposal, conduct client satisfaction surveys and programme adjustments according to the results, improve coordination with local stakeholders, and organise field visits and direct interaction with affected people.

"To systematically obtain feedback from affected people about design of aid programmes during need assessments, agencies must improve communication with and participation by beneficiaries."

"Strengthen more field visits and interaction with beneficiaries for the response they received and timely supports instead spending weeks for assessments."
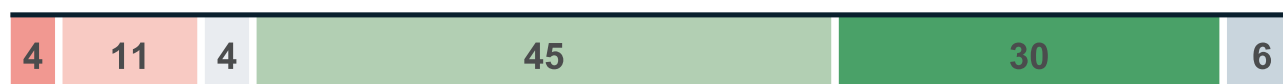
Q6. Cash

Do you feel that cash programmes contribute to better outcomes than other kinds of aid?

1 = Not at all
2
3
4
5 = Yes, I do
I don't know

(values in %)   **Mean: 3.9**
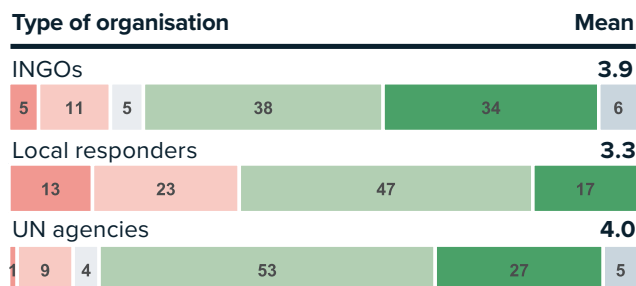
4	11	4	45	30	6
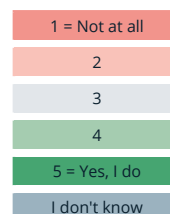
The majority of respondents feel that cash programmes lead - to varying degrees - to better outcomes, although 15% do not.

Respondents from local organisations are more sceptical about the effectiveness of cash support compared to international staff.

Type of organisation	Mean

INGOs — **3.9**

| 5 | 11 | 5 | 38 | 34 | 6 |

Local responders — **3.3**

| 13 | 23 | 47 | 17 |

UN agencies — **4.0**

| 1 | 9 | 4 | 53 | 27 | 5 |

Follow-up to those who responded 1, 2, or 3 to Q6:

Please explain why you answered that way.

Some staff see no advantage in cash programming because it is mostly short term, creates dependence, risks corruption/fraud, is not applicable in all areas, and requires existing infrastructure.

"They [affected people] should be helped with small projects to increase their skills; if you give them money it is only for the short term. But if we provide them with skills and ideas it will never end."

"It is inappropriate in remote and hard-to- reach areas. In addition, there is no good system in place to monitor the process. In-kind contributions will improve some behaviour change which is not possible with cash. Women and children will be undermined with cash contributions."

Please give 1 or 2 examples of how this could be improved.

Staff believe that cash programmes can be more effective if there was access to the market, proper targeting, monitoring and implementation, an integrated approach, long-term programming, and NGO involvement in aid management.

"Instead (of cash) other sustainable programmes will have better outcomes —such as vocational skills trainings, community projects, livelihood programmes, community capacity building programmes, and infrastructure creation or rehabilitation."

"Provision of income-generating opportunities will enable people to earn even after the project ends."

"The level of corruption is so high that improvement is difficult at this time, however an active role by NGOs might be helpful in aid management."

Q7. Flexibility

Do humanitarian organisations have the flexibility to adjust their projects and programmes when things change?

| 1 = Not at all |
| 2 |
| 3 |
| 4 |
| 5 = Very much |
| I don't know |

(values in %) — **Mean: 3.9**

| 1 | 9 | 4 | 59 | 17 | 10 |

Most of the staff are quite positive about the flexibility of programming. There are no significant differences in staff perceptions on this issue.

Please explain why you answered that way.

Staff mention obstacles for flexibility because of centralised systems, donor and time constraints, and security issues.

"Because mostly when projects are designed it will not be changed, the change needs more time for approval of donors in the circumstances of short-term implementation."

"Most agencies are linked to donor requirements and programme cycles imposed within respective organisations."

Please give 1 or 2 examples of how this could be improved.

More flexibility could be achieved if funds could be adjusted in a timely manner to the changing needs on the ground, if additional funds were available, and if more authority were given to the national staff and their ideas.

"Advocacy for possible change of context/situation with donors prior to triggering of change. Reserved allocations for this purpose when aid agencies receive funds."

"Give some authority to national field staff and support their ideas collected from the field."

"Sometimes we plan something for an affected community and submit a proposal to a donor. Later, at the implementation stage the community's needs change or requires more support to be delivered due to external/internal factors. We need the donors to be flexible with us in including/responding to new needs and/or in extending the duration of the project."

Q8. Reporting time

Do you feel the amount of time you spend on reporting is appropriate?

| 1 = Not at all |
| 2 |
| 3 |
| 4 |
| 5 = Yes, I do |
| I don't know |

(values in %)

Mean: 4.0

2	6	4	64	24
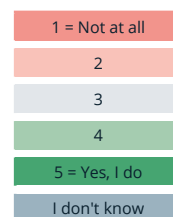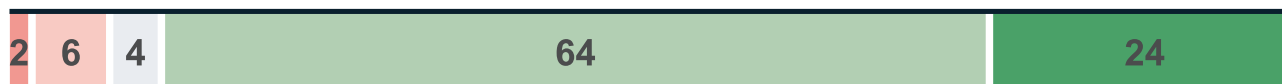
The amount of time spent on reporting is seen as mostly appropriate. There is no significant variation across demographic groups.

Please explain why you answered that way.

Some field staff feel burdened by the amount of reporting because it comes in addition to other field work, it must be done in emergency constraints, and it includes reporting to various stakeholders and is often duplicated.

"When you consider the amount of time we spend tracking every penny, sign-in sheets, write-ups for the donor, copying receipts...I spend at least 50% of my time tracking how I've spent the money. It doesn't leave much time to implement the programmes as it should."

"Because still there are many manual reports instead of automatic ones from COMET [Corporate Monitoring and Evaluation Tool]."

"Reporting to each cluster, OCHA, local authorities, donors... is too much. Information is requested several times and often duplicated."

Please give 1 or 2 examples of how this could be improved.

Reporting can be simplified by harmonised requirements among individual stakeholders, on-line updates, deployment of more field staff, or division of tasks among members, as well as less frequent reporting.

"Simplify, unify the formats, get the most substantial facts and evidence."

"Simplified reporting format and integrated database."

"Harmonisation of the reporting with government system (semi-annual and annual report) … online partner portal to be developed for the NGOs; through this method both, donors and NGOs, will have timely access to project data."

Q9. Cooperation

Do humanitarian and development actors work together effectively in Afghanistan?

1 = Not at all	
2	
3	
4	
5 = Very much	
I don't know	

(values in %)   **Mean: 3.7**

4	15	5	50	20	6

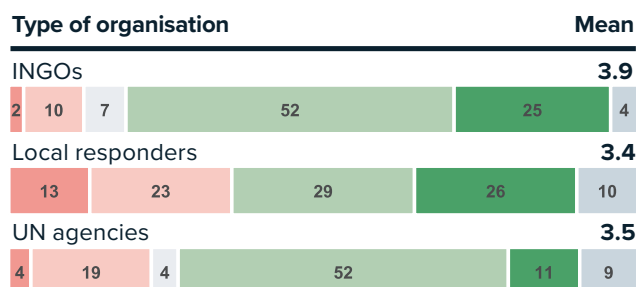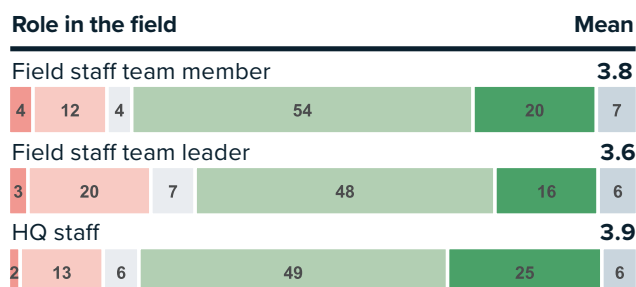**Most respondents see effective cooperation among humanitarian and development actors, although 19% do not.**

Staff working in INGOs are more positive about collaboration between the two actors compared to local responders and UN agencies.

Type of organisation	Mean
INGOs	**3.9**

2	10	7	52	25	4

Local responders	**3.4**

13	23	29	26	10

UN agencies	**3.5**

4	19	4	52	11	9

Field staff team leaders interviewed are slightly less convinced that humanitarian and development actors work together effectively.

Role in the field	Mean
Field staff team member	**3.8**

4	12	4	54	20	7

Field staff team leader	**3.6**

3	20	7	48	16	6

HQ staff	**3.9**

2	13	6	49	25	6

Follow-up to those who responded 1, 2, or 3 to Q9:

Please explain why you answered that way.

Negative perceptions are explained by poor coordination in the field, lack of development projects, gaps between emergency and development projects in Afghanistan, complicated coordination structures and a dearth of fora to bring actors together, as well as governmental inaction.

"I think the development and humanitarian fields are not yet well coordinated. It may need central-level attention, as in most cases the development field is run by the government and at the field level there is no such coordination mechanism existing to link the mentioned fields."

"No early recovery cluster, no joint coordination mechanisms."

"Due to the dynamics and volatile situation in Afghanistan, development is very slow and limited although a lot of aid has been injected into the country. Moreover, a clear line of distinction between development and humanitarian assistance is not drawn. If the development groups undertake their activities in time most of the emergencies will be dealt with timely and effectively."

Please give 1 or 2 examples of how this could be improved.

Cooperation could be improved by joint programming, especially in livelihood and emergency response; field and/ or cluster level coordination fora; long-term sustainable programmes; joint financing; support to local NGOs; and a humanitarian-development-government network.

"Clusters should identify cross-cutting issues that impact the implementation of programmes and advocate with ICCT [Inter-Cluster Coordination Team] and OCT [operational coordination teams] to bring about changes."

"Rolling out the early recovery cluster. Regular interactions between development and humanitarian actors. Government engagement and political will."
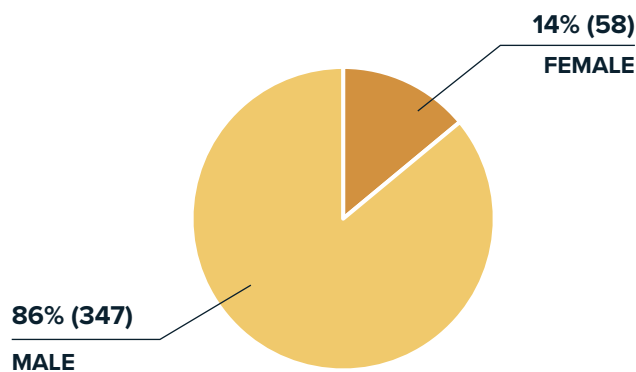
"Donor resources to be shared equally, continue capacity building for national NGOs, provision of core funding for national NGOs who are dealing in emergency situations, if they have funds and donor trust, together with UN they can bring about significant changes to the lives of affected populations, they know better than the government, NGOs have more transparency and are more accountable, and can have better differential diagnosis between needs i.e. poor and those with specific needs who require recovery and meaningful protection attention."

DEMOGRAPHICS

The graphs below depict the demographic breakdown of the 405 respondents. Each graph includes percentages, as well as the frequency in parentheses.
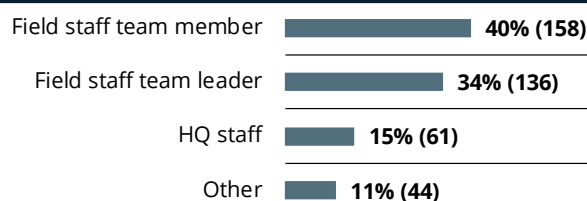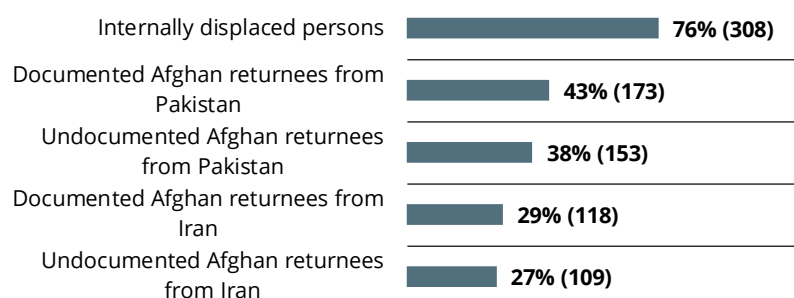
Gender

14% (58)
FEMALE

86% (347)
MALE

Age

19-32 years	**35% (124)**
33-42 years	**34% (121)**
43-79 years	**32% (114)**

Role in the field

Field staff team member	**40% (158)**
Field staff team leader	**34% (136)**
HQ staff	**15% (61)**
Other	**11% (44)**

Work with displaced people*

Internally displaced persons	**76% (308)**
Documented Afghan returnees from Pakistan	**43% (173)**
Undocumented Afghan returnees from Pakistan	**38% (153)**
Documented Afghan returnees from Iran	**29% (118)**
Undocumented Afghan returnees from Iran	**27% (109)**

*Respondents could choose multiple answer options, therefore percentages do not total 100%.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

The following next steps are suggested for consideration by humanitarian organisations in Afghanistan:

a) Dialogue. Discuss the main findings with your own staff and partners to verify and deepen the analysis. These "sense-making" dialogues should focus on themes where the data suggests that further attention or course correction may be necessary.

b) Advocacy. Consider sharing the feedback with other agencies working in Afghanistan to see how, together, the

humanitarian community can address concerns or bridge gaps.

c) Closing the loop. Encourage field staff to close the feedback loop by communicating changes or informing affected people about how services are being adapted to take their feedback into account.

Ground Truth Solutions' staff would be happy to discuss the findings with agencies in Afghanistan and offer advice on follow-up activities.

NOTE ON METHODOLOGY

Survey development

Ground Truth developed two survey instruments - the affected people survey and the field staff survey - to measure the implementation and the effects of the Grand Bargain commitments. The goal of the first survey is to gather feedback from affected people on the provision of humanitarian aid and track how perceptions evolve over time. The second survey, meanwhile, collects feedback from field staff on the implementation of Grand Bargain themes and provides a baseline to track progress on implementation and impact of the commitments. Closed questions use a 1-5 Likert scale to quantify answers.

Sample size
Affected people survey
Interviews were conducted with 783 individuals across seven regions in Afghanistan targeting documented and undocumented Afghan returnees from Iran and Pakistan, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), and Pakistani refugees.
Field staff survey
Online surveys were conducted with 405 field staff team members, team leaders and M&E, programme and technical specialists from different organisations, namely INGOs, UN Agencies, and local responders. Fourteen percent of respondents are female and 86% male.

Sampling methodology
Affected people survey
The affected population was sampled pseudo-randomly. The objective was to have representative samples in each of seven regions in Afghanistan, for each of the four groups of displaced people (documented and undocumented Afghan returnees, IDPs, and Pakistani refugees), and a 50-50 male-female split, with at least 60 respondents for each demographic subgroup to ensure representativeness. Participants were randomly selected and interviewed in their place of residence, in public places, on the street, and in social gatherings.
Field staff survey
Twenty-two organisations were approached and asked to participate in the survey; 21 participated and distributed the

online survey using a convenience sample of their staff. Organisations who participated were: UN agencies and international organisations (UNHCR; UNICEF; WFP; OCHA); INGOs (IRC; Save the Children, NRC, CARE, Solidarites , ACTED, PIN, Afghanaid, SNI); and the following local and national responders (CoAR, RAADA, RCDC, TLO, ADEO, AHDS, DAO, ORCD).

Data disaggregation
Affected people survey
Data is disaggregated by region, type of accommodation, gender, and received cash support.

Field staff survey
Data is disaggregated by type of organisation and role in the field. The analysis in the report includes any significant difference in the perceptions of different demographic groups. It does not, however, show the full breakdown of responses according to these categories.

Language of the survey
Affected people survey
This survey was conducted in Pashto and Dari.
Field staff survey
This survey was conducted in Pashto, Dari, and English.

Data collection
Affected people survey
Data was collected between 21 and 26 April 2017 by Sayara International, an independent data collection company contracted by Ground Truth.
Field staff survey
Data was collected between 26 April and 16 May 2017 using an online survey tool.

For more information about Ground Truth surveys in Afghanistan, please contact:
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