

AJAGAK BASELINE SURVEY

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Published by Integrity Watch Afghanistan
Kolola Poshta, Kabul, Afghanistan

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BASELINE SURVEY

Integrity Watch Afghanistan - USIP

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ABOUT INTEGRITY WATCH AFGHANISTAN

Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA) was created in October 2005 and established its self as an independent civil society organization in 2006. IWA's aim is to continue being a reference actor related to understanding, analyzing and acting for transparency, accountability and anti-corruption issues.

Integrity Watch's mission

The mission of Integrity Watch Afghanistan is to put corruption under the spotlight by increasing transparency, integrity and accountability in Afghanistan through the provision of policy-oriented research, development of training tools and facilitation of policy dialogue. Integrity Watch works all across Afghanistan in the following five pillars: Community Based Monitoring, Public Service Monitoring, Extractive Industries Monitoring, Community Trial Monitoring and Budget Tracking.

About Extractive Industries Program

Integrity Watch will monitor the extractive industries' mechanism founded to assess whether companies comply with the international standard of extraction and commercial production of minerals. The monitoring aims to limit the adverse environmental and social impacts of mining and to maximize the positive impacts of mining. IWA organizes different discussion forums with the government of Afghanistan, companies and civil society organizations in order to generate more interest in the sector and take an early and proactive approach to prevent and avoid abuses. It also seeks timely intervention through the consultative process between public and private section, civil society organizations, governmental institutions on the practical and legal framework related to extractive activities. This process is believed to strengthen natural resource management and to avoid resource conflict. Integrity Watch is part of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative Multi-stake holders group.

About Integrity Watch Research Unit

IWA's Research Unit undertakes research and advocacy on crosscutting themes. Its first objective is to develop new empirical research on corruption. Its second objective is to consolidate current knowledge on corruption, accountability, transparency and integrity. Thirdly, it aims to enhance research capacity for anti-corruption issues. Together, these objectives work to influence decision-makers, increase civil society engagement and raise public awareness of corruption issues.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Integrity Watch would like to take this opportunity to express our special gratitude to many community elders and residents in Ajagak¹, who shared their views and narratives. Our appreciation goes to district administration officials in the Shibar District for providing us with valuable and up-to-date information in their respective fields. Our special thanks go to all members of the shura in Kalo and people of Ajagak for their whole-hearted support and cooperation. Integrity Watch would also like to thank the geologists, who asked to remain anonymous, and provided critical data and information to the report. We are grateful to our colleagues, especially to Mariam Kosha, Javed Noorani and Dr. Marine Durand for writing the report. We would also like to thank Dr. Marine Durand and Marie Huber for their timely edits and Shahim Kabuli for his help in designing interviews and illustrations. Lastly, the report would have not been possible without the invaluable guidance of Dr. Yama Torabi, Ms. Fifi Sabang, and Mr. Daniel Munzert as well as the team at the United State Institute of Peace, especially Emily Horin, Dr. Raymond Gilpin and Rebecca Kullman who have been the driving force behind this inquiry. We also really want to express our consideration and appreciation to the IWA's Board members, especially Lorenzo Delesgues, and to the external reviewers, Dr. Juanita Olaya and Pr. Saleem Ali for the time they gave to review this paper and for their thorough comments and suggestions.

¹ Ajigak in local dialect is for old woman and it seems there was an old woman once lived where the mine is and the area is named after her. For Hazara people, Aja is the word used to call the mother. IWA staff was also told by Afghan Watch did a research on Ajigak and found out that local people were against the wrong spelling of Hajigak with a H saying this is not the proper term and does not reveal the etymology. The local community elders also attest that Ajigak is the correct writing so Integrity Watch take the opportunity of this report to correct the writing.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of a baseline survey conducted by Integrity Watch Afghanistan around the Ajagak mine region in Bamiyan from September to October 2012. This research is the first of its kind in Afghanistan to focus on the mines and communities living there. This study collected primary data on current social, economic and environmental conditions, governance, access to services and the judiciary, security, status of women, and institutional conditions of the 65 communities within the Ajagak area in the Bamiyan and Wardak provinces.² This study is a baseline survey, representing a current view of Ajagak, and the data collected will be used to compare with data collection in follow-up surveys.

The objectives of this research project are twofold. Firstly, this research aims to contribute to the knowledge and data and the future impact of mining in both the short- and long-term periods using indicators that will be identified as a result of this study. Secondly, this research aims to enable Integrity Watch and other stakeholders to assess the potential impact of future community-based extractive industries monitoring programs.

Ajakak is a mountainous region which experiences 7 months of winter and 5 months of spring and summer combined. The valley connects Bamiyan to Kabul via the Maidan Wardak Province through rough roads and mountain passes.³ These road conditions have a direct effect on the daily life of the people, in terms of accessibility and commerce. The province has not historically been known for mining.

The focus group interviews for the baseline survey showed that there are 1191 households in the 65 villages in the region, with a total population of 10185 people. However, the household data collected shows that there are 6127 People in the 895 households there. The village elders claim a higher figure for the population, however the findings show that there is an emigration of people in search of economic opportunities which may not have been realized by community elders. Household size ranges from 1 to 22, which can include extended family, comprising of parents, brothers, sisters, children and sometimes cousins. Bamiyan province has a young population and half of its population falls under the age of 17. The ratio of the sexes in the province is tilted towards males and is larger than the national average. In 2011 the number of males was 107 while there were 100 females according to the NRVA.⁴ Shibar has the second smallest population among the districts of Bamiyan, comprising of 6.9% of the population of the province.

The survey also shows there has been both immigration and an emigration of people in the region. The immigration is largely due to the return of the refugees from Iran and Pakistan while the emigration is happening due to residents searching for economic opportunity. Agriculture is the primary occupation of both males and females in this region. Women — besides carrying out household labor — extend help to their male counterparts in the fields and provide additional income by making handicrafts.

The findings show that people in Ajagak have land that they use for cultivation, but the amount of land is generally not large enough to leave the families with large income.⁵ The survey shows that 75% of

² 65 is the preliminary number of villages [type of villages impacted from the mine extraction].

³ Noorani, Javed, "Hajigak: The Jewel of Afghan Mine" 2011, (http://iwaweb.org/Reports/Hajigak-The_Jewel_of_Afghanistan-2011.html. accessed July 5th 2013).

⁴ Central Statistic Organization, 2011 'National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment' 2011-2012.

⁵ The minimum is 0.3 jireeb i.e 600 m² per family.

people in the region share their dwellings with relatives or neighbors.

The education indicators show marked improvement since the end of the Taliban regime and their collapse in 2001 where schools were closed in the region. Though there is data from 2000, and recent records show that more and more students in Bamiyan are going to school. For example, there were 108870 students in 2009-10 going to school in the entire province and this number increased to 129436 students in 2011-12—a 20 % increase.⁶ Schools have been putting in extra effort to prepare students for higher education compared to past years where there were few qualified teachers. In an interview with Mr. Sultan Delawari of boys senior secondary school, the researcher learned that teachers in school work with students beyond school hours to prepare the class 12th for pre-university entrance exam.⁷

While health is crucial it is a major issue for the people in the region. Health care costs a lot, and is often a major financial burden on the families. People of the region have many common diseases, some of which stem from malnutrition and lack of access to clean water. This research found that often women, especially expectant mothers, do not refer to a midwife or doctor in these areas. This reflects a lack of health centers and medical specialists in the region, as well as difficulties accessing those that are available.

Women have been active members of the community when it comes to economic activities, but their issues such as health, inheritance, rights, and disputes are still not discussed openly. Though young girls have access to education, it is still men who are often responsible for addressing their issues and problems. However, some women in the region have been part of their local *Shura* and have taken part in literacy and vocational trainings.

The decision makers and sources of popular opinion in the communities are often community elders or sometimes *Mullahs*. It has been an established order where the elders have the authority to decide for the community when needed. These influential people are responsible for resolving civil disputes between people in the village over marriage issues, land and irrigation, protecting the village from attack by bandits or other armed forces, selecting and managing development projects in the village, setting the punishment for crimes, and providing information to district, provincial and central government authorities about the situation in the village. The results of the focus group interviews reveal that in Ajagak the elders have still more power and are generally the primary decision makers for their community.

⁶Central Statistical Organization 2012, 'Education', (<http://cso.gov.af/Content/files/Education%20syb.pdf> accessed on July 5th 2013).

⁷ Interview with Sultan Dilawari, at Kalo, dated July 20th 2012.

Key Findings

The following points summarize the key findings of the survey:

Social, economic and environmental conditions:

- Ajagak is a mountainous region with a very heterogeneous young population. It has long harsh winter with temperature coming down to -25 °C.
- The average size of the household is 7.1 persons per house.
- Majority of the people are poor and depend on Agriculture for their income and daily life. 96% of people in Ajagak have access to grazing land.
- There is in-migration and out-migration in the region for various reasons, especially related to weather and job opportunities.
- Ajagak area and the villages around are representative of the Afghan patriarchal society, and decision making within the household is still the prerogative of the oldest man of the house.
- The majority of the residents have to borrow money to buy food.

Access to services:

- 93% of people in the region have a type of access to electricity.
- 54% of people have TV, and 74 % have mobile sets.
- 35% of the households draw water from unprotected rivers and lakes.
- 48% of people suffer from various diseases and are not in a good health condition.
- 67.2% have access to education and the households spend a lot of money for education purposes.
- Land property is mostly inherited without official documents. Some people have different kinds of local titles over the land, as Malyati and Urofi titles.

Governance and institutional conditions:

- 82% of people think the local government is working for the benefit of the people.
- Residents have local conflict resolution mechanisms mostly through community elders as Maliks or Arbabs.
- Community Development Council is operative in the region and they work in cooperation with the local representatives of the population.
- National and International NGOs have a minimal presence in the region.
- Over 90% of the population did not have information about the quality of the development projects implemented in their region.

Attitudes towards extractive industries projects in the area:

- 69% of female respondents and 79 % of male respondents showed readiness to give their land to a mining project in exchange of compensation.
- 31% of people who said they are ready to give their dwelling to project would ask for bigger piece of land while 25 % asked for same size land and money compensation.
- Infrastructure (especially the main roads) is bad and hampering connectivity with other cities especially during winters.
- Local people are interested in the investment and potential coming into the region through extractive projects. They expect a lot of changes with investment in the surrounding mines.

- Information about mines is shared within an elite group, which further distributes it to local communities, but often information is not shared regularly or in its entirety.

Recommendations

With the findings of this research and taking into account the research and the strategy of the organization, Integrity Watch issues the below recommendations for action.

IWA recommends to private sector, governmental institutions, CSOs, media and donor agencies:

1. Principles of Responsible Mining. Equator Principles and Natural Resource Charter call for informed consultations with the communities living and impacted by mining operation. In the light of these international standards and principles and understanding of the local communities the company and government must have sustained programs to increase the awareness of the people of the Ajagak and surrounding regions about mining, their rights, impact of mining and opportunities attached and the rights of various groups of people.
2. Civil Society should monitor and report on mining operations and its impact on the local population by organizing meetings and training regarding the different aspects of the mining process, especially technical and social ones.
3. Conduct regular informed consultations between local community, public actors and mining company to raise the stake of the citizens in general and communities around mines in particular in the project.
4. The Afghan government and mining companies need to train local populations on practical issues and prepare them for jobs in mining projects as an alternative source of income to their traditional occupations. Otherwise we may witness a large number of youth being channeled towards the insurgency threatening the security of the country.
5. The findings of the report shows that the majority of the people in Ajagak spend their income on health and education. Therefore, the Afghan Government is urged to improve access to, and the quality of, health and education systems in the region. This may give them a chance to save and spend on productive activities which can help to break the vicious circle of poverty and increase the quality of living for the population.
6. The Afghan government and the mining companies need to collaborate on a way to encourage public microfinance initiatives in the region to improve people's economic security and borrowing on market rates. For example, the company can set up a micro-finance unit to provide soft loans to local people.
7. Mining companies must have programs to help women acquire skills that may help them earn additional income. Women in the region are assigned household work and they are generally denied education opportunities. Family structures are often hard and fast, keeping them tightly constrained in their household roles. There is a need for relevant training programs for the empowerment of women in Ajagak according to the opportunities in the region.
8. Afghanistan has many titles for land. Mining requires land and the issue of land-titles will continue to come up repeatedly unless the titles are made uniform. The Afghan government should address titles, ownership and occupancy issues related to land and find solutions to avoid conflicts on the subject. The Afghan soil should be mapped and titled. Additionally, properties deeds should be uniformed across the country.

9. People who lose land to any mining project must be consulted, convinced and compensated at market prices. Because responsible investment in mining is strategic for the country, the Afghan Government ought to inform the population so that they are prepared to give their land for projects for a fair compensation and be resettled based on International standards such as International Financial Corporation Standards.
10. Development at times has led to marginalize some people, not allowing them or made it difficult to benefit from development projects meant for all people for example the location of a clinic may not be convenient for all people in the region. It is important to engage equally the local communities across the region to refrain from the concentration of the benefits of development projects to certain powerful people. The company must be careful about the development projects and make sure that they benefit all people equally.
11. The Afghan government must include an integrated environmental social impact management assessment into the environment law of Afghanistan. They need to hold the mining company to account for the combined environmental management plans' continued implementation throughout the project. Current Afghan law requires mining companies to conduct social impact studies to prevent the negative outfalls of mining operations, but only those in the immediate area of the mining operation. The law needs to include an integrated environmental and social impact study not only on the immediate area but also downstream in far of villages where people are forced to use the water contaminated by mining.
12. . The mining company should build protective walls along the river to avoid floods and protect the communities around Ajagak. This was repeatedly voiced as a concern by the population of Ajagak.

INTRODUCTION

Afghanistan is home to numerous precious and semi-precious stones, metals, rare earths and hydrocarbons. There are reports of huge reserves of iron, copper, lithium, chromite and hydrocarbons. Among the metals are the iron ore deposits discovered in Ajagak, the exploitation rights of which are under negotiation. The negotiation team seems to have referred to Integrity Watch Afghanistan's recommendations on Ajagak

The Ajagak iron ore deposit is situated in the mountainous Bamiyan province, 130 km west of the capital, Kabul. Though it is one of the several iron deposits within this area, it is the largest one located to date. The ore is located within the heart fault-zone as sub-concordant sheets and lenses within Proterozoic Meta-sedimentary and Meta-volcanic rocks. A study in the 1960s demonstrated the mineral potential of the region, estimating at that time that the Ajagak area had around 1.8 billion tons of iron ore, with a concentration of approximately 62% Fe.⁸

Ajakak is the second large deposit in Afghanistan being offered to foreign investors. The first mine in Afghanistan that was awarded to a foreign investor was the Aynak copper mine in Logar Province, which has over 11.3 million tons of pure copper at the ore grade of 1.5 %per ton of rock, according to a senior geologist at the Ministry of Mines (MoM).

The initial disinclination of private investors to move into Afghanistan was driven mainly by security concerns. The Ajagak mine was tendered in late 2011 and a consortium of Indian companies and a Canadian company were declared fit for the second round and negotiation has been going on with them for the last one year. The negotiation is happening in secrecy without much shared with the public and the concerns of the CDCs have not been heard.

The iron ore at Ajagak offers a good opportunity for the government of Afghanistan to generate revenues for its expenditure and development budgets and to reduce gap between the government and society. The social investment that is supposed to accompany contracts with foreign investors should increase the dialogue between the government and local communities, thereby bringing the government closer to the people. The new employment that will be created with the investment in mining and the associated social investment should help improve the understanding of public officials and civil society organization about the obligations of the government to its citizens. There may be unique negative outfalls as well due to mining project such as environmental disaster and social unrest. Investments in the natural resource sector in other countries have generated activities in other economic sectors, allowing countries to improve hard and soft infrastructure⁹ appreciably. This infrastructure has been instrumental in assisting governments in satisfying the needs of their citizens and implementing sound political decisions, both of which are challenges for the government of Afghanistan today. The new Constitution of Afghanistan was written in light of the current social realities to help the country transition out of conflict and to sustain social order, but it is not yet a respected document. One possible reason for this lack of respect is that the representatives of the people who went to Kabul to deliberate on the articles of the new Constitution did not engage first with their constituents to discuss and incorporate their views on the articles to be enshrined within the

⁸See <http://mom.gov.af/en/page/1382>, accessed on the 28 May 2013.

⁹Soft infrastructure refers to the legal framework, policy and regulations.

Constitution. Informed consultation with communities about the projects the benefits it would accompany for the Afghans and the threats need to be discussed to build trust and increase the stake of the communities in project. Negotiating contracts with people in Kabul may be inked on weak foundations if communities' voices are not reflected in the final contract.

1. Genesis and organization of the survey

Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA), with the collaboration of the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), Revenue Watch Index (RWI) and Open Society Afghanistan (OSA) designed an impact evaluation of the Ajagak mine in August 2012. Integrity Watch developed the survey tools and methodology and trained the qualified enumerators. Data collection was initiated at the end of September and completed by the end of October 2012. IWA's quantitative research coordinator Shahim Kabuli trained the enumerators and supervisors and conducted the monitoring during the data collection at the field. 10 male and 10 female enumerators and 3 supervisors received training. All participants received training on survey methodology, how to use GPS, how to administer the survey questionnaires, selection of respondents for the interview, etc.

At the end of training, each couple of the surveyors received a village list and each couple received one GPS unit to allow them to take the coordinates of each individual's house. Integrity Watch communicated with the Central Statistics Office (CSO) in Kabul and received an official letter indicating that Integrity Watch had the authorization to do the data collection for this study and the CSO office in Bamiyan supported the team. CSO and the Governor's Office in Bamiyan also wrote another official letter to the Shibar district administrators informing them about this study.

2. Research Objectives

The objectives of this research project are twofold. Firstly, this research aims to contribute to the knowledge and data on the future impact of mining in both the short- and long-term period over indicators that will be identified as a result of this study. Secondly, this research aims to enable Integrity Watch and other stakeholders to assess the potential impact of future community-based extractive industries monitoring programs.

This study also aims to collect primary data on current social, economic and environmental conditions, governance, access to services and the judiciary, security, status of women, and institutional conditions of the 65 communities within the Ajagak area in Bamiyan and Wardak provinces.¹⁰ This study is the baseline survey, representing a current view of Ajagak, and the data collected will be used to compare with data collection in follow-up surveys. Besides offering quality information about the region for the negotiation team to take with the potential investors.

¹⁰ 65 is the preliminary number of villages, impacted by the mine extraction.

3. Methodology

The methodology of this survey is mixed methods, including both qualitative and quantitative data collection. The Ajagak Baseline survey is based on questionnaires administered to three segments — female heads of household surveys, male heads of household surveys, and focus groups. The quantitative questionnaire included 133 questions for the focus groups, 193 questions for the male households and 141 questions for the female households. After asking personal questions on the interviewee identity and situation, the interviewers address questions about the research themes. The questionnaire consisted of mostly close-ended questions with some open-ended that were post-coded upon data entry. The questionnaire was pre-tested to capture all the connotations of local populations, nuances, and connotations of local population. The pre-test took place with the first draft of the questionnaire in Reshkhori village close to Kabul city. Due to the length of the interviews, some questions (especially on governance) were removed from the questionnaire to shorten it. Interviewers asked the questions to each male and female Head of Households, and to selected focus groups.

Household interviews

In total, Integrity Watch hired 20 enumerators and 3 supervisors. A supervisor conducted the male focus group at the village level. A list of the villages is available in the annexes.¹¹

895 households in 65 villages around Kalo and Arek Valley of Ajagak area were covered. A total of 1790 male and female interviews were administered in the communities. These interviews generally took around one hour to complete. The following indicators were included: household registry, access to land, assets, economic activities, access to education, electricity, drinking water, health facilities; access to road, market, judiciary, and information, perceptions about central government, local governance, conflict resolution, etc.

Different survey questionnaires were administered to males and female interviewees. The specific questions related to men were asked to men and those questions related to women were asked to women. This specification improved the accuracy of information provided by both genders. It also divided the load of interview questions regarding one household to the two respondents from the same household. However, both questionnaires had a set of similar questions to test the different perceptions of men and women and to cross-verify the accuracy of the data provided by the respondents.

No	Type of questionnaires	Number
1	Male Head of Household	895
2	Female Head of Household	895
3	Male Focus group	24

Table 1: Interviewees number and types

¹¹ See annex 1.

Village level interviews

In the second stage, interviews were carried out at the village level with 24 Community Development Councils (CDCs). CDCs are not present in each village and can represent more than one village. The 24 CDC represent the 65 villages. The survey takes into consideration all the CDC of the selected area. There was neither CDC removed from the study nor random selection.

CDC members were chosen because they are the ones who are making decisions regarding development at the community and village level. CDC is a democratic institution and unlike elders or mullah, CDC members are elected by the villagers. Most of the important and reliable elders are elected by the citizens to be part of the CDC, so it gives the CDC a representative status and a legitimate voice. As the chief of CDC members, the head of CDC has crucial information not only about political aspects such as village governance and conflict resolution, but also socioeconomic aspects such as demography, water distribution, agriculture, and activities related to mine extraction.

These interviews were conducted in an average of 2 hours. Four to nine CDC members were selected to participate in each of the interviews. The CDC members decided themselves who will attend the focus group and the number was limited to give enough time to each participant.

The indicators were focused on village governance, women's role in the village, village decision-making processes, conflict resolution mechanisms, village security, knowledge of the Ajagak contract and implementation, and environmental issues. The researcher looked for the general consensus amongst the participants in most of the questions. In most of the questions, the CDC members agreed to select one answer. In some other questions, when CDC members disagreed the numbers of the different answers were counted up and the answer with the highest number was picked. All questions were closed questions. The reason for using this tool was to find information and observe the functioning of village-level institutions. The focus group provided a check over the responses provided by the interviewers. The focus group took place as a public gathering, making it more difficult for the interviewee to lie in front of their acquaintances. Sometimes in certain focus groups interviewees did not want to talk in front of elders. Therefore, several questions were asked directly to each individual privately and the researcher asked them to write the number of the respondent in front of the answer. This was done to ensure freedom of expression, maximum participation, and validity of results.

All the surveys were conducted in a panel interview with the same households and CDC members in order to compare positive and negative impacts of extraction of Ajagak to those communities who are living close to the mining site. Integrity Watch has recorded detailed information about each household to allow tracing them for future surveys. This comparison will help policy makers to revise policies and to not only mitigate any negative impacts of future mining activities but also to create positive impacts. This study could also serve as a relevant tool to measure the impacts of large mining activities in the Afghan context and the efforts of civil society in monitoring them.

Monitoring and verification strategy

The survey was designed with a rigorous methodology including a two level corroboration procedure. First level of cross-verification took place on the field, at the household level. Surveyors and supervisors were trained in Kabul at the end of September 2012. Three supervisors have the responsibility to monitor the three teams of surveyors. The supervisor checked the completed interview forms at the end of the interview process in the village. He also conducted re-interviews with 5% of households in each

village. He cross-verified essentially demographic and agricultural questions about the household members between female and male answers.

The second level of cross-verification was done during the analysis at the focus group level. Integrity Watch analyst compared the data regarding the population provided by the focus group interviews at village level and the interviews aggregated at village level.

4. Scope of the study

The survey and focus group questions were about the following aspects of Ajagak's communities:

- The current socio-economic conditions of the local communities directly impacted by the Ajagak mine.
- The potential social, economic, environmental, governmental and institutional impacts of mining in the communities close to the mining area once operations start.
- The capacity and interest of local communities to monitor extractive processes at Ajagak.
- The training needs of the community monitors in order to enable them to monitor the impacts of mine-related activities, including infrastructure development.
- The level of satisfaction and acceptability of monitoring activities among the community members.
- The ability of civil society to help the improvement of the communities' knowledge on transparency, access to project information and oversight capacities.
- The potential of extractive activities at Ajagak to improve access to basic facilities (*i.e.* drinking water, electricity, health facilities, schools, roads, markets, access to information) for those households close to the mine area.
- The impact of extractive activities at Ajagak on women's role in governance at the village level and women's capacity to monitor extractive processes at Ajagak.
- The extent to which mining activities at Ajagak affects the trust between people and the government.
- The impact of the mining activities at Ajagak on the security situation in the region.

The survey questionnaire focused on the social and economic conditions of the villages, infrastructure, political institutions and governance, and potential or existing community-based monitoring.

Social conditions studied in this survey included: demographic changes, literacy, education level, employment, information regarding housing types, physical facilities, access to water and electricity, inter-community relationships, community networks and organizations, and institutions such as schools, health facilities and markets or bazar.

Economic aspects consisted of different criterion such as employment, sources and levels of income, household expenses, debts or credits, agricultural and land matters, livestock and exploitations...

The infrastructure situation has also been analyzed, including access to and condition of roads and access to market and health or educational institutions.

Regarding institutions, the interviews comprised some questions on service delivery, existing state institutions, and access to local government agencies. The researchers were also interested in governance matters, conflict actors and dynamics, mediation and conflict resolution mechanisms, access to justice, household perceptions on different issues (fairness in treatment by government officials, land resettlement plans, community consultation, security, Ajagak Protection Unit, mine related corruption) and access to grievance compensation mechanisms, to Ajagak authority.

The study also examines the existence of community monitoring, capacities, and other monitoring mechanisms. It aims to measure the level of satisfaction of citizens, their expectations, and the impact on transparency and access to information regarding the mining project and the environment as it affects community life.

INTRODUCTION

Afghanistan is home to numerous precious and semi-precious stones, metals, rare earths and hydrocarbons. There are reports of huge reserves of iron, copper, lithium, chromite and hydrocarbons. Among the metals are the iron ore deposits discovered in Ajagak, the exploitation rights of which are under negotiation. The negotiation team seems to have referred to Integrity Watch Afghanistan's recommendations on Ajagak.

The Ajagak iron ore deposit is situated in the mountainous Bamiyan province, 130 km west of the capital, Kabul. Though it is one of the several iron deposits within this area, it is estimated to be the largest one to date in Afghanistan. Ajagak is the second largest deposit of any kind in Afghanistan being offered to foreign investors. The first mine in Afghanistan that was awarded to a foreign investor was the Aynak copper mine in the Logar Province, which has over 11.3 million tons of pure copper at the ore grade of 1.6% per ton of rock, according to a senior geologist at the Ministry of Mines (MoM).

The initial disinclination of private investors to move into Afghanistan was driven mainly by security concerns. The Ajagak mine was tendered in late 2011 and a consortium of Indian companies and a Canadian company were declared fit for the second round and negotiations have been going on with them for the last year. The negotiation is happening in secrecy without much being shared with the public and the concerns of the CDCs have not been heard.

The iron ore at Ajagak offers a good opportunity for the government of Afghanistan to generate revenues which can be used to develop the infrastructure and expand the opportunities for citizens in the immediate areas of mining activity and to reduce the gap between the government and society. The social investment that is supposed to accompany contracts with foreign investors should increase the dialogue between the government and local communities, thereby bringing the government closer to the people. The new employment that will be created with the investment in mining and the associated social investment should help improve the understanding of public officials and civil society organizations about the obligations of the government to its citizens. There may be unique negative fallout from new mining project as well, such as environmental disaster and social unrest. Investments in the natural resource sector in other countries have generated activities in other economic sectors, allowing countries to improve hard and soft infrastructure¹² appreciably. This infrastructure has been instrumental in assisting governments to satisfy the needs of their citizens and implementing sound political decisions, both of which are challenges for the government of Afghanistan today. The new Constitution of Afghanistan was written in light of the current social reality required to help the country transition out of conflict and to sustain social order, but it is not yet a respected document. One possible reason for this lack of respect is that the representatives of the people who went to Kabul to deliberate on the articles of the new Constitution did not engage first with their constituents to discuss and incorporate their views on the articles to be enshrined within the Constitution. Informed consultation with communities about the projects the benefits it would accompany for the Afghans and the threats need to be discussed to build trust and increase the stake of the communities in project. Negotiating contracts with people in Kabul may be inked on weak foundations if communities' voices are not reflected in the final contract.

¹² Soft infrastructure refers to the legal framework, policy and regulations.

1. Genesis and organization of the survey

Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA), with the collaboration of the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), Revenue Watch Index (RWI) and Open Society Afghanistan (OSA) designed an impact evaluation of the Ajagak mine in August 2012. Integrity Watch developed the survey tools and methodology, and trained the qualified enumerators. Data collection was initiated at the end of September and completed by the end of October 2012. IWA's quantitative research coordinator Shahim Kabuli trained the enumerators and supervisors and conducted the monitoring during the data collection in the field. 10 male and 10 female enumerators and 3 supervisors received training. All participants received training on survey methodology, how to use GPS, how to administer the survey questionnaires, selection of respondents for the interview, etc.

At the end of training, each pair of the surveyors received a village list and one GPS unit to allow them to take the coordinates of each individual's house. Integrity Watch communicated with the Central Statistics Office (CSO) in Kabul and received an official letter indicating that Integrity Watch had the authorization to do the data collection for this study and the CSO office in Bamiyan supported the team. CSOs and the Governor's Office in Bamiyan also wrote another official letter to the Shibar district administrators informing them about this study.

2. Research Objectives

The objectives of this research project are twofold. Firstly, this research aims to contribute to the knowledge and data on the future impact of mining in both the short- and long-term period over indicators that will be identified as a result of this study. Secondly, this research aims to enable Integrity Watch and other stakeholders to assess the potential impact of future community-based extractive industries monitoring programs.

This study also aims to collect primary data on current social, economic and environmental conditions, governance, access to services and the judiciary, security, status of women, and institutional conditions of the 65 communities within the Ajagak area in Bamiyan and Wardak provinces.¹³ This study is the baseline survey, representing a current view of Ajagak, and the data collected will be used to compare with data collection in follow-up surveys. This research will also offer quality information about the region for the negotiation team to use for potential investors.

3. Methodology

The methodology of this survey uses mixed methods, including both qualitative and quantitative data collection. The Ajagak Baseline survey is based on questionnaires administered into three segments — female heads of household surveys, male heads of household surveys, and focus groups. The quantitative questionnaire included 133 questions for the focus groups, 193 questions for the male

¹³ 65 is the preliminary number of villages, impacted by the mine extraction.

households and 141 questions for the female households. After asking personal questions about the interviewee's identity and situation, the interviewers address questions about the research themes. The questionnaire consisted of mostly close-ended questions with some open-ended that were post-coded upon data entry. The questionnaire was pre-tested to capture all the sequencing, nuances, and connotations of local populations. The pre-test took place with the first draft of the questionnaire in the Reshkhori village close to Kabul city. Due to the length of the interviews, some questions (especially on governance) were removed from the questionnaire. Interviewers asked the questions to each male and female Head of Households, and to selected focus groups.

Household interviews

In total, Integrity Watch hired 20 enumerators and 3 supervisors. A supervisor conducted the male focus group at the village level. A list of the villages is available in the annexes.¹⁴

895 households in 65 villages around the Kalo and Arek Valley of Ajagak area were covered. A total of 1,790 surveys, of both male and female interviewees were administered in the communities. These interviews generally took around one hour to complete. The following indicators were included: household registry, access to land, assets, economic activities, access to education, electricity, drinking water, health facilities; access to road, market, judiciary, and information, perceptions about central government, local governance, conflict resolution, etc.

Different survey questionnaires were administered to males and female interviewees. The specific questions related to men were asked to men and those questions related to women were asked to women. This specification improved the accuracy of information provided by both genders. It also divided the load of interview questions regarding one household to the two respondents from the same household. However, both questionnaires had a set of similar questions to test the different perceptions of men and women and to cross-verify the accuracy of the data provided by the respondents.

No	Type of questionnaires	Number
1	Male Head of Household	895
2	Female Head of Household	895
3	Male Focus group	24

Table 1: Interviewees number and types

Village level interviews

In the second stage, interviews were carried out at the village level with 24 Community Development Councils (CDCs). CDCs are not present in each village and can represent more than one village. The 24 CDC represent the 65 villages. The survey takes into consideration all the CDC of the selected area. There was neither CDC removed from the study nor random selection.

CDC members were chosen because they are the ones who are making decisions regarding development at the community and village level. CDCs are a democratic institution and unlike elders or mullah, CDC members are elected by the villagers. Most of the important and reliable elders are elected by the citizens to be part of the CDC, so it gives the CDC a representative status and a legitimate voice. As the chief of CDC members, the head of CDC has crucial information not only about political aspects such as village governance and conflict resolution, but also socioeconomic aspects such as demography, water

¹⁴ See annex 1.

distribution, agriculture, and activities related to mine extraction.

These interviews took, on average of 2 hours to conduct. Four to nine CDC members were selected to participate in each of the interviews. The CDC members decided themselves who will attend the focus group and the number was limited to give enough time to each participant.

The indicators were focused on village governance, women's role in the village, village decision-making processes, conflict resolution mechanisms, village security, knowledge of the Ajagak contract and implementation, and environmental issues. The researcher looked for the general consensus amongst the participants in most of the questions. In most of the questions, the CDC members agreed to select one answer, though in some questions, when CDC members disagreed the numbers of the different answers were counted up and the answer with the highest number was selected. All questions were closed questions requiring either a yes or no, or a multiple choice response. The reason for gathering quantitative, rather than qualitative, information of this kind was to develop a tool that could provide data to be used overtime in this baseline report. The focus groups provided a check of the responses provided by the interviewers. The focus group took place as a public gathering, making it more difficult for the interviewee to lie in front of their acquaintances. Some times in certain focus groups interviewees did not want to talk in front of elders. Therefore, several questions were asked directly to each individual privately and the researcher asked them to write the number of the respondent in front of the answer. This was done to ensure freedom of expression, maximum participation, and validity of results.

All the surveys were conducted in a panel interview with the same households and CDC members in order to compare positive and negative impacts of extraction of Ajagak to those communities who are living close to the mining site. Integrity Watch has recorded detailed information about each household to allow tracing them for future surveys. This comparison will help policy makers to revise policies and to not only mitigate any negative impacts of future mining activities but also to create positive impacts. This study could also serve as a relevant tool to measure the impacts of large mining activities in the Afghan context and the efforts of civil society in monitoring them.

Monitoring and verification strategy

The survey was designed with a rigorous methodology including a two level corroboration procedure.

The first level of cross-verification took place on the field, at the household level. Surveyors and supervisors were trained in Kabul at the end of September 2012. Three supervisors have the responsibility to monitor the three teams of surveyors. The supervisor checked the completed interview forms at the end of the interview process in the village. He also conducted re-interviews with 5% of households in each village. He cross-verified essential demographic and agricultural questions about the household members, distinguishing between female and male answers.

The second level of cross-verification was done during the analysis at the focus group level. Integrity Watch analysts compared both the data regarding the population provided by the focus group interviews at the village level as well as individual interviews aggregated at village level.

4. Scope of the study

The survey and focus group questions were about the following aspects of Ajagak's communities:

- The current socio-economic conditions of the local communities directly impacted by the Ajagak mine.
- The potential social, economic, environmental, governmental and institutional impacts of mining in the communities close to the mining area once operations start.
- The capacity and interest of local communities to monitor extractive processes at Ajagak.
- The training needs of the community monitors in order to enable them to monitor the impacts of mine-related activities, including infrastructure development.
- The level of satisfaction and acceptability of monitoring activities among the community members.
- The ability of civil society to help the improvement of the communities' knowledge on transparency, access to project information and oversight capacities.
- The potential of extractive activities at Ajagak to improve access to basic facilities (*i.e.* drinking water, electricity, health facilities, schools, roads, markets, access to information) for those households close to the mine area.
- The impact of extractive activities at Ajagak on women's role in governance at the village level and women's capacity to monitor extractive processes at Ajagak.
- The extent to which mining activities at Ajagak affect the trust between people and the government.
- The impact of the mining activities at Ajagak on the security situation in the region.

The survey questionnaire focused on the social and economic conditions of the villages, infrastructure, political institutions and governance, and potential or existing community-based monitoring.

Social conditions studied in this survey included: demographic changes, literacy, education level, employment, information regarding housing types, physical facilities, access to water and electricity, inter-community relationships, community networks and organizations, and institutions such as schools, health facilities and markets or bazaars.

The infrastructure situation has also been analyzed, including access to and condition of roads and access to market and health or educational institutions.

Regarding institutions, the interviews comprised some questions on service delivery, existing state institutions, and access to local government agencies. The researchers were also interested in governance matters, conflict actors and dynamics, mediation and conflict resolution mechanisms, access to justice, household perceptions on different issues (fairness in treatment by government officials, land resettlement plans, community consultation, security, Ajagak Protection Unit, mine related corruption) and access to grievance compensation mechanisms, to Ajagak authority.

The study also examines the existence of community monitoring, capacities, and other monitoring mechanisms. It aims to measure the level of satisfaction of citizens, their expectations, and the impact on transparency and access to information regarding the mining project and the environment as it affects community life.

AJAGAK SURVEY FINDINGS

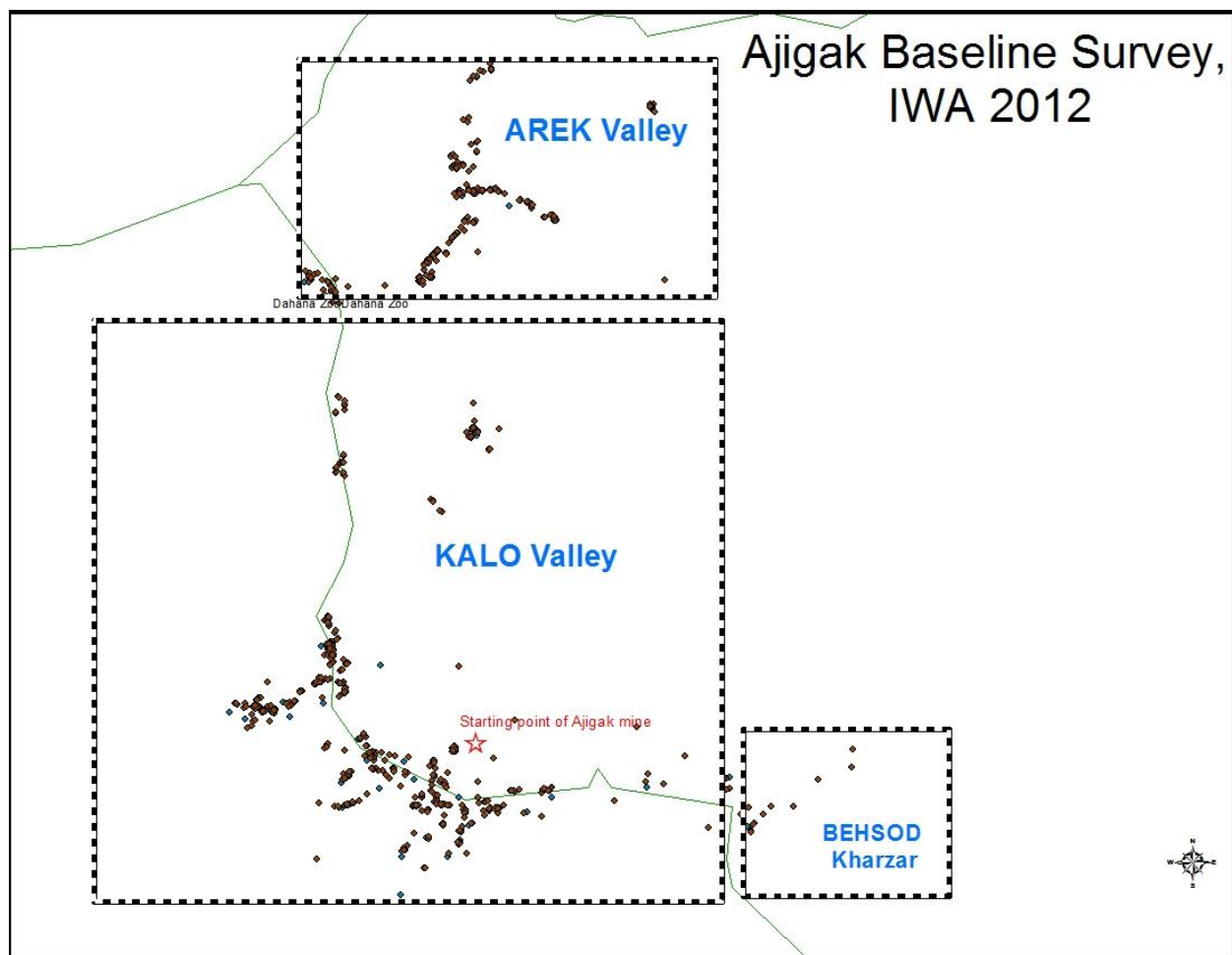
Demography and population

The villages around Ajagak are small and unorderedly planned bearing similarity to other rural parts of Afghanistan. There are six villages on the mountain bearing the mines. Most of the houses are made of raw bricks with few exceptions. Kalo which is a sub-district of Shiber is a pear shaped valley.¹⁵



Map 1: Ajagak area in Afghanistan

¹⁵ Observation during the field visits.



Map 2: Ajagak area from a local perspective

1.1 Villages studied

The survey in total covered 65 villages for the baseline study. It is important to mention that Ajagak is shared between two provinces, Bamiyan and Maidan Wardak. The region is mountainous with a valley that narrows as one goes towards Shibar district. Therefore, to be as comprehensive as possible, the survey was conducted on both side of the Ajagak which covered two provinces.

Prior to the data collection, an Integrity Watch focal point went to Kalo valley and visited the Shibar district administrator to collect the name and number of villages in the Ajagak mine area that would be directly impacted by the Ajagak mine extraction. The district administrator, Head of Kalo valley Mr. Saifyar and the members of the Ajagak region provided a list of the villages with the number of households to Integrity Watch's local team in August 2012.

During the survey, Integrity Watch discovered that the number of households in the list provided by the officials and the Ajagak mine council for the Ajagak area (984 household in 54 villages) was in fact just for Kalo valley and was not matching the number of actual households currently inhabited in the Valley of Kalo (593 households in 54 villages). Integrity Watch team found out that in Ajagak area, in addition to Kalo valley there was Arek valley which includes 270 households in 8 villages and Beshod district.

Though officials working in Bamiyan province said that half of Ajagak is within the boundary of Maidan Wardak province, many villages close to the mine think that they belong to Shibar district of Bamiyan. Three villages in Beshod district with a total of 32 households on the Maidan Wardak side of Ajagak were covered for the survey. So the total of households covered by IWA's survey is 895 in 65 villages.

Migration from the region may be a major reason for this discrepancy as many people move out of Shibar in search of economic activities. The population is not static as a result of migration.

How many households are there in this village?

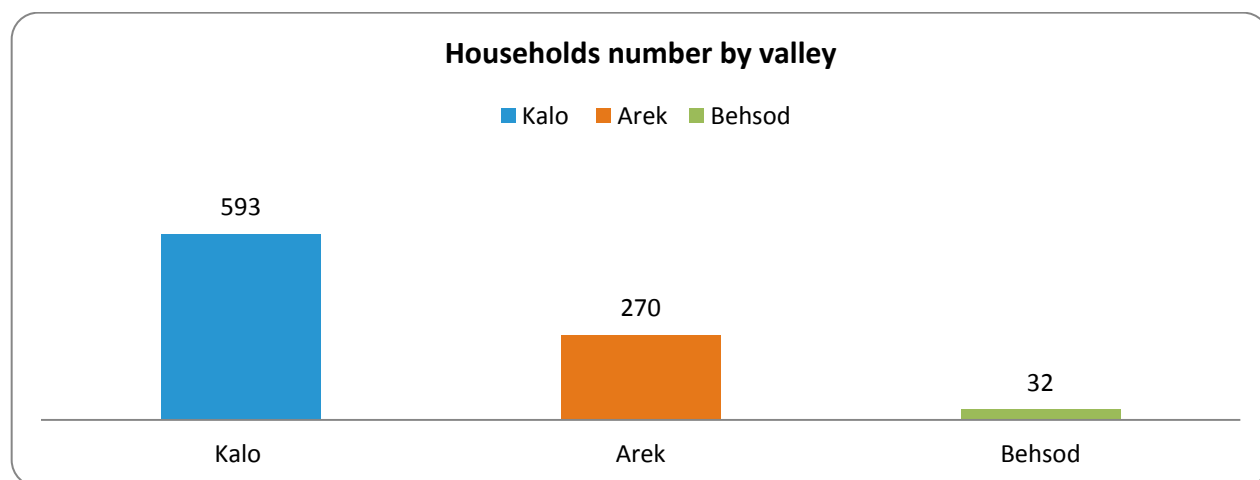


Figure 1: Households number by valley

1.2 Village demography

The structure and size of a population, as well as their evolution over time, are principal components in development planning. According to the National Risks and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA) report of 2007/2008, "Afghanistan is challenged by a rapid population growth, fuelled by very high fertility and significant in-migration in recent years."¹⁶

The focus group interviews with CDC members showed that the number of households in Arek Valley, Kalo, and three villages in Behsod called Ajagak, Khorozar and Dewar is around 1,191. The population in the 65 villages Integrity Watch surveyed numbers around 10,185 according to

The focus group's results. The household survey, which covered every household in the selected villages, showed that there are currently 6127 people living in the 895 households. However, despite the exhaustive survey Integrity Watch carried out, some elders in Kalo do not agree with this number. This discrepancy may be due to out-migration of households from the region.

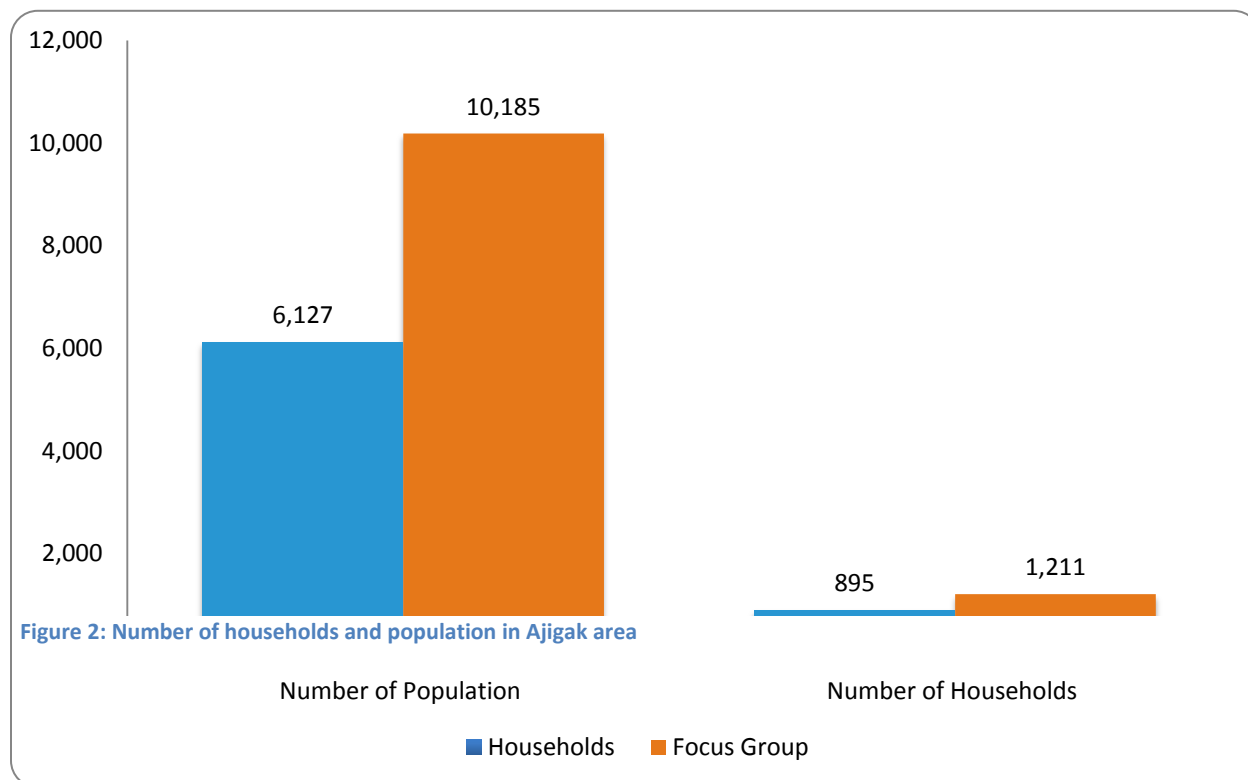
How many households are there in this village?

¹⁶ See: <http://afg.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/default/files/afghanistan-secondary-data-review-ACAPS.pdf> accessed on the 29 May of 2013.

1.3 Sex and age composition

Figure 2: Number of households and population in Ajagak area

According to the survey of Integrity Watch in Ajagak, the sex ratio is 1.05. The population size of Ajagak



estimated from the household results is composed of 6127 residents, 3146 males and 2981 females. Thus there are 105 men for every 100 women. There are more males than females in Ajagak (men represent 51,6% of the total population), as in Bamiyan province (where the number is around 51,7%).¹⁷ The sex ratio in Ajagak area is the same as the national one.¹⁸

¹⁷ CSO report, *op. cit.*

¹⁸ NRVA report 2007/2008 available on line, http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/asia/documents/afgh_nrva_2007-08_full_report_en.pdf, consulted on the 27 of May 2013, p. 18.

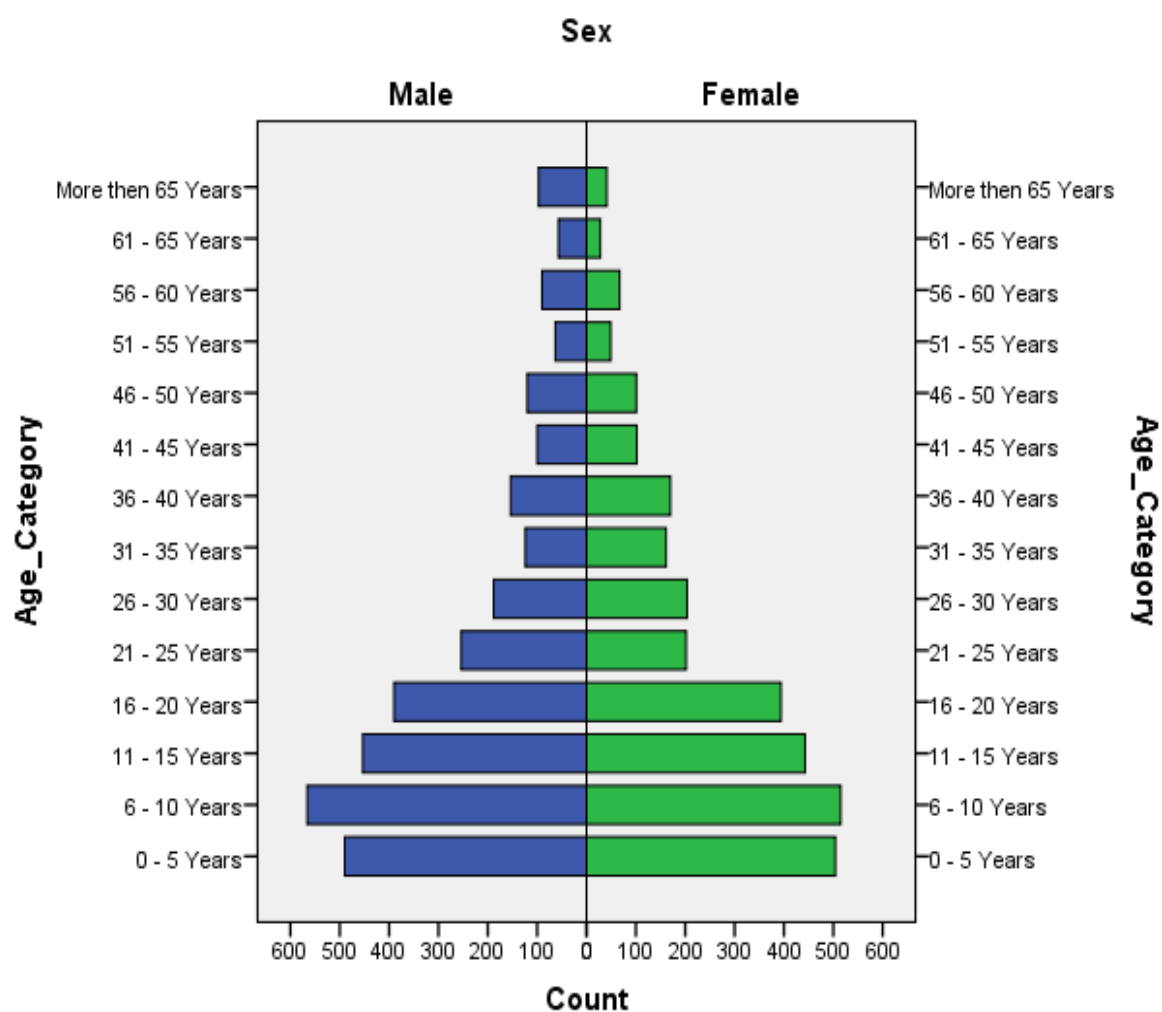


Figure 3: Sex and age ratio in Ajagak area

The most striking feature of the Afghan population is its very young age proportion. In compliance with the graphs below and the provincial and national statistics, most of the population is under 20 years old. And according to the households' results, the average age is 16.6 in the villages analyzed in the study.

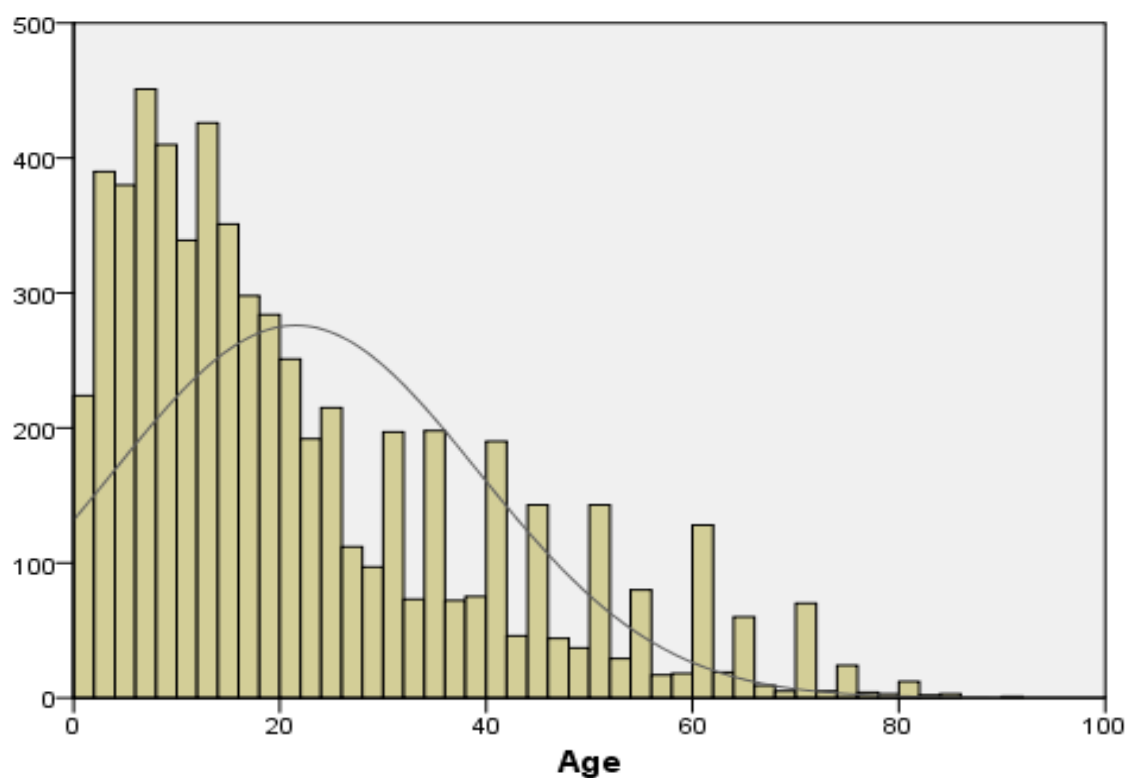


Figure 3: Age distribution in Ajagak

Generally in Afghanistan, the sex ratio across age groups follows a pattern in which girls outnumber boys at birth. The large number of population is structured by 6-10 years old in both girls and boys, young generation is between 20-30 years (and less represented in the population). In the other hand above 50 years the percentage of male ratio is higher than female which indicate a shorter life expectancy for women.

1.4 Household size

Households in Afghanistan are large. On the national level, the average household size is 7.3 persons per household according to the last NRVA survey.¹⁹ Household size was asked of female and male interviewees to cross check the answers. In Bamiyan province, the household size reaches 7.4 while it's around 7.2 in Ajagak area.²⁰ The answers from the female interviews show that the size of family ranges between 1 and 22 people.

The family most commonly consists of husband and wife, their sons, daughters, grandchildren and sometimes cousins as well.

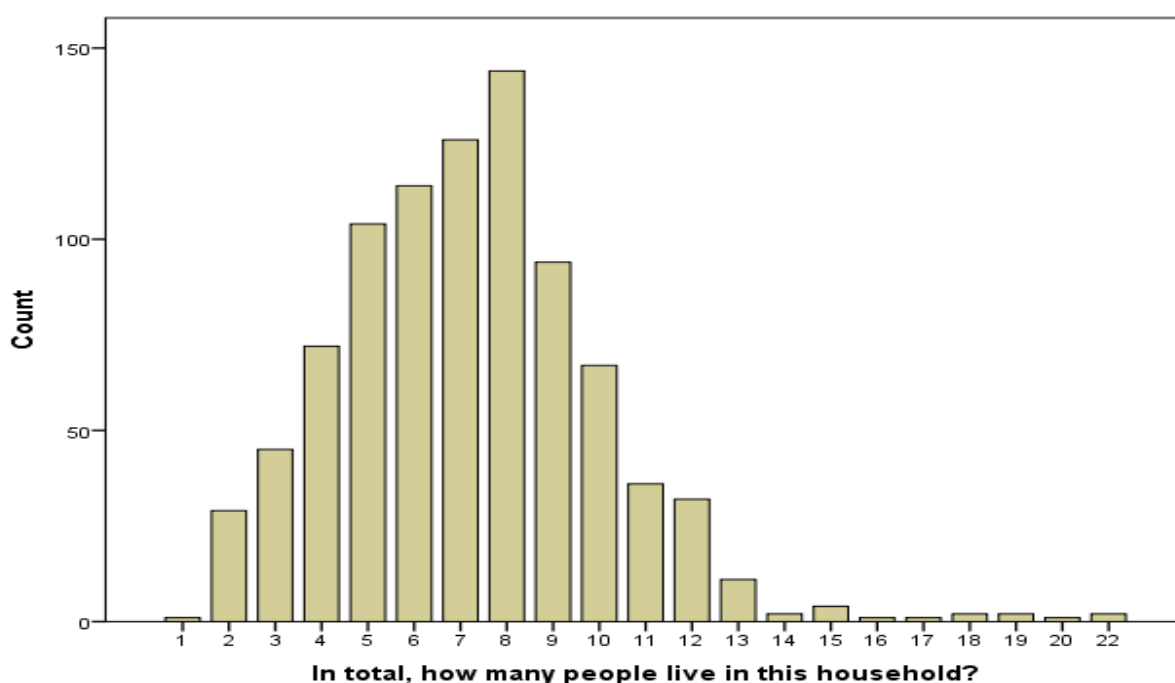


Figure 5: Household size

1.5 Household migration

Out-migration, especially for male members of the family, is usual and current in Afghanistan. The data collected during field work from households answer indicates that migration is common among people of Shibar and Ajagak. Migration is due to push and pull factors.²¹ In Ajagak area, economic and employment opportunities are the major pull factors. The migrants often send remittances to support

¹⁹ NRVA report 2007/2008 available on line, http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/asia/documents/afgh_nrva_2007-08_full_report_en.pdf, consulted on the 27 of May 2013, p. 18.

²⁰ CSO report, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

²¹ The push factor involves a force which acts to drive people away from a place and the pull factor is what draws them to a new location. See <http://geography.about.com/od/geographyglossary/g/ggpushpull.htm>, accessed on 29 May 2013.

their family financially. It has also been observed that sometimes an entire family migrates in search of better opportunities. With job creation for the people in the project, the out-migration may stop while in-migration may see an increase

Have more households moved into the village or out of the village during the past 12 months?

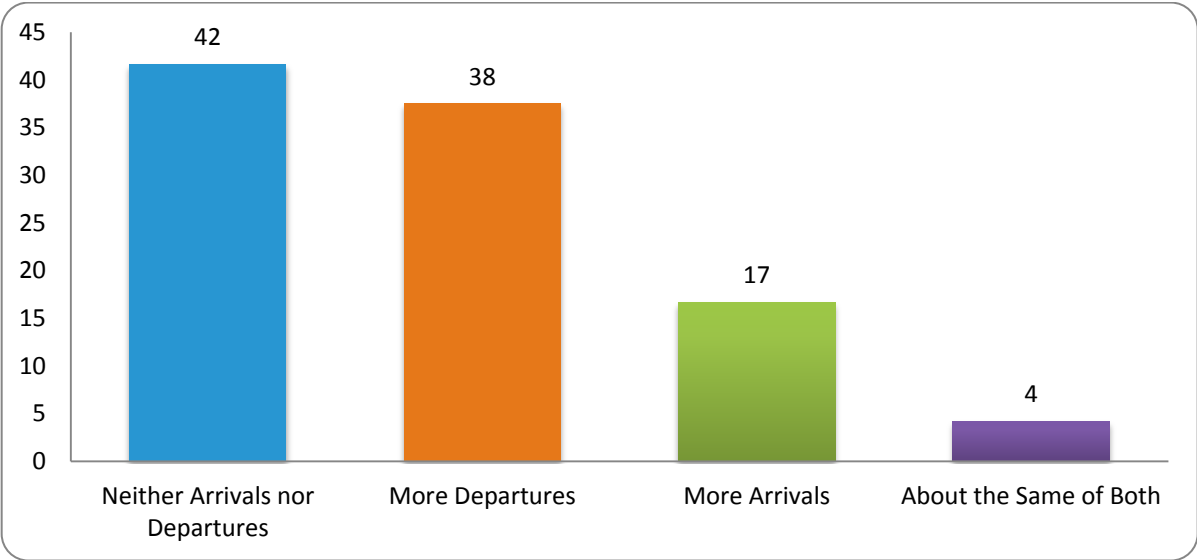


Figure 6: Percentage of migration in Ajagak according to focus group

According to the focus group results, 38% of respondents said that households have moved out of their village while 17 of respondents said additional households have settled into their villages. 42% did not report any household migration either in or out.

From the graph above, more than half of the household (58% which is the total number of the three categories more departures, more arrivals and about the same of both) testifies that there has been migration in the region.

It is imperative to mention that the region around Ajagak experiences 7 months winter, which makes it unfit for agriculture—a traditional profession for the people. Integrity Watch carried out the baseline survey during October 2012 which is a month that marks the beginning of winters in the district. Most of the families survive on agricultural products and a harsh winter steals the chance to cultivate and to harvest for as many months as in other regions of Afghanistan. More often than not, the harvest is poor and insufficient for families to live off. It creates an issue of food security and this may increase with the in-migration of people to the region who may come in search of jobs. This may make the region more vulnerable and the poor population may find it difficult to survive. Usually in Afghanistan, as in Ajagak and from the field observation, the main reasons for the out-migration of local population—namely a lack of employment opportunities and access to facilities critical for the well-being and survival of the people.

Some of the wealthy people from the region are not living in the area. From discussions between Integrity Watch’s researcher and elders from the area (especially Ajagak mine council), some of the residents have residences in several places and spend much of their time in urban centers. However, they remain connected with the region and still hold influential positions and make decisions for communities. This may indicate multiple entries for one person who seeks to benefit from projects in

several places. It may also illuminate the arguments of the village elders who say the population is higher than mentioned in this study.

Integrity Watch research has shown that people of the region are living under harsh conditions and the valley does not have quantitatively and qualitatively the kind of land to support large-scale agricultural activities.²² The CSO survey shows that the population on average in the entire Shibar district worked for 6.1 months during the 2011.²³

2. Economic and social situation

The population of Ajagak area, as the most part of the Afghan citizen is affected by poverty and hard living conditions, due to geographical and socio-political context. On the country level, around 36% of the population is not able to meet their basic needs, according to the NRVA report.²⁴ The following section considers the economic, social and financial situation of the Ajagak residents.

2.1 Economic and financial situation of the household

Though the people living around Ajagak are in the shadow of one of the biggest and richest iron mines in the world, they are generally financially vulnerable, with weaker safety nets and low economic security.

Only 7.2 % of the residents have bank accounts according to the household results. Most of the people of the area live on income from agriculture, but agricultural harvest is often at the whim of the unpredictable forces of nature that are so characteristic of higher altitudes in Afghanistan.

Labor force and participation

The Central Statistical Report of 2011-2012 shows that 78500 of the residents of Bamiyan over the age of 15 years had engaged in some sort of economic activity during the past 12 months. The number equals to 39.5% of the population that is above the age of 15. While 60.5% of the population in the same age group did not have any work during the 12 months prior to the survey. While in Shibar the number of male who worked in 12 months prior to the CSO survey was 38.4% of the population and just 9.1% of women have employment opportunities. A big chunk of the population at Shibar was unemployed during the year 2011-12. While the survey also underlined the child labor as well. The CSO survey shows that out of every 100 children between the ages of 5-17 there were 7 kids working.²⁵

The male in the family often goes outside the home to work and females stay home to do household labor and care for the family. However, in rural areas across the country, though men work in farming families are often supported also by females from the family. Ajagak is no exception to this tradition. The survey also found that there are cases of child labor, especially working on farms and performing farm-related activities. Mining operation may increase risk of child labor as the male members seek jobs

²² *Op. cit*, Hajigak: The Jewel of Afghan Mines, by Javed Noorani.

²³ *Op. cit*, NRVA report 2011-12 p. 33.

²⁴ NRVA report, *op.cit*, p. 54.

²⁵ *Op-cit*, CSO report of 2011-2012.

in mining project.

Focus group interviews showed that most male household members are engaged in agriculture and in 18% of cases women and children are engaged as well. The wages for men working in farming is 388 Afs per day, compared to 266 for women and 283 for children. 82% of the men are also engaged in rearing livestock both for household and market. Women to a small extent (6%) have been engaged in animal rearing, along with 18% of children. About 12% of the men in the region are also engaged in handicrafts such as rugs, compared with 6% of their female counterparts and 18% of children. In the construction field, 88% of the CDC members interviewed in a focus group said that there was work for males in the last 12 months, 12% for children with an average labor wage around 350Afs per day. And there is no construction work for women, mainly due to cultural and factual reasons.

Out-migration from the region is high and mostly male members of the family go in search of employment. During the survey 47% of the males said they went out in search of economic opportunity during the last 12 months.

The focus group interviews with CDC members reflected that there are jobs for 35% of men in local government institutions with wages averaging to 208Afs per day. For women, the opportunities are one-sixth of those for men in government institutions.

Most of the local people working in public sector are employed in the health and education sector. Interviews also showed that there are small employment opportunities for local people with NGOs, though this is only 6% (all male) with a daily average salary of 270 Afs.

Type of activities	Men		Women		Children (less than 18 years)	
	%	Average	%	Average	%	Average
Agricultural Activities	100	388	18	266	18	283
Livestock Activities	82	282	6	150	18	200
Handicraft Production or Carpet Weaving	12	250	6	150	6	150
Construction Labor	88	383	0	0	12	300
Jobs taken outside of district, but income reaching the village	47	381	0	0	0	0
Jobs taken with the local government	35	208	6	200	0	0
Jobs taken with NGOs in health & education	6	270	0	0	0	0

Table 2: Labor distribution in Ajagak area

Income Source

The baseline survey Integrity Watch conducted on the Maidan Wardak and Bamiyan sides of Ajagak indicated that the main source of income for the residents is from farming and agricultural products such as potatoes, carrots and wheat. These are the main commodities taken to market from Kalo valley, one of the sub-districts of Shibar. Some respondents also mentioned orchard products, opium and livestock as sources of income. Integrity Watch also observed that there were woven rugs for sale. The survey also identified additional sources of income like farming for household consumption, which included crop and livestock production. Farm wages are from both opium and cash crop production and livestock. There are some people employed in the service sector such as schools, NGOs, the UN, as well as extractive and security sectors. Reportedly, there are people involved in trade, cross-border trade, shop keeping, firewood collection and charcoal, handicrafts, carpet weaving, and transportation activities. There are also some people working in *Sarafi* business (*hawala* money transfer).

What are your household's income generating activities in the order of importance?

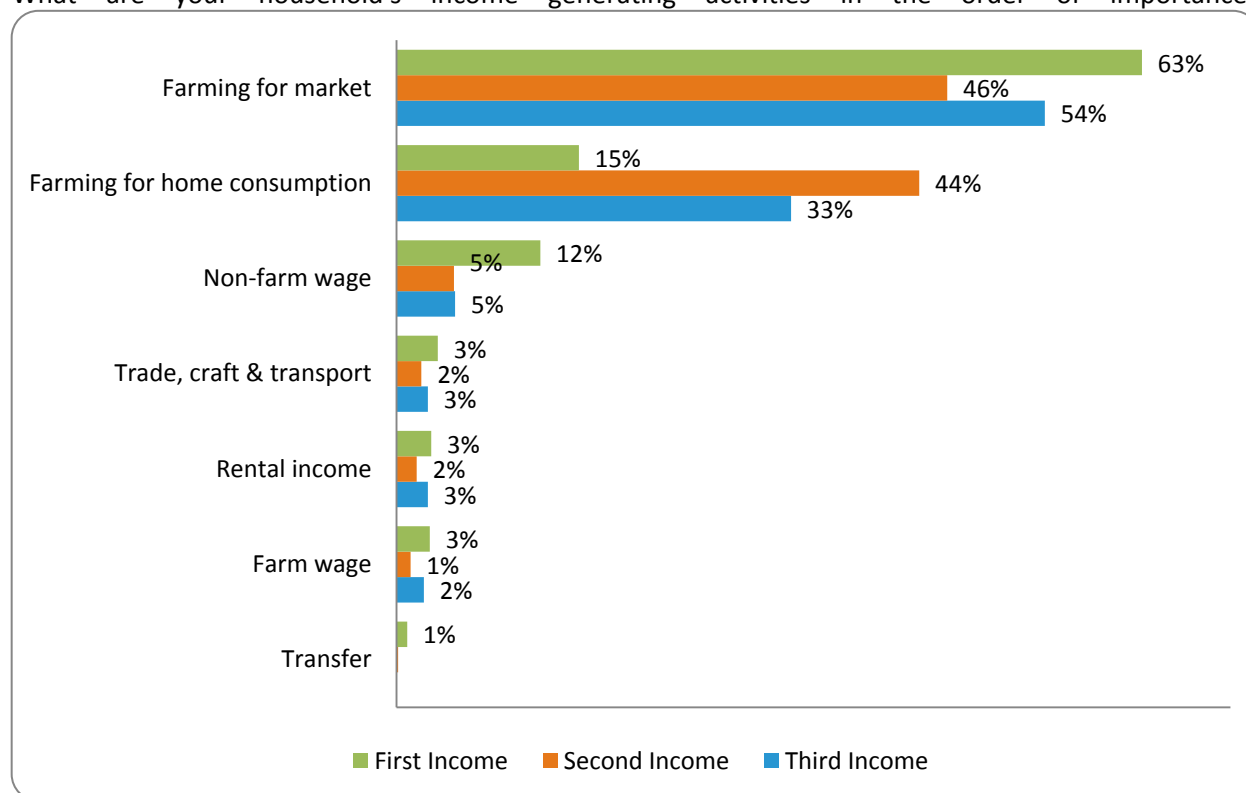


Figure 7: Income sources of the population in percentage

The focus group discussions with CDC members and with the households showed that the majority of the people living in Ajagak are involved in farming. The main source of income for 47% of those interviewed was farming. The region is remote and infrastructure is poor and people do not have many other sources of income.

Around 13% of the people interviewed said they sold their harvest in the spring of 2012. 81% of people sold their agro-production in advance during the fall of 2011 to survive through the winter, despite

prices being very low at that point.

Livestock is the second major source of income. Livestock provides income for the locals through multiple streams such as dairy products, wool, and livestock.

What are your household's income generating activities in the order of importance?

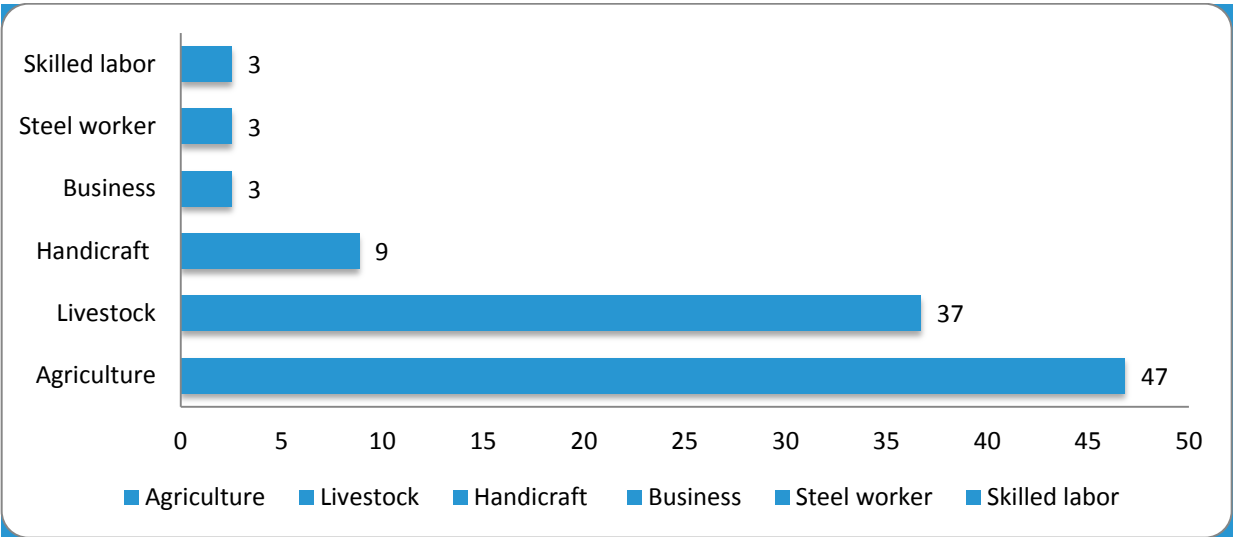


Figure 8: percentage of income distribution in the community

Economic Perceptions

Interviews with male households found that 50% of males think that there has been no change in their economic condition within the past 12 months. 30% think their economic lot has improved, and 19% think their condition has worsened within the past 12 months. However, interviews with males showed that 62% think their economic condition has remained the same as last year, whereas 18% think it has improved compared to previous year.

The surveyors also asked the head of household how they were situated on a scale from one (very poor) to five (very rich). The results that of the 895 households, 152perceived that they were very poor (17%), 372 poor (41.6%), and 334 poor with some resources (37.3%), while just 29 (3.2%) are rich and only less than one percent were very rich.

The graph bellow shows individual perceptions of economic status ofpeople in Ajagak area:

Imagine 5 steps, where the first step stands for the poorest people in this village, and the highest step, the fifth, stands for the rich. SHOW THE PICTURE BELOW

At which step is your household today?

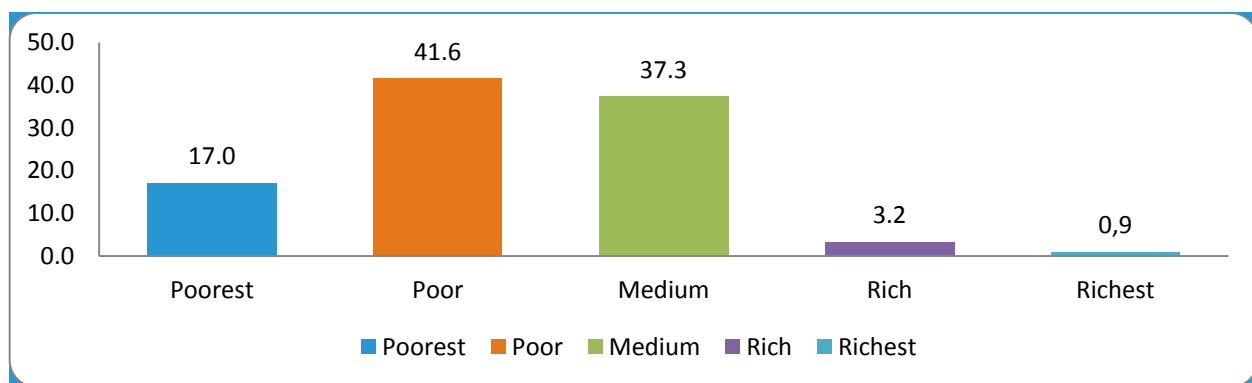


Figure 9: Perceptions of economic status in percentage

Women's activities and income

In Afghanistan, women remain at a disadvantage in securing paid jobs. Their overall share in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector is only 8%, which is even significantly below the average for Southern Asia (17%), the region with the lowest share in the world.²⁶

Women play important role in the micro-economy of the Ajagak region and in the income of the family. The findings of the survey showed that 89% of the women were involved in economic activities and contributed to family income. The income generating working hours reported ranged from 1 to 84 hours per week per woman worker.

Generally, in these communities, 71.4% of the husbands or elderly male member have decision making authority, even on their wives' personal affects .Only 4.8% of the women said they retain some input when it comes to selling their jewelry.

The income generating realms where women are involved are variant. Based on the survey, 91.3% of the women support male family members in agricultural activities both for self-consumption and market. Other women are either working in livestock, sale of dairy products orchards, carpet and rug weaving, milling, or as health workers or school teachers. Though females are income earners in the region, only 47.7%of women said they have the authority over spending the money they earn, while 45.3 % do not have the power to decide how their income is spent. In almost 91% of cases it is the husband who has the decision making power over this income and around 9% it is either the father-in-law, father, brother, brother-in-law, son or sometimes the first male cousin.

It has been a traditional trend for female to support the male members of the family in farming instead of hiring a wage laborer during harvest time.

Household belongings in the region

Interviews conducted for the survey in Ajagak, especially those conducted with households, showed an interesting range of gadgets and items that may easily mark household to have access to more information and place them ahead of their counterparts in other rural regions of Afghanistan.

The chart below shows the assets available in households.

²⁶ Op. cit, NRVA report of 2008-09.

Do you or your household have these items?

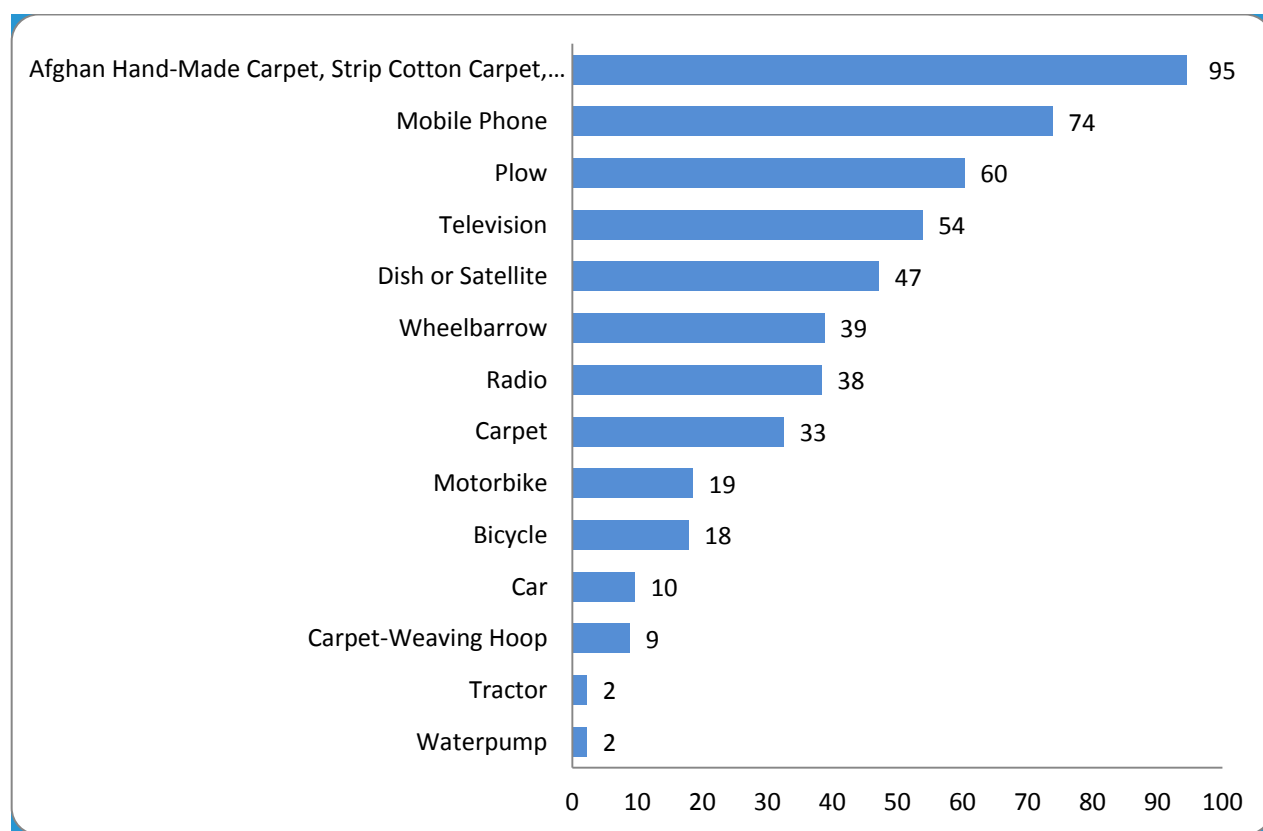


Figure 10: Kind of household belongings in percentage

The assets show a marked departure from other rural regions of the country. 54% of people have TV sets and 47% households have dish TV, which provides them with direct access to more information and news.

Women also have ownership of some assets of households. The survey showed that 19.1% of women own their own livestock, of which 60.4% were bought by the women themselves. Out of the interviewed females, 9.5% of them received livestock or living facilities as dowry. About 26.3% of female livestock owners are taking decisions after the approval of their husbands to spend income generated, and 11.2% of livestock owned by women was purchased by their husbands as *Mahar*, which is a part of the dowry. Only 4.7% of husbands in the household accept to decide collectively how to spend the family income. About 2.3 % of women have jewelry, of which 42.9% of women purchased it for themselves, while 33.3% received it as dowry from their parental house and 23.8% received it as *Mahar* from their husband's family.

Expenditure

The residents of Ajagak region have several types of expenditures. There are three main types of expenditures, in the following order:

1-Health care expenditures (including all type of medicines, doctor fees and hospital fees)

2a-Education expenditures (especially tuition for school, college or university, school supplies and other stationeries)

2b- and food expenditures (including all type of food items for consumption inside and outside the house)

The survey results reveal that on a monthly basis, the minimum total of all expenditures is 1095 Afs, including 1000 Afs for the food expenditures, while the maximum is 122658 Afs. In this case, around 8000 Afs are spent for health expenses, 6850 Afs for education expenses and around 4000 Afs is for fuel while 40,000 Afs are spent in alimentation and the rest of the 122658 is spent on other types of expenditure. The average total of all expenditure is 10934 Afs spent each month by households, including 5069 Afs on food expenditure, 657 Afs on health expenditure, 124 Afs on education and 96 Afs on fuel.

The graph bellow shows the household expenditure by group types.

What has the household spent in the last 30 DAYS for?

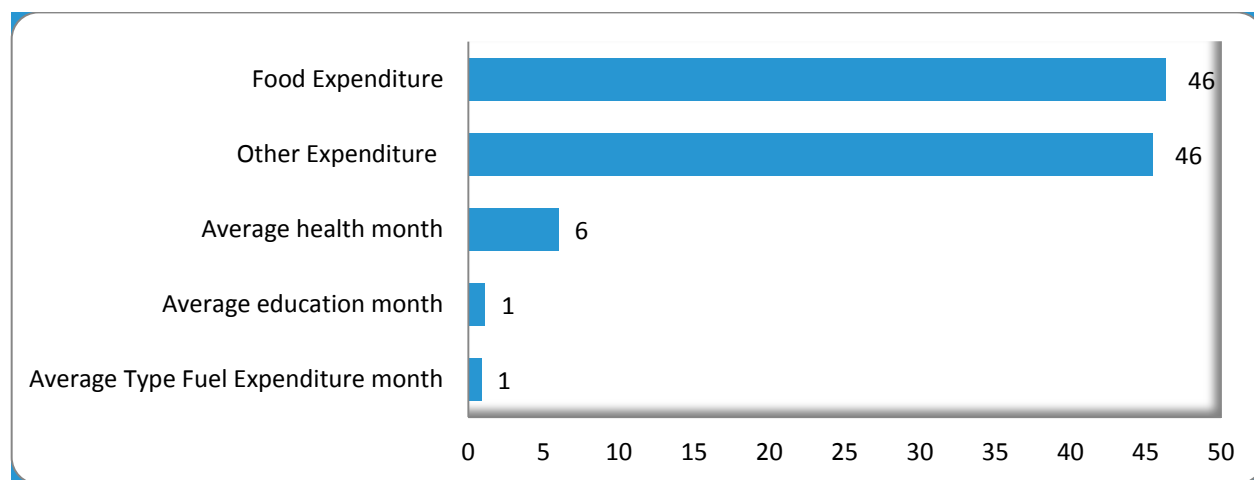


Figure 11: Household expenditure by group in percentage

Health care and accessing health services both within the province and beyond it require a major portion of the household budget, as people are vulnerable to illness. Often the locally available medical care may not be sufficient for the kinds of diseases prevalent in the region and the people may therefore be required to travel outside the district or province to access the medical services required.²⁷

Household loan

As the rest of the Afghan population, the Ajagak's residents live in a harsh environment and have to face different shocks (see section below). On the national level, around 30% of the population had to borrow money as a coping strategy.²⁸ On the local level, Ajagak residents are mostly rural and living under poor conditions. They often have to borrow money to survive. The household survey result showed that during the past 12 months, 46.1% of people, more than the national number, borrowed at least once or several times money from sources outside the household. The interviews results showed that people borrowed money mostly to buy food (in 44,2% of the cases), which may reflect that people do not have income to save.

The graph below illustrates the main reason why people took loans during the previous year.

²⁷ See more in-depth analysis below.

²⁸ See NRVA report, *op. cit*, p. 112.

What purpose did you need the loan for?

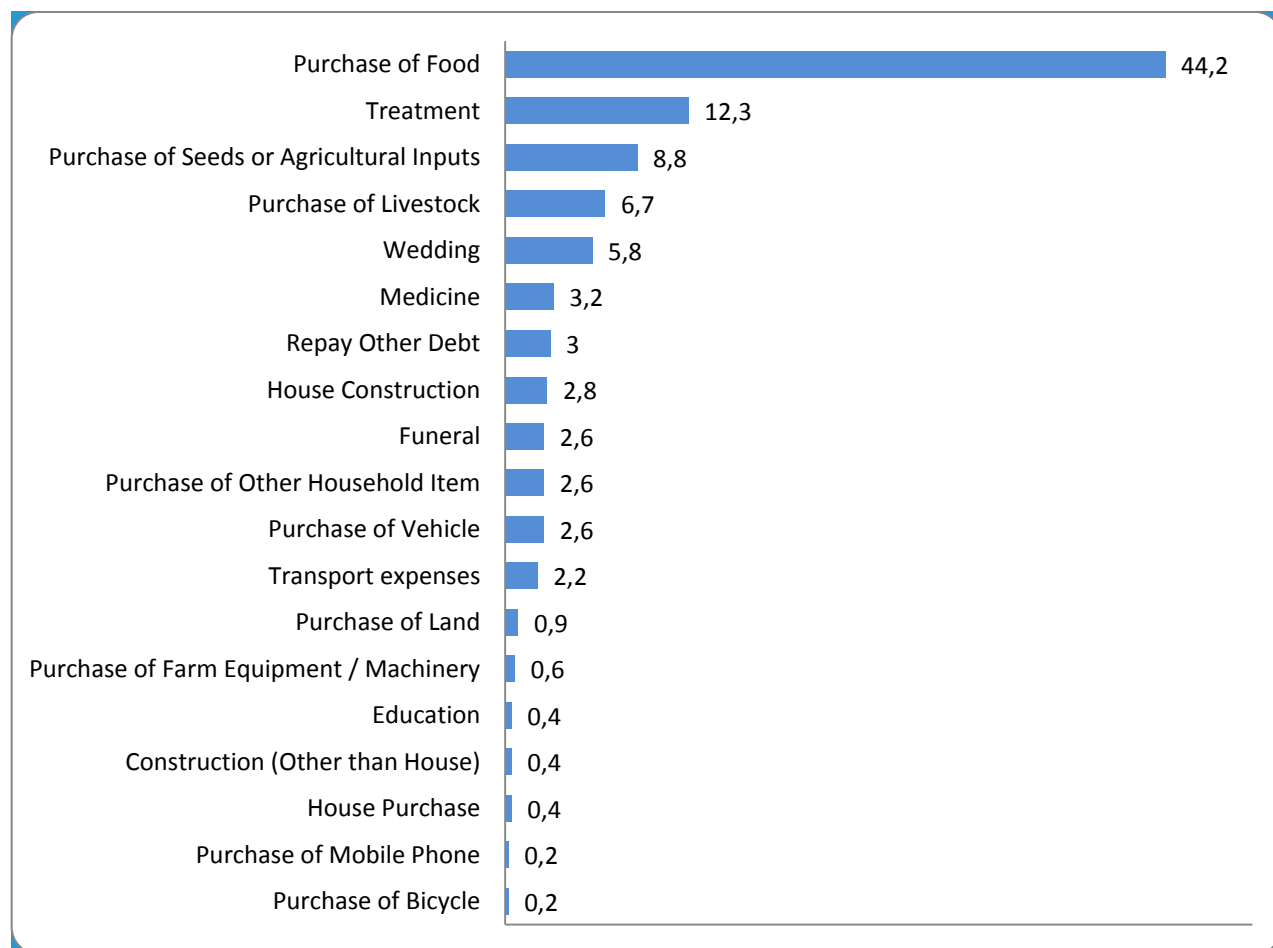


Figure 12: Purposes of loans in percentage

People of the region are economically vulnerable, which makes their life difficult in terms of economic security. Poor harvest complicate things further and leave them with little to save. Therefore, emergencies may force people to either borrow or sell their harvest when the prices are down to feed themselves and their families.

The second reason for the household to take out a loan or a mortgage is related to the health of the household. In 12,3% of the cases, according to the households results, the reason for taking out a loan was to provide treatment to a family member.

2.2 Health of the households

Afghan health system is in a weak state and suffers from the decades of conflict. Major health indicators, as sanitation, nutrition, mortality are at low level of the international rankings. In this section, the study presents the state of health of Ajagak residents, the prevalent diseases in the area, access to health facilities, treatments methods and issues related to maternity.

Household state of health

The three decades-long war affected all aspects of life—especially health and infrastructure — in rural areas across the country. There has been a steady recovery in some sectors, including health. Despite visible improvement in health indicators, Afghanistan is still among the worst performing countries.²⁹

Obtaining medical services is very expensive, while people's health condition is fragile. It is more so in villages that are not well connected with urban or peri-urban centers. Some of the major factors contributing to poor health conditions are malnutrition, access to drinking water and adequate sanitation. It is also difficult and expensive to access health services, and even more so if quality services are sought.

The baseline survey looked at several issues related to health. The household's results indicate that the health condition of residents is perceived as not satisfactory. Of the people interviewed, 47.8 % said they did not fall ill in the previous month, while 17.9% said they suffered one or more diseases or required medical services.

Have you or any member of your household suffered from any illness or injury during the past 30 days?

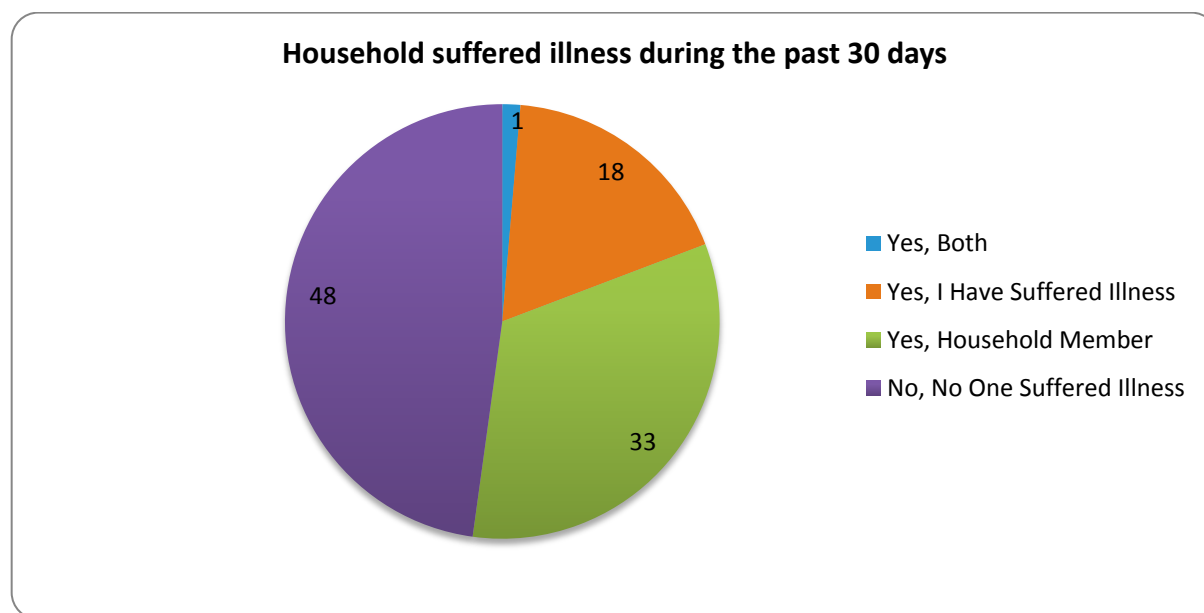


Figure 13: Health condition of the household during the past 30 days

In the household interviews, 33% of respondents said that at least one member of their family either fell ill or suffered injuries during the previous month. The survey showed an important number of ill people,

²⁹ According to the Human Development Index.

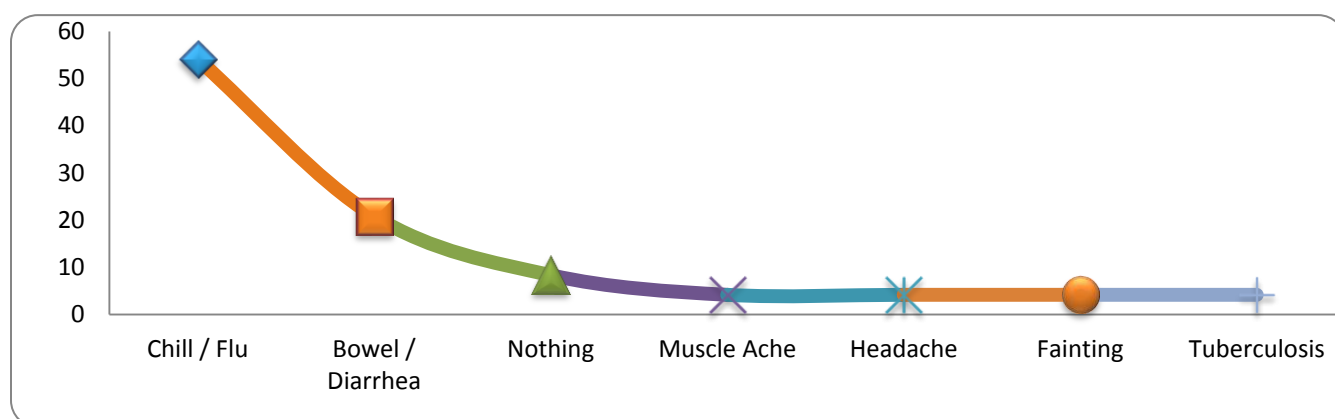


Figure 14: Most common illness in the region according to the focus groups

demonstrating how vulnerable the population is in regards to health. The illness may be due to

malnutrition, difficulty in accessing health care services and this is a major problem facing the communities and it increases their vulnerability level

Types of prevalent diseases

The data from the survey showed that there are several kinds of illness prevalent in the region. The findings from focus group discussion show that the most common and preventable illness in the region are flu, cold, diarrhea, muscle aches, headache, fainting and tuberculosis. Only 8% of the CDC members painted an optimistic picture and said there was no illness their village in the past 12 months.

It is important to underline that the region around Ajagak did not enjoy regular connectivity with the provincial capital and other urban centers which made it difficult for people to have exchanges. Besides, the harsh winter deprived the people of economic activities and additional and steady income. This may have had a major effect on their health and growth thus allowing minor illness impacting the population in major ways diminishing their productivity.

What was the most common illness suffered by people in this village in the past 12 months?

Regarding common illnesses, the age categories were divided into four groups for the questionnaire: 1 to 5 years, 5 to 18 years, 19 to 30 years and 31 and above.

The following table presents a complete picture of last year diseases by age group according to the households.

	1to 5 years	6 to 18 years	19 to 30 years	More than 31 years	Total
Fatigue / Tiredness	0.8%	1.3%		1.1%	0.9%
Muscle Ache		3.8%	13.0%	8.7%	6.2%
Headache	1.6%	3.8%	9.1%	18.0%	9.6%
Migraine		2.5%	2.6%	1.6%	1.5%

Dizziness		1.3%		2.7%	1.3%
Fainting	0.8%	5.0%	2.6%	0.5%	1.7%
Breathing Problems	15.0%	3.8%	3.9%	8.2%	8.6%
Chill/Flu	34.6%	40.0%	20.8%	13.7%	25.1%
Fever	2.4%	3.8%	1.3%	1.1%	1.9%
Vomiting	5.5%	6.3%		1.6%	3.2%
Stomach	1.6%		7.8%	11.5%	6.2%
Bowel / Diarrhea	33.1%	17.5%	7.8%	3.3%	14.6%
Heartache		1.3%	1.3%	1.6%	1.1%
Kidney	0.8%	1.3%	7.8%	10.4%	5.8%
Lungs	0.8%		1.3%	0.5%	0.6%
Skin Disease	0.8%	2.5%		2.2%	1.5%
Fracture		1.3%	1.3%	3.8%	1.9%
Broken Bone(s)	0.8%	1.3%	1.3%	2.7%	1.7%
Tuberculosis		1.3%	1.3%	1.1%	0.9%
Cholera			1.3%		0.2%
Blurred Vision			1.3%	0.5%	0.4%
Loss of Sight				0.5%	0.2%
Psychological Issues			1.3%	0.5%	0.4%
Madness	1.6%		5.2%	2.2%	2.1%
Nesayi		2.5%	3.9%	1.6%	1.7%
Walidi			3.9%		0.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 3: Types of diseases by age group

According to the previous table the most common disease is the flu, with more than 25% of the total interviewees who have been affected in the past twelve months (around 35% of the first age group, 40% of the young people between 6 and 18 and 20.8% between 19 and 30 and only 13.7% of the last age group). Most of the household's members who are more than 31 years old testify that they have been suffering from headache (18%), and stomach problems (11.5%). The younger population (under 18 years

old) in the area has been largely hurt by digestive issues, as bowel and diarrhea (more than 33% of households 'members under 5 and 17.5% between 6 and 18 years old).

Access to health facilities

Access to health facilities and health services is not only complicated by a lack of availability of facilities in the region and the distance and accessibility of facilities, but also by travel time, expenses and cultural factors. But the survey showed that the people of Ajagak have some access to government and private hospital or clinics, even if it's often far and not. Based on data provided by CDC members, 92.3% of the doctors accessed by the residents are in government hospitals and 7.7% are in private hospital or clinic. 75% of nurses accessed are also working with government hospitals and 25% in non-governmental clinics.

	Doctor	Nurse
Hospital	7.7%	None
Government Clinics	92.3%	75.0%
Non-governmental Clinics	None	25.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Table 4: Access to health facilities in the region

As the Ajagak area is a rural one, access to health facilities is more complicated than in urban area, as showed the NRVA results from 2008.³⁰ According to this survey, only 44% of the population living in Bamyian province can access the nearest health facility within one hour while they are 96% in Kabul province.³¹

Treatment methods

In rural areas of Afghanistan, as Ajagak, treatment is traditionally in the form of locally available traditional medications. Sometimes treatment is not even practiced by medical personnel but by religious figures or other respectable community members. Ajagak residents often resort to seek remedies through these traditional channels, though there are many who seek respite through modern facilities as well. The survey showed that 89.3% respond to illness immediately without time delay. The survey showed that in spite of traditional attachment, 96.6% of people refer to professional doctor found in the region or province, 1.4% to official midwives, and the rest go to nurses, community health workers or faith healers.

Who gave the treatment? Where was it?

³⁰ See NRVA report p. 74. *Op.cit.*

³¹ *Ibid*, p. 75, figure 8.1.

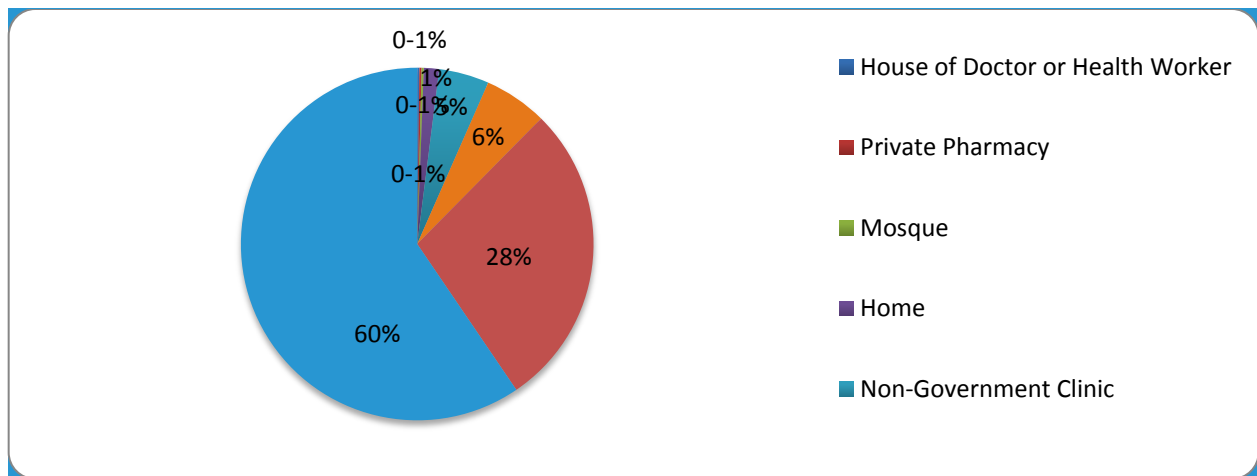


Figure 15: The distribution of people on the basis of their preference for medical help

The remaining 10.7% of population have not gone for any kind of treatments. The table below shows the different reasons that people who suffered illness did not receive treatment.

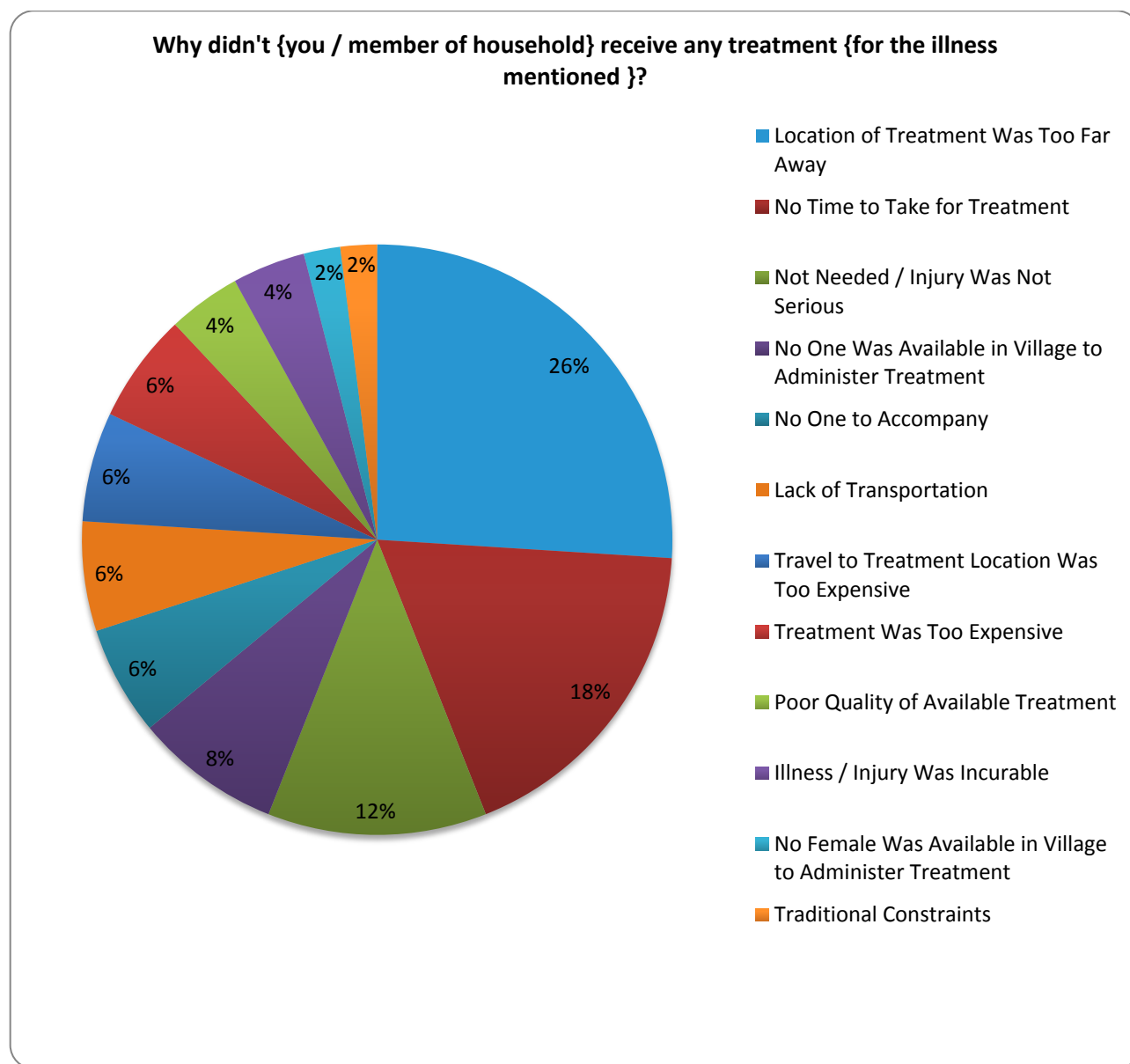


Figure 16: Reasons for non-treatment

The main reason given by the households to explain why they didn't receive any treatment when they were sick is the long distance to get the treatment (26% of the answers). Also several answers were related to the extended way and the lack of resources, in terms of medical personnel (8%) or transportation (6%), or people to go with the sick person (6%). The second justification is that they didn't have time to take care of their health and it was not the priority of the family (18%). One other important reason is the financial condition of the family. 12% (respectively 6% each) of the justification

was that the treatment or the travel to the location of the treatment was too expensive.

Pregnancy and maternity related issues for women

This section addresses women who are married and under the age of 49 years. In the past 24 months, only 34.3% of women had given birth, while 61 % did not and 4.7% opted not to answer this question. On the national level, the total fertility rate is between 5.27 and 6.26 according to the NRVA report, and depending on the employed methods.³² In Bamiyan province, as most of the urban areas, fertility rate is higher, around 7.8, especially because children are a labor force and would be able to take care of their parents.³³

The findings of the survey revealed that expecting women received prenatal care during their pregnancy between 0 and 13 times. A vast majority of women, who have given birth, received prenatal care during their pregnancy.

Around 80% of women had an injection to prevent the baby from getting tetanus, while 19.2% of women did not receive any kind of vaccinations.

The chart below presents the health care centers that women visited during their pregnancies.

Did you see anyone for prenatal care during this (most recent) pregnancy? [IF YES] Who did you see?

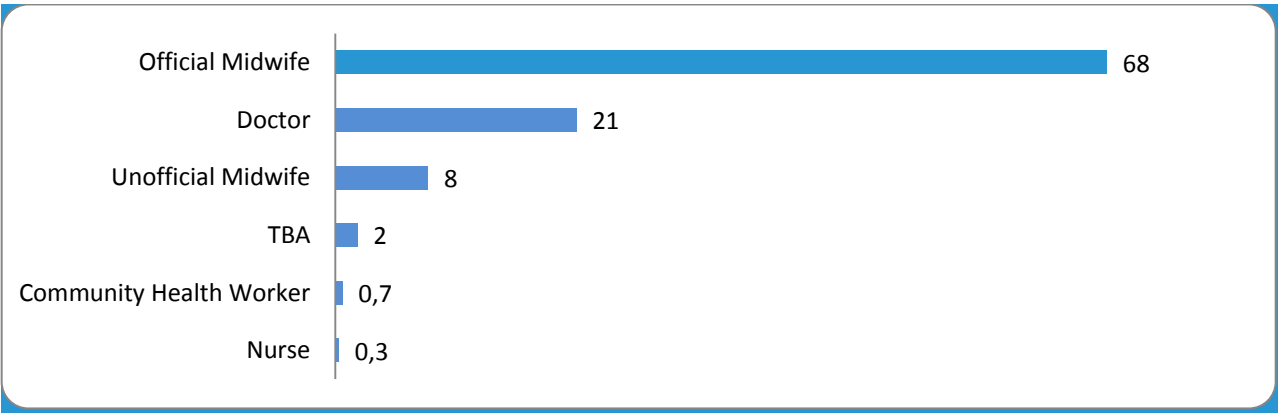


Figure 17: Health care centers visited during the pregnancy in percentage

68% of the female household’s members interviewed who went to see someone for medical care during their last pregnancy got to an official midwife, while they were 8% to get to unofficial one. Doctors followed midwives in rank for the delivery-related medical services, with 21% of women referring to them. 2% went to visit a trained birth attendant (TBA) and less than 1% went to visit a community health worker or a nurse.

Prenatal care during most recent pregnancy by age group

³² See NRVA report, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

³³ See CSO report, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

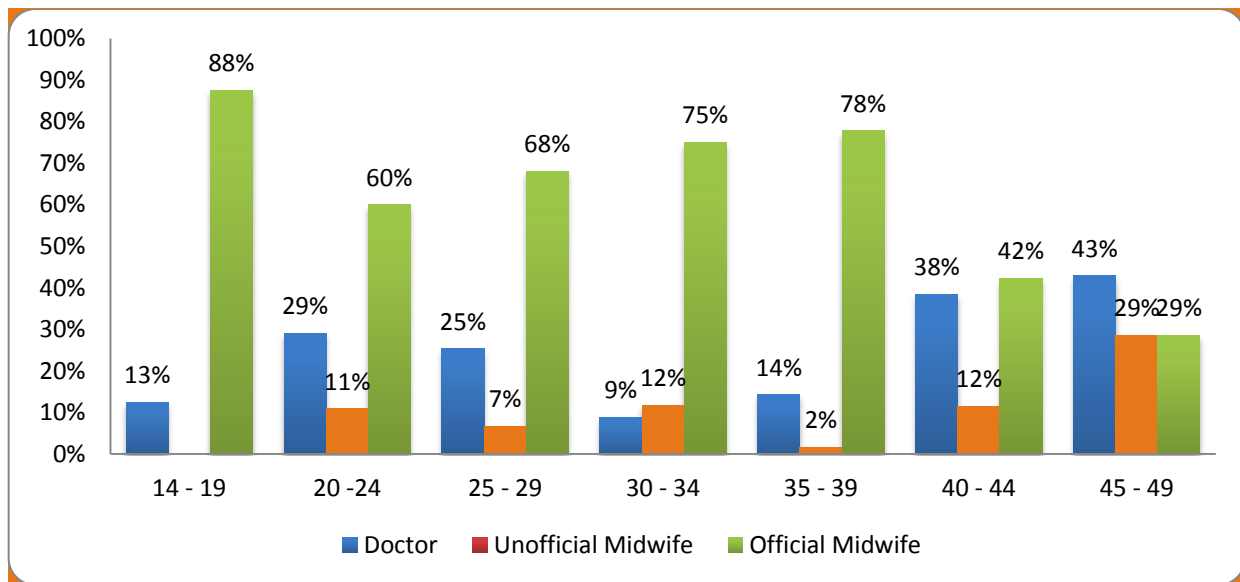


Figure 18: Person who assists the expected mother according to age group

Regarding delivery locations, the survey showed that 49% of women had their delivery in government clinics, 41% of women had their deliveries at home or at a neighbor or relative's home, 9% of women had their deliveries at hospitals and 1% of women had their deliveries at non-government clinics.

Who was the primary person to assist with the most recent delivery?

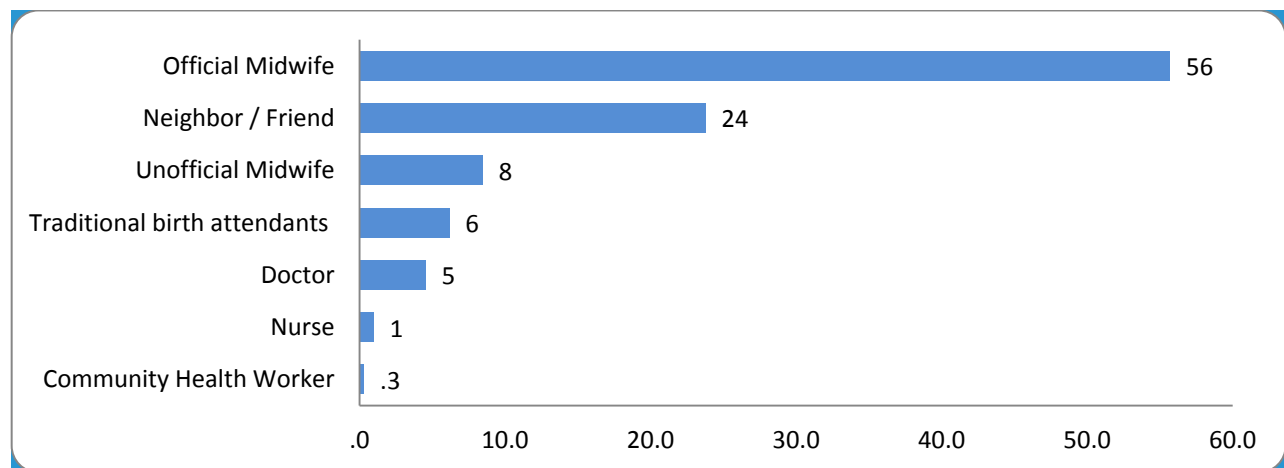


Figure 19: Primary person to assist the last childbirth in percentage

Official midwifery was most prevalent with regard to catering to assisting expecting mothers in and around Ajagak (56% official and 8% unofficial ones). Around one fourth of them has only support for a neighbor or a friend to assist them with the birth.

2.3 Education

Afghan education system has not achieved great results, though some improvements during the last few years, it remains at a really low level.³⁴ In addition to this state, there are considerable gaps in terms of

³⁴ According to the NRVA, only 17 percent of the population aged 25 years and over has attended any type of

gender equality and balance, both from pupils as teacher's sides. In this section, the report exposes Integrity Watch's finding related to literacy and school attendance in Ajagak area.

Literacy

Literacy is the ability to read and write, with understanding, the everyday life. It's one of the crucial aspects of human development, and an expected result of education.

The Baseline study Integrity Watch conducted study, to measure indicators related to education, through the following age group

- (1) below 7 years of age, with a literacy rate of zero percent;³⁵
- (2) between 7 and 17 years of age, with a literacy rate of 67.2%;
- (3) between 18 and 25 years of age, with a literacy rate of 49%;
- (4) 26 years of age and above, with a literacy rate of 23%.

Can this household member read and write?

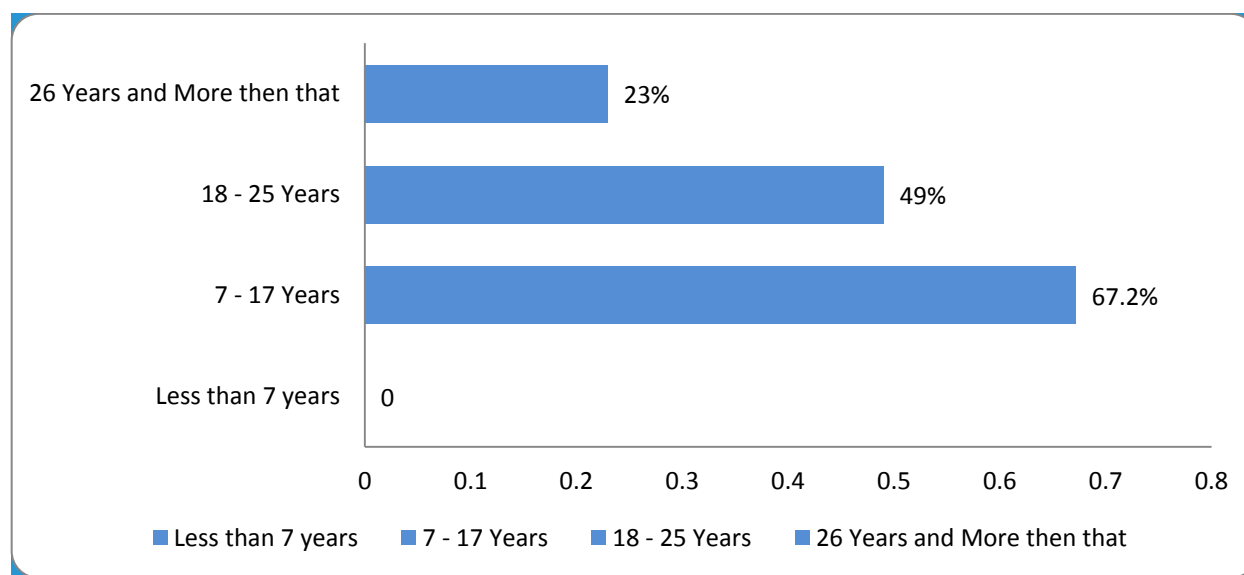


Figure 20: Overall literacy rate in Ajagak

Male literacy rate in Afghanistan is around 39 for male, 12 for female and combined of 26 for population.³⁶ In Bamiyan province the literacy rate for male is 36 while it is only 8 for women.³⁷ The Central Statistic Organization's data on Bamiyan shows illiteracy among people in the age group of 25 and above is 90 %. However CSO recent survey shows that the situation for education is changing. The literacy rate according to the Household data and CSO show that for the children from 10 to 15, the

formal education. *Op. Cit*, executive summary, p. 9.

³⁵ The education system starts at the age of 7 in Afghanistan.

³⁶ See NRVA report, *op. cit*, p. 66.

³⁷ *Ibid*, p.67.

literacy rate was 50.1 for boys and 25 for girls. From 15 to 24, it was 61.6 from males and 34.1 for females. There is still gap in education opportunities when it comes to women and men. The literacy rate of girls and young women are half the number for boys or young men. In Ajagak area according to the households' findings, the literacy rate is in total 37.6% (64.7% for male and 35.3% for female) while the illiteracy is 62.4%.

Can this household member read and write?

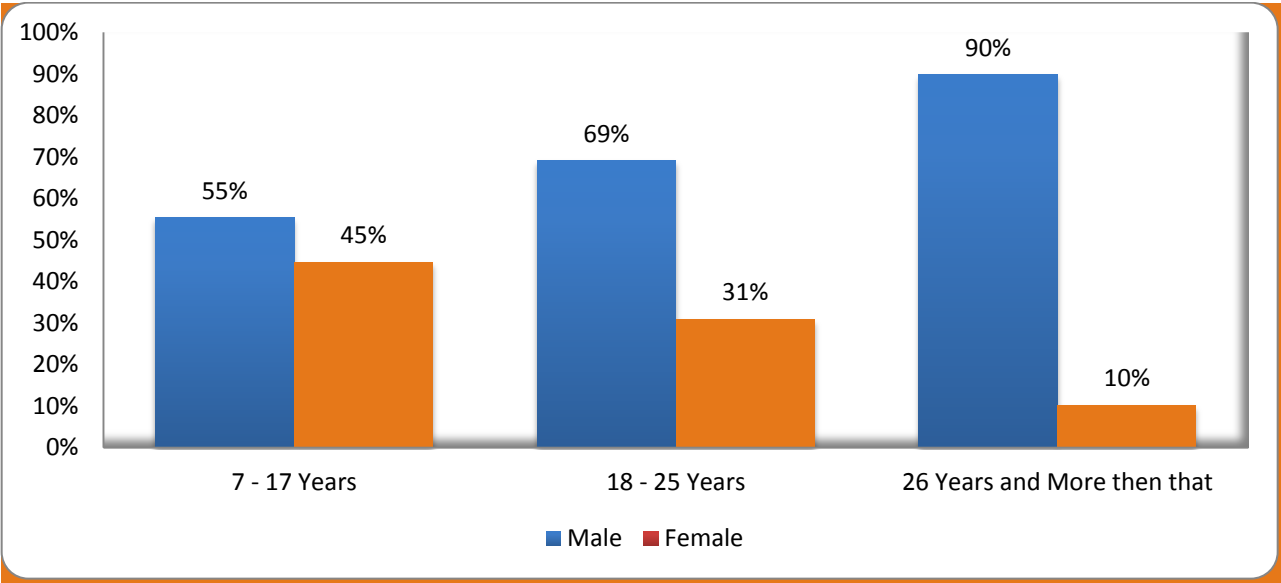


Figure 21: Literacy rate by sex and age group

As the previous graph shows, in Ajagak area as nationwide, the gender difference is also increasing a lot according to the age group. Between 7 and 17 years old the rates are 55% of literacy rate for the boys and 45% for the girls. Between 18 and 25 years old, the rate raises for the men to 69% and decreases for the women to 31%. The last age group is even more unbalanced. 90% of the men above 26 years old were literate while there were only 10% of the women. Access to education in the past decade has shown improvement where women have access to education, too.

Integrity Watch designed a simple test for the interviewees. It was to make sure that the interviewees were literate.³⁸

The graph below exposes the results and confirms this important gender inequality in terms of illiteracy.

Can you read this message now and I want you to calculate this for me? (respondent)

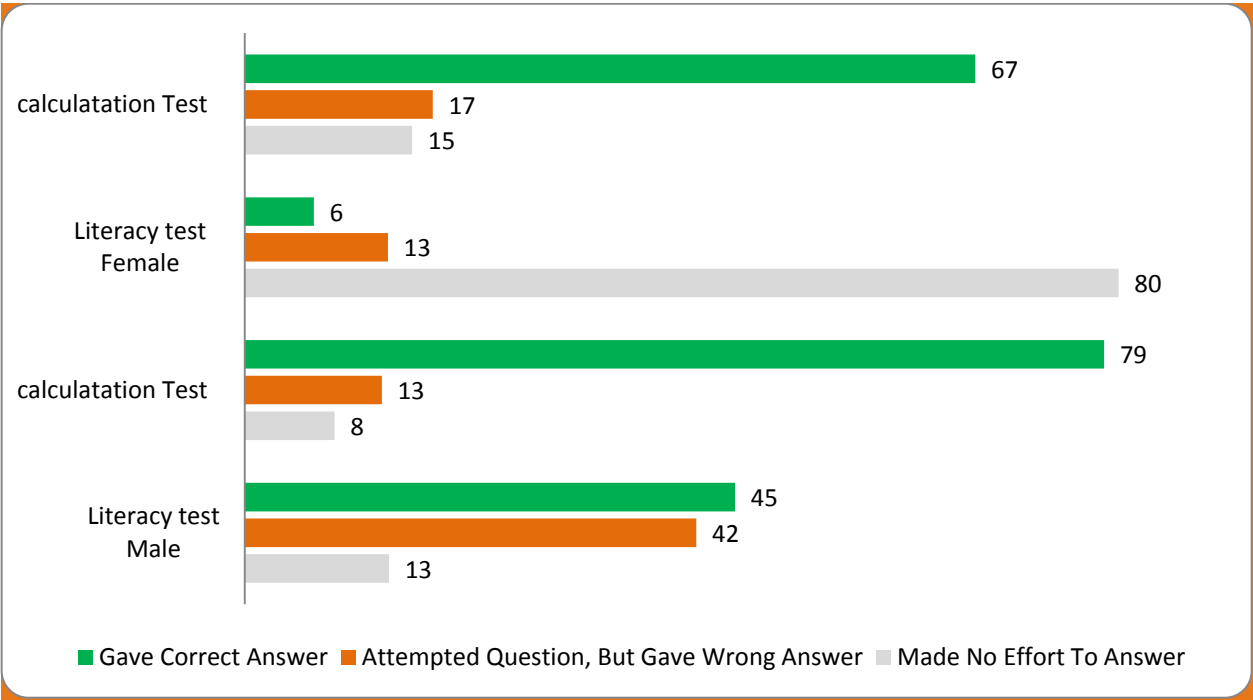


Figure 22: Calculation and reading test results from respondents

The above graph constitutes another illustration of the gender difference in terms of literacy. One of the interesting aspects is that regarding the calculation test, the results between female and male interviewee are not so divergent. 67% of the female interviewed gave a correct answer (against 79% of the male) while 17% tried to answer the question but didn't get the right answer (against 13% of the male) and 15% of the female made no effort to answer (against 8% of the male). Yet considering the literacy test, the findings are no longer similar between male and female answers. While 45%, so almost half of the men interviewed gave a correct answer, there are only 6% of the women. 42% of the men understood the question but couldn't reply properly (against 13% of the women). And 13% of the men made no effort to answer while they were 80% of the women. Female illiteracy in the region thus confirms the national rate and the need to take measure to improve the education system and attendance in Afghanistan.

³⁸ They were different questions to avoid bias and test the knowledge among the residents. One of them was for example about a land with two trees, and another land with two trees. The surveyors asked the male head of household and one the female of the household separately if they could read the text in question. When they could, they were also asked to answer the calculation test, which lies in adding the two lands and finding the number of trees (4). When they could not answer, then the surveyor asked him to make the calculation test.

School attendance

Participation in school is another major indicator to determine the level of education of a selected population. School attendance is the first step of it. In Ajagak, around 80% of boys in the age group of 7-17 and 68.4% of their female counterparts were enrolled in school. In total, 74.4% were enrolled in school and currently acquiring education. 25.6% of youth in the region were not participating in school. On the provincial level, 56.5% (59.5% of the boys and 53.3% of the girls) of the pupils between 7 and 12 years old are attending primary school, while only 37.4% (44.1% of the boys and 30.6% of the girls) between 13 and 15 years of age attend secondary school. 28.9% of those between 16 and 18 years old attend high school, with a major gender difference (36.6% of the young men, 20.5% of the young women).³⁹ In total, on average 46.7% of the boys between 7 and 18 years old attend school while 34.8% of the girls do.⁴⁰

On the national level, around 58.8 % of the males between 7 and 18 years old attend school, and only 37.3% of the females do.⁴¹ In comparison with the findings of the survey, it seems that school participation is higher in Ajagak area than the provincial and national average.⁴² The most important reason to explain this situation is that there are schools in the valley and different NGOs⁴³ work in the region. Education in Ajagak plays an important role for the residents. Another explanation, in comparison with national or provincial surveys, is that the IWA Ajagak survey is focusing on one specific area and does not include remote areas, which might lower the final percentage.

		Total	
		Yes	No
Sex	Boys between 7 - 18 Years Old	80%	20%
	Girls (7 - 18 Years Old)	68.4%	31.6%
Total		74.4%	25.6%

Table 5: School attendance by gender in Ajagak

People in Ajagak are very interested in education, as shown in the survey results. There are two schools for the villages that are close to the mine. There are other schools in the valley. The schools cater to male and female students but at different times. The number of school- going girls has increased from the early days of this government. The schools from the region prepared over 300 students for university last year⁴⁴.

There are a number of students who do not go to school (25% of overall sample). There are different reasons for which families are not sending their children, or preventing them from going to school. The graph below illustrates the main reasons why children don't attend school.

³⁹ CSO report, *op. cit.*, p.26.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* An average calculation was done from the Table 11.

⁴¹ See NRVA, here, an average was done, from the figure 7.3, with the data on male and female, from 7 to 18 years old, p. 69.

⁴² Around 52 percent of primary-school age children (42 percent for girls and 60 percent for boys) are attending primary school, leaving some 2.3 million children not in primary school. The figure implies a significant improvement compared to the net primary enrolment rate of 37 in 2005. See NRVA, *op. cit.*

⁴³ Like Agha Khan Development Network.

⁴⁴ *Op-cit* interview with Delawari, principal at school in Kalo.

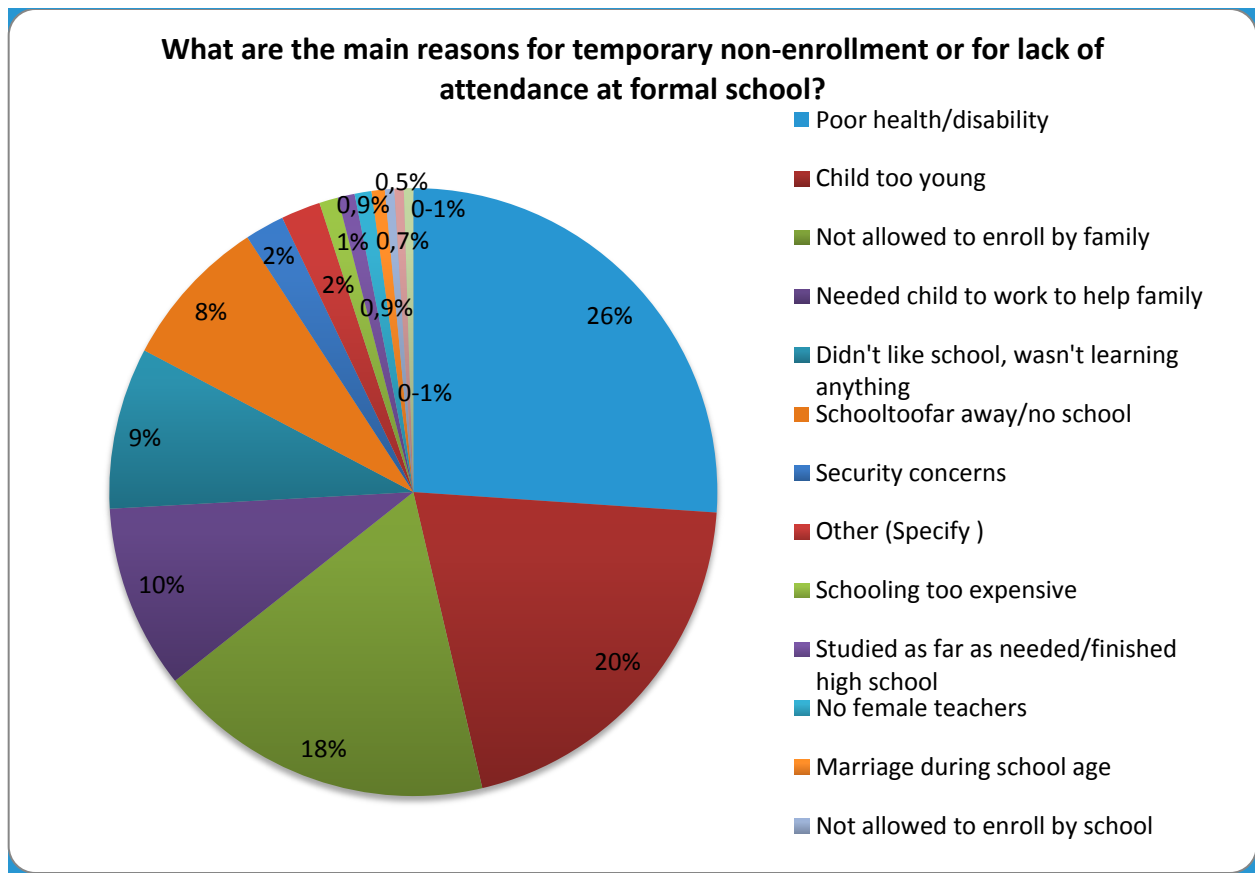


Figure 23: Reasons for non-attendance at school

There are several reasons, used by the household members to explain why their children are not enrolled or attending school. The main reason used by the parents or family members is the) child is in poor health or is too weak or disabled (26% of the answers). Most also justified the non-enrollment or non-attendance by the fact that the child is too young to go to school (20%). In 18% of the cases, the children were not allowed to go to school by their own family, while in 10% the household members needed the kids to work to help the family. 19% said the family considered that it was a waste of time and that the child was not learning anything at school. Access to the school is also a problem, and for 9% of those surveyed, the school was too far, or there was no school in the village. Last, 2% expressed also security concerns in sending the children to school.

The following graph distinguished the reasons given by the household according to the sex of the children of the age between the 7-18 years old (based on 25% of the overall sample).

Main reasons for not going to school or temporary non-enrollment or for lack of attendance at formal school

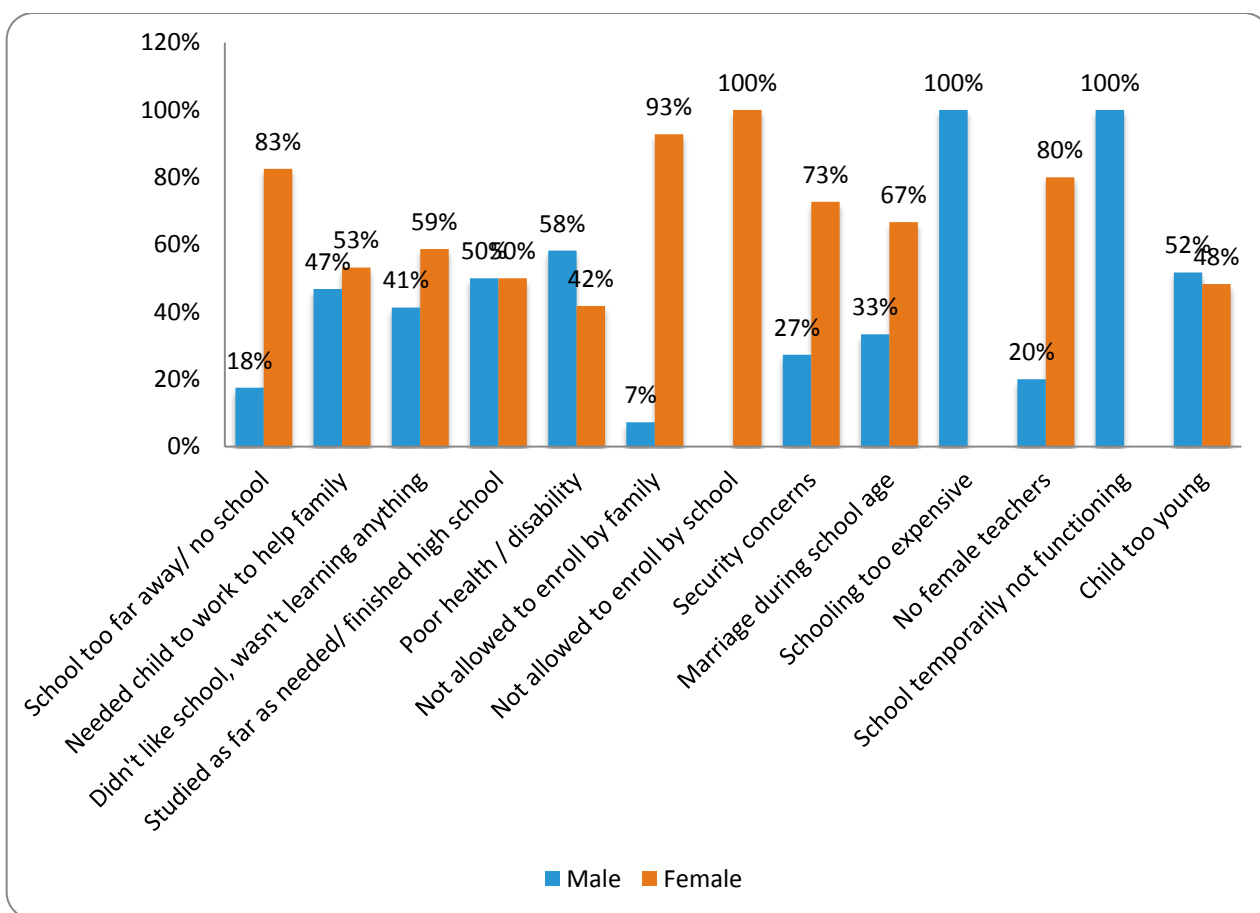


Figure 24: Reasons for non-attendance at school by gender

The above graph is interesting in terms of access to education from a gender perspective. Most of the arguments not to attend, or continue attending school are used in a huge proportion when it comes to girls or young women. For example, the percentage that gave the reason for non-attendance as “school is too far, or there is no school in the village” applied that argument to 83% for the females, but only 18% for males. For the argument “the child was not allowed to enroll by the family” the difference is even more important, applying to 93% for females non-attendees, but only 7% for the males. Also, some of the answers given concern only the female pupils, such as “not allowed to enroll by school (3 cases in the Ajagak area). Some reasons concern only male pupils, especially “school was temporarily not functioning” and “schooling was too expensive” (100% male, for both answers). From the gender perspective, it’s also important to reveal that the security issues, and the marriage during school age, as justification for non-attendance or non-enrollment are mostly use for female (respectively 73% and 67% for girls, and 27% and 33% for boys).

Education in rural areas of Afghanistan has met setbacks for a range of reasons. People in villages that do not enjoy regular connectivity and suffer from poor economic conditions have more reasons not to send their kids to school. Integrity Watch’s findings show that security, conservatism, distance and sometimes the belief of the parents stop girls from attending school. Comparatively, boys enjoy more parental favors and support when it comes to school. Sometimes economic reasons force a household to retain the child for household chores or help in agriculture.

Habitat, Agriculture and Environment

The region in and around Ajagak experiences harsh winters and pleasant summers, and the cultivation season is short. The region has sufficient natural water, which flows into the Shibar river. The Bamiyan side of Ajagak is in a valley with limited flat land for cultivation, while the Maidan Wardak side is large and water deficient. The infrastructure available around the mine (*i.e.* roads) is poor and of low quality. The Italian government has funded the road project to connect Bamiyan to Kabul via Shibar. People travel through the rough roads rarely on car; some use animals and many walk. This part of the report examines the habitat, the agricultural milieu and activities, and the transportation and circulation.

3.1 Habitat

Housing conditions in Ajagak, as the rest of Afghanistan are often inadequate. There are also huge disparities between wealthy people and the rest of the population, and between rural and urban people. The housing situation of the households is a relevant set of indicators, which exposes the living conditions, and socio-economic development of a population. In this section, the report presents the key findings in terms of the housing conditions, including: ownership and occupancy, the facilities of the dwellings, the date and type of construction, access to drinking water, access to electricity, the main sources of heating and lighting, and phone coverage.

Ownership and occupancy

Regarding the ownership and the occupancy of the dwelling, the household survey results found that 75% of the families live in single dwellings, while 24.9% share with others. The findings in Ajagak are close to the data on the national level, where around 70% of the citizenry lives in single family houses, and 22% in a shared house.⁴⁵

The following graph illustrates the occupancy status of the dwellings in Ajagak. Around 72% of households inherited residential property and are the occupants of their dwellings, while 20% of

⁴⁵See NRVA report, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

households were provided with a free household plot through charity. Less than 1% are tenants and less than 1% rent their dwelling.

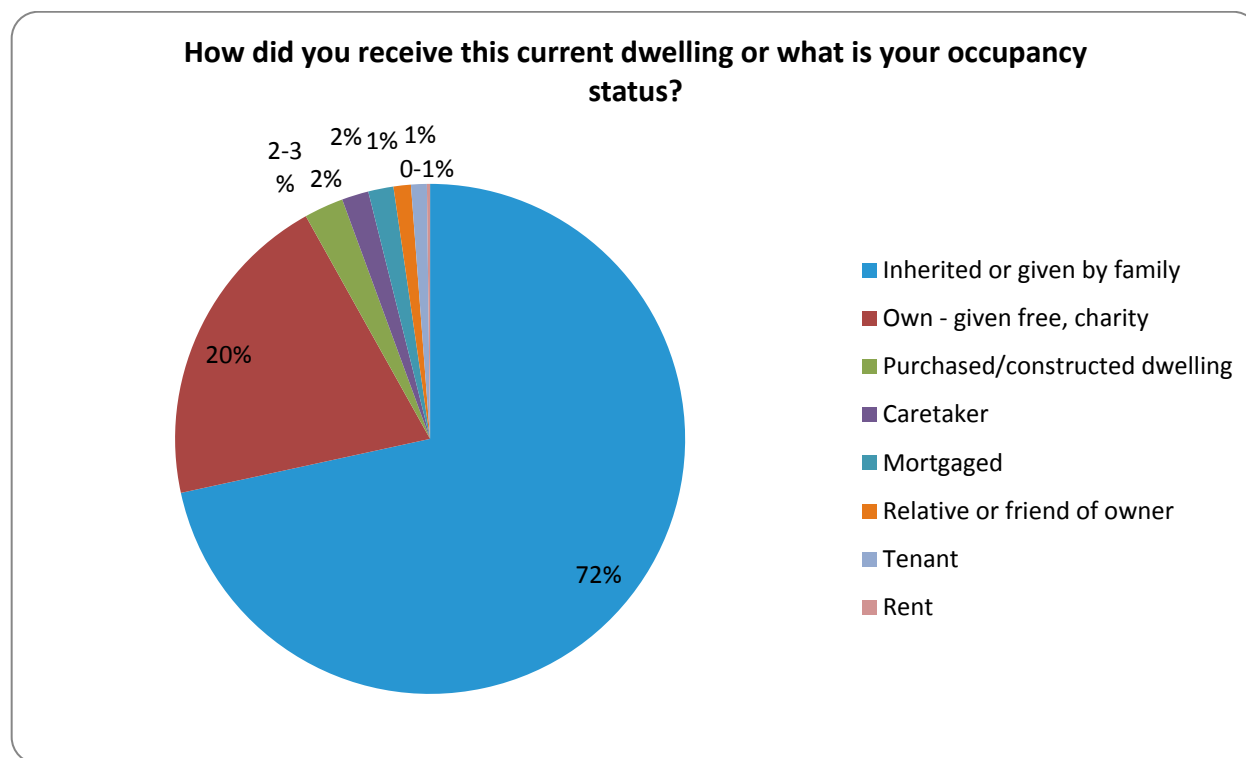


Figure 25: Occupancy status of Ajagak residents

These figures are close to the national and provincial data. Countrywide, 86% of the households claim ownership of the dwelling where they live⁴⁶, while they are 87% in Bamiyan province.⁴⁷ In the same province, only 3.9% were renting, while 7.5% had free lodging.⁴⁸

Currently there are six different kinds of titles over land such as Sharahee Qawala, Orufi Qawala, Malyati Qawala, Inheritance, grazing land and rain fed land titles. The current mineral recognizes these titles and owners are required to provide titles as such. According to the survey findings, around 80% of the occupants do not have any kind of documents to prove that they are the legal owner of the property. 1.5% had no knowledge of any kind of legal documents while 8.8% have registered property deed documents. 6.3% have sale documents (*Qawale Urfee*) and 3.6% have other local documents or that are used locally as non-official titles over the land like *Sanad Ghairy Rasmy*. Issues regarding land titles are common in the whole of rural Afghanistan. This is also the case on the national level, where 88% of rural households and around 70% of the urban dwellers have no proper documentation or registration that attest to the ownership of their dwelling.⁴⁹ The government seems to take the shorter route of seeking legal documents for ownership whereas millions of people in rural parts of Afghanistan do not have legal

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p. 93.

⁴⁷ CSO report, *op. cit*, p. 80.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*.

⁴⁹ See NRVA report, *op. cit*, p. 93.

document or know of the requirement to have such documents. It is imperative for the government to deal cautiously with the issue of land to avoid antagonizing people.

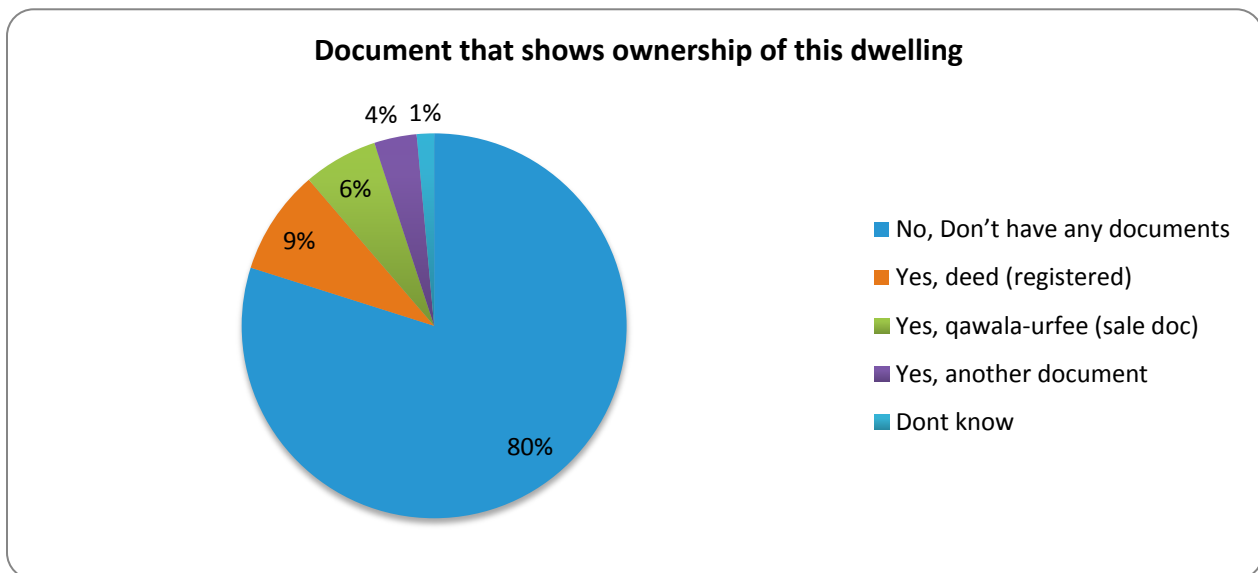


Figure 25: Documents showed by the household to attest the ownership of their dwelling

Construction date and type

The survey examined property type. 58% of residential properties in Ajagak were built more than 20 years ago, which was the period of civil war in Kabul. During this period, Shibar was peaceful and it is likely that people returned to the region to live. However, 13.5% of the households were built 10-20 years ago, coinciding with the change of regime and probably the return of many refugees from Iran and Pakistan. More than 14% of residential properties were built more recently, while 4.5% were built very recently. 1% of people did not remember the date of building their property.

Regarding the construction materials, households used different elements for construction. 54.5% d clay and raw bricks for the exterior wall of the house, while 45.1% used rocks and mud to make the wall. About 0.5% used baked-bricks and stone. 98.3% used tin and metal sheets for roofing, while 1.2% used concrete and 0.4% used wood. On the provincial level, "87.9% of the households in Bamiyan were living in houses with roofs made of wood, branches, and a mixture of mud and straw."⁵⁰ Also in Bamiyan province, and according to the same socio-demographic and economic survey, stone with mud is the most common material for the outer walls of the dwellings (around 75% of the households).⁵¹

⁵⁰ See CSO report, *op. cit*, p. 78.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 79.

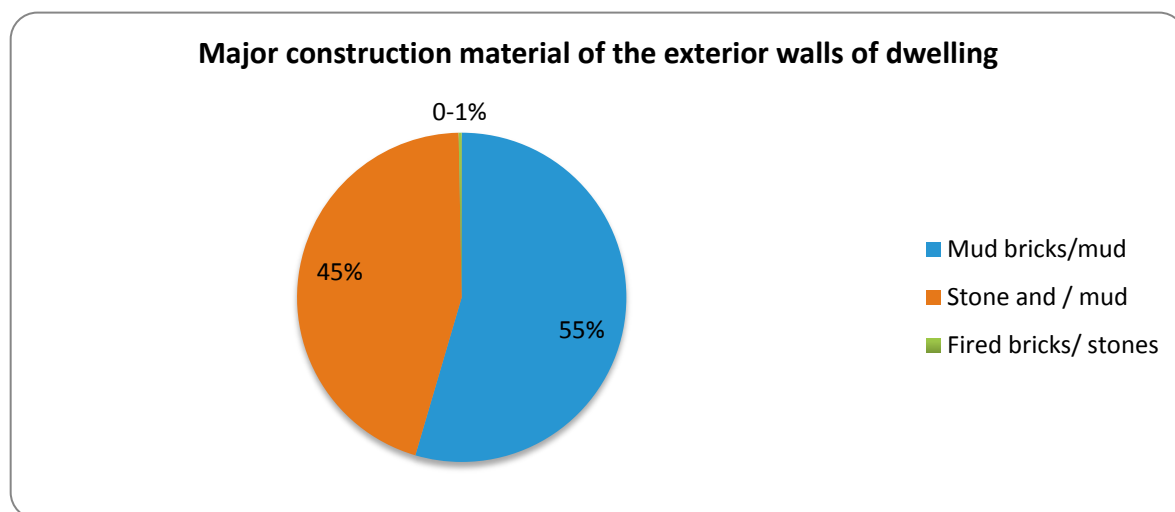


Figure 26: Major construction material of the exterior walls of the dwelling

Residential building and house facilities

During the survey, 75.1% of household respondents said they have independent houses to live in, while 24.9% share a housing complex with others. The size and number of rooms in each residential property varied from between one to fifteen rooms. Rooms are defined in the study, as a bedroom, a living room, a dining room, a guard or cook or maid, any kind of room for the employee, but toilet, bathroom and kitchen are not counted as a room. About 70% of the houses have between 1 and 3 rooms, signifying a small household size, while 29.3% have 4 or more rooms. The size and number of rooms in the region is sign of economic situation. The larger the house is, the richer the family.

Number of rooms	Average Household Size	Number of Households
1	6.19	145
2	6.92	299
3	7.93	181
4	7.59	148
5	7.20	40
6	8.43	35
7	7.90	10
8	7.58	19
9	6.75	4
10	6.44	9

Table 6: Number of rooms by household's size

The table above reveals that most of the households (299) in Ajagak live in a dwelling with two rooms. 181 households interviewed live in a three-room house, while they are 145 in a one-room house. The size of the household does not necessarily indicate the number of people living in the household as many of the homes had few rooms but a greater number of inhabitants.

On the national level, according to NRVA survey results, “the most frequently observed numbers of rooms per dwelling for rural Afghan households are two and three, whereas for urban households it is three and four.”⁵² On the provincial level, in Bamiyan, 31.6% of the households lived in dwellings with only one room, and around 39% in dwelling with two rooms.⁵³ Only 14.3% of the households in Bamiyan live in dwellings where there are more than four rooms, less than in the Ajagak survey result.⁵⁴

Regarding the facilities present in the house, the survey looked at both kitchen and toilet facilities. Having an independent kitchen seems to be an indicator of development and resources, as it is common in villages for households to use the living room for cooking. The findings showed that a vast majority of households in Ajagak (73.5%) have the kitchen as an independent room or space, while 18.5 % use part of another room to cook in.

What kind of kitchen/cooking facilities does this dwelling have?

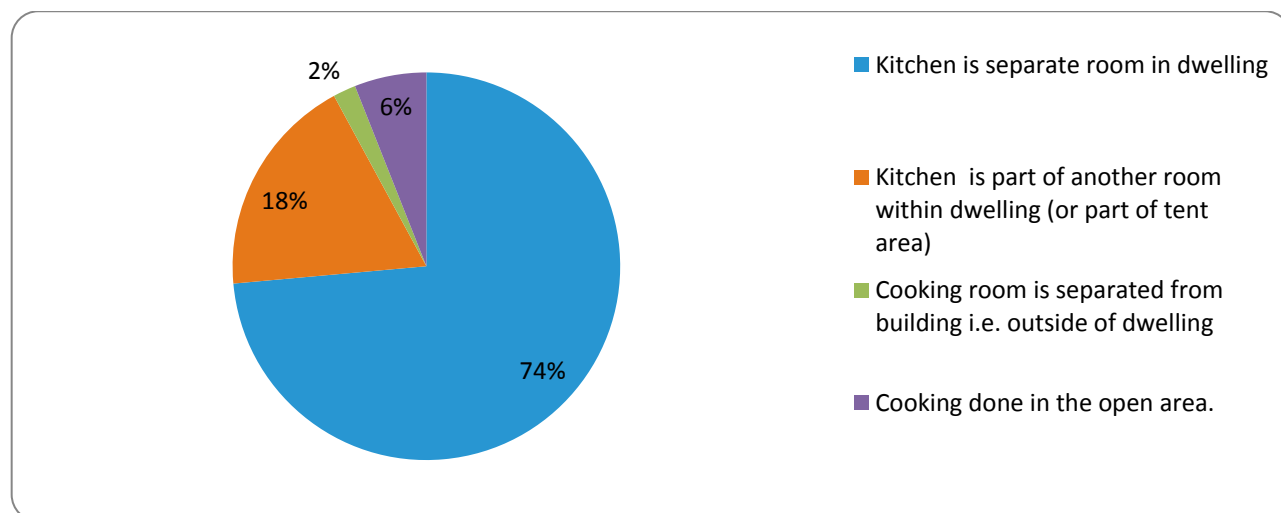


Figure 28: Types of cooking facilities used by the residents

As for the toilet facilities, about 39% of the households testified that they have a toilet within the compound or walls of the house while 61.2% had this facility outside the compound. About 40% of the sanitation facilities were shared among several households. In comparison with national data, the households in Ajagak have a worse sanitation system than Afghan citizens in general. 89% of the population has access to sanitation within the compound while 22% shares the sanitation facility with other households.⁵⁵

⁵² See NRVA, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

⁵³ CSO report, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, see table 37.

⁵⁵ See NRVA report, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

The table below shows the kinds of toilet facilities used by Ajagak households.

Which main toilet facility does your household use?

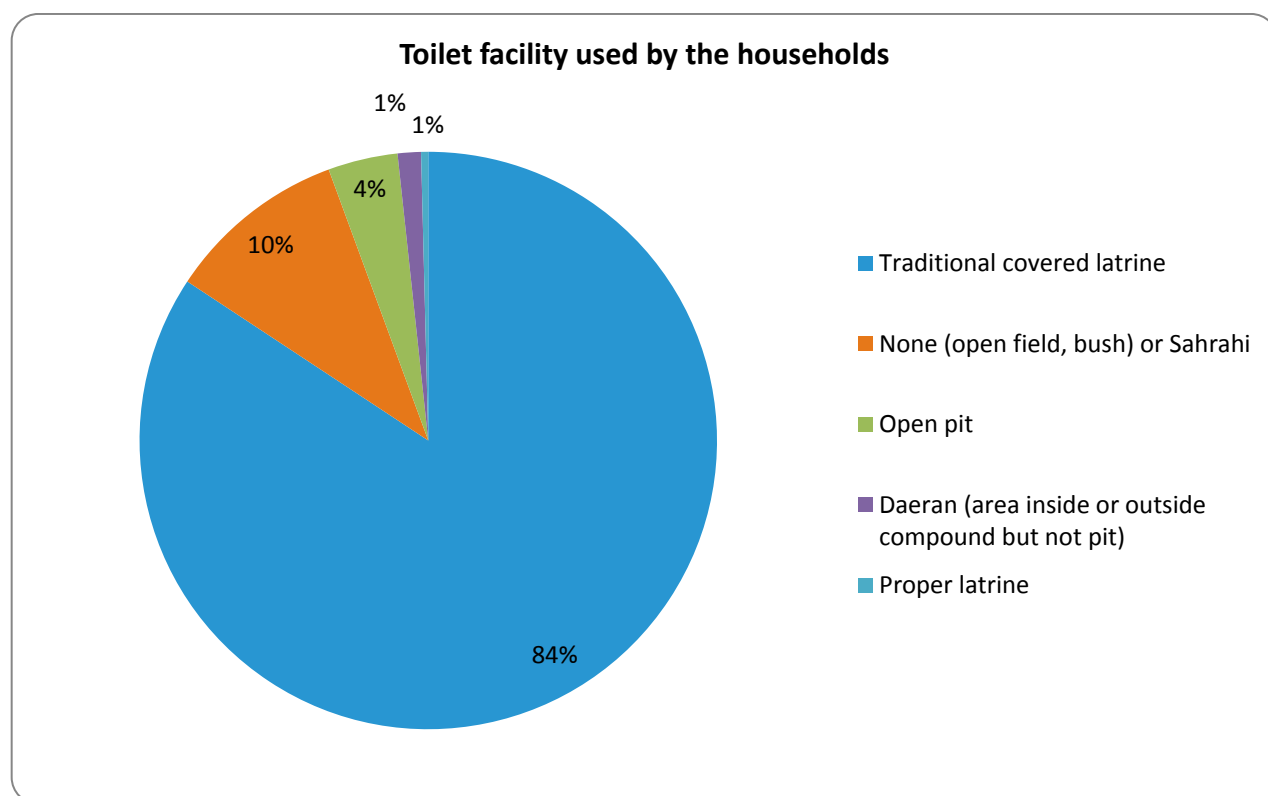


Figure 29: Types of toilet facilities used by the residents

84% of the respondents say they just have traditional covered latrines, while 10% didn't have one at all. Around 4% have an open pit, whereas 1% has access to daeran (which is a place inside or outside the compound used for waste products), and only 1% to improved latrines. The data on the provincial level are a bit better since 30% have access to improved latrines (including proper latrines and open pits).⁵⁶ Data in Ajagak regarding improved latrines are similar to that collected on the national level in 2007: only 5% of the Afghan population has access to improved latrines (compared to 1% and 4% in the figure above).⁵⁷ Countrywide, 25% of the population (more than in Ajagak) use open fields or the daeran.⁵⁸

Water supply and facilities are crucial in terms of health and basic hygiene. "Inadequate sanitation, hygiene and water result not only in more sickness and death, but also in higher health costs, lower worker productivity and lower school enrollment."⁵⁹

Access to drinking water

Access to drinking water is a major concern, despite the availability of water in the region. The people of Ajagak draw 39% of their potable water from the existing rivers, lakes and water channels of the region. 73.6% of women, 14.6% of girls, 4.8% of men and 6.9% of boys are occupied in bringing water for

⁵⁶ See CSO report, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

⁵⁷ See NRVA report, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ See NRVA report, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

household consumption use.

According to the focus group interviews, the residents of Ajagak benefited from three different projects supporting access to drinking water—especially the construction of wells with hand pumps. The hand-pump mounted well projects have been successful because the water table in the region is high; the highest water table is at 8 meters depth, medium at 24 meters while the deepest is at 70 meters. The perception of drinking water as clean and sanitary are as follows: 66.5% of consumers considered this water to be potable, while 29.2% thought the water could sometimes be muddy and unsafe to drink. Only 4.4% of the population said the water was always muddy and unfit to drink.

Moreover, only 58.7% of the residents answering the household interviews have regular access to drinking water, while 41.3% occasionally do not have such access because of non-availability of clean water.

In Bamiyan province, 35% of the households get their drinking water from unprotected springs and 33% from surface water. These sources remain the main sources of water for drinking, washing, cooking and other uses. On the national level, only 27% of the population has access to drinking water, with considerable differences between urban (around 60%) and rural (only 20%) households, and between the provinces. For example in Bamiyan province, 13% of the population has access to drinking water while the number is 56% in Kabul and 5% in Helmand.⁶⁰

In Ajagak, only 10% think that water is not safe in all seasons, 65% of them said that during the spring the water is not safe because flooding contamination. In the winter, 66% of them reported that they are faced with the shortage of drinking water because they can't go to the mountain to the springs to collect the drinking water because of snowfall, but in the other seasons they have access to their main source of drinking water.

The table below indicates the unavailability and unsafe quality of the water according to season in Ajagak area, based on 41% of sampling.

Water is not available			Water is not safe	
	Number of responses	Percentage	Number of responses	Percentage
Summer2012	29	12.8%	23	4.3%
Spring2012	30	13.2%	351	65.0%
Winter2011	151	66.5%	33	6.1%
Fall2011	16	7.0%	77	14.3%
All Seasons	1	0.4%	56	10.4%
Total	227	100.0%	540	100%

Table 7: Availability and safety of the water in the region

The findings from the baseline survey underline once again the harsh winter that freezes the valley for almost 7 months and thus decreases the water supply to households. The response shows that 66.5% respondents said that the water is not available in winter while 65% of the respondents said that water is not safe in spring. Spring is the time of the year when snow melts, washing mud along its course into the river which is a major source of drinking water supply to local communities. During spring and summer, the region has sufficient supply of water for villages along the river while villages away from

⁶⁰ See NRVA report, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

the river find it hard to access water.

Access to electricity

Electricity is a very important life amenity, but it is a luxury in many rural parts of Afghanistan. However, it is important to highlight that the survey found 93% of the households interviewed in the area had access to electricity generated by small hydro-dams partially funded by NGOs. The data further revealed that, on average, households had access to electricity for 10.3 hours daily.

The chart below shows a complete picture of electricity sources.

What was the main source of the electricity?

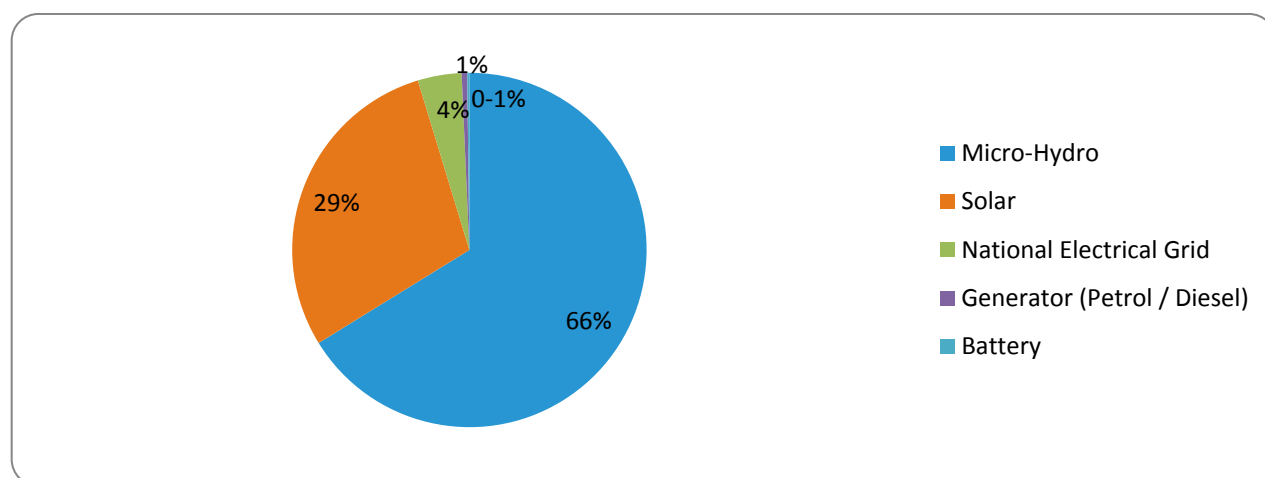


Figure 30: Main sources of electricity used by the residents

The residents pay around 150 Afs per month for use of electricity. However, there were mixed responses to the question regarding price stability of the electricity. 76% said the price of electricity had increased. The National Solidarity Program and Agha Khan Foundation are supporting the community members, developing several projects to facilitate the generation of electricity from water sources. Ajagak is situated in a mountainous region and the residents use the water coming from the springs and the melting snow. About 65% of villagers have access to micro-hydro projects, while 29% of the households use solar power and the rest use solar energy, generators and battery.

According to the provincial data, around 27% of the households have access to electricity at home in Bamiyan.⁶¹ In the country as a whole, the average is 20%, ranging from 78% in urban areas to 6% in rural areas.⁶² 42% of the Afghan population didn't have access to any source of electricity in 2007. The national average is 11 hours per day by the electricity grid and lower numbers for each alternative source, including generators.⁶³

Sources of heating and lighting for households

The people living in Ajagak use a number of sources to light their homes. According the household

⁶¹ See CSO report, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

⁶² See NRVA report, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

findings, around 70% of people use electricity generated from small hydro-dams, while 27% use solar energy and 2% use battery for light. Less than 1% use electricity from the national grid. On the provincial level, the solar power is the leading source of energy for lighting in Bamiyan province (three in every five households).⁶⁴

What has been the household's main source of lighting during the past 30 days?

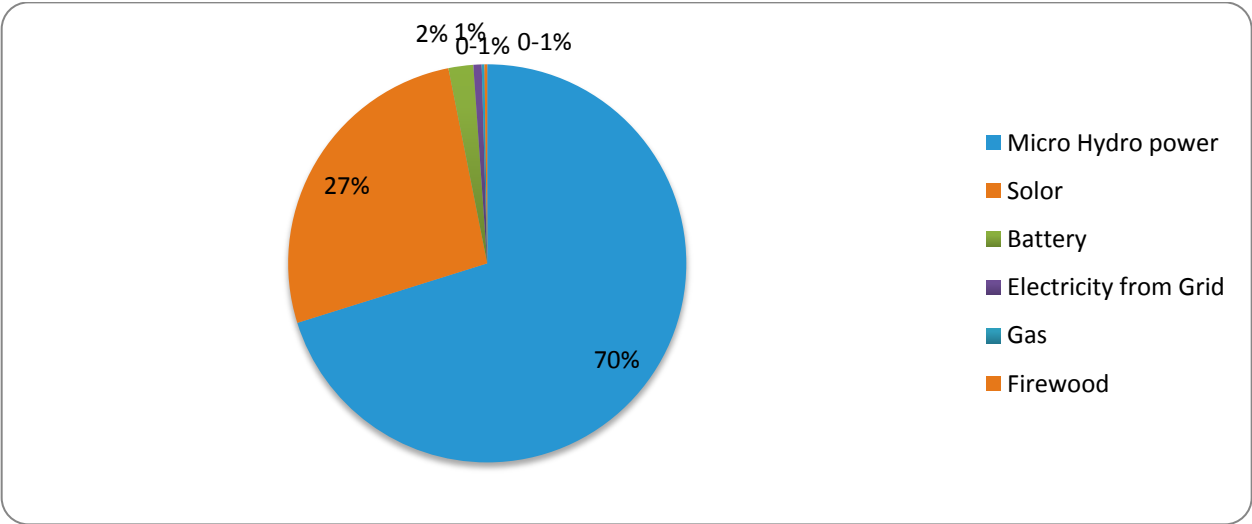


Figure30: Household's main source of lighting during the past 30 days

Regarding the main source of energy for heating, 53.2% of the residents use bushes. 35% use cow dung, while 7% use firewood. People of the region do not enjoy regular connectivity and have little incomes when the winter is harsh. Their survival strategy is dependent upon locally available sources of heating in winter, with bushes, cow dung, wood and gases the best options.

What has been the household's main source of cooking fuel during the past 30 days?

⁶⁴ See CSO report, *op. cit*, p. 74.

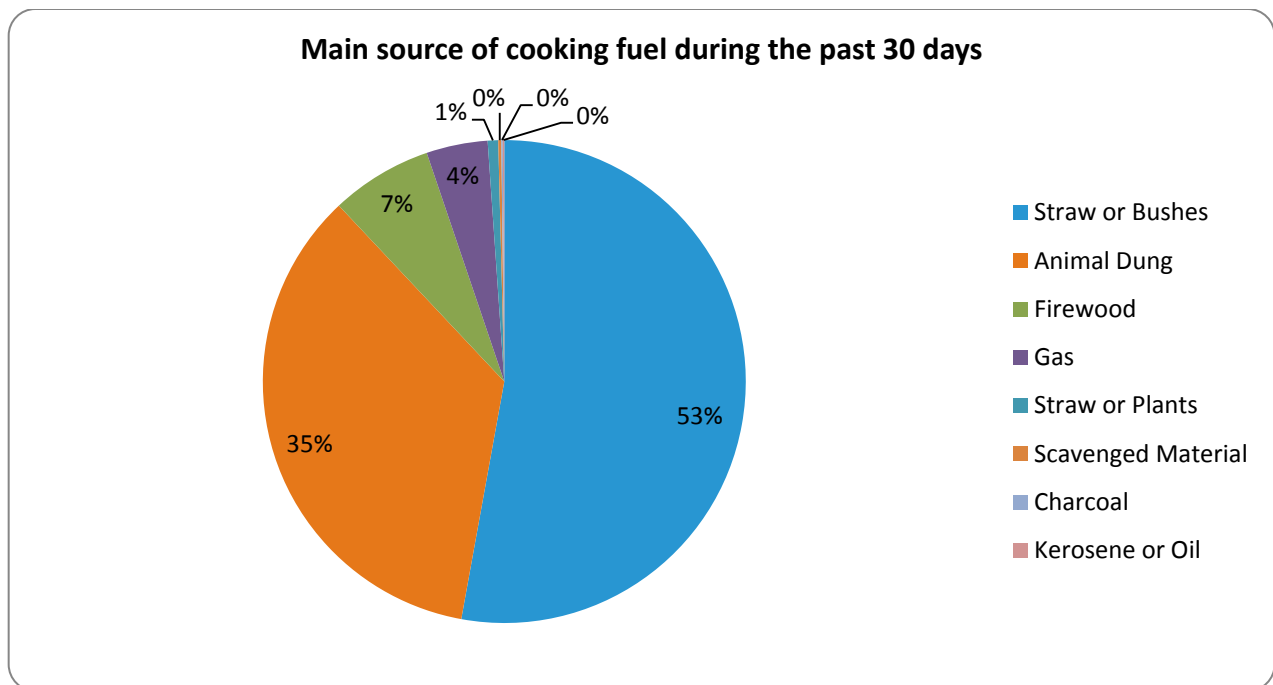


Figure 31: Main source of cooking fuel during the previous month

These numbers can be compared to the data collected by CSO on the provincial level in Bamiyan. Animal dung is the most common source in the province, with around 45.5% using it; it is the second source in Ajagak. Residents there are using mostly straw and bushes and less straw or plants than the rest of the province.⁶⁵ Animal dung is also the most important source of energy for heating in the province (7 in every 10 households).⁶⁶

According to the NRVA survey “the use of solid fuels for heating and cooking in homes usually results in incomplete combustion and hence in the emission of hundreds of compounds, some of which may induce cancer and other health problems. It also produces greenhouses gases that contribute to global climate change.”⁶⁷ The source of energy for lighting, heating and cooking has a direct impact on health and the environment of the Ajagak resident and area.

Phone Coverage

Though a large majority of households have mobile phones, there are few telecom towers in the valley. The area is connected to other parts of the country and world with only a weak signal. It is not commercially viable to build towers because the population is poor and small.

Based on reports from CDC members, 59% of the area has no coverage for mobile phones in their villages at all. 41% of them reported that when there is coverage it is very weak and they have to go to the highest point in the area to catch signal to call someone. Moreover, it does not seem profitable for the companies right now to install towers to provide services, though there are some towers in the region. Ajagak residents are perceived by CDC members to have less access to phones than the

⁶⁵ See CSO report, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, p. 73.

⁶⁷ See NRVA report, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

countrywide number (only 71% of the population had a mobile phone in 2012).⁶⁸

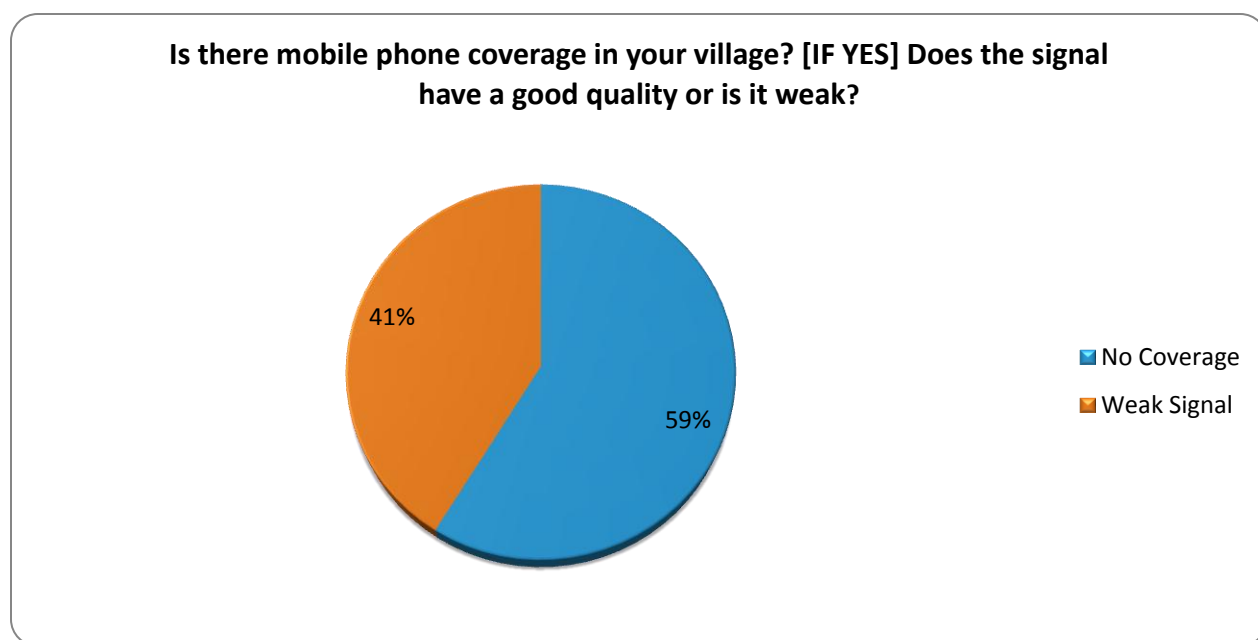


Figure 32: Existence and quality of the phone coverage in the area

Information and communication means are really important to connect the Ajagak residents to the outside world, and are a prominent indicator to measure the state of development. Access to modern technologies is crucial in terms of access to information, on political, economic and social level.

3.2 Agricultural milieu and activities

Agricultural activities are the main occupation and source of income for the people of Ajagak as for the Afghan population as a whole. Nationwide, 55% of households were engaged in farming and 68% have at least livestock.⁶⁹ The World Bank report attests to the fact that agriculture contributes 37% to GDP.⁷⁰ This section of the report studies different aspects of the agricultural milieu

Land possession and types

Results showed that on average, each household has 4.2 acres of irrigated land and 1.2 acres of rain-fed land, while each house has an average of 0.1 acre of orchard in addition to the residential plot.

How many jireeb of irrigated land does your household own?

⁶⁸ See SAP 2012 Asia foundation report, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

⁶⁹ See NRVA report, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

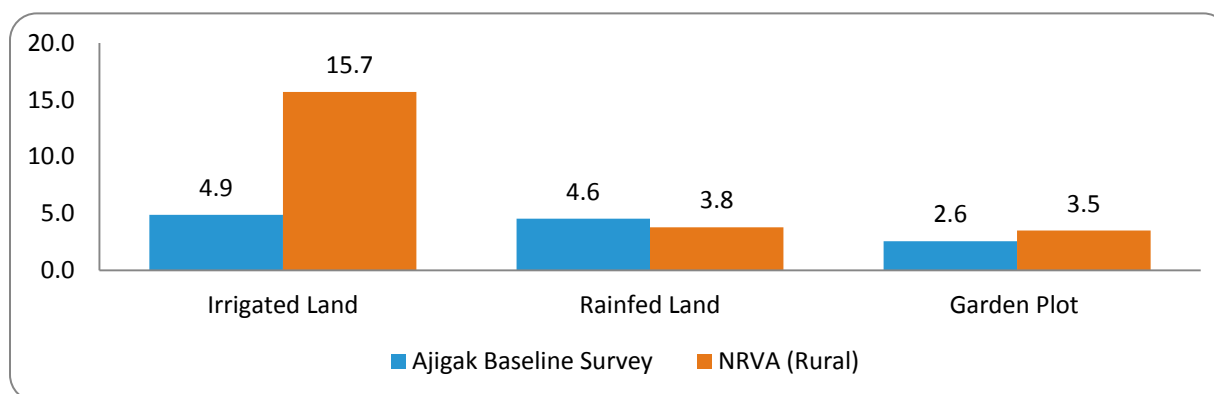


Figure 33: Average size of the land ownership in the area

The above graph represents a comparison between national level (data collected from NRVA survey) and Ajagak results from household interviews. The average size of the irrigated land is 4,9 acres in Ajagak, while it is 15.7 acres on the national level. The Ajagak area has very little irrigated land, notably because there is almost no flat land except at the bottom of the valley. Nearly all the land in Ajagak is has a rough topography and is difficult to cultivate: 4.6 acres is the average size of a plot of rain fed land in Ajagak, more than the national average which is 3.8 acres. The average size of a garden plot is 2.6 acres in Ajagak, which approaches the national average of 3.5 acres.

Though the weather is harsh for a large part of the year, the valley supports the life system of 7 kinds of trees. The four prominent types of trees are indicated on the graph below:

What kind of trees are in this village and what kind of products do they produce?

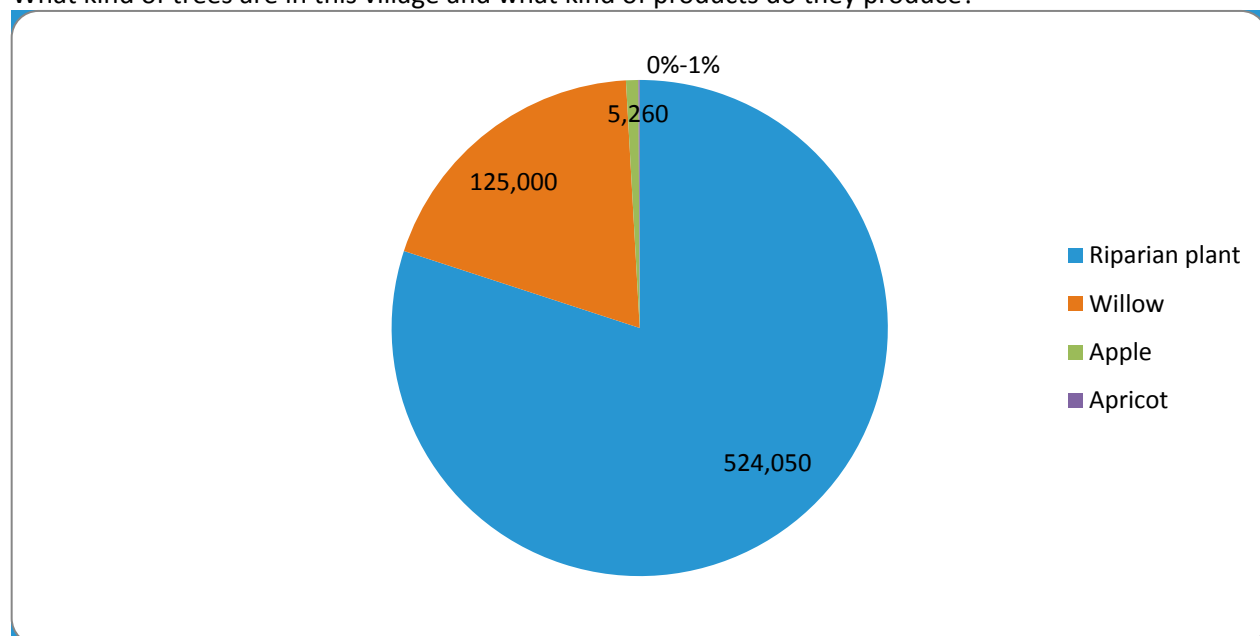


Figure 34: Number of trees reported by CDC members in the region

Agricultural activities are the main source of income for residents. The household results also indicate that during the past 12 months, 53.9% of households cultivated crops for household consumption, while 34.9% of households had cultivated for sale, and less than 1% worked as wage laborers in the field. Only

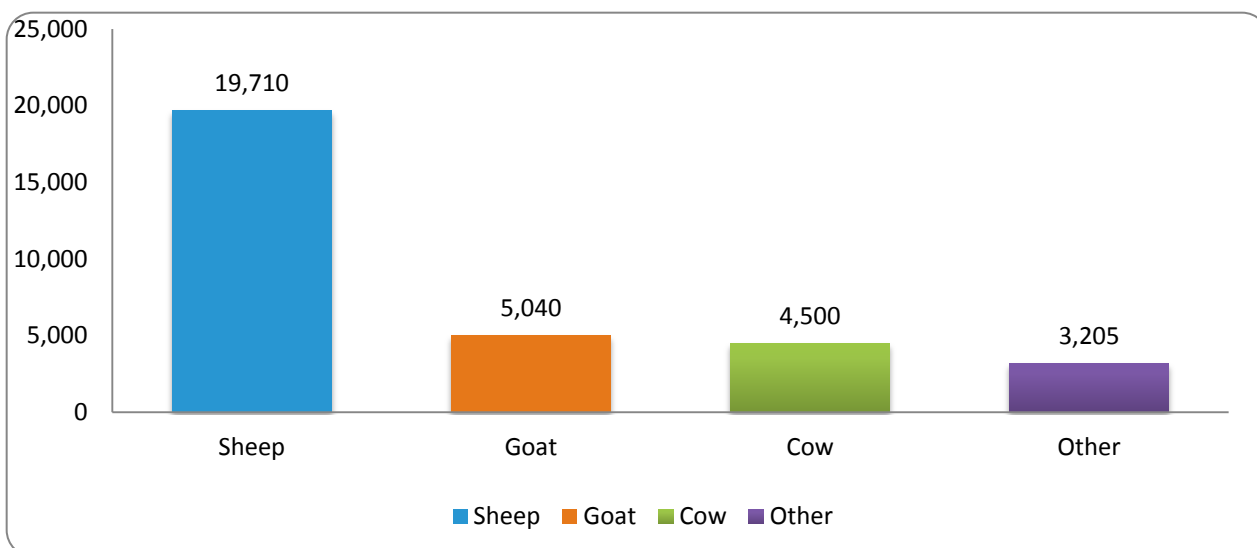


Figure 36: Number of animals going to grazing land

0.7% of the population in Ajagak area was not involved in any kind of agricultural activities.

The percentage of the population that cultivated crops for market on average sold 5138 kg, generating on average 8.2 Afs from each kilo of sale. In the previous year, an average of 48722 Afs (maximum of 324000 Afs) was earned in household income by the sale of agricultural products.

In light of water availability, harsh winters and short summers, the population does not produce large quantities of agricultural products for market.

Grazing Land

The second main source of income for the households in Ajagak is livestock. Based on focus group interviews, almost 96% of the villages have access to grazing land. 90% of households own livestock such as sheep, goats, and cows. Keeping livestock is prominent due to the high level of access to grazing land. Based on data extracted from the focus group interviews, there are 32,455 animals in total, of which 19,710 are sheep, 5,040 are goats, 4,500 are cows and 3,205 are other animals (mostly donkeys).

The Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development has provided some families with livestock, and this strategy has paid off. Locals have bred livestock as well.

The residents for the first time had disputes over grazing lands with the Kuchis, nomads who for centuries visited the area and coexisted with other locals. The residents of the area also had disputes over the same issues with neighboring villages.

How many animals from your village are going to this grazing area?

Water capacity and Irrigation System

The Ajagak Mountains stand tall and gaze down upon meadows on all sides. Numerous streams of water join the river in its course before it merges with the Shibar River at Kalo. However, the quantity of surface and underground water is insufficient for meeting local needs. The region has small streams that the local people currently rely on for household use, electricity generation and agricultural purposes. When mining operations begin, this water may be diverted to the project, thus drastically reducing water for household use and irrigation purposes.

The main irrigation sources in the Ajagak area are rivers, springs and canals. According to focus group interviews, 47% of farmers use river water for irrigation, while 41% use water from springs, and about

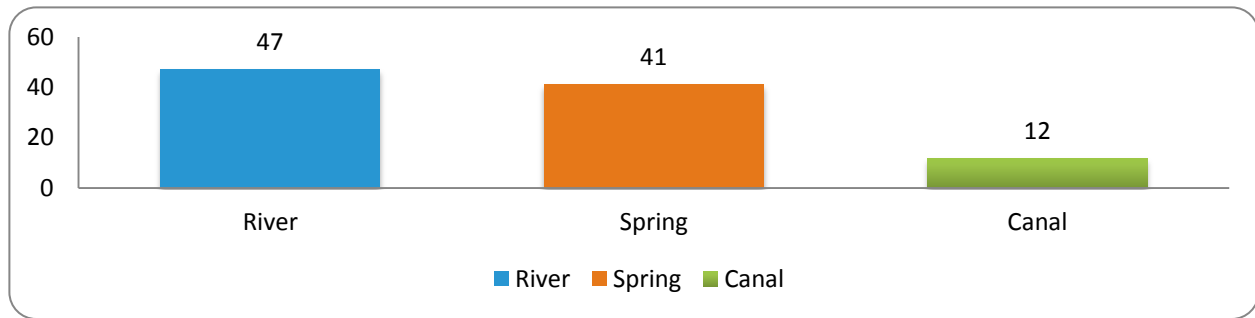


Figure 37: Main source of irrigation in the area

12% from the canal. In the last cultivation season the majority of farmers had enough water for irrigation, but the remaining 40% reported that they did not. Most of the time, during the summer the farmers at Ajagak face a critical lack of irrigation because they do not have storage facilities, during the spring and winter season, there is more water for irrigation, which makes it easy to use for cultivation.

Based on the survey, more than 70% of the population involved in agriculture has enough irrigation water for crops. The graph below shows the sources of water for cultivation.

What was the main source of irrigation for crops grown by people in the village during the most recent season?

Flooding

Based on the data from the focus group interviews, flooding seems to be a major natural factor threatening the residents of the region. The data indicated that half the respondents experienced flooding every year and 18% had faced a natural disaster in the last year. A quarter of respondents had not ever experienced any flooding, while 12% said they experienced flooding 15 years ago. Most of the villages that had experienced flooding are located in the valley, where most of the closest mountains are covered with snow. There are many weather factors that can cause a flood to occur, including heavy rain over a long or short period of time (flash floods), melting snow, or a combination of these factors, which can cause rivers and lakes to overflow. Many Ajagak villages experienced flash floods during the spring season, which severely affects the agricultural

activities of the residents.

Given the current adequacy of water supply and usage, a major concern is that mining operations will

require much of the water currently used by the local communities for agriculture and household purposes thus constraining their activities, livelihoods, health and well being.

When your village was suffered a flood?

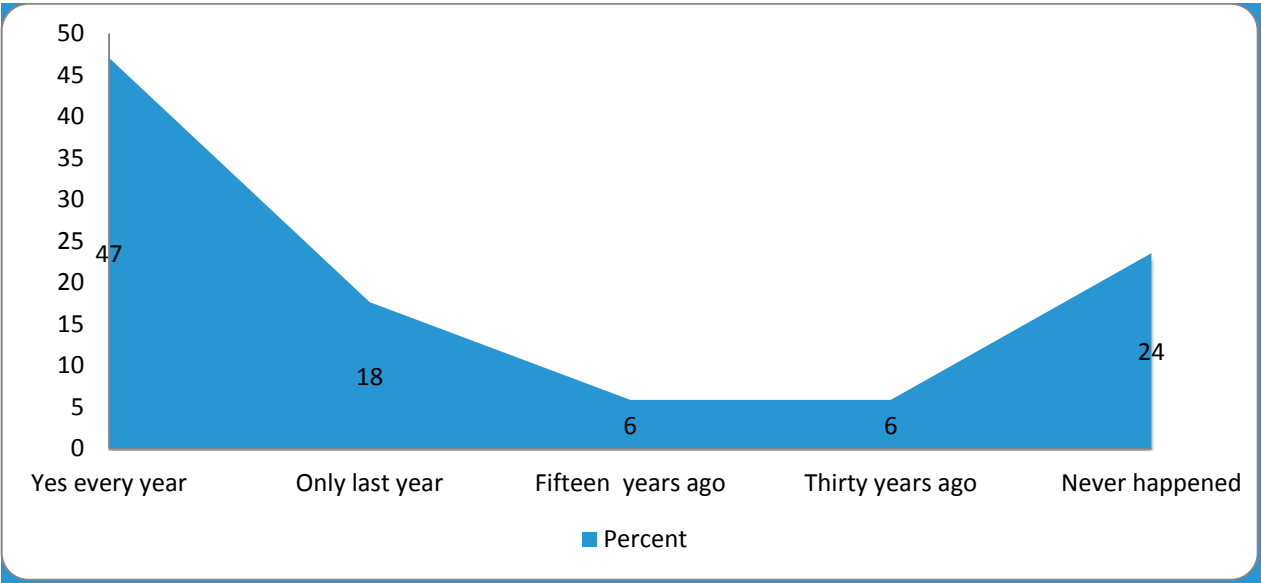


Figure 38: Frequency of flooding in the area

Crop production

Most of the people in the Ajagak area are receiving their daily income from farming their land. The survey finding shows that the main agricultural products are potatoes, wheat, barley, alfalfa, clover, and cumin.

According to the household results, in the last farming season between 0.3 and 80 acres of land were allocated per household for the above-mentioned crops. Production was around 788 *sair*⁷¹.

The following graph illustrates how much of each kind of crop was cultivated by households in each season during the past 12 months.

During the past 12 months, in which seasons did you or your household harvest crops and which crops did you harvest?

⁷¹ Sair is a traditional way of estimating the size of land proportionate to the amount of seed used especially when the plot of land is rain fed. One *Sair* of seed is equal to 5516 Kg.

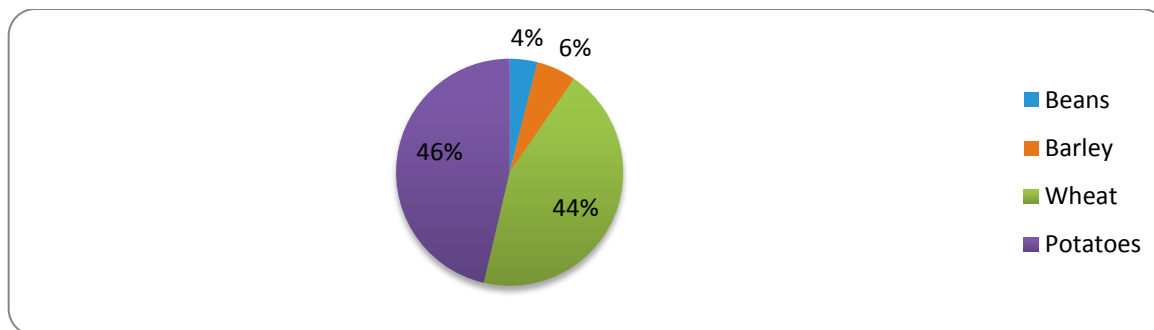


Figure 39: Main types of the crops in the area

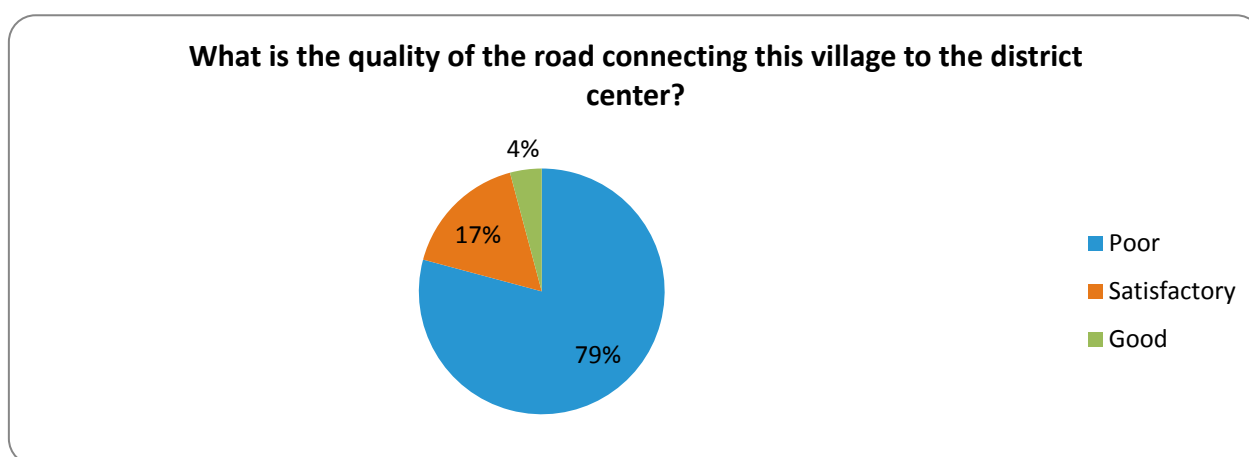


Figure 40: Percentage of common crop diseases in the village

Crop diseases

Based on the focus group results, there are a number of threats to crops in the region. In the past 2 years, farmers have faced a number of crop diseases. The most common crop diseases in Ajagak were rust (59%) and frost (18%), while 24% reported that there was not any common crop disease. Rust is a common threat affecting wheat, where the wheat color changes to red during harvest time. During cold weather, crops—especially wheat and potatoes—cannot grow normally, affecting the harvest and production, and therefore the income of the villagers.

Please list the common crop diseases in your village?

3.3. Accessibility and transportation

Shiber is a region that falls on the highway between Maidan and Bamiyan provinces and Ajagak is the mine that connects the provinces. The road is rough and runs through bumpy mountainous slopes making travel through the region unattractive and expensive because cars break down and suffer damage. In addition, the region does not have commercial production, and people are poor so business has not come in. As a result, the area has little contact with the outside world.



Figure 41: Quality of the Road in percentage

Access to roads

Ajagak is located in Bamiyan province in the central highlands, next to Wardak. There are two main roads connecting Bamiyan to Kabul. One of these is the Shibar road, which connects Bamiyan to Parwan province, and the other is the Ajagak road, connecting Bamiyan to Wardak province. The quality of the latter road is poor. Since the road runs through mountains, during winters many drivers prefer not to use the Ajagak road and instead use Shibar Road as an alternative. The area is mountainous and there is not much flat land. People mostly live close to the Ajagak road. Almost 67% of the villages have this road running through their village or live less than 1 kilometer away from it. 29% of the villages are far from Ajagak road (between 1 – 5 kilometers), and only 4% of communities don't have a road to connect their villages to the Ajagak road. It is important to mention that a road from Bamiyan center through Kalo connecting the province to Maidan Wardak is under construction currently. This project is funded by the Italian government. The first part of the road (Wardak province to Onai pass) has already been completed. A Chinese company performed the construction activities of this part. The second part from Onai pass to the end is contracted to an Iranian company (prime contractor) which has then sub-

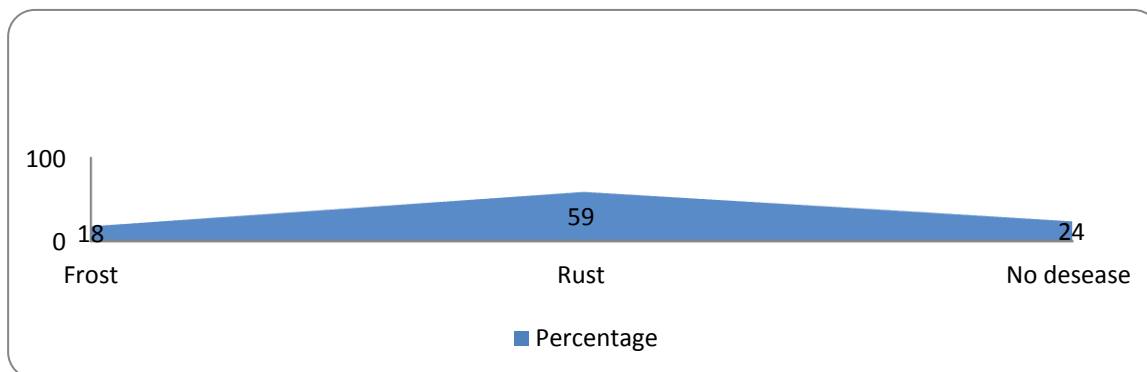


Figure 42: Road between the village and the district center

contracted it to two joint ventures of Afghan companies (Umran and Gholola Group). The total length of

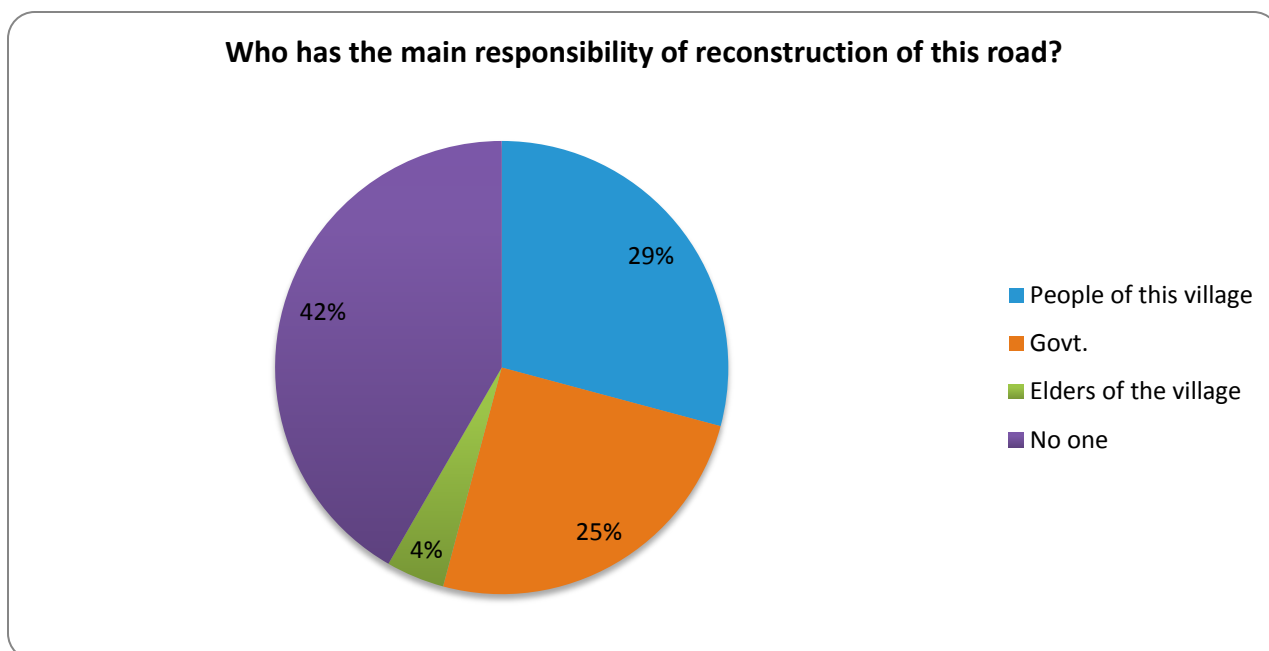
the road is 82 km.

Moreover, the Ajagak road is closed approximately 9 months of the year because of the harsh winter in Ajagak. Truck drivers have to use the Parwan road in spite of its insecurity due to the presence of the Taliban.

Most of the people complained that construction of the new road was too slow. A few dozen kilometers out of Bamyan, the Ajagak road as it enters the Kalo valley becomes difficult to traverse, with only one lane and washed out areas from flooding.

Quality of roads connecting villages to the district center

Figure 43: Responsibility in terms of maintenance of the roads



The road connecting villages to the district center is also of very poor quality, zigzagging through the valley. 79% of villagers complained that the quality of the road from their village to the district center is poor, and only 11% were satisfied or said the quality of their village road is good, though the road is unpaved and difficult to travel on.

Road maintenance

Road maintenance is the responsibility of the Ministry of Public Works and the Ministry of Public Welfare. However, the survey showed that people largely do not know who is responsible for maintaining or reconstructing the village road. Based on the results of the survey, 42% of the CDC members believed that no one is responsible for maintaining the village road; 29% believed that it is the responsibility of the villagers; 25% believed that it is the responsibility of the government; 4% said it is the responsibility of the village elders.

Usability of village road

Weather plays a major role in the usability of the road. Roads are mainly not usable from fall to spring. From the third month of fall (November), the temperature drops to -25 to -30°C in winter. Snow could be seen on mountains during May in the Ajagak area. It starts snowing in the winter, and continues until March. At the end of March the flooding season begins, when the snow melts and water gushes out at high speeds overflowing its natural course. This can often flood and wash out unpaved roads or deposit sand on the road, making it difficult for small cars to navigate.

During which months of the year was the road not usable by vehicles?

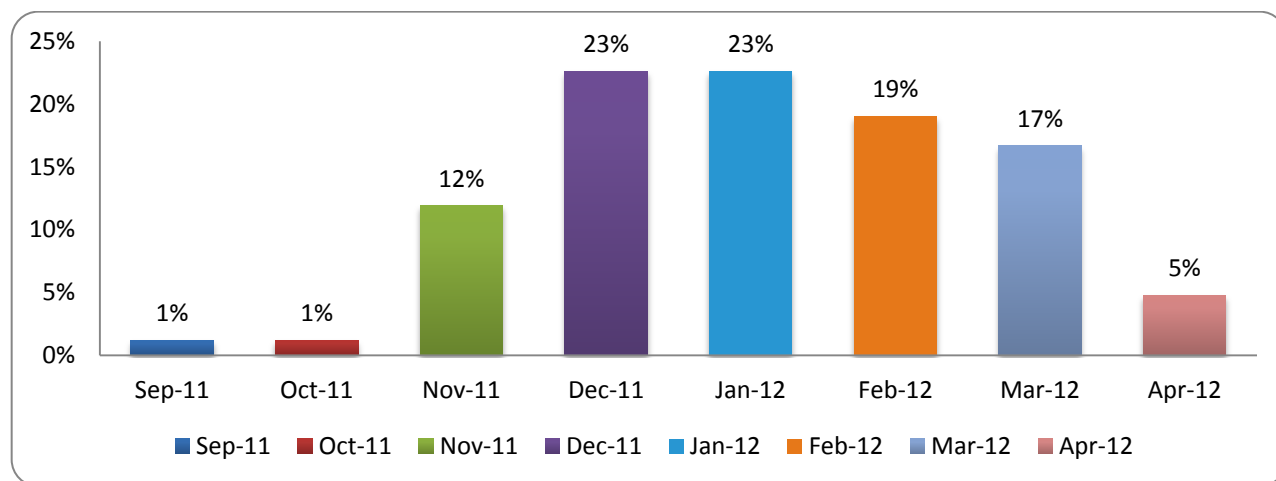


Figure 44: Unusable road according to the season

Frequency of travel to the district center

The data collection for the survey was carried out in September 2012, and during this time the CDC members reported on the frequency of the vehicles traveling from their village to the district center in the past 30 days. The report showed that 29% of the villages did not have any experience of cars traveling from their villages to the district center in the past 30 days; about 29% reported that cars had gone from their villages to the district center once every 2 days; 21% reported once every day the vehicles traveled from their village to the district center; 13% said that vehicles traveled from their village to the district center twice a day; the remaining 8% reported that vehicles traveled from their village to the district center at least once or twice a week.

During the past 30 days, how frequently have vehicles travelled between this village and the district center?

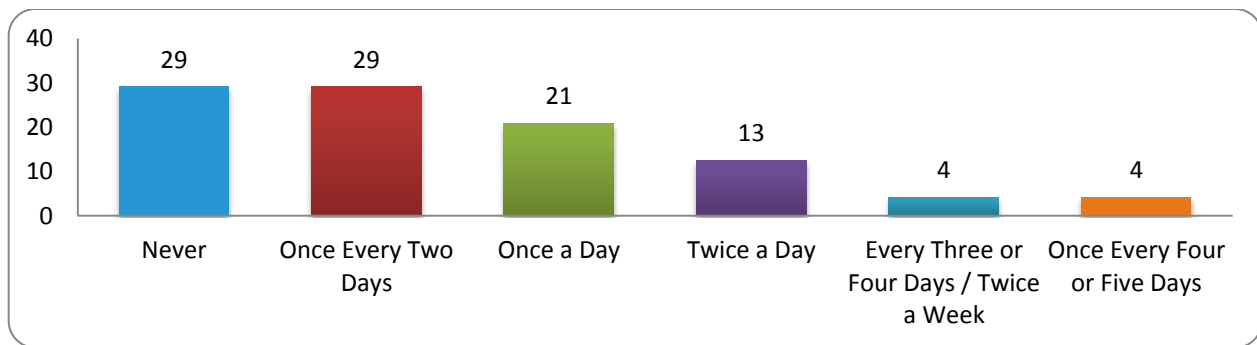


Figure 45: Frequency of traveling in car between the village and the district center

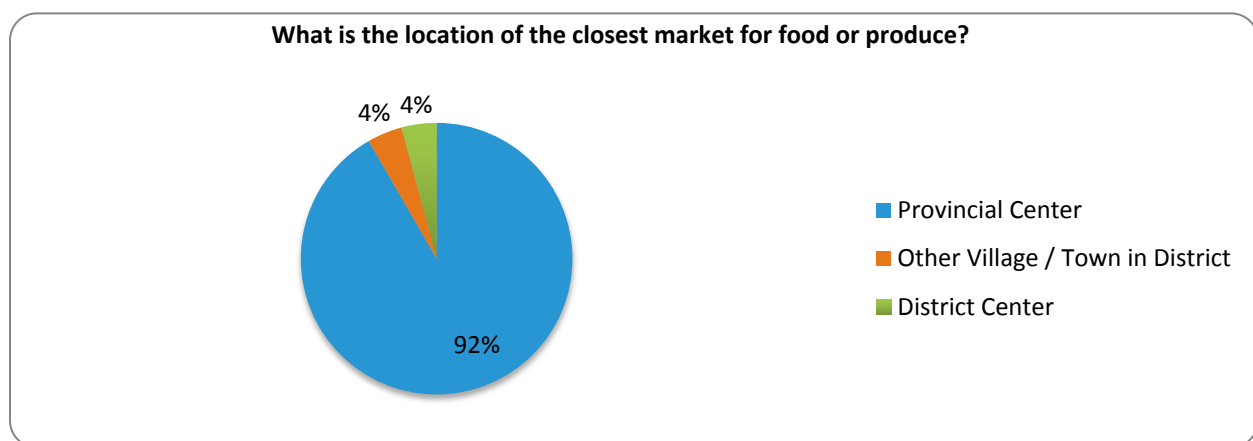


Figure 46: Location of the closest market in the area

Food Market

Ajagak is located between Maidan Wardak and Bamiyan provinces on rocky terrain and in harsh weather conditions. The population has not fully met its market potential and therefore there has been no marketplace developed for commercial interest. Almost 92% of the villagers do not have access to a food market in the Ajagak area, so they go to the Bamiyan provincial center to buy food and other necessities. There is no market in the Ajagak area except some shops in the Kalo valley, a few general stores and a very old-style restaurant that only operates during certain times of the year. Integrity Watch found that the main road of Ajagak was under construction and some of the workers brought in their food from the provincial center. People in Ajagak mostly buy their food from the Bamiyan center and consume mainly their own produce—primarily wheat, potatoes, and livestock, dairy products and meat from the animals. The Shibar district center is located on the highway and it does not have a market to cater to the people of the region.

Type of transport

Transportation to and from the region is largely through the utilization of small vehicles. People access markets for sale and purchase with vans. Surveys show that people use vans to transport loads up to 50 kg of commodities, or higher, to market. About 25% of people use donkeys to carry their commodities to market. Depending on availability, people sometimes use trucks. On average, it takes two hours and forty minutes for people to reach the closest market. The minimum one-way time to access the closest food market is one hour and the maximum is 6 hours.

The graph below presents the sources of transportation for 50kg of wheat to the district center or nearest *bazaar*.

How do people from this village usually transport 50 kilograms of wheat (or other produce) to the closest permanent food market?

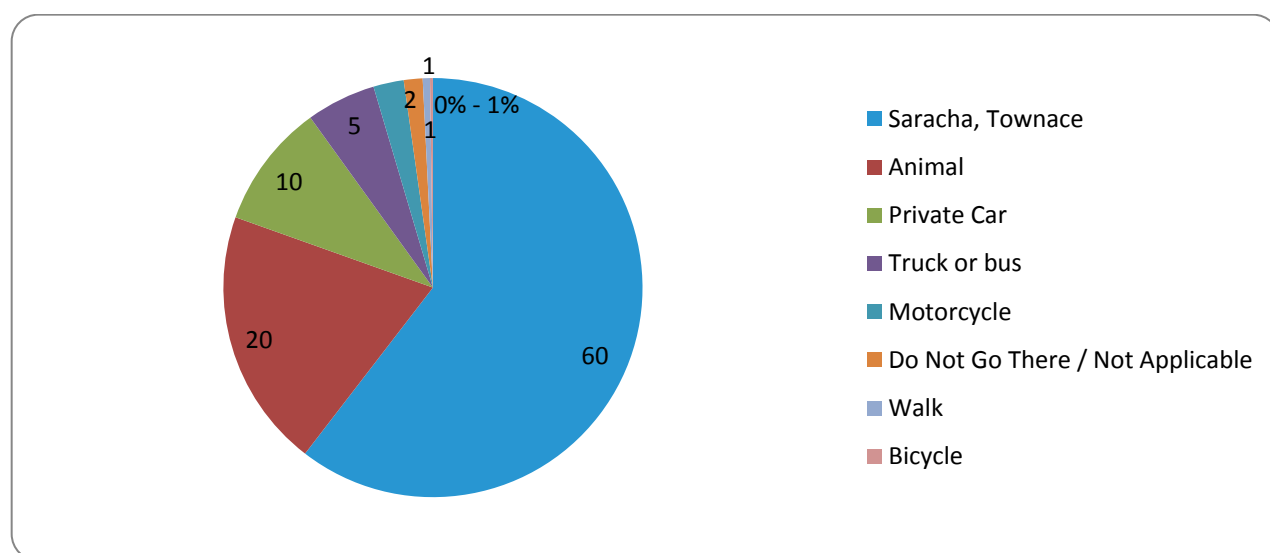


Figure 47: Principal method of transport for basic food to the district center or nearest bazaar

The distance to the district center or nearest market takes on average around 2.7 hours driving (minimum 1 hour, maximum 6 hour depending on the location of the village) by car one-way and the cost of a round trip is usually about 325Afs (maximum of 3000Afs) depending on the means of transportation.

On the national level, around 30% of households are more than two kilometers removed from the nearest drivable road and the average distance is 3.4 km according to the NRVA survey form 2007.⁷² From the same source, the national data indicates that the percentage of households reaching the nearest market within one hour is only 26% and within three hours is 51%.⁷³

⁷²See NRVA report, *op. cit*, p. 52.

⁷³*Ibid.*

Socio-political sphere

The geography of the region and its harsh winters have affected the economy and life of the residents. People can only cultivate for 5 months per year and then they have to save for the harsh winter in order to survive it. People are poor and they are politically divided based on ethnic lines and some even on denominational grounds as well. Ajagak has Shia and Sunni population. The Shia population is further divided into three groups, namely the Ismailia, Jafari and Sadaat.

The household survey examined people's opinions of which authorities or influential people are responsible for resolving civil disputes that occur between people in the village over, marriage, land and irrigation issues, protecting the village from attack by bandits or other armed forces, setting punishment for crimes, selecting and managing development projects in the village, and providing information to district, provincial and central government authorities about the situation in the village.

4.1 Local governance and decision making

The local government is called district administration, and deals with the local governance issues. The head of the administration is the District Governor. The affairs of the district are run in consultation with the local elders from the village and a cluster of villages. The local elders are *Maliks*, *Arbabs*, or *Kalan-i-Qarias*.

Government and perceptions

The survey findings showed that 82.6% of people believe that the District Governor in the area is working for the benefit of people, while 6.3% of interviewees answered that their District Governor is working for his own benefit.

The table below shows a complete picture of people's perceptions of the self-interest of government officials in the area:

	For The Benefit of All People	For The Benefit of Some of the People	For Their Own Benefit	Don't Know	Total
District Governor?	82.6	9.8	6.3	1.3	100.0
Provincial Governor?	67.2	16.0	14.9	2.0	100.0
Officials of the Central Government?	54.5	14.6	28.2	2.7	100.0
President of Afghanistan?	66.4	13.3	17.9	2.5	100.0
Members of Parliament?	51.5	20.3	26.3	1.9	100.0
District Council?	75.8	11.5	9.8	2.9	100.0
Government Judges?	40.7	15.6	40.6	2.6	100.0
National Army?	90.4	4.9	4.4	0.3	100.0
National Police?	91.6	4.7	3.2	0.4	100.0
NATO / ISAF / American Soldiers?	25.5	10.3	59.9	4.4	100.0
The exploring Company?	42.9	15.5	35.1	6.5	100.0
The exploration organization working on Ajagak?	44.9	19.4	27.2	8.5	100.0
Security Police assigned for the Ajagak?	56.5	15.8	14.2	13.5	100.0
Regional commanders?	41.5	21.0	32.1	5.5	100.0
Malek/Arbab?	69.9	20.0	9.4	0.7	100.0
NGO Employees?	48.6	20.7	27.9	2.8	100.0

Table 8: Popularity of government officials in the area

The findings of the survey show that residents of the area have had different experiences regarding public services. The table below illustrates the perceptions of people who received public services at different levels:

	Our village	In Ajagak Area	In district	In province	From Kabul	Don't have access/Not applicable	Don't Know	Total
Security by police?	15.1	13.2	68.7	2.3	0	0.7	0	100.0
Justice by court?	2.0	0.8	50.1	42.1	0.7	1.7	2.7	100.0
Property tax?	0.1	0.4	34.7	12.8	0.6	48.6	2.7	100.0
University Education?	2.7	0.3	0.7	80.4	11.3	4.4	.2	100.0
Primary School?	81.5	12.3	3.1	1.5	0.1	1.6	0	100.0
Secondary and High school?	48.9	15.6	23.0	9.9	0.8	1.7	0	100.0
Hospital and health services?	51.2	14.5	14.6	14.7	0.8	3.9	0.2	100.0
Public electricity?	26.4	0.1	1.8	3.8	0.1	66.3	1.6	100.0
Registration of your assets?	15.6	0.1	14.2	16.0	0.4	46.4	7.3	100.0
Lease of building?	15.8	0.3	10.5	18.7	0.2	50.4	4.1	100.0
Haj services?	1.1	0.6	7.4	84.0	1.7	2.8	2.5	100.0
Recruitment in Govt. job?	7.7	2.1	19.6	57.4	0.7	7.5	5.0	100.0
Matrimony Registration?	41.9	1.2	9.3	5.6	0.8	38.8	2.5	100.0
Possession of National ID?	1.0	0	79.9	17.4	0.2	0.9	0.6	100.0
Possession of Passport?	0.1	0.1	5.1	89.2	1.1	2.8	1.6	100.0
Services provided to martyrs and dysgenics?	0.6	0	35.4	36.9	1.8	19.0	6.4	100.0
Car license?	0	0	2.7	89.2	2.3	1.2	4.6	100.0
Driving License?	0	0	1.9	89.6	1.9	1.6	5.0	100.0

Table 9: Percentage of the population who received public services

The table clearly confirms the findings in other sections of the survey such as economic status and the connectivity of the area to the rest of the province and country, and level of development in the region. Access to primary education and health care is available to the people of the region. Access to electricity, security, registration of marriages and land rights are also available locally, but limited to a small percentage of people. However, availability of services such as acquiring the Tazkira, driving license, passport, car registration, recruitment centers for government jobs, Haj services, university education, access to formal justice (courts) in the region are rarely available and limited to few people, those economically well off. The categories of services are reflective of the size of the population, connectivity of the region with the rest of the province and the development in the district. Most services are available to a majority of the population at the first level of the local sphere while the rest are delivered from the capital of province.

Decisions makers

Throughout its history, Afghanistan has had a traditional decision making hierarchy where the elderly males have enjoyed unchallenged authority in making decisions for the family, community and the nation.

The following table presents the authorities who are involved in taking decision-making.

Ajagak Region	Resolving civil disputes between people in the village over marriage issues	Resolving civil disputes between people in the village over land and irrigation issues	Protecting the village from attack by bandits or other armed forces	Selecting and managing development projects in the village	Providing information to district, provincial, and central government authorities about the situation in the village	Setting the punishment for crimes, such as theft...
Malik/Arbab/Qariyadar	18.2	14.0	4.0	5.3	12.4	11.2
Extraction of Ajagak mine	0.1	0.3	4.1	0.4	0	0
Mullah/Imam/Mosque Mullah	29.7	7.5	1.1	0.1	0.8	1.9
Commander	0.1	0.1	0.2	1.0	0.6	0.8
Tribal Elders/Whitebeards	36.0	48.7	20.7	21.6	30.3	22.1

Community Development Council / Local Council	13.6	23.5	23.4	38.1	43.4	23.4
Police	0	0.6	7.6	6.6	1.3	3.8
District Government	2.2	4.8	27.2	17.7	4.4	30.4
Provincial Government	0	0.6	6.3	1.2	0.7	4.5
Central Government	0	0	2.1	0.7	0.3	0.7
Villagers	0	0	2.8	6.3	3.8	0.3
Don't Know	0	0	0.6	1.1	2.1	1.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 10: Authorities involved in resolution mechanisms according to the type of dispute

The focus group interviews once again indicated that the elderly male members of the family, community and district still hold the power over decision-making. People continue to follow what the elders decide in the family and community. During the household interviews the researchers from Integrity Watch asked respondents to name three people who are making important decisions for their communities and about 29% of the CDC members said that the elderly in the community are people who make decisions. CDC heads and members were second to elders when it comes to decision-making. The graph represents the detail of who was reported to make decisions in the communities.

The findings of the household survey showed that in people's opinion authorities or influential people are responsible for making decisions in the community. The table below presents the authorities involved in making decisions:

What are the names of the people who are usually making decisions for people in the village? (in order of importance)

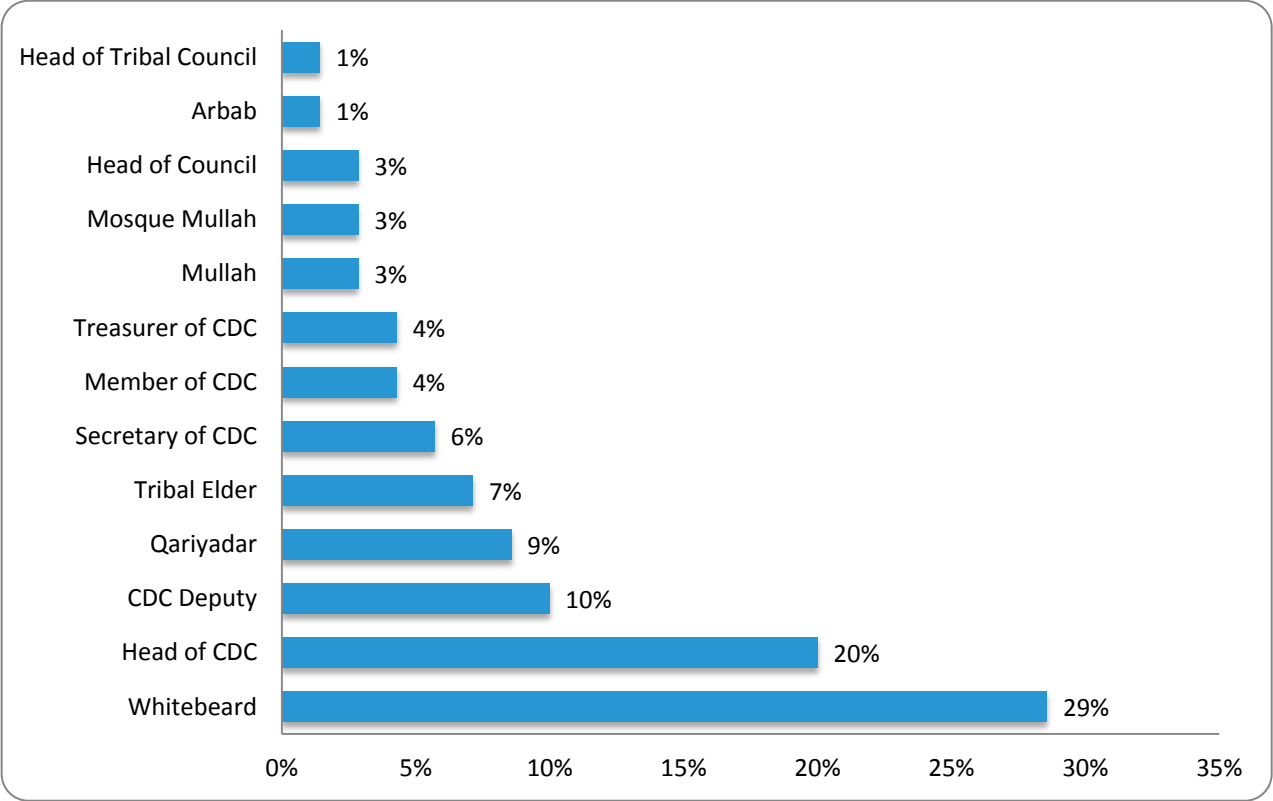


Figure 48: Main decision makers in the village

Certifying documents is done mostly by the CDC head and deputy, with 58% of people referring to the CDC for this while 29.5% of people referred to Maliks, etc. It is common in Afghanistan to verify one’s residence with the help of the village elders.

In the past, the authority of the certifying documents for the village was the main responsibility of the village leader, but now this responsibility has shifted to the CDC head, who is usually elected or named by the people or elders. The district center will then recognize this village leader or CDC head. This marks a shift of authority from traditional realms into formal and more accountable bodies.

The elders will continue to hold a position of authority in rural Afghanistan for a while until more educated and economically independent youth come into the political scene, position themselves for contributing to the social welfare and become agents of change. The political economy of allowing elders to continue holding the decision-making role seems to be a conscious choice by political leaders.

Power division

Almost 71% of the communities reported that in the case of the villagers needing money or food, there is no one in the village to turn to for help, while 29% said that local elders, tribal leaders or CDC leaders might help. The following graph presents the power division in Ajagak's communities.

Village Local Governance structure

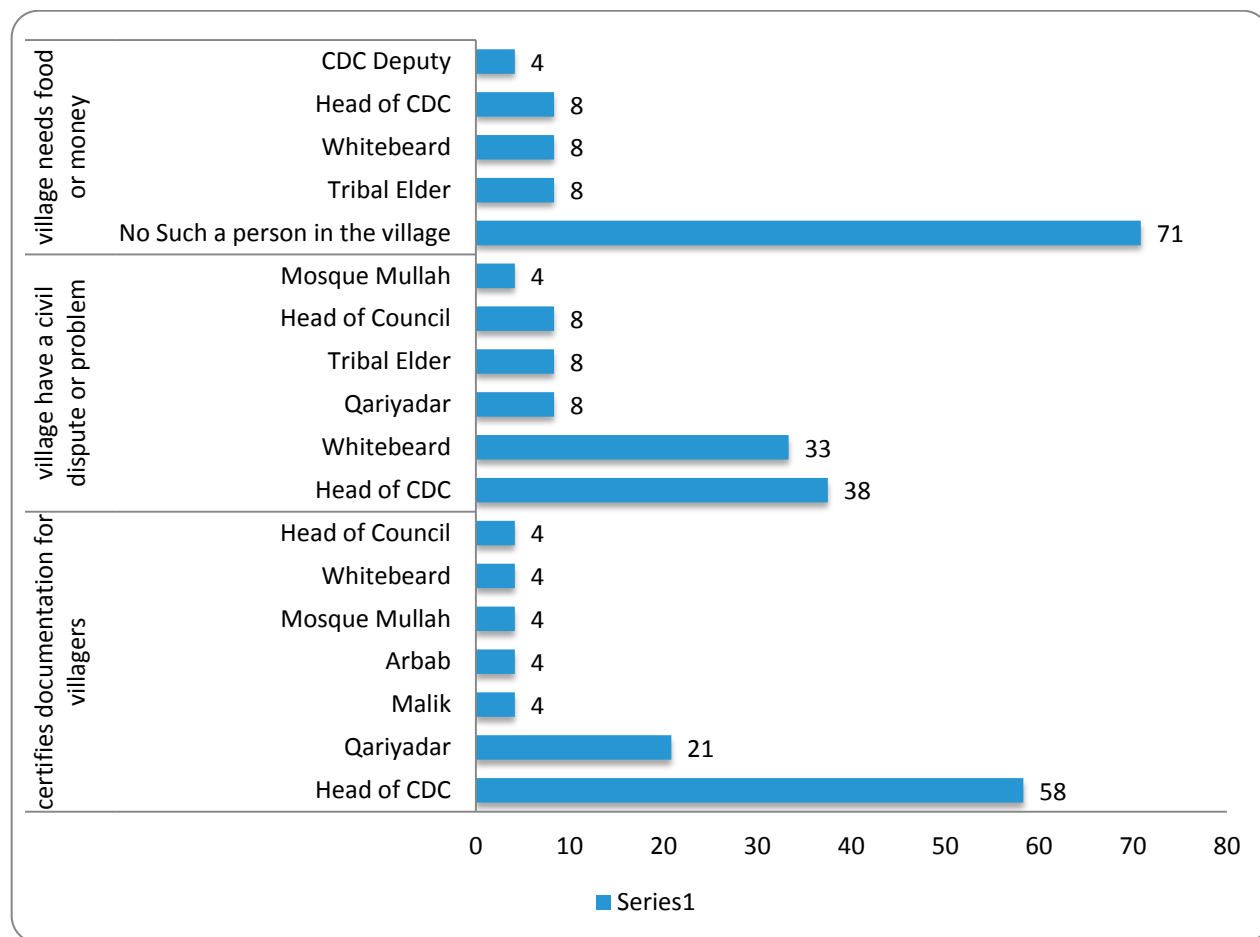


Figure 49: Division of the power between community elders

Community Development Council

The National Solidarity Program (NSP) has covered almost 96% of the Ajagak area. Community Development Councils are a part of the NSP program, where the members of the CDC are elected by the community. CDCs are responsible for managing the development activities in the village and local governance. CDCs are supposed to have male and female members. In some of the communities they have a joint male and female CDC, but in a majority of the CDCs there is a subcommittee of female CDC members. CDC members have regular meetings, or when there are some important decisions to be made about their community they call separate meetings. In Ajagak, about 50% of communities said that their CDC belongs only to their own community; 42% reported they have shared CDC with other communities; only 4% reported that they have two CDCs in their community.

Are there any councils that just belong to this village or which are shared with other neighboring villages?

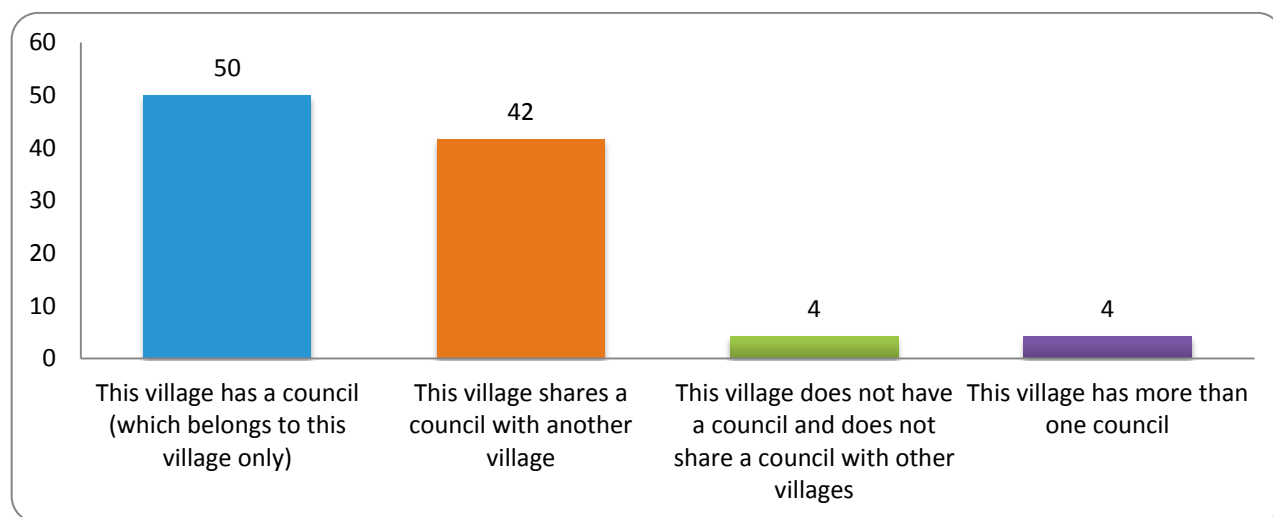


Figure 40: Council presents in the villages area in percentage

Some CDCs in Ajagak have an equal number of male and female members. The village sizes in Ajagak are very small, which is why we found that in one community there were 2 male CDC members and no female CDC members. The average number of male CDC members is 5 and the average number of female CDC members is 3.

	Men	Women
Mean	5	3
Minimum	2	0
Maximum	10	10

Table 11: Average number of CDC members present in Ajagak.

In the past 12 months CDCs have met to make decisions about the community. The number of meetings held by each community differs according to issues and urgency. Some CDCs have held 3 meetings in 12

months while others held 2-3 meetings every month. There were few CDCs that were very active. On average, the Ajagak CDCs conducted 10 meetings in the past 12 months.

Mean	9.6
Minimum	3
Maximum	24

Table 12: Number of yearly CDC meetings in the area

When asked about their last CDC meeting, some CDC members reported that only the CDC members participated and they didn't invite villagers to participate. However, most of the meetings are held in a democratic environment where villagers are invited to participate in the meetings. On average, 10 villagers participated in the last CDC meeting and at maximum 30 villagers were present at the last CDC meeting.

Mean	10
Minimum	0
Maximum	30

Table 13: Number of villagers who took part in CDC meetings

The main activity of the CDC members in Ajagak in the past 12 months was managing development projects. Their second most prevalent activity was consultation with the villagers about selection of projects for their communities (22%) and the third most common task for CDCs was to negotiate leases with the government. Only 9% of the CDCs did nothing in the past 12 months for their communities.

What was the most important activity of your village council in the past 12 months? N=96% OS

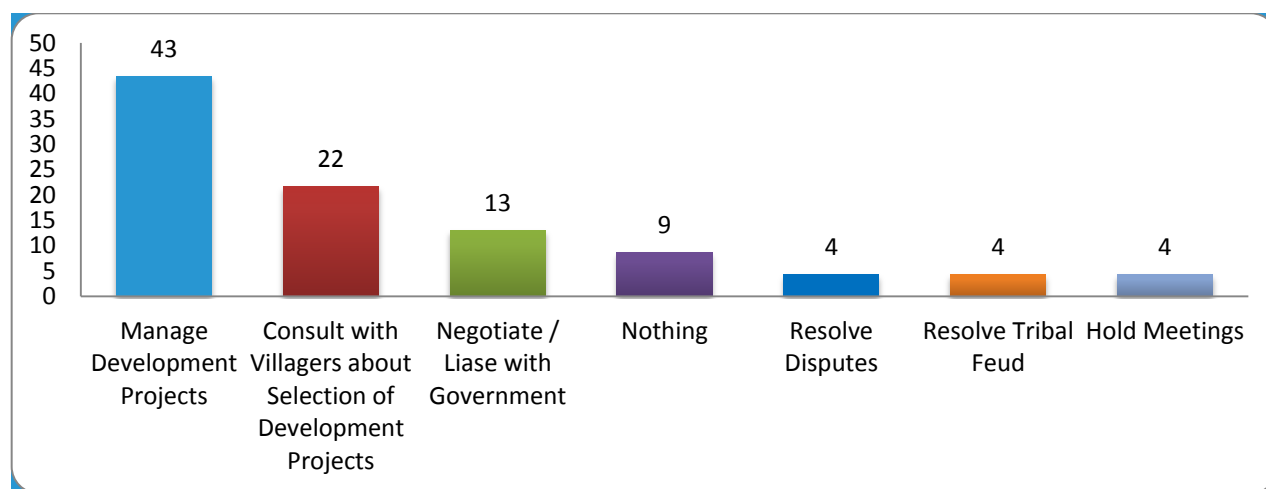


Figure 51: Main activities of village council in percentage

Village leadership

Traditionally, governance at the local level was the privilege of Maliks in rural parts of Afghanistan. Maliks often inherited the authority from family due to resources. The Maliks have enjoyed support at

the local level in the absence of other institutions and have been involved in conflict resolution and offering loans to locals.

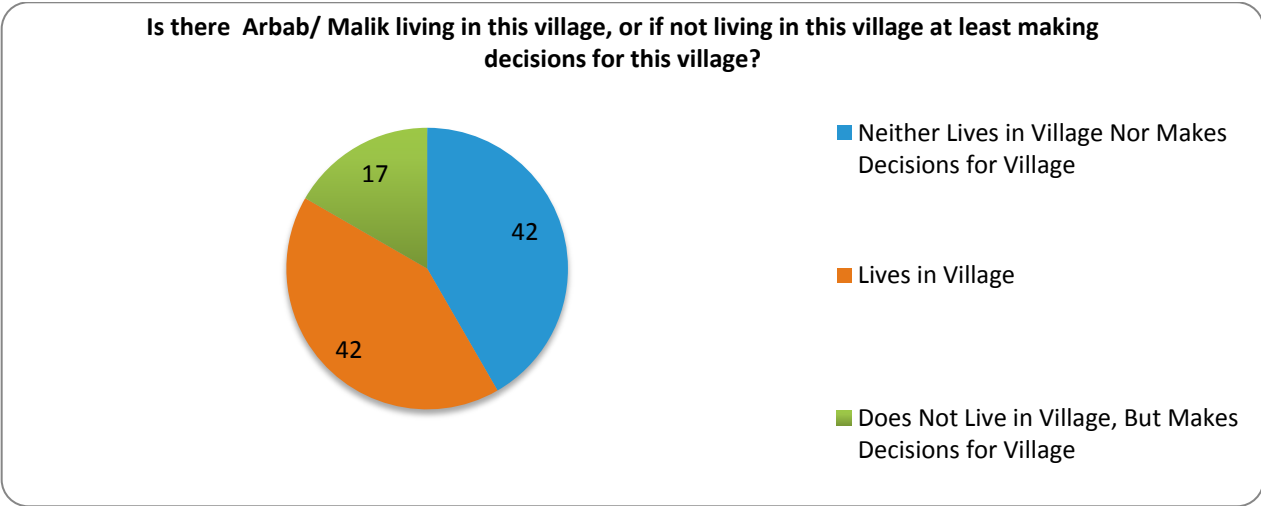


Figure 52: Arbab/Maliks presence and decision making in the area

In some other areas (for example Khulm district of Balkh province), the villagers had to pay from their harvest to the village head, because this village head didn't have any salary but he had the responsibility of managing the village. In other areas, the village head is a wealthy person of the village. The village head has the responsibility of settling civil disputes, making decisions about water distribution, weddings, certifying documents, leading village meetings and managing other activities related to the village.

In Ajagak, CDCs were elected by the people with this traditional structure still in place. Almost 83% of the Ajagak communities reported the village head is living in their community or if not he is still making decisions about their communities. Only 17% reported that there is no such person making decisions for their community.

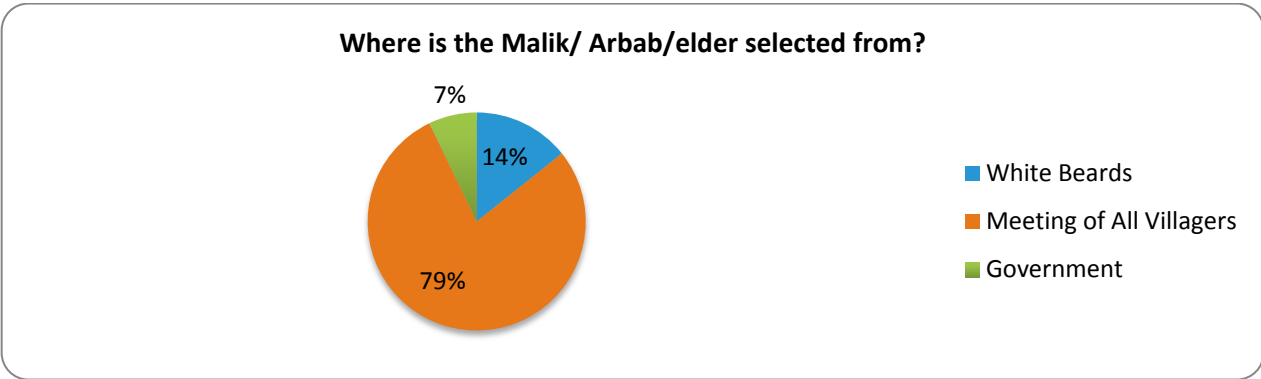


Figure 53: Origin of the decision makers

According to 79% of the respondents, the local village head, Arbabs and Maliks, have been appointed by local elders. Subsequently the villagers accepted this appointed person as Malik of a village. There are no elections for the village head. In 14% of cases the village elders selected and appointed the head of the village while in 7% of cases the District Governor appointed the head.

There has been a small departure from the traditional mechanism of village authority and its inheritance. However, most commonly, when the village head doesn't want to continue to work or he dies, the elders hold a meeting and appoint his son or someone from his family to be the next village head.

The village heads (Maliks/Arbabs) are mainly responsible for negotiating with the District Governor, with their next main responsibility being to manage development projects (31%), and sometimes they negotiate with the central government and certify documents in their communities. Only 8% of their responsibility is to solve disputes and 8% of their responsibility is to make the rules for the villagers.

What is the responsibility of Malik /Arbab(decision makers) in this village? n=59 % OS

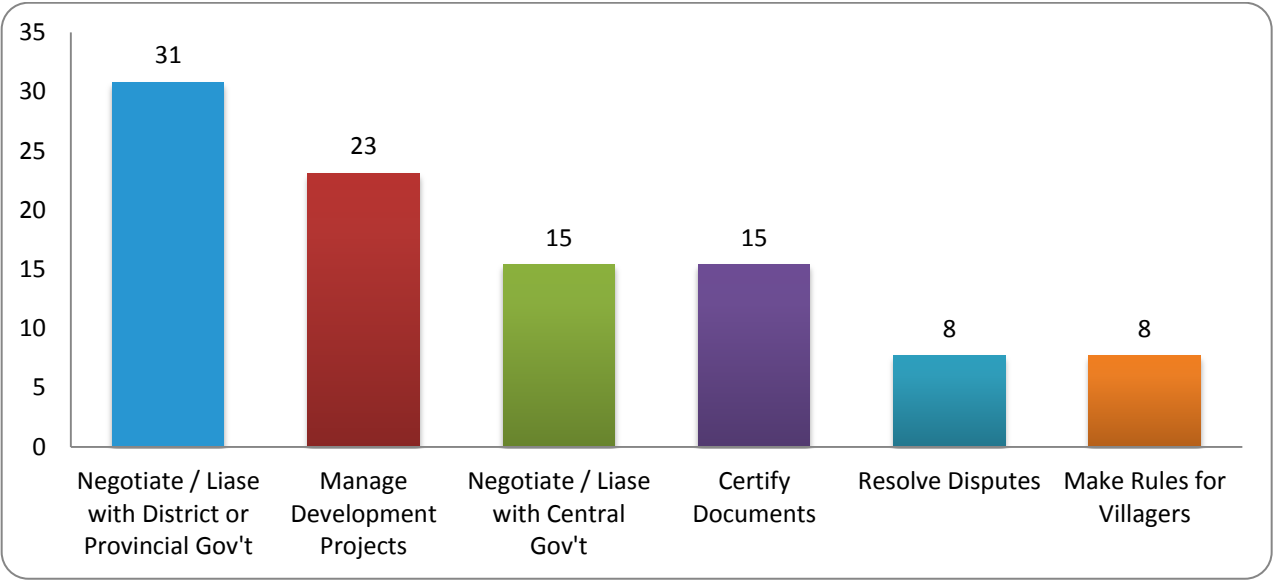


Figure 54: Major responsibilities of the village leaders

For a long time, in rural parts of Afghanistan people have commanded the respect of their community based on their land or resource possession. The local name for a rich and resource-holding person in rural Afghanistan was Khan, Zamindar or elder. In other words, Khan, Zamindar or Arbab are connoted one with resources and riches. In Ajagak, only 29% of the communities reported that there is such a person living in their community. The Khans or Arbab would create a web around them by inviting local people into their homes and being generous hosts, through which he would gradually cultivate respect. Villagers would see him as one who should intervene in event of conflict. He would also give loans to locals to bring them within his influence. He would thus earn authority from the people through use of his wealth.

Is there Khan/ Zamendar/ elder living in this village, or if not living in this village at least making decisions for this village?



Figure 55: Leaders and decision making in the village

The main responsibility of Khans/Elder is to make decisions about the village. In most of the villages, the Khan/ Elder is a very important part of the village council because such individuals are respected by the people and have money and power. Their other key activities include conducting religious services, communicating with NGOs, and promoting good behavior among community members. Sometime these people are not living in the village but still make decisions about the village. In Ajagak, only 29% reported such a person living in their villages.

What is the responsibility of Khan/ Zamendar / elder in this village? n=29% OS

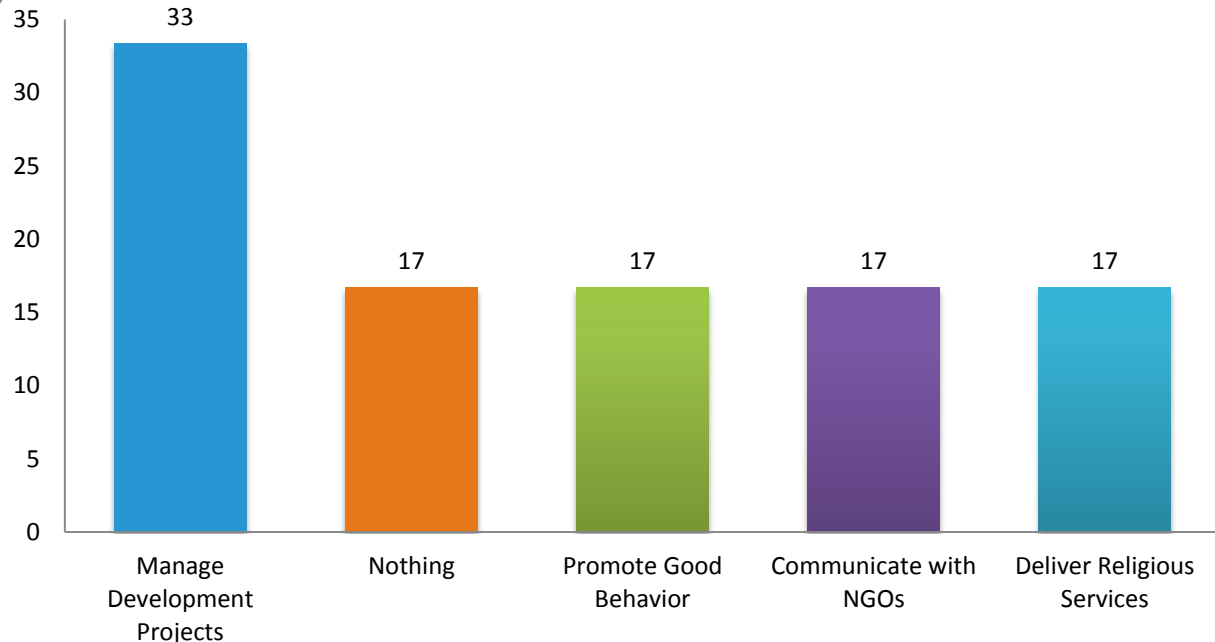


Figure 56: Main responsibilities of village leaders

These Khans/Zamindar/Elders are mostly wealthy people, and when they have capital they try to negotiate such a title from the elders in communities, so that people in the community respect them. Interviews with Khans and Maliks showed that 57% said they were appointed by the community elders;

29% were appointed in consultation with the villagers; 14% inherited the position from their fathers who held the position in the community and people continued to consider them as Maliks.

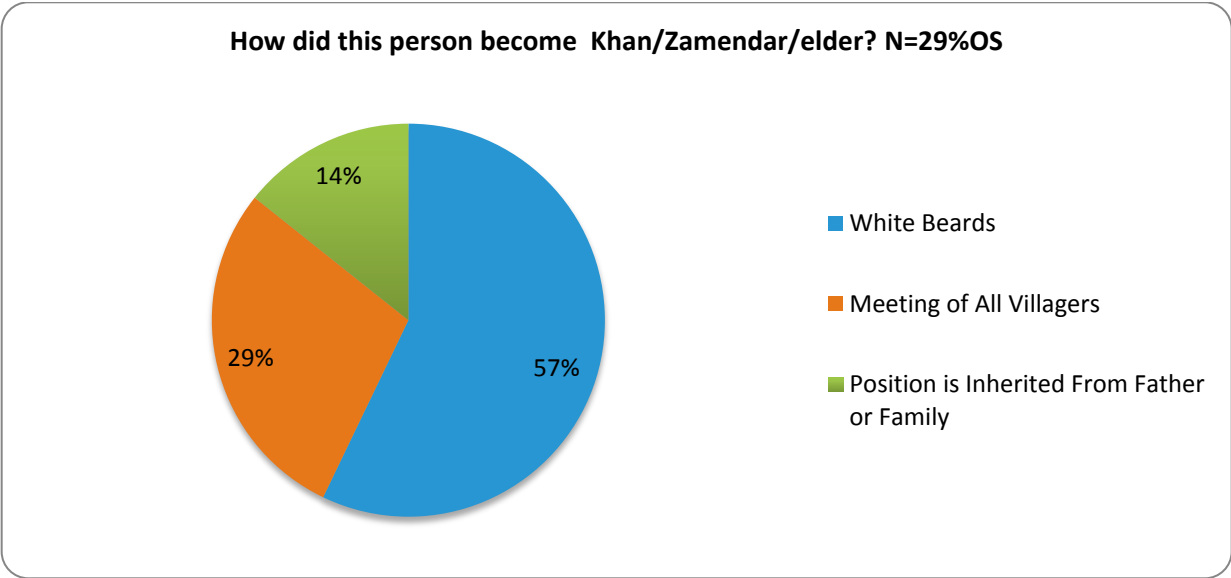


Figure 57: Origin of village leaders

There is one commander with a lot of respect in the area. He is former Mazari loyalist and now falls under Karim Khalili’s command. He has brought reform in the communities in Ajagak, and at times when facing resistance to his reforms he has used force on the people to achieve his goals. His main responsibility is to negotiate with district or provincial government. He enjoys the support of the local elders and the religious institution in Kalo. He is a CDC member and also a member of the Ajagak council.

4.2. Conflict resolution

Ajakak like many other parts of Afghanistan may have small disputes over land, water, grazing rights or livestock. Most people living in rural Afghanistan have traditional mechanisms and institutions for conflict resolution. For example the *Jirga*⁷⁴ system is one of the oldest institutions of conflict resolution in rural Afghanistan and many times in the peri-urban regions as well. It is an informal and cost effective way of resolving an issue.

⁷⁴ Jirga is a traditional institution where village elders or representative bring parties to the dispute together and are authorized to decide. hey listen to each side and resolve the conflict/dispute and the decision is binding

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Conflict frequency

The household survey findings showed that in the last 12 months, the residents of the area reported having few disputes. 93.3% of residents reported that they had no disputes, while only 2.7% had disputes. The major cause of dispute was landownership, with which 1.3% of residents were involved. Other causes included water issues, theft of livestock, and personal insults or disrespect.

In most cases, the people and authorities of the village are involved in resolving conflicts. The following table shows the most recent disputes that have been settled. Based on the survey findings, there were only 24 cases in the village in the past 12 months, of which 4 were not settled.

	Frequency	Percentage
No Dispute	871	97.3
Yes but not settled	4	0.4
Yes	20	2.2
Total	895	100.0

Table 14: Number and frequency of the settled dispute

The findings of household surveys showed that during the past few years only 1.1% (21 cases) of respondents had experienced tribal feuds in the village among its residents. The table below illustrates the reported attacks on the village from armed groups during the past two years:

	Frequency	Percentage
No attack	874	97.7
Yes	21	2.3
Total	895	100.0

Table 15: Number and frequency of attacks against the village

Civil disputes

The local structure for conflict resolution is visible in Ajagak. The elected CDC members (with 38% voter participation in elections) followed by the elders in communities are most commonly involved in conflict resolution. The findings showed that people continue to use traditional dispute resolution mechanisms to settle disputes and they often do not resort to formal courts for settlement of disputes. There have also been instances where a major crime has been resolved by the elders of the community. The referral of cases to local elders may be due to inaccessibility of formal courts in the region and the speed at which cases are resolved.

Special cases

Disputes in rural Afghanistan are most commonly over land ownership or water for irrigation, and such disputes were experienced in the Ajagak region in the past 12 months. In total, there were 7 disputes, of which 2 were over land, 3 over irrigation, and the other 2 over aid distribution in the community. 3 disputes were solved by the people of the village and 4 of these disputes were solved by people from outside the villages.

Yes, people from the village helped to resolve dispute	Land Ownership Dispute	1
	Water/Irrigation Dispute	2
Yes, people from outside the village helped resolve dispute	Aid	1
	Land Ownership Dispute	1
	Water/Irrigation Dispute	2
	Total	7

Table 16: Origin and types of dispute resolution

Disputes in rural parts of Afghanistan are often resolved through the local informal justice system. People try to solve disputes among themselves mediated by a third party. If they feel that the problem is too big and the elders feel that it is out of their control, they then send the case to the government court to sort it out. In this case, findings showed that the people from Ajagak did not go to the district center to sort out their problems but rather went directly to the Provincial Council. Understanding the local dispute resolution practices may help the company and government deal effectively and cost-effectively with tense situations in the region arising as a result of the project. Only 29% of these disputes were solved by the Provincial Council and the other 71% of the disputes were solved by the village leader, head of CDC or head of the village local council.

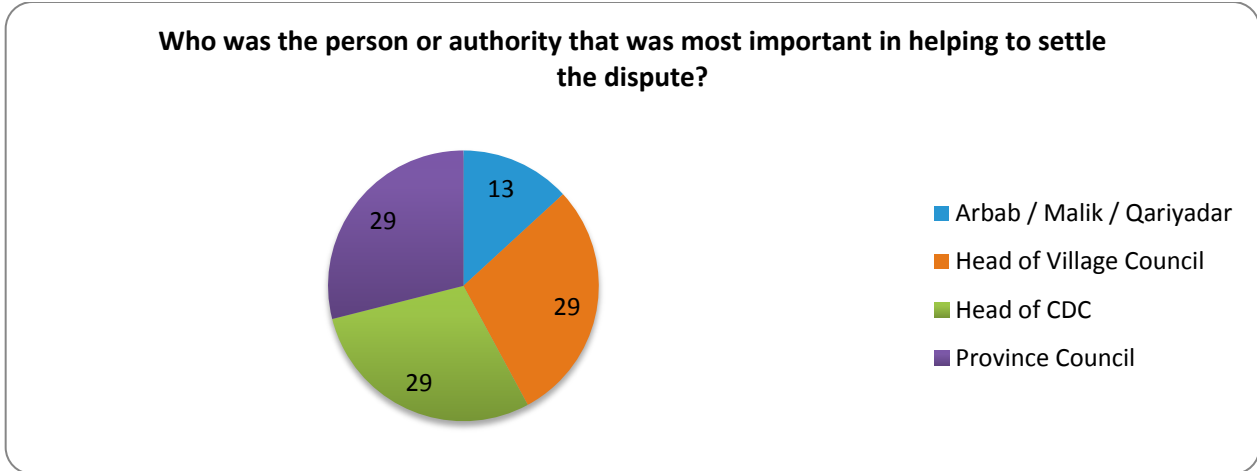


Figure 58: Main authorities in terms of dispute resolution

4.3 Visit of representatives

In the past 12 months, different actors have visited the Ajagak area. NGO members visited the Ajagak communities the most—a total of 89 times. The second category was district representatives (34 times) and representatives of the mine (26 times). Representatives of political parties visited the area only 8 times, Afghan National Army or Afghan National Police members visited the communities only 5 times, and representatives of the government or ministries visited the communities4 times in the past 12 months.

During the past 12 months, how many times was this village visited by the following authorities? {NAME OF AUTHORITY}

Visiting of the government and non-government actors from the Ajagak area

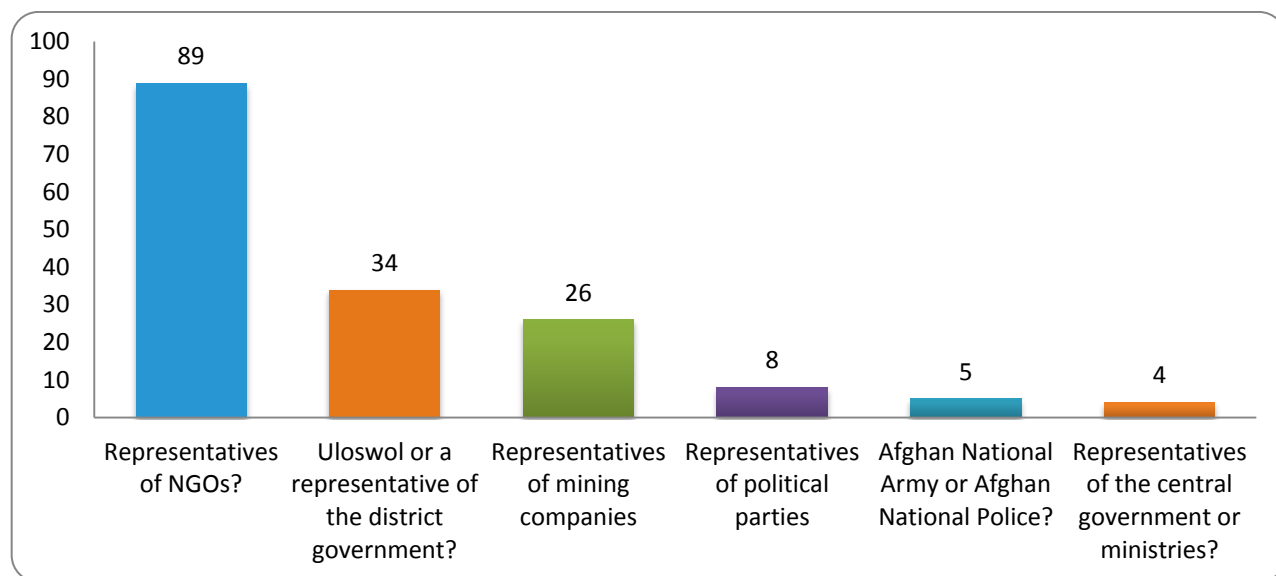


Figure 59: Number of governmental and non-governmental actors visiting the Ajagak area

4.4 Development projects

The Ajagak area has seen many projects materialize in the past few years. Among the most visible and important projects are amicro-hydro power project, solar energy schemes, schools, clinics and drinkable water. However, people think that the most needed projects for their community are literacy courses for men (40%) and education projects (30%). Irrigation projects were considered most needed by 15%, training or literacy courses for women by 10%, and a clinic or health care in 5%.

What is the one project that is most needed by the people of the village right now?

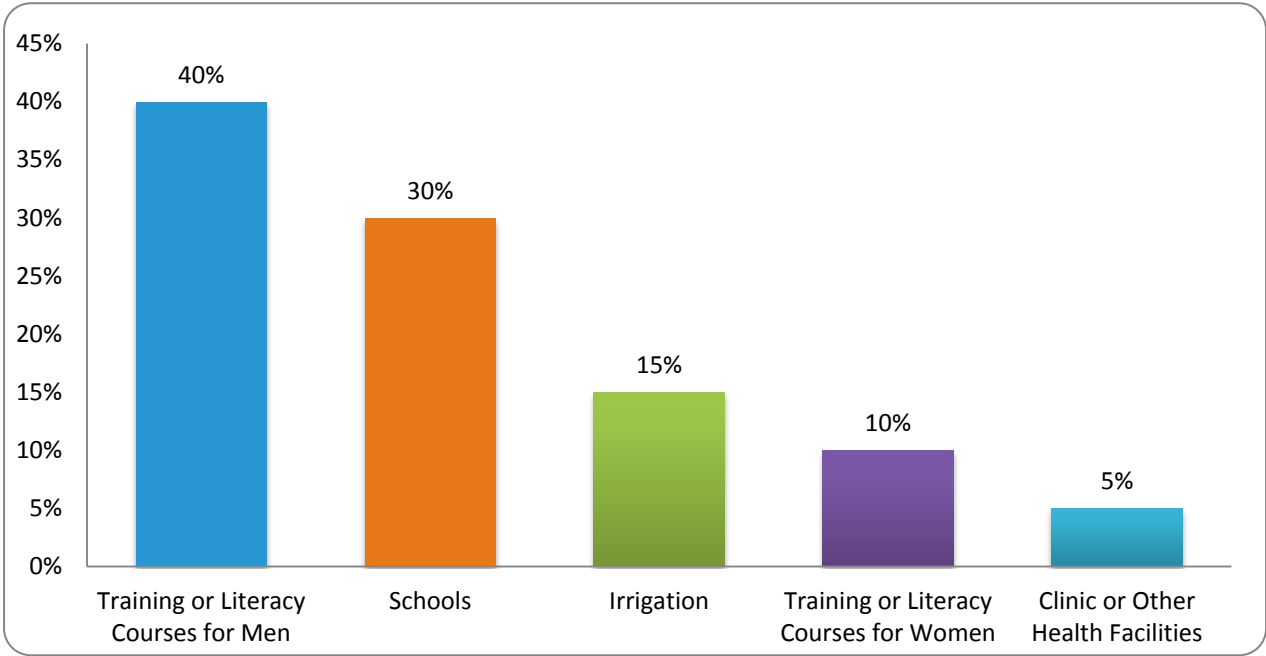


Figure 60: Main projects needed by the residents

In the past 2 years there were many projects implemented by NGOs and the Afghan Government in Ajagak. In total, there were ten projects implemented by NGOs and the government, most of which were road and bridge projects. Four drinking water projects have been implemented in Ajagak—two of them by Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), one by a foreign company, and one by one of the NGOs in the Ajagak area. One school has been built by one of the NGOs in the Ajagak area, and there was one other project that was not specified in our survey. But when asked what is the one project that you think is most important to your area, the village leaders said literacy training for men (40%), schools (30%), irrigation (15%), training and literacy courses for women (10%), and 5% of them said they need clinics or other health center projects.

The below table presents more information on the project type and the responsible implementer.

Construction or Rehabilitation of Roads and Bridges	Central Government	Number
	MRRD	1
	Foreigners	1
	NGO	6
	Village Council	1
Project for drinking water, for instance, construction of wells with hand pumps?	MRRD	2
	Foreigners	1
	NGO	1
Construction or rehabilitation of school?	NGO	1
Other project	NGO	1
Total		15

Table 17: Types of projects and responsible authorities

Kalo, on the Bamiyan side of Ajagak, has seen some development in the last few years. For example, there is a well-maintained clinic close to the Dane-Ghar Ghara area of the sub-district along with a kindergarten. There are two senior secondary schools also providing education up to class 12 to both male and female students. The population also has access to clean drinking water, and electricity from a small hydro-dam funded by MRRD. The clinic in Kalo was funded by MRRD, which AKF implemented and still runs. The schools in the region are built by NGOs associated with the UN.

However, the villages on Maidan Wardak side of Ajagak do not have schools, clinics or access to clean drinking water, though the Ismail council based in Bamiyan tries to help the people.

Comparatively, the Ajagak area is highly developed. Looking at the use of mobile phones, access to television, electricity, and the presence of well-run schools, the people of the region are well placed compared to their counterparts in other rural communities across the country.

4.5 Insecurity

The household survey findings showed that during the past 12 months, 0.7% of households have been affected by insecurity or violence inside their village or on the roads in the districts.

According to the survey, 52% of the females interviewed indicated that there has been a deterioration of the security of teenage girls when traveling to and from school or when socializing with other girls, compared to the last two years. The table below shows the picture of teenage girls' safety in the area. These questions have been asked from the women interviewed, with the objective of understanding their views about the safety of teenage girls compared to two years earlier.

Compared to the previous two years, do you think teenage girls from this village face more danger, less danger, or the same when traveling to and from school or when socializing with other girls?

Do you feel... than the past two years ?	Frequency	Percentage
More Safe	28	3.1
No Change in Safety	343	38.3
Less Safe	465	52.0
Don't Know	59	6.6
Total	895	100.0

Table 18: Perception of safety of teenage girls in the area

Perceptions of Ajagak population on the mining activities

Though the negotiation between the government of Afghanistan and the two companies shortlisted for the iron mine has been protracted, once the contract is signed it may take up to five years for the company to start production. It is important to note that the iron mine in Ajagak is not fully explored and the companies may be required to explore and estimate the reserves of the deposit before any production starts.

Mine operations in Ajagak will make the district and region more attractive for a variety of reasons, including enhanced employment and other economic opportunities. Mining operations often have a trajectory that is dotted by a number of economic, social and commercial opportunities. The project offers an opportunity for urbanization, industrialization and more infrastructure. New business may emerge to supply goods and services to the mine.

The project will be a source of employment and skills and healthy competition in the region. People of different backgrounds working in the same offices may present new opportunities to overcome ethnic and other differences, in favor of social cohesion.

Integrity Watch interactions with local communities show that they want the investment to go ahead. They see a bright future awaiting them once the project becomes operational. However, they clearly want the companies to employ locals first. The people worry they will be displaced and if so will seek compensation for their land losses. The Equator Principles, the UN Guidelines for Businesses and Natural Resource Charter⁷⁵ promote local employment and protection against intended and unintended adverse effects. Some who have had contact with their political leaders have made demands that may not be conducive for the implementation of the project. Local communities expect more schools, better roads, adequate resettlement, electricity, safe drinking water, clinics and employment, among others items.

⁷⁵ The Natural Resource Charter comprises of 12 precepts which focus on responsible mining to avoid 'Resource Curse'. <http://naturalresourcecharter.org/>

5.1 Household perceptions and characteristics

This section deals with the household, its characteristics and challenges. The households shared with the fieldworkers the main problems in the region, their conditions of life, and how householders’ coping strategy.

Main problems according to the population

The challenges facing households in the Ajagak region are varying and are largely no different from the rest of Afghanistan. Basic life amenities are not available to the population. For example, the people of the region are facing shortages of water for drinking and irrigation , and this directly affects their livelihood and economy. People of the region also face natural disasters such as earthquakes, landslides, avalanches, floods, heavy snow and severe and frosty conditions. These not only threaten their lives, but also increase the costs of survival.

General sources of insecurity constitute some of the more direct threats to households. Violence and robbery are demoralizing and endanger the residents, while inflation and financial constrains have had major effects on the demand for local produce. In the absence of appropriate medical care, prevalent diseases threaten the lives of people, while influxes of refugees from Iran and Pakistan have strained the limited resources further in the region.

The population of Ajagak is facing different kinds of challenges. The following chart exposes the main challenges affecting households of the area in the last 12 months.

In the last 12 months has the household been negatively affected by any of the following challenges

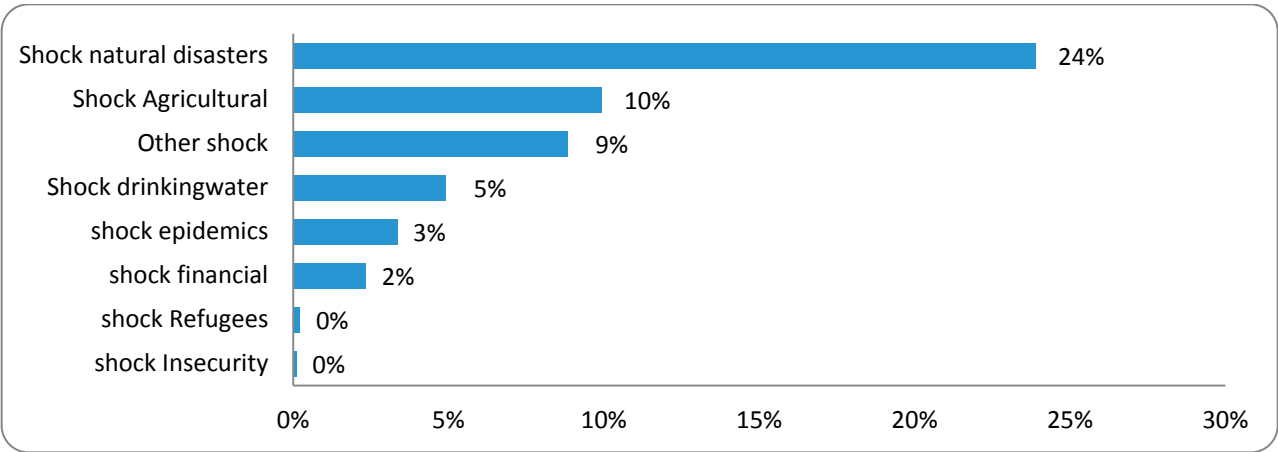


Figure 61: Main types of challenges affecting the residents

As yet, mining operations have not begun. People may not know how to gauge the kind of effect mining may have.

Household happiness

Though happiness is a complex issue and indicators may vary, the survey findings indicated that in the

whole population of the Ajagak area, 27% of women and 18% of men are very happy in their lives, while 1% of women and 1% of men are very sad.

The following chart illustrates the happiness/sadness levels of households as reported by male heads of household and female heads of household.

Please tell us how happy you are with your life? Very happy, happy, neither happy nor discontent, discontent, very displeased

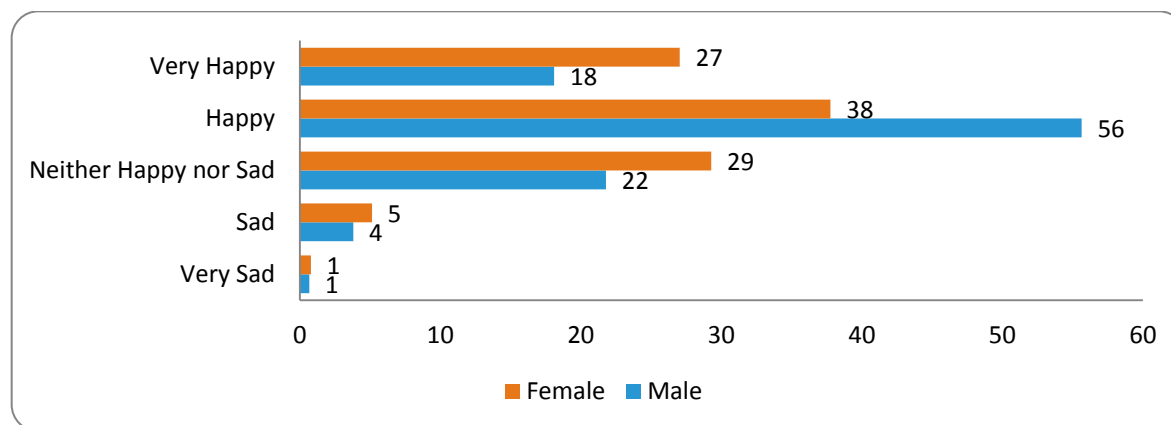


Figure 62: Household happiness by gender

Coping strategy

Afghans have long been exposed to conflict and subjected to a variety of shocks. Afghanistan is a country with a high-risk-profile, due to its combination of climatic and natural circumstances and political turmoil have weakened the social safety nets of people as well as affected their ability to trust one another.

Some of the other shocks which may have geographical character are availability of water both for household consumption as well as for irrigation. Diseases are other threats to local people and they become catastrophic in absence of medical facilities and doctors. Inflation rates in the country indiscriminately shocks the citizens and more so in the rural part which does not enjoy regular access to market. The return of refugees has been identified as a shock as well because they constrain the resources available.⁷⁶

Though people of the Kalo district face different kinds of difficulties from time to time. Past experiences show that 70.3% of households coped with difficulties; 70.2% of these difficulties reduced the household food consumption and impacted the survival of the family. One interpretation may be that people are concerned with their safety and survival more than anything. Of the residents who encountered difficulties in the last 12 months, 53.5% have recovered partially while 12.3% have recovered completely and 33.8% are still trying to recover.

The findings of the survey showed that the socio-economic condition of households during the past 12 months remained the same as in the previous year for 52.8% of the population, while 21.9%

⁷⁶ *Op-cit*, NRVA report, p. 109.

experienced improvement and 16.9% saw themselves as worse off.

The following graph exposes the frequency of problems related to the basic food needs of the households.

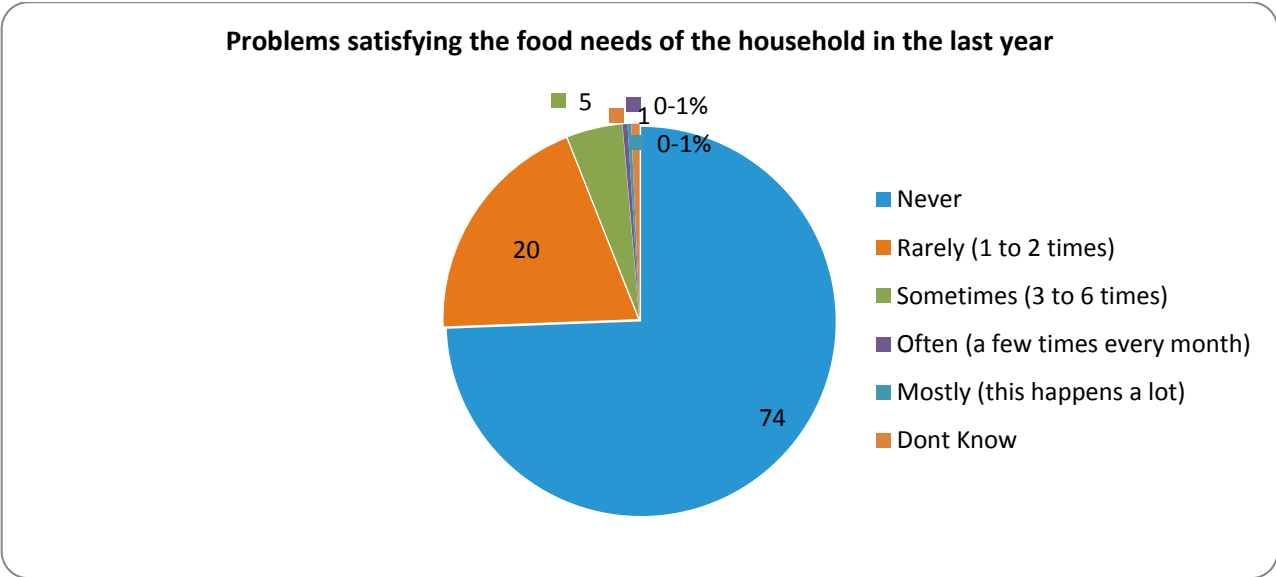


Figure 63: Frequency of the household in satisfying basic feeding needs

5.2 Awareness and access to information

The population around Ajagak area is isolated. Their education and living conditions are poor so their ability to gain knowledge and awareness about mining activities is limited. This section focuses on awareness of the citizens in the Ajagak area regarding mining issues and presents the method and frequency of access to information.

Information methods and frequency

Access to information is considered an important indicator for active citizenship, particularly in Afghanistan where there are few accountability and transparency mechanisms. Residents of the region have different sources of information, some of which may have been created intentionally in order to increase the awareness of the population. The survey showed that 43.9% get their information from TV programs accessed locally; 9% listen to the radio; 13% get a neighbor’s version of news; and around 18% do not have any access to information sources. Some also get information from relatives, friends, CDC members, elders and visitors.

Those who are listening to the radio mostly listen to the following stations:

- 1- 34.6% listen to BBC
- 2- 30.7% listen to Azadi(ISAF)
- 3- 15.4% listen to Voice of America

- 4- 12.3% listen to Radio Aryana
- 5- 4.4% listen to Afghanistan National Radio
- 6- 1.3% listen to Arman Radio (private)
- 7- 1.3% listen to Watandar Radio (private)

The graph below shows the average time that male/female respondents reported listening to the radio in the last 24 hours.

In the past 24 hours, for how many minutes did you listen to the radio?

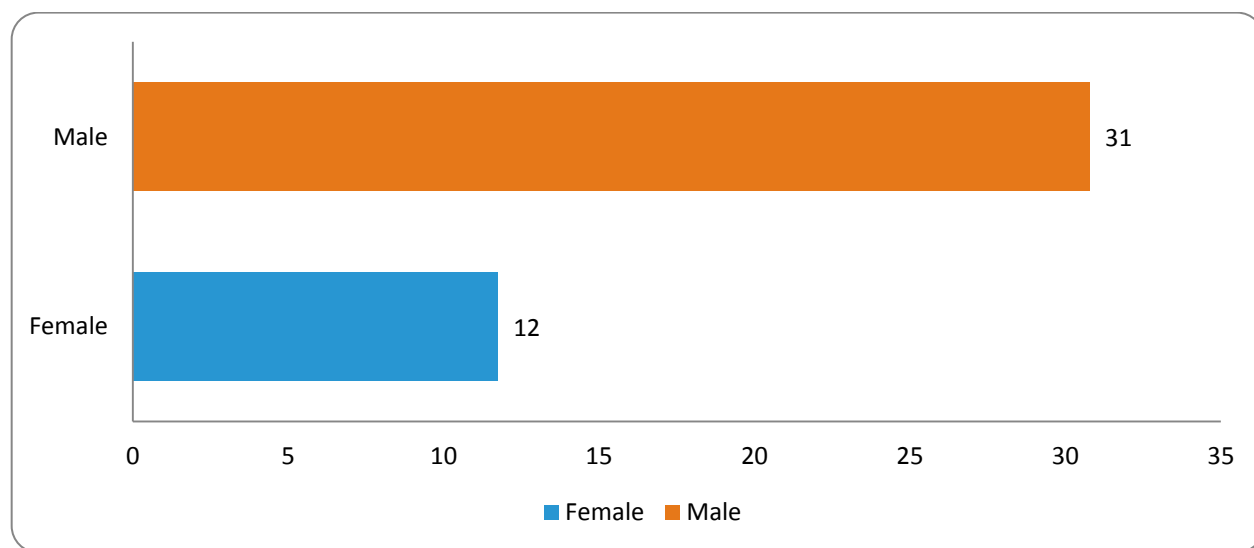


Figure 64: Average of time that residents spend to listen to the radio

Those who reported getting information from television said they watched TV an average of 80 minutes during the past 24 hours from the following channels:

- 1- 55.7% watch Tolo TV
- 2- 19.3% watch Tamadun TV
- 3- 17.7% watch Radio and Television of Afghanistan (RTA)
- 4- 5.9% watch AryanaTV
- 5- 0.9% watch Limar
- 6- 0.2% watch Noorin
- 7- 0.2% watch Arezo

Ajagak mine awareness

Survey results revealed that 74% of women and 84% of men do not have access to information related to the mining's projects implemented in their communities. Only 1% of female sand 9% of males have access to this information. However, only around 25% of women and 7% of men did not know what projects would be carried out in their region. This would suggest that the question seems to have not captured the data, as currently there are no projects related to mines.

The chart below shows what kind of information was shared with the people who access the information related to the mining projects in their communities.

If yes, what kind of information is shared with you?

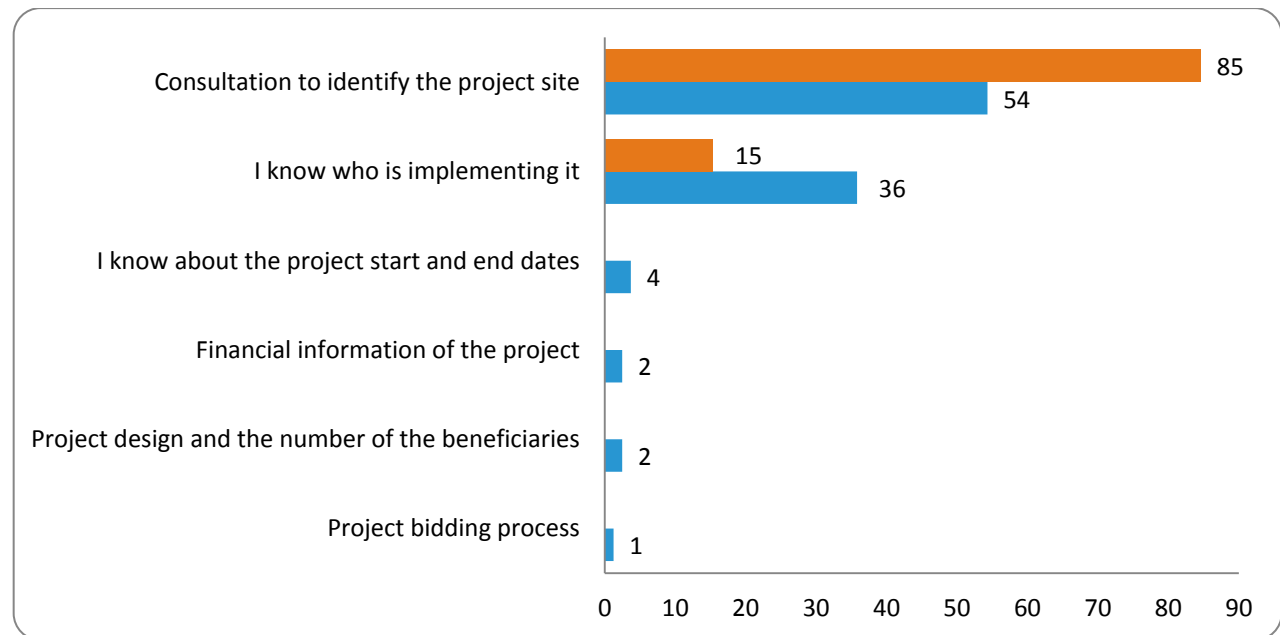


Figure 66: Kind of information shared about the project

The findings indicated that more than 98% of women and around 91% of men have not had any news about the kind of projects implemented, while only 1.5 % of women and 8.5% of men heard about project during their design phase.

Those who reported having received information about the mining projects accessed it through the following sources:

- 1- 53.8% of females and 19.5% of males through friends or colleagues
- 2- 15.4% of females and 23.2% of males through local or national media
- 3- 23.2% of males and no females through CDC
- 4- 15.4% of females and 13.4% of males through *shuras*
- 5- 15.4% of females and 2.4% of males through community meeting(s)
- 6- 8.5% of males and no females through Ministry of Mines (MoM) or provincial government representatives
- 7- 9.8% of males and no females through the construction contractors

The findings indicate that only 7.8% of females (70 females) and 4.8% of male elders (43 male elders) were consulted and involved in the decision-making process of the projects while 87.3% of females and 4.5% of males were not consulted. Of those involved in consultation process, 50% of women and 59% of men were very satisfied with the way they have been consulted. 42.9% of females and 9.8% of males who were consulted believed consultation needed to be improved; 7.1% of females and 27.9% of males were somehow satisfied, and 3.3% of females and 0% of males were not satisfied with the consultations.

These findings may be interpreted that there is an elite that has access to information and participates in decision-making without consulting the common people or beneficiaries about the projects and their impacts. The findings of this section may be interpreted as if there is no further information-sharing with the wider constituencies planned.

The focus group interview found that only 24% of CDC members had heard about the extraction project at the Ajagak mine, of which 50% learned about it during consultations to identify the project site while the other 50% knew who would implement this project in Ajagak.

If yes, what kind of information is shared with you? N=24% of OS

■ Consultation to identify the project site ■ I know who is implementing it

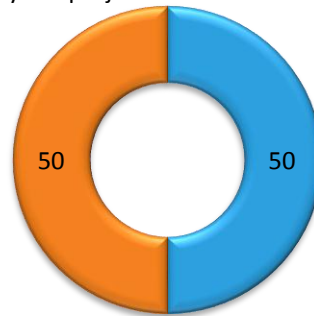


Figure 66: Shared information about the site and the implementation of the project

Based on the focus group interviews, 50% of CDC members who had heard about the Ajagak project found out this information from Ministry of Mines representatives, 25% from the local and international media, and 25% heard about it during a community meeting. The MoM plays a proactive role in the form of the Head of the Ajagak Authority who has been going to the site regularly. He is willingly playing the role of “tour operator” for any new visitor of some importance, which in turn keeps in touch with communities.

Where did you learn from about this project?

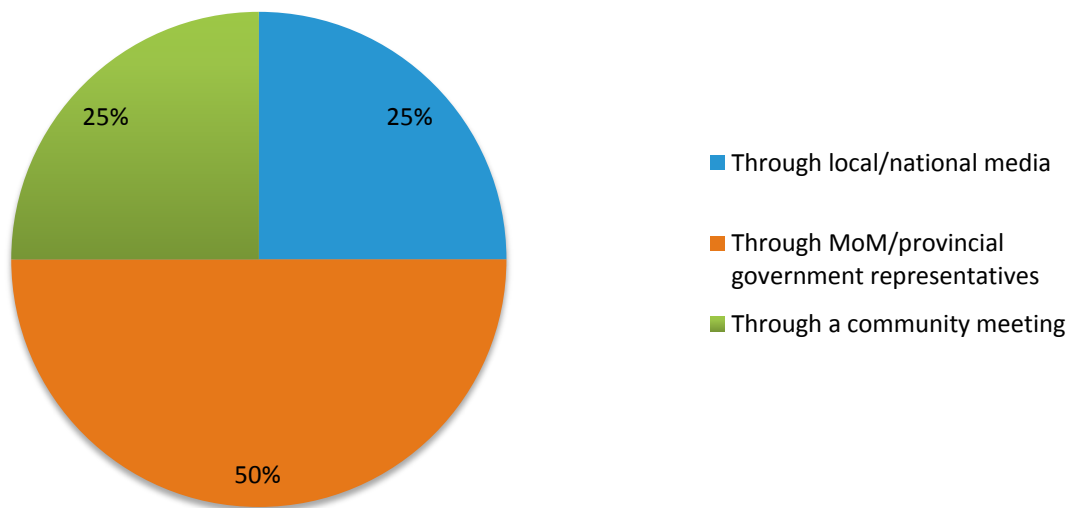


Figure 67: Origin of the information shared about the project

Perceptions about the quality of project-related activities

The main highway of Ajagak connecting Bamiyan to Kabul is under construction and the residents mostly believe the construction of this road is part of the Ajagak project. Also, some security towers have been built by the Ministry of Mines for the security of the Ajagak mine. In reality, the road is being funded by the Italian government and contracted to an Iranian company and the road is not being built because of the mine. However, the police security towers were built for the police force that will protect mining operations in Ajagak. The security towers are the only project carried for the mining site. There have not been any projects executed by any mining company as of now.

The graph below presents the awareness regarding the quality of the construction work.

How is the quality of the construction work of the mine related projects that are recently implemented?

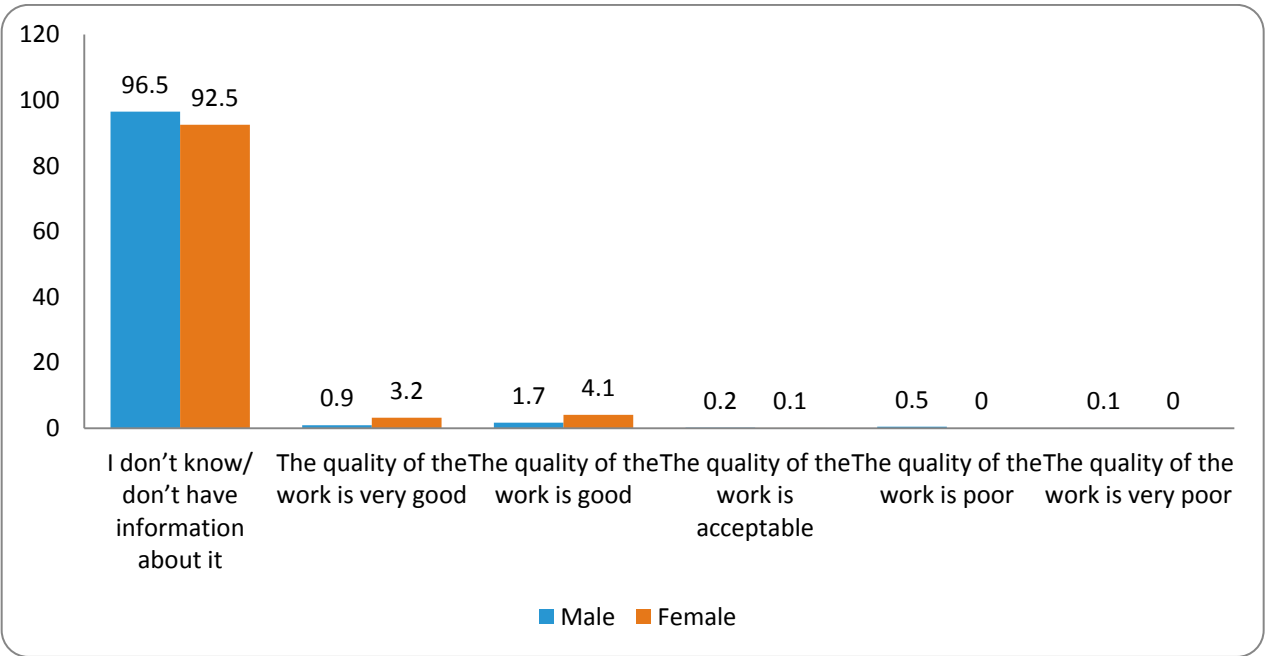


Figure 68: Perceptions of the residents about the quality of the project related activities

The level of awareness among the communities living in Ajagak about the development projects and the quality of those projects that are essentially projected to be built for the people of the region seems abysmally low. The findings on the graph show that 96.5% male members of the communities do not have access to information on quality of the work while 92.5% of the females do not know or have any information about the quality of work. A small number of people seem to know about the quality of the work done there. The perception shared here is about the newly built police security tower to provide security for the mine once it starts operation.

59% of CDC members interviewed during the focus groups said they didn't know or they didn't have any information about the quality of the work, and only 6% of them said they are not happy with the quality of the construction work.

How is the quality of the construction work of the mine related projects that are recently implemented?



Figure 69: Perceptions of the quality of the construction work related to the project

The perception of the quality of project work resonates among the males interviewed during the survey. About 59% of the males interviewed said that they did not have any information about the quality of work carried out, while 24% said the quality of work was good. While 6% said that the quality of work was acceptable. 6% also said that the quality of work was poor.

Perceptions about the mine protection unit APPF

The mining project would require a significant number of security personnel to protect it from attacks. Besides the presence of security unit to protect the project may have negative impact on the lives of the local people and increase their vulnerabilities.

The MoI has already put security towers and rooms around Ajagak. Residents in Ajagak generally have positive perceptions about the forces in charge of maintaining security in the region. The Ministry of Interior has put in place its police unit in charge of protecting such sites, called the Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF). The MoI has given preference to local people in recruiting for the unit.

The chart below reveals the gender distribution of the perception of the APPF.

What do you think about the Mines Protection Unit? Do you think they...

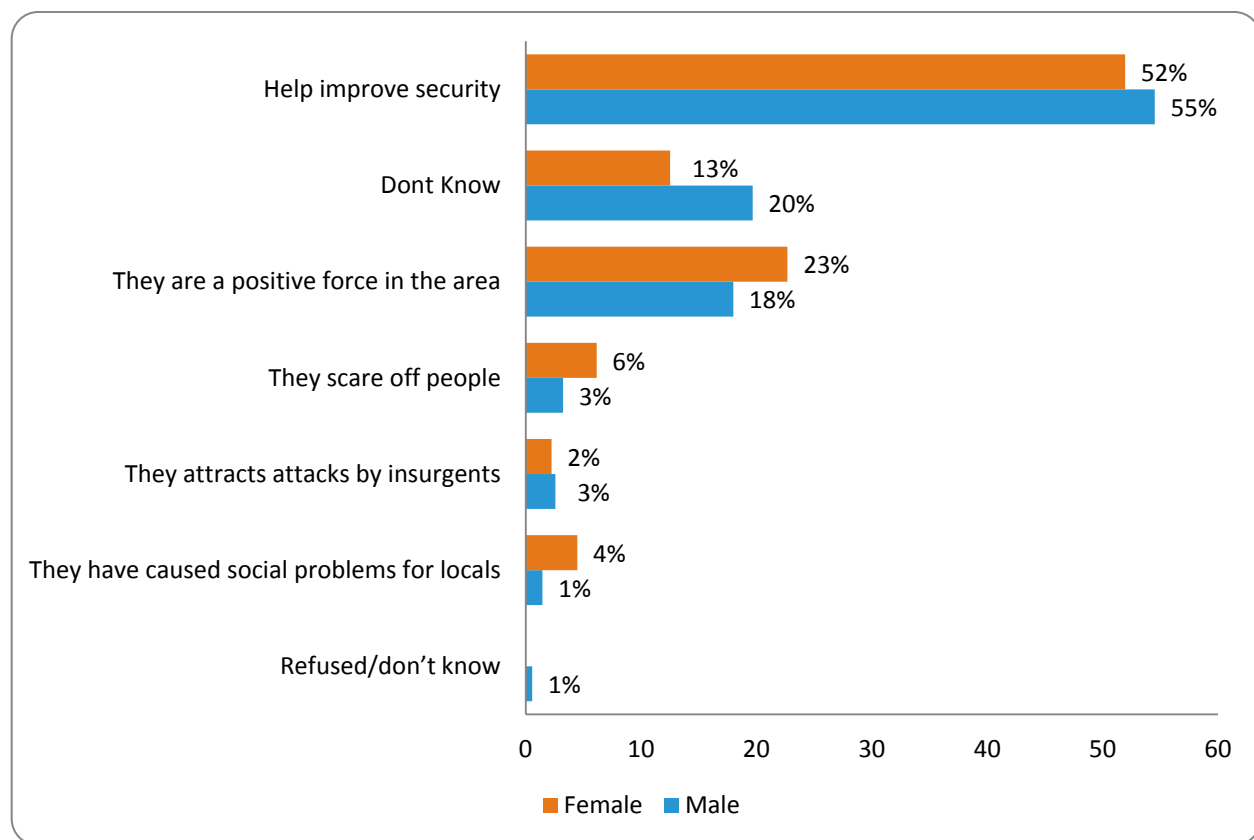


Figure 70: Perception about the Mines Protection Unit by gender

The survey found that 76.1% of females and 91.6% of male respondents did not know about the origin and the task of the protection unit, while 6.1% of women and less than 1% of men knew that they are local soldiers. 15.5% of females and 0.1% of males refused to answer this question.

During the focus group interviews, the elders also gave their view about the protection unit. 35% said that they didn't know anything about it because the unit had not yet been created, while 12% had a negative view about it. Only 53% thought that the unit would improve security in the Ajagak area.

What do you think about the Mines Protection Unit? Do you think they...

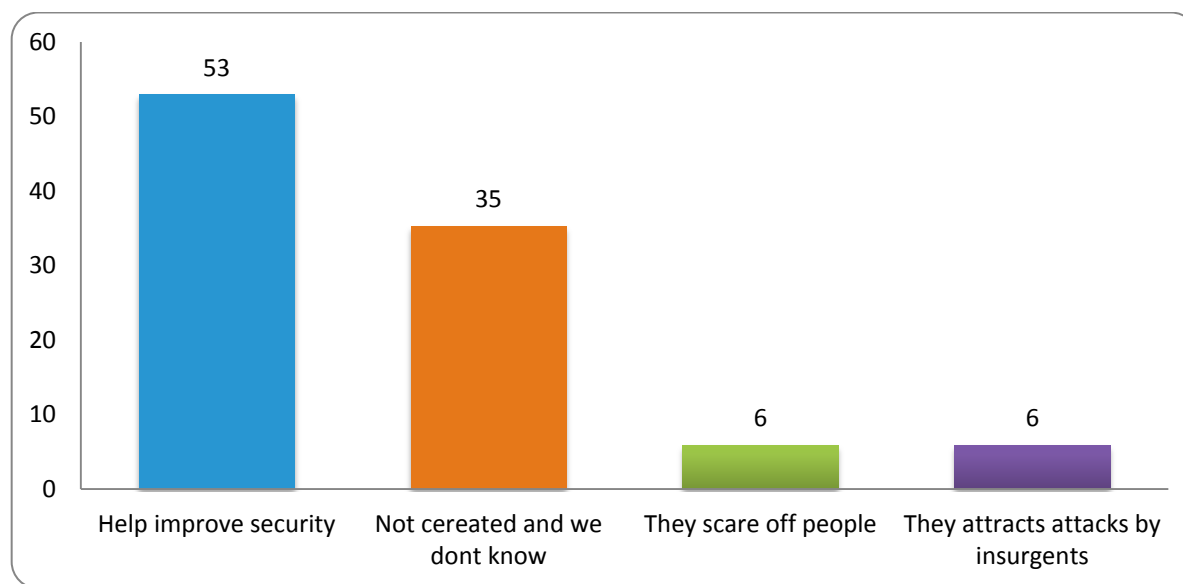


Figure 71: Perception about the Mines Protection Unit in percentage

The Ajagak Authority is a special unit created within MoM to oversee the implementation of the mining project. In the quantitative survey, there was a question about information on management and implementation of the mining project delivered by the Ajagak Authority and how the residents perceive it. According to the findings, 98% of females and 96% of males were not aware of the institution, while 2% of females and 1% of males thought that this institution is doing a good job. Though people talked about the work of Ajagak Authority, in reality the Authority has yet to begin its work, which includes community consultation.

Mining operations at the site of Ajagak may see an influx of job seekers to the region because the project will create some employment opportunities. In addition, the mining project will require other services that may be best supplied from close proximity to the mine. Rapid urbanization is another spin off the mining project. Ajagak region is a rural area cut off from urban centers with its own small economy and limited resources and nature. When people move into the region it may see more demand for goods and services and inflation, which may in return constrain the available resources and make it difficult for the poor of the region to afford it.

The following graph exposes a complete picture of male/female perceptions:

During the process of the mine extractive activities in this area, most of the foreigner/Afghan will come to this area and they will want to stay. Do you think this is fine with you (any particular objection)?

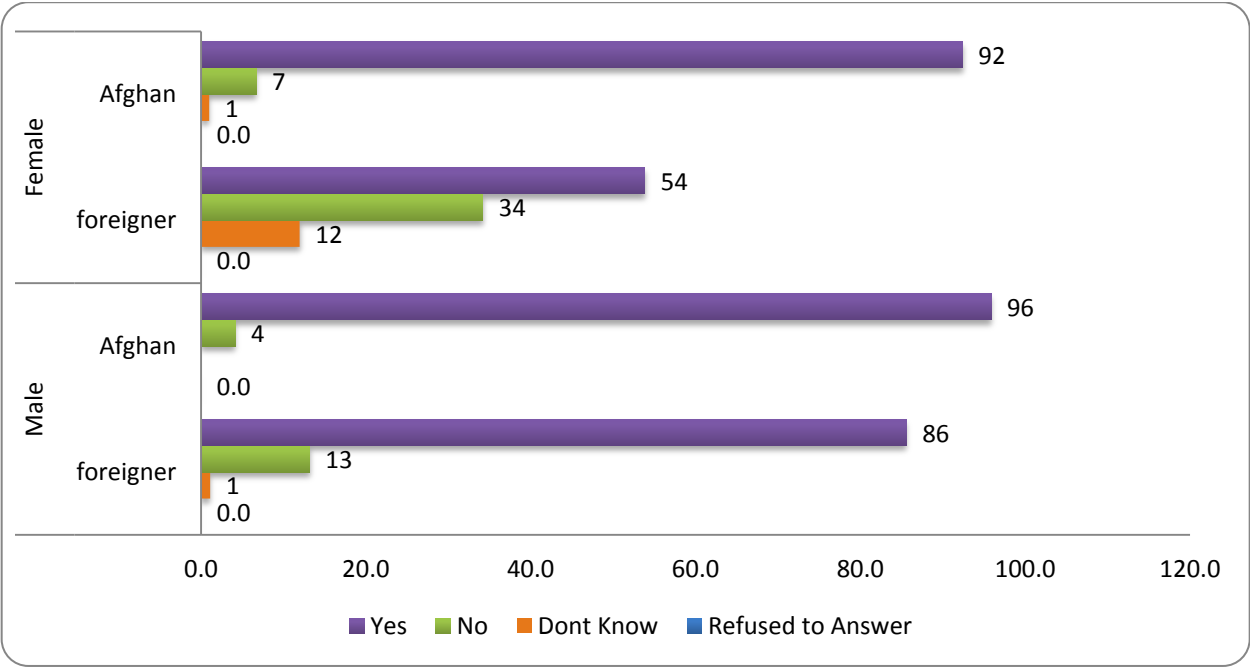


Figure 52: Potential stay of people related to the project in the region

5.3 Land and property compensation

Land titles in Ajagak are as problematic as in any other part of Afghanistan. There are several conflicting land titles in Ajagak as well. People have inherited land for decades, and some people have Malyati titles over land. There are people who have cultivated rain-fed land that they claim to be theirs. Ajagak has a Kuchi population that seasonally goes south in winters. The land titles issue, could complicate any compensation requirements, and may create hurdles when investment is made in land for the mine.

Land compensation

Mining operations require land and it may displace people living close to the mine site. The survey found that 64.5% of females and 76.3% are ready to make their land available for the project. 28.7% of females and 16.4% of males are not ready to do so.

If the company wants to take your land and build some infrastructure for the Ajagak, how many of you are ready to give your land to the company?

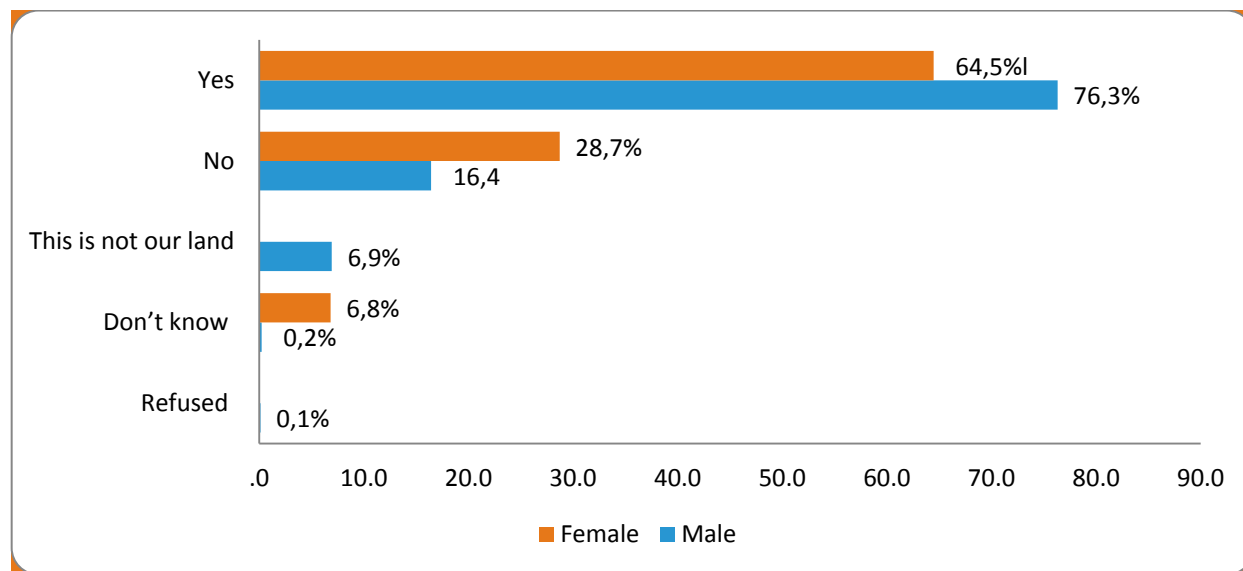


Figure 73: Residents ready to give their land to the company by gender

Those who are ready to give their lands for the mining related activities (housing, infrastructure, etc.) will require compensation.

The chart below presents which kind of compensation the landowner will demand.

What form of compensation would you seek if you are required to give your land for mining?

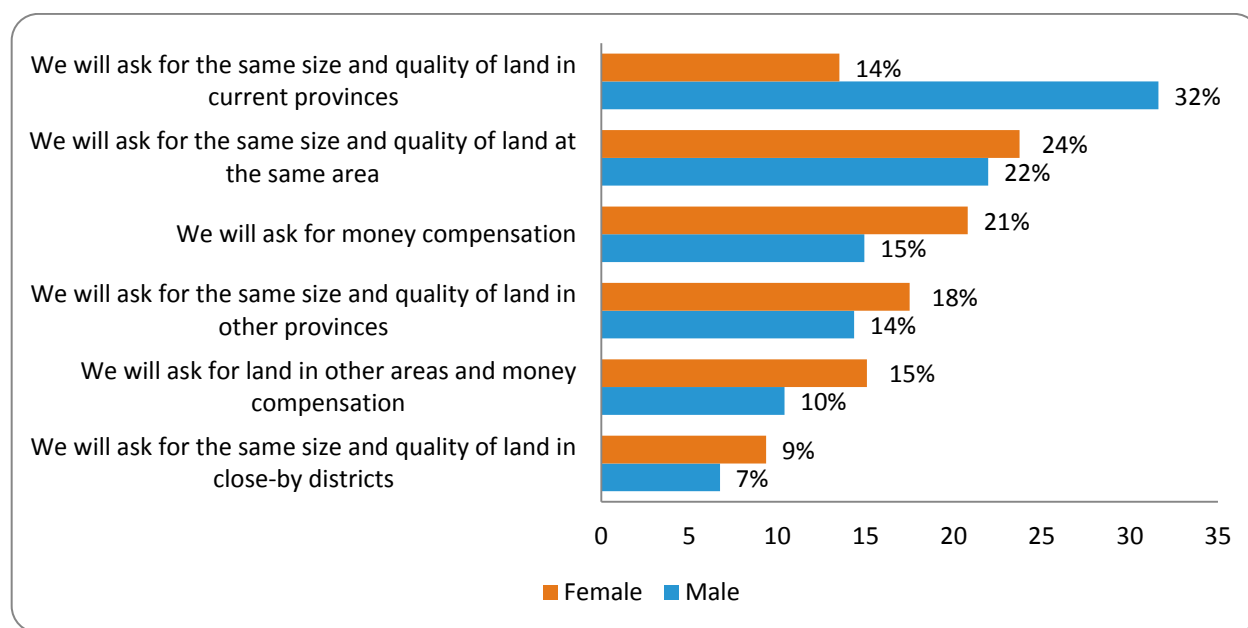


Figure 74: Form of compensation potentially required in exchange of the land by gender

Almost 94% of the elders interviewed during the male village-level focus groups agreed to give up their land if the company asks for it. 38% would ask for monetary (cash) compensation, while 25% would ask for the same size and quality of land in other provinces (Kabul); 19% would ask for the same size and quality of land in the same area, 13% would ask for the same size and quality of land in current province (Bamiyan Center), and 6% would ask for land in other areas and monetary compensation as well.

There are some activities within political circles mobilizing local people regarding land compensation and revenue sharing with provinces. The discussion clearly carried a divisive undertone. In addition, there has been a dispute with Kuchis coming to the region during summer to stay. Kuchis have been nomads, traveling between south and central Afghanistan from time immemorial. However, recently the population of the region, predominantly Hazara, no longer allows Kuchis to come to the region due to fights between the two tribes in the recent past.

What form of compensation would you seek if you are required to give your land for mining? N= 94% of OS

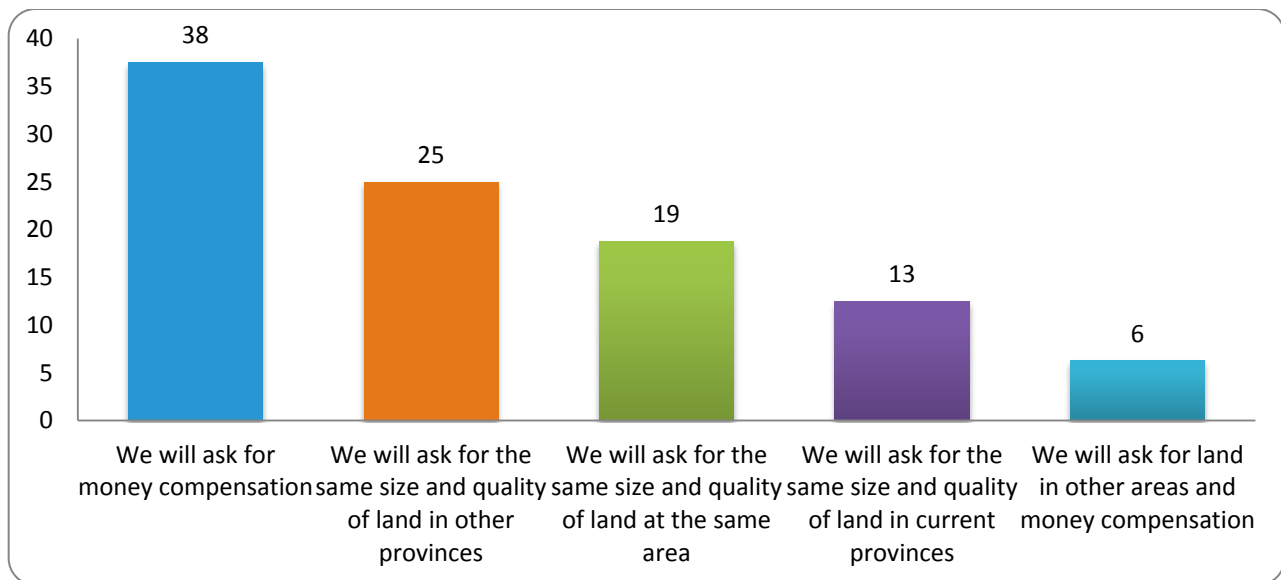


Figure 75: Form of compensation potentially required in exchange of the land in percentage

Compensation for residential property

In the survey, 69% of females and 79% of males responded by saying that they are ready to give up their dwelling if a company comes to invest in the mine. 24% of women interviewed and 21% of men interviewed are not ready to give up their property. Those who say they want to give up their land say they will ask for compensation.

The following chart presents the readiness of male and female members to give up their dwellings.

If the company or state wants to take your house or dwelling to build some infrastructure for the Ajagak, how many of you are ready to give your dwelling to the company or state?

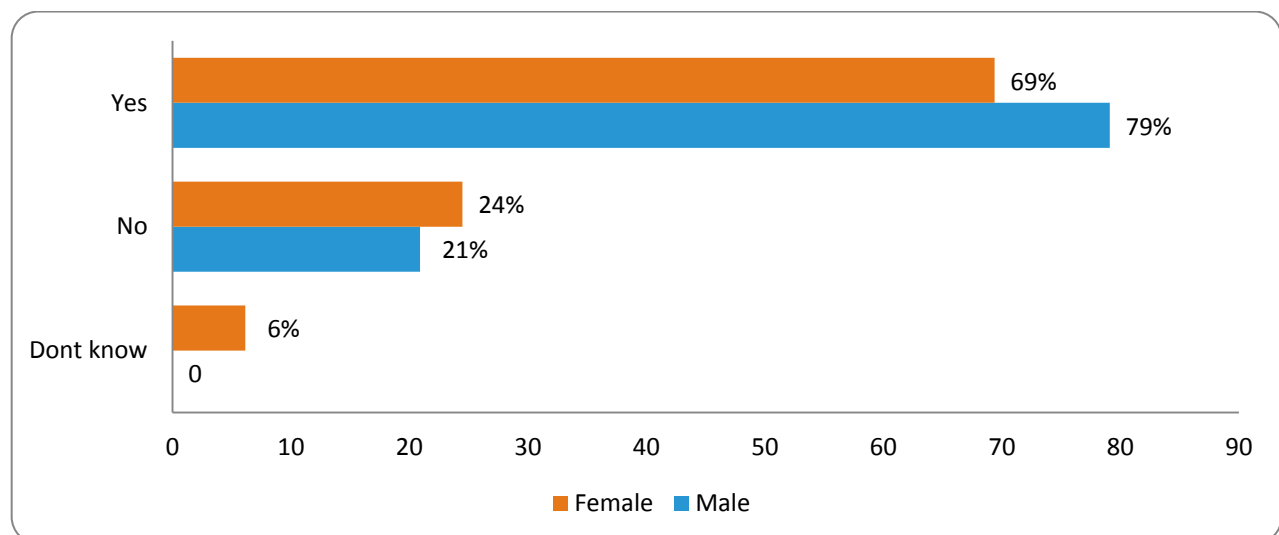


Figure 76: Residents who are ready to give their dwelling for the mining project by gender

An overwhelming majority (94%) of Ajagak elders accepted to give up their dwellings to the company if they need to build on the land. 31% said that they would ask for a bigger size and better quality of house in the same area; 25% would ask for the same size and quality of house in the same province (Bamiyan center). Another 25% would ask for monetary compensation; 13% would ask for the same size and same quality house in the same area, and only 6% would ask for a bigger size and better quality of housing in nearby districts. Only 6% refused to give up their houses to the company.

What form of compensation would you seek if you are required to give your dwellings for mining?
N=94% of OS

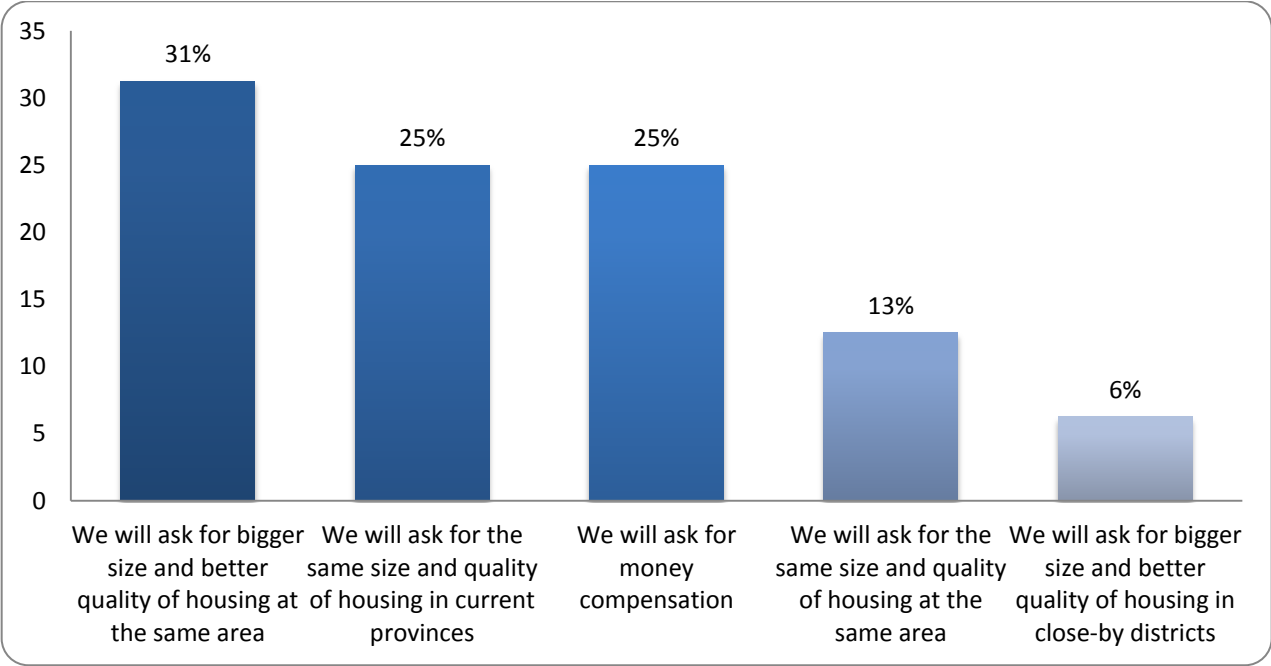


Figure 77: Form of compensation potentially asked by the residents in exchange of their dwelling

5.4. Monitoring

Monitoring the mining operation is an important issue. It is more so because the site is remote and the presence of a local monitoring team is important in order to report incidents or violations of best practices.

Perception of villagers about monitoring of extractive activities

As the extraction of Ajagak iron ore begins, the local people from the area feel they must be involved in the monitoring process. The survey found that 94% of women and 95% of men think that it is the right of residents of the area to monitor the mining process.

Do you think it is the right of the residents of the area to monitor Ajagak Iron ore?

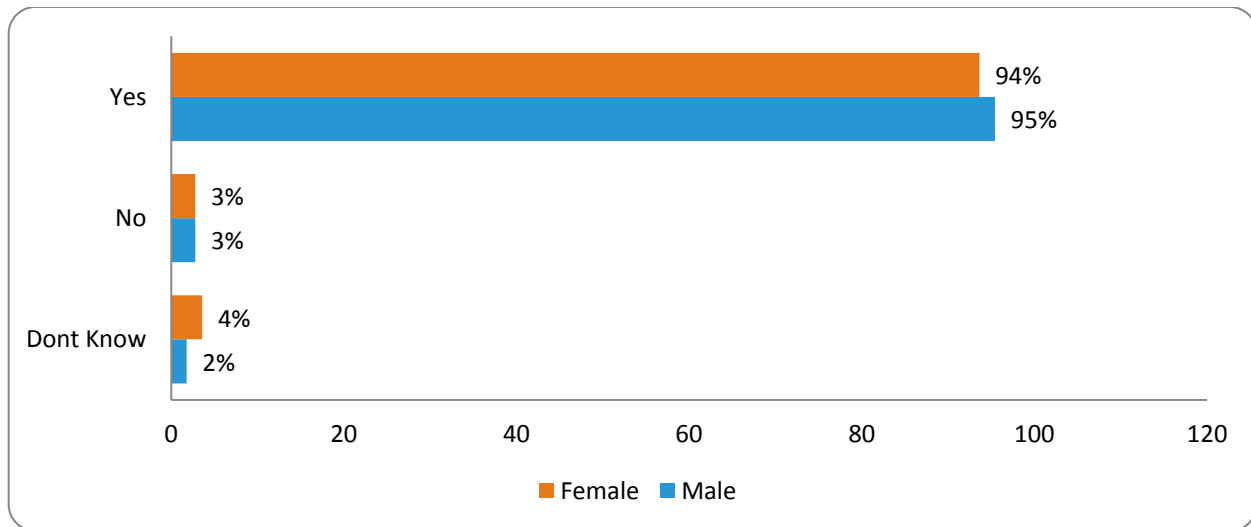


Figure 78: Perception of the resident about the right to monitor the project

Perception questions to the population about women's involvement in the monitoring process revealed that 62% of females and 85% of males would like women to be part of the monitoring process, while 30% of females and 13% of males do not want women to be part of the monitoring team.

Do you think, the women should also take part in monitoring team?

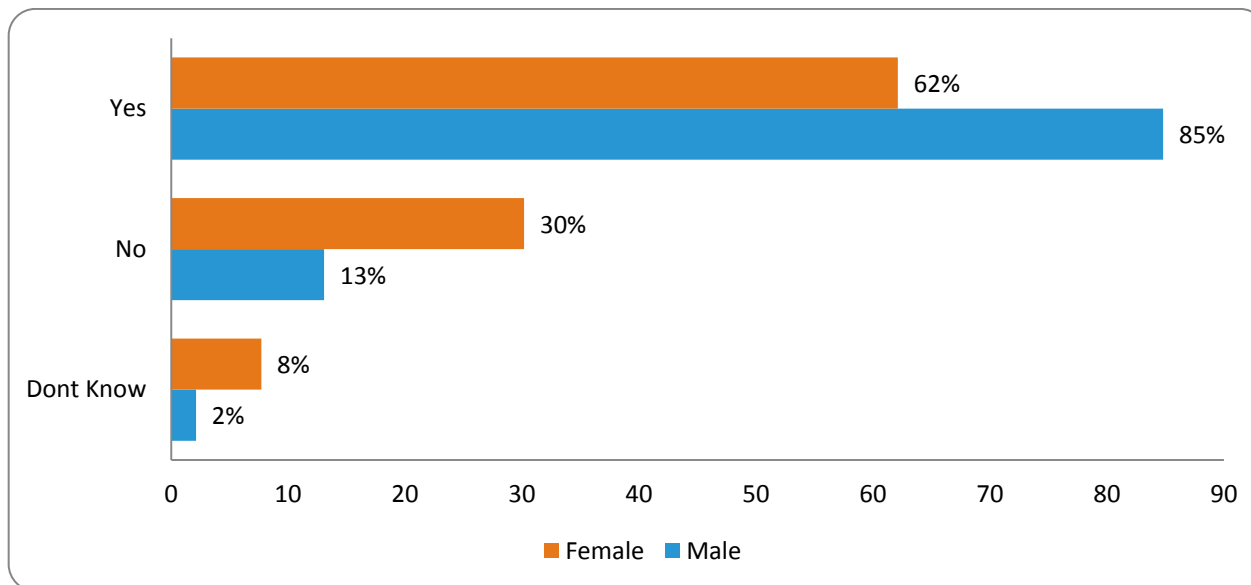


Figure 79: Perception about the participation of women in monitoring activities

Individually, 36% of females and 72% of males would like to be a member of the monitoring team, while 40% of females and 13% of males think that they don't have the capacity to do monitoring. However, 15% of females and 12% of males do not want to be part of the monitoring team, and 7% of females and 2% of males would like to be part of the team but cannot due to family restrictions.

Do you also want to be a member of this monitoring team so that you can monitor the structures made by the company?

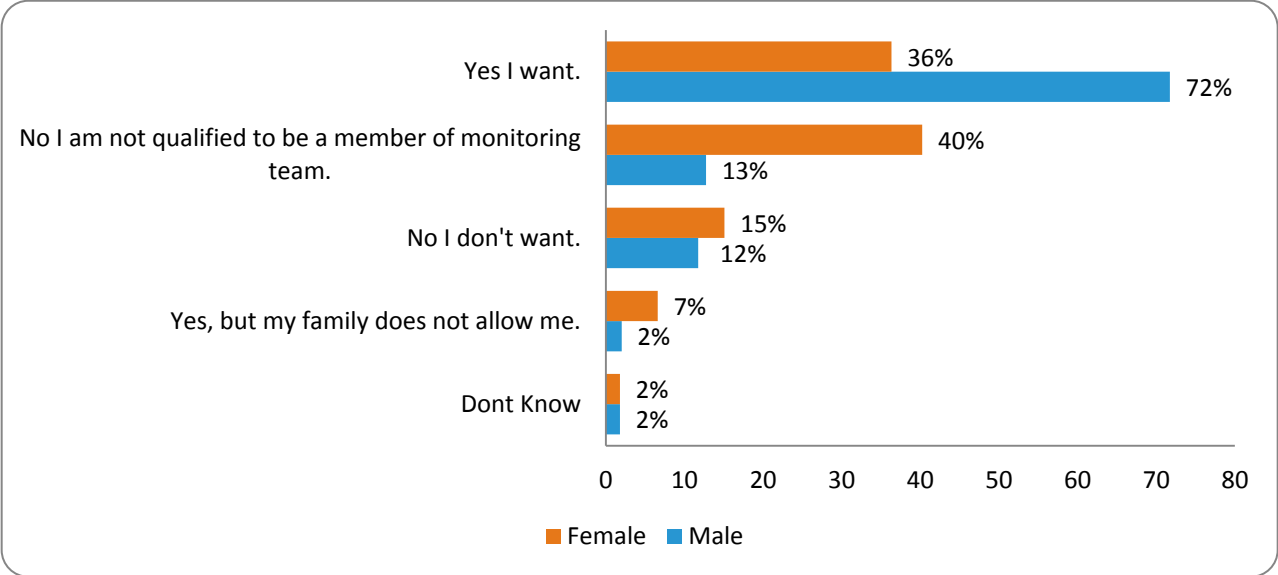


Figure 80: Willingness to be part of the monitoring activities by gender

Villagers monitoring knowledge

The citizens of Ajagak is interested and think that is their right to monitor the extraction of iron ore, but most are not aware of the project. The survey findings indicated that only 13% of villagers have knowledge of monitoring, while 87% do not have knowledge. 6.6% of the population has been trained during the last year in project monitoring and 93.4% of population did not have any kind of training on project monitoring. For the realization of the National Solidarity Program, the implementing partner, mostly NGOs gave training on design and monitoring of the projects.

Records show that 12.4% of the population was involved in the monitoring process of other projects in the area and 87.6% of the population was not involved in monitoring processes. 3.8% of villagers held the perception that there are people who want to prevent the residents of the area from monitoring, while 92.1% thought there are no obstacles. The below table illustrates who the people believe might create obstacles for monitoring the mining operations:

Do you think, there are people who want to prevent the residents of the are from monitoring exploration of mine?

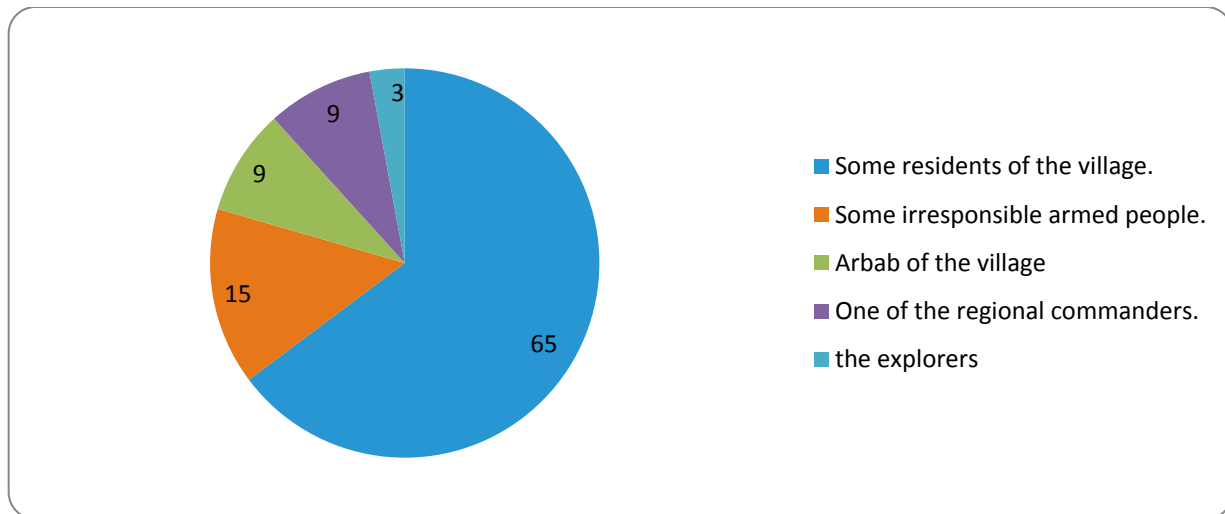


Figure 81: Residents who might create obstacles in the monitoring activities

5.5 Job opportunities

Large-scale mining operations are very capital intensive; at the same time it can provide jobs for the local people.

In general, if any mining company establishes activities in the region, 75.2% of population would like to work within it, while 16.4% of people would not like to work within it. The following chart shows the perception of the population:

In case, if any mining company is established in your region, would you work within it?

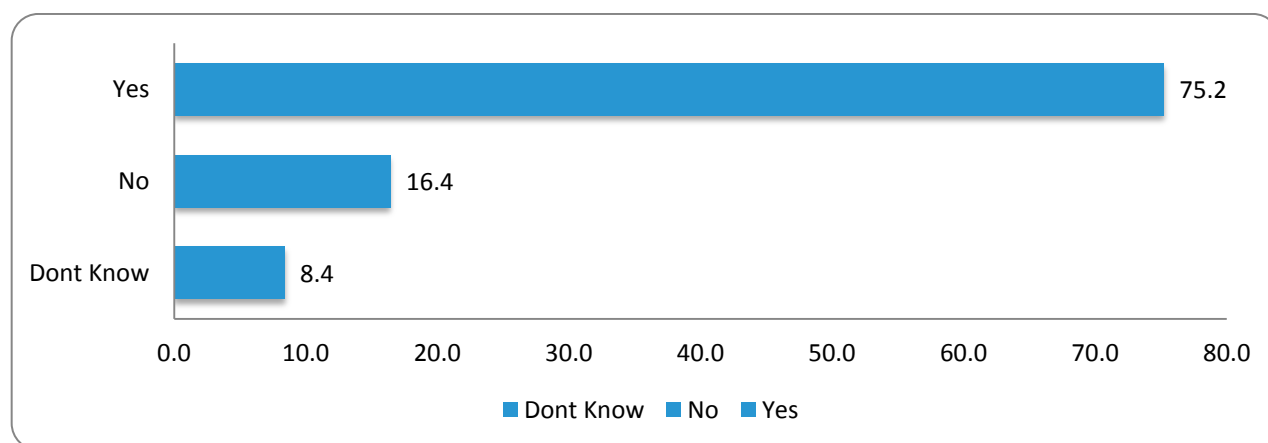


Figure 82: Percentage of potential workers in the mining project

Female perception about village development and local governance

Afghan society is very patriarchal and the realm of decision making is considered to be the prerogative of the male members of household. The NRVA report of 2007-08 states that “The society of Afghanistan is characterized by very strong gender segregation and strict rules regarding the social and physical space to move, especially for women.”

The realm of development is no different: male dominated. Shuras or CDCs⁷⁷ are the bodies that are involved in the decision making on development. Though the bodies now have created space for women to be involved, the NRVA report of 2007-08 states: “direct representation of women is nationally only established in 20% of the communities through Shuras and in 36 % through CDCs, compared to 56% and 60% for male representation. The CDCs are much more common in the rural communities, whereas the presence of Shuras is only modestly larger in rural areas than in urban ones. If there are no female decision-making committees in the community, in some 40% of the cases the male committees take women’s views into consideration; 35 % do this usually and 5 % do this sometimes only. The procedure followed to represent women is usually to have their concerns voiced by their husbands.”⁷⁸

The following section analyzes women’s perceptions. All of the graphs and data are derived from answers by female heads of household.

6.1 Women and development projects

The following section examines the results of the baseline survey from a gender perspective. And it

⁷⁷ The Shura, or local council, has traditionally been the institution around which people mobilize. It is an informal body for decision making and dispute resolution on a range of economic, political and sometimes social issues. Like most traditional Afghan institutions, it is usually comprised of male elders and landowners. However, female and mixed Shuras also exist. Community Development Councils (CDCs) are village organizations, relatively recently established within the framework of the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) under the auspices of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD). It is a country-wide initiative that provides block grants to communities to enable them to plan, prioritize, implement and finance their own development projects.(definition taken from the NRVA report of 2007-08)

⁷⁸ Op-cit NRVA report.

focuses on women’s needs, in terms of development, projects, and trainings to be undertaken.

Projects prioritized by women

The survey showed that women prioritized water as the most urgent of needs. 28% of females said that their urgent need is drinking water, followed by a need for clinics (17%) and electricity (15%). 11% of women also felt they needed literacy courses and 6% stated a need for schools and 6% for phone coverage.

What is the one project that is most needed by the people of the village right now?

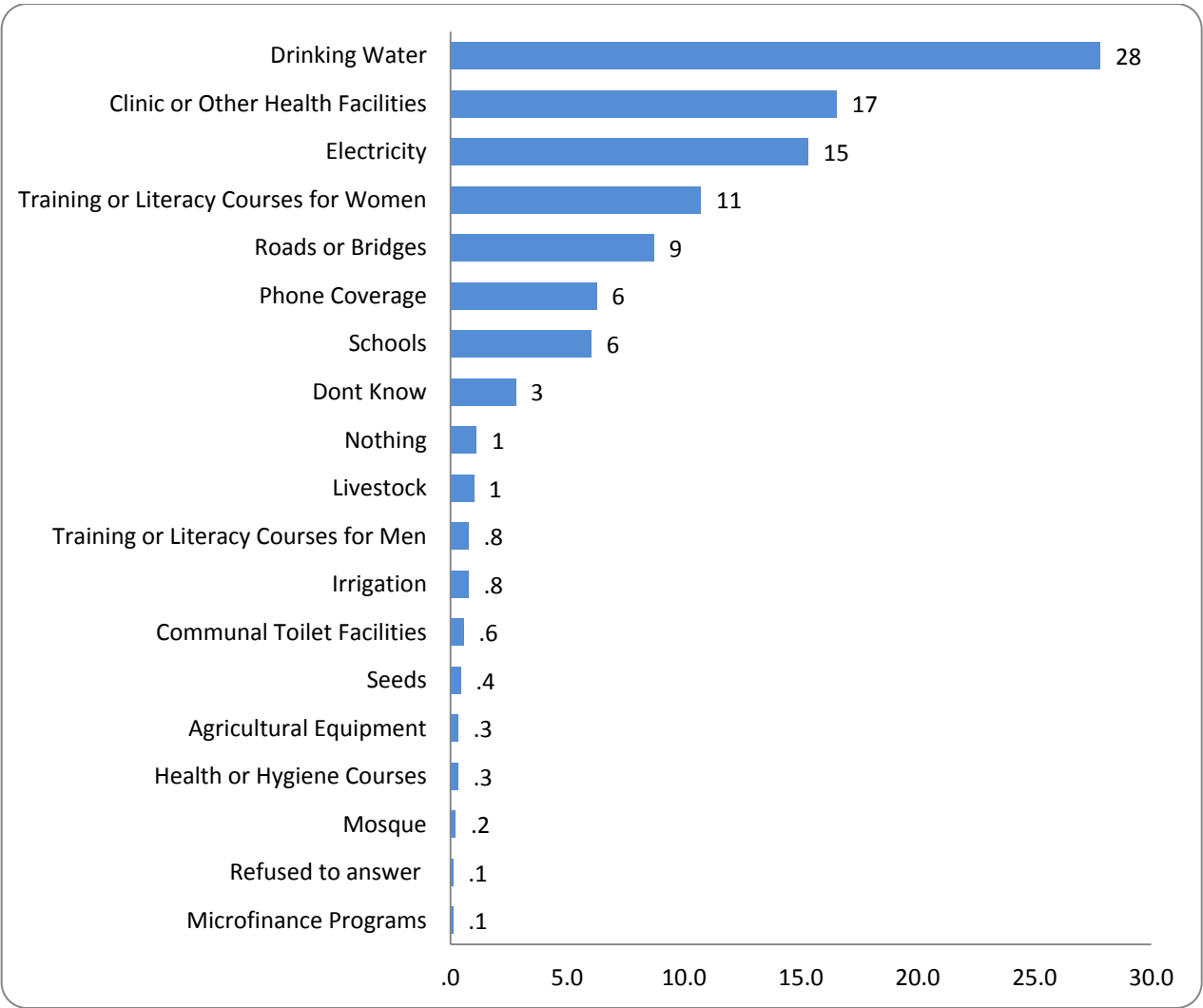


Figure 6: Projects perceived as most needed by women

Female participation in trainings

There are vocational training and literacy courses for women. However, the location of the training centre may not be accessible, as many women say they have not seen any training centre. This will remain a challenge for development actors to ensure inclusive development and participation.

Of women who have not participated, 75% stated the reason was that they were responsible for household labor and therefore could not attend. 83% said they would not attend a training course if there was one.

Are there any vocational training or literacy courses for women currently being taught in the village?

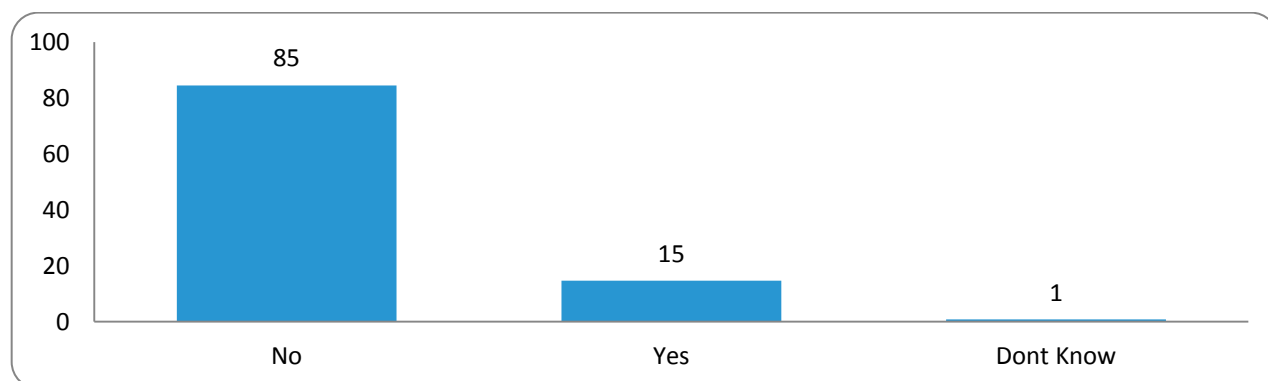


Figure 84: Female participation in training activities

Though obviously women in Ajagak are open to attending such courses, the responses show that 76% of females say that they cannot attend training because the household chores do not leave them with any time to do so. 14% of respondents say they are not interested in such training; 10% says they do not need these skills.

What is the main reason that women {could not/are not allowed to} to attend these courses? Both males and females answered this question.

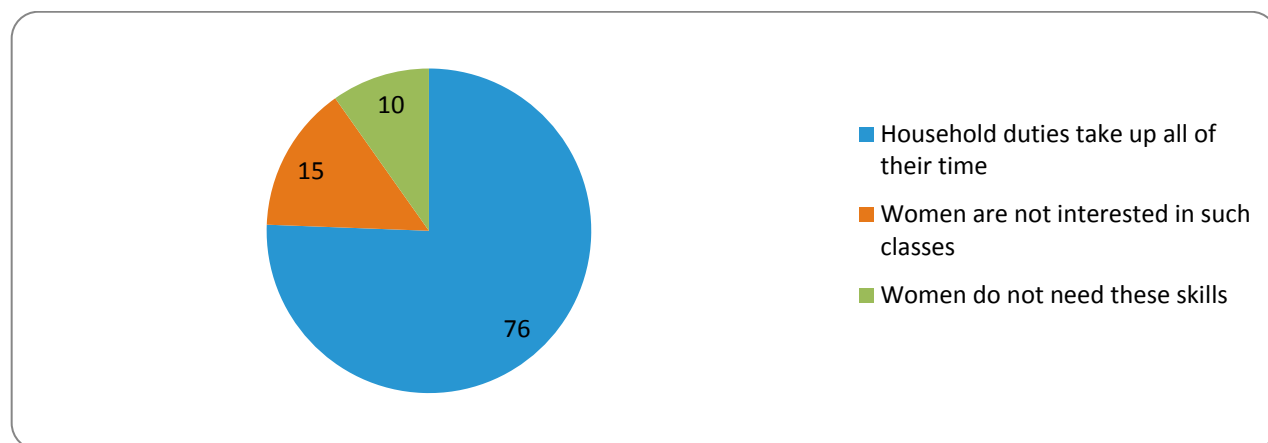


Figure 85: Main reasons why women wouldn't attend training activities

If literacy or training courses were offered, would you attend them?

	Frequency	Percentage
No	34	82.9
Yes	7	17.1
Total	41	100.0

Table 19: Potential attendance to future training

Field observations found that girls have a separate school they have been attending. There is a difference in perception about girls' education; while 98.8% of females support girls' education, at the same time they are not ready to attend a training course themselves.

In your opinion, should girls in your village be allowed to go to school?

	Frequency	Percentage
No	10	1.1
Yes	884	98.8
Don't Know	1	0.1
Total	895	100.0

Table 20: Girls participation to school

6.2 Female opportunities and space to discuss their household problems

Do women have a person or a group to go to for discussing and/or finding a way to solve their problems?

The survey found that 63% of females stated there is not any group with which they can discuss their issues or issues bothering them. 12.3% did not know of any such a group.

Do women have someone or a group to go to discuss and/or find a way to solve their problems?

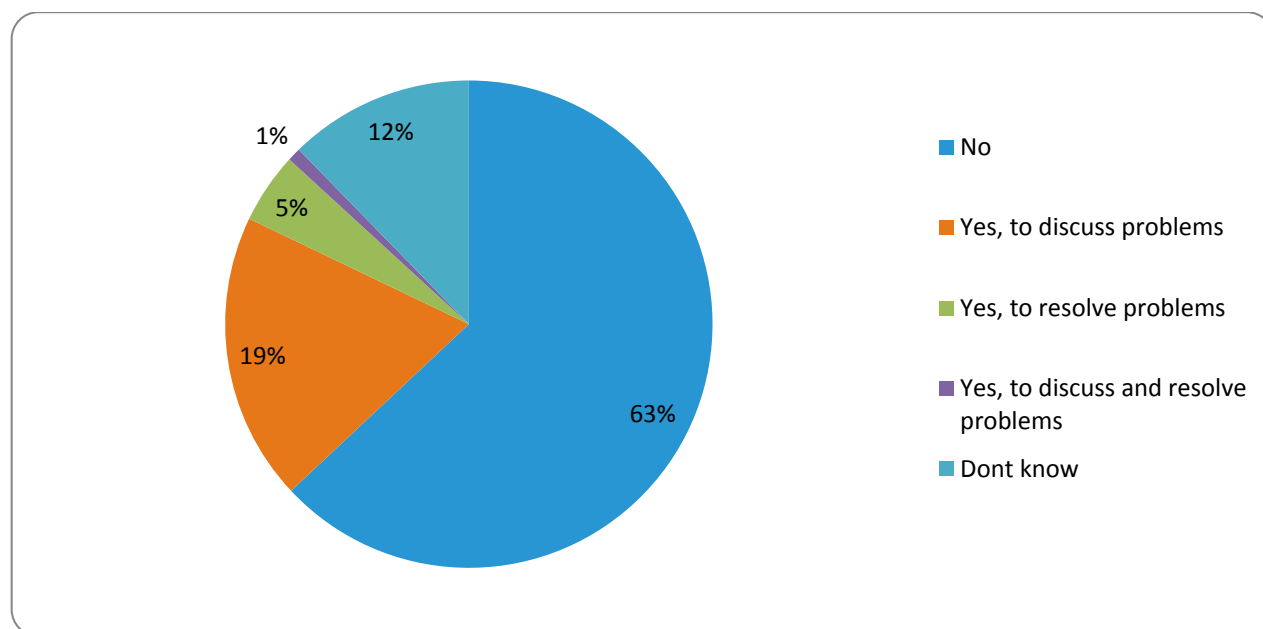


Figure 86: Existence of group for women to discuss issues

It seems that the culture of seeking solutions to women's issues is still not present, which reflects conservatism and issues of honor of the family. Women are assigned more household labor and discussing any issues beyond the walls of the household seems abnormal behavior in many rural parts of Afghanistan. Additionally, women have limited interactions outside the home, the spaces are few, and accessibility may not be easy.

Of the people with whom women identified they share their issues, 26.3% said they share with elderly and respected people. 24.9% of women also said they can talk to other women. 18.4% said they consult and share their problems with the women's council. 18.4% said they visit mullahs.

Who or what group?

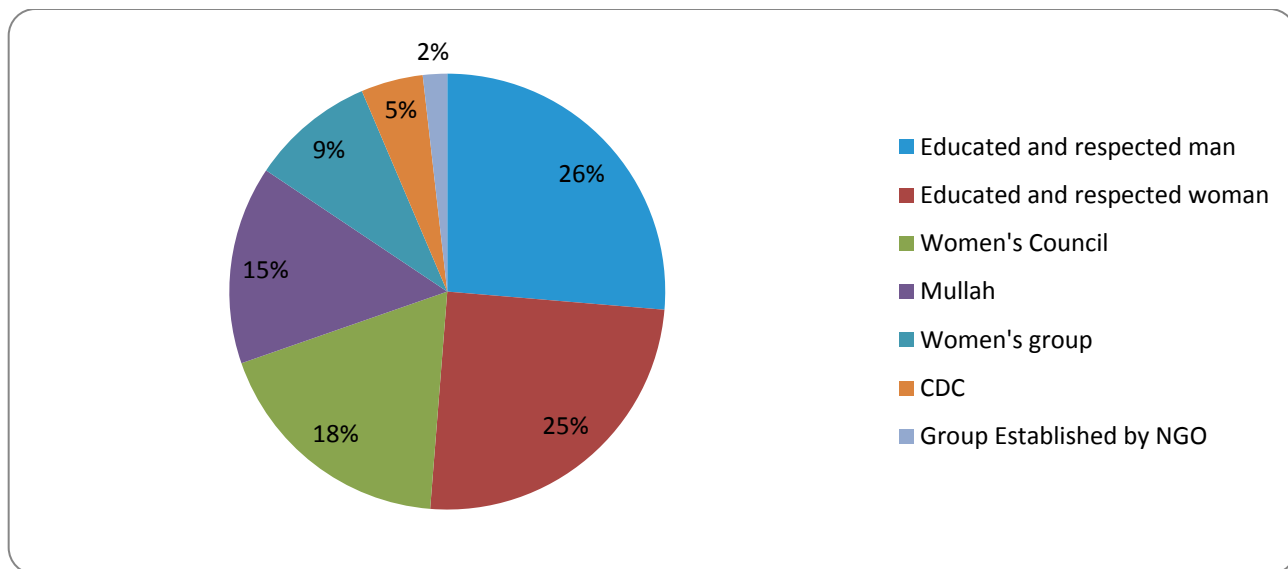


Figure 87: Person or group that women consult to discuss or solve their issues

In these forums, women discuss different kind of problems, illustrated in the following graph.

What sort of problems do they discuss?

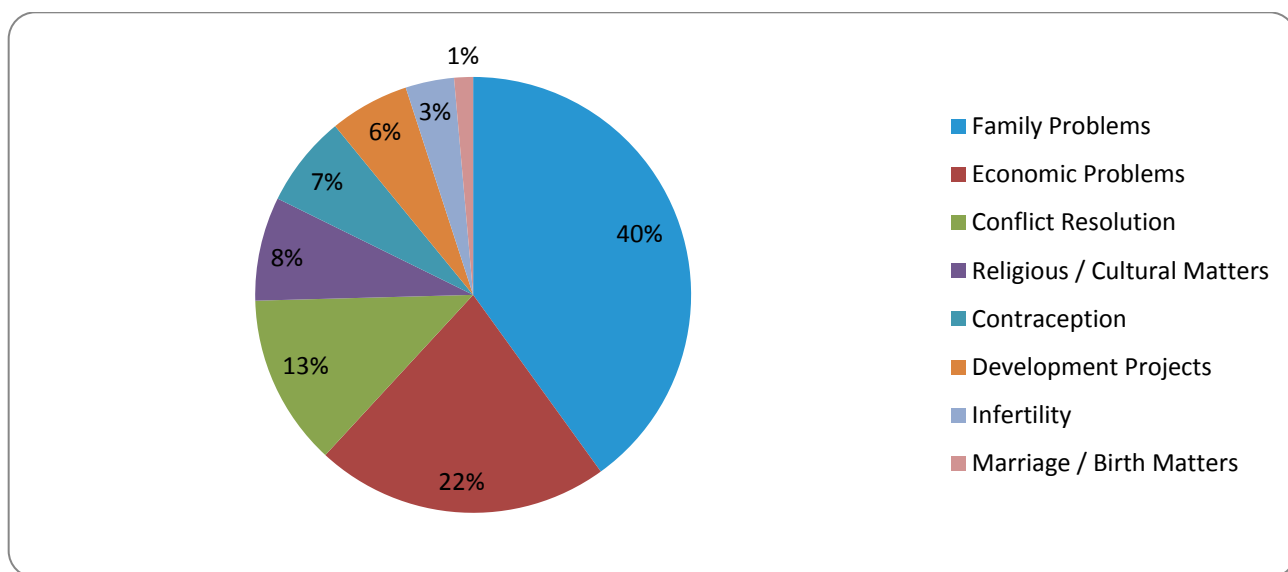


Figure 88: Types of issues discussed by women

In contradiction to earlier findings, here 61% of women say they discuss family and economic issues with elderly and respected people in the community. 12.7% talk about conflict resolution and 6.8% talk about contraception issues, while 3.6% discuss infertility issues. Some of these issues are very hard for women to discuss in rural parts of the country.

6.3 Female travel outside the village

The economic situation of people and poor connectivity may discourage the residents of Ajagak to visit the district or the provincial capital. The data from the survey show that people of the region are generally not wealthy. They are not in a position to save money to travel and visit the city for purposes other than medical care or marriage occasions. The visits are also usually far from the villages.

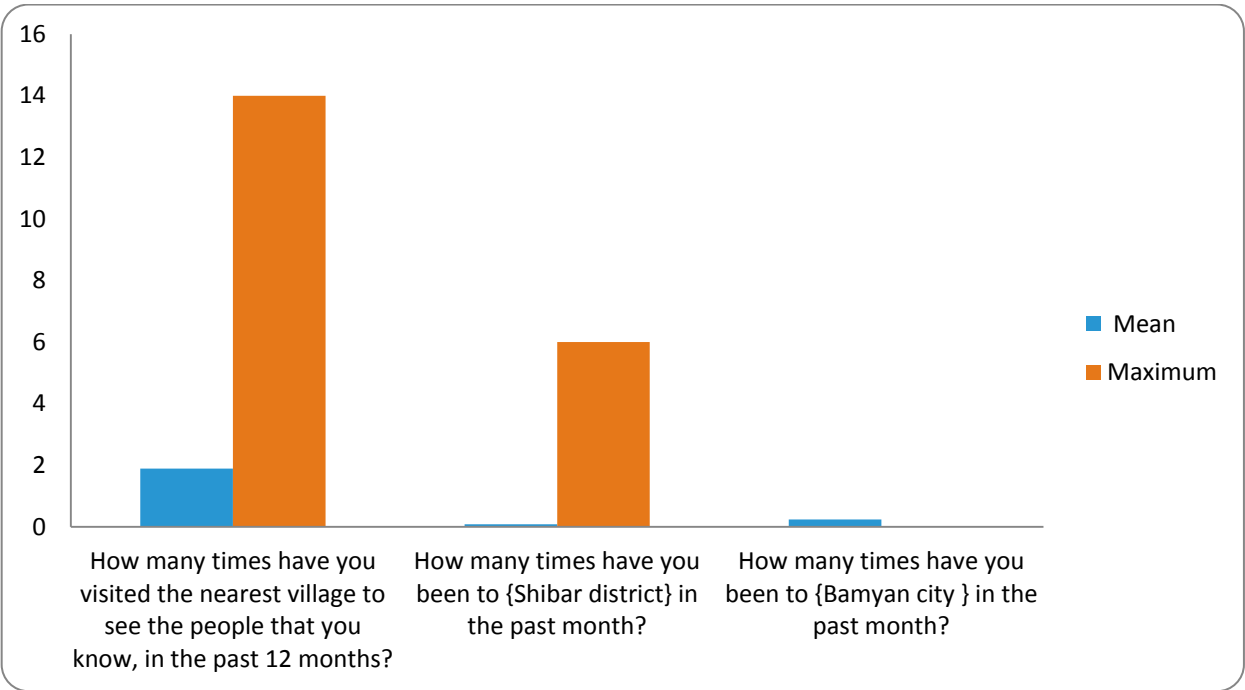


Figure 89: Female going outside the village

6.4 Female opinion about village leadership

Over the past 12 months, what was the most important thing done by the council (mainly CDCs) or village elders for women?

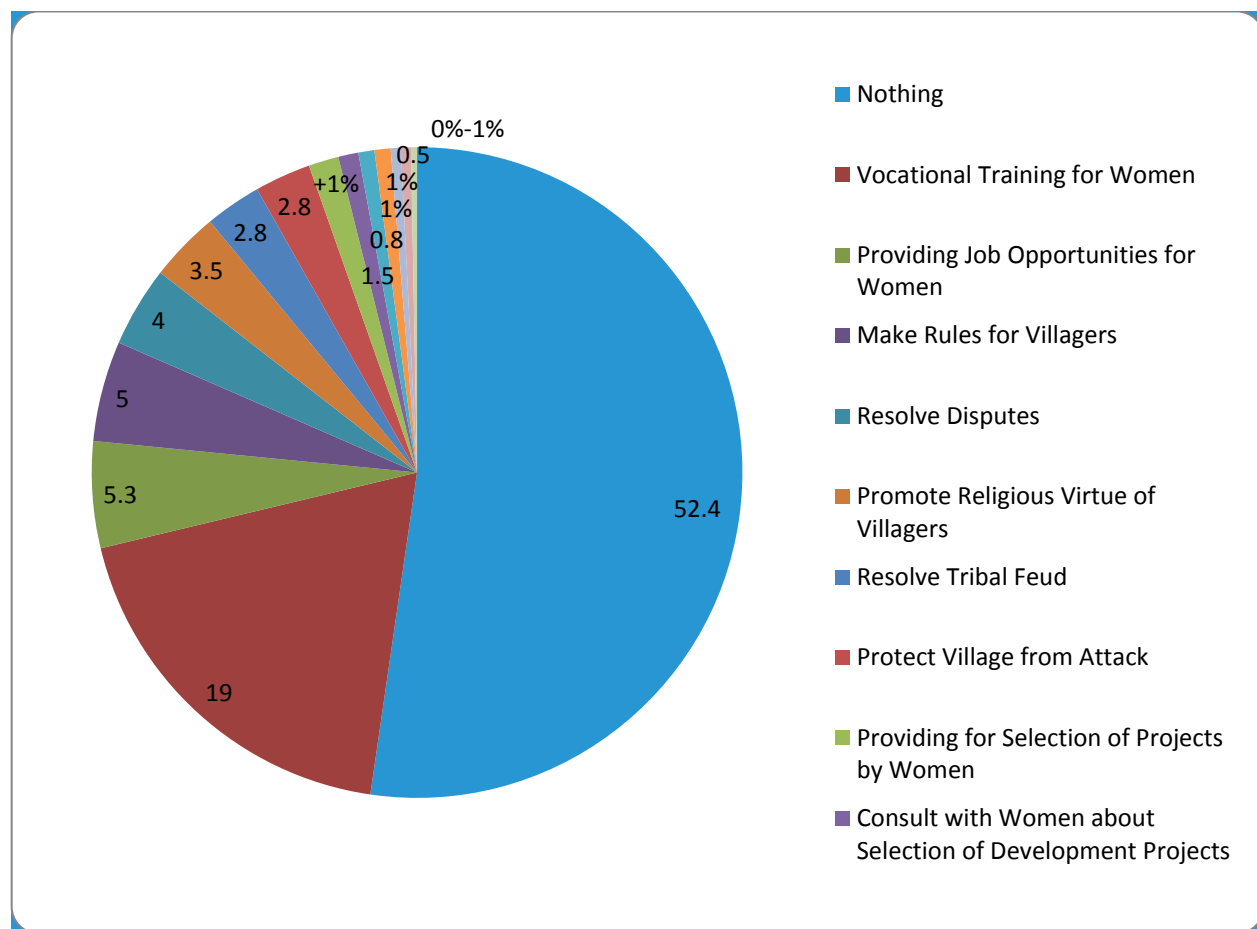


Figure 90: Most important thing done by the council or village elders for women

Establishing women's *Shuras* has been an important step taken for the empowerment of women in rural parts of Afghanistan. However, the survey found that even though there are *shuras*, according to 52.4% of female respondents the *Shura* has not done anything for them. 19% of women reported that the women's *Shura* has been involved in vocational training.

In your opinion, should women engage in {village council} and participate in decision-making for the village, should there be a separate council for women which only deals with women's affairs, or should they have no council and no role in decision?

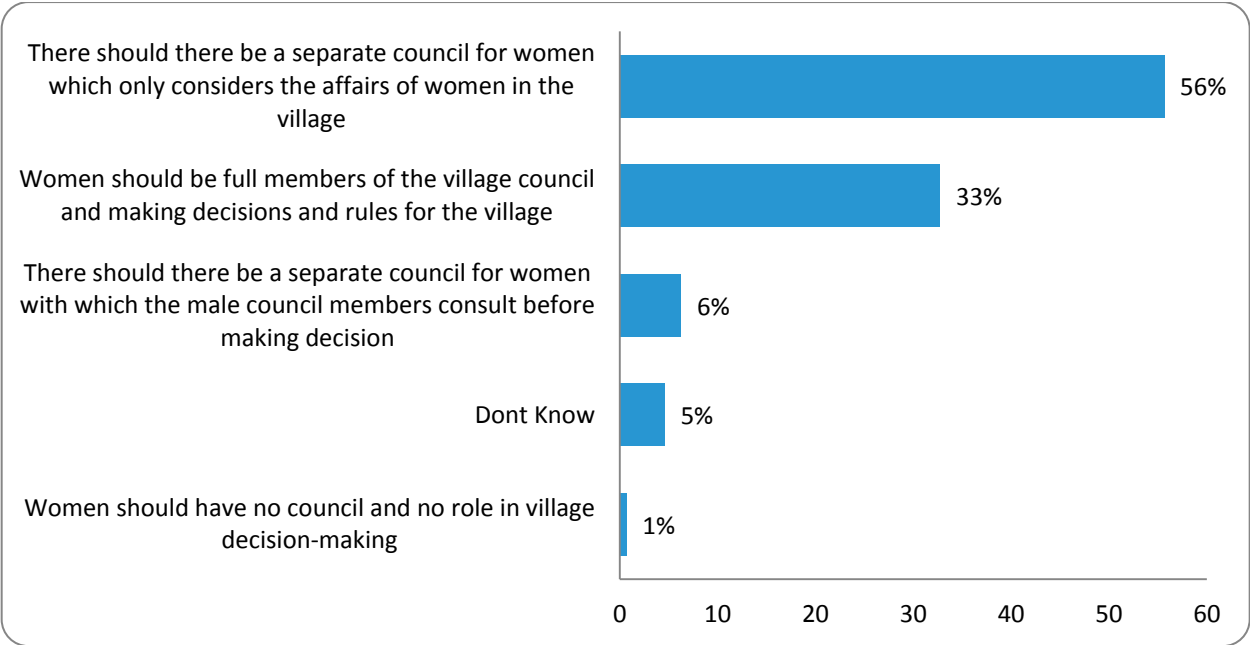


Figure 91: Women's involvement in the village council and decision-making

The questions about the participation of women in decision making through a separate council show that 56 % of women want separate councils for women to deal with women’s issues. On the other hand, 33% of them say that women should be full members of the village council and be consulted while making decision for the village.

6.5 Female inheritance

Inheritance by females is guaranteed by religion, also in the region both the husbands’ and wife’s parents support inheritance for females. However in Afghanistan it is rarely practiced to give females their due of inherited property.

Local women have inherited property, livestock, jewelry, and land. The graphs in the report reflect that inheritance practices still exist. But there have been reports of conflicts over inheritance issues (such as money, land) which have been locally resolved especially by elders, mullahs, and Arbabs.

If a woman in the village is claimant related to her inheritance or property ownership, who will resolve it?

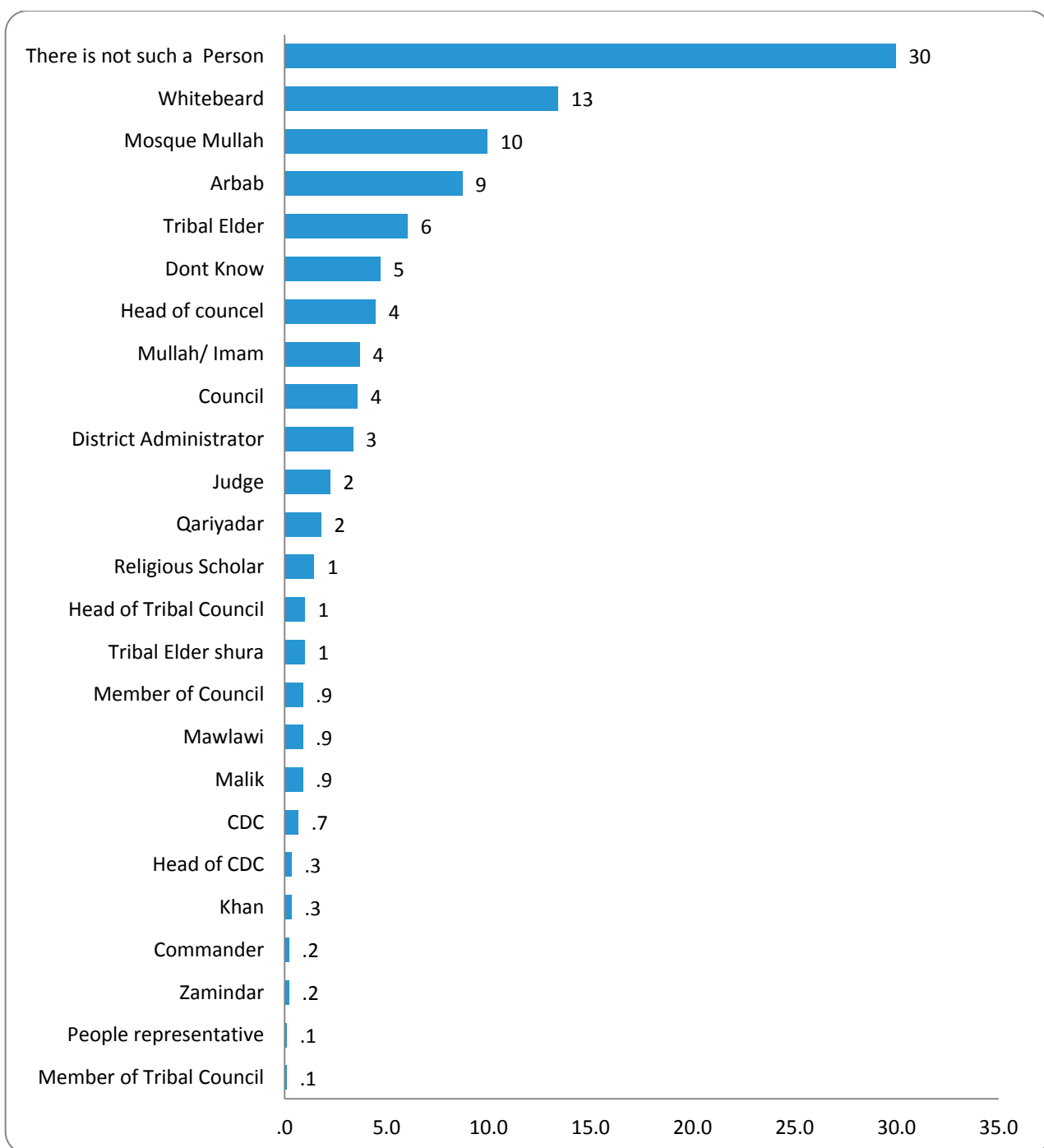


Figure 92: Person capable of solving cases regarding women's inheritance

In regards to women as claimant to a property as her inheritance right, the findings show that there are not many mechanisms in place for women to seek resolution. The survey showed that 30% of respondents do not have a place to go or a person who can seek a remedy on their behalf when it comes to their property rights being guaranteed to them in Islam. Only 13% of the women respondents would refer to the elders in the community and 10% to the Mullah in the local Mosque, while 9 % would go to the local *Arbab* to seek a resolution on discrepancies of property rights issues.

6.6 Female participation in election

Democracy and election is very new in Afghanistan. Women's participation in elections in rural parts of Afghanistan is very low. However, their participation in some regions may vary depending on the level of education among males and awareness among females.

In your opinion, is participation of women in local and national elections correct or not?

	Frequency	Percentage
Correct	856	96
Incorrect	14	2
Don't Know	25	3
Total	895	100

Table 21: Potential participation of women in election

The women in the region are more extroverted; Hazara communities among Afghans are one of the most mobilized communities during elections. The findings show that 96% of the women have participated in elections which may be more than the male participation nationally.

CONCLUSION

The baseline survey in Ajagak as designed and conducted by Integrity Watch captured the essential socioeconomic characteristics of the population before the intervention for mining purposes. In this baseline study every household in each village was interviewed. The survey provides an accurate number of villages and an accurate population figure for the valley, which will be important for following and understanding future trends once the mining projects become operational and the impact can be measured. The survey covered every household present there in three areas—namely Arak valley, Kalo and Ajagak villages, which lie on the Maidan Wardak side of Ajagak.

The survey found that there is out-migration of residents as well as in-migration of refugees from Iran and Pakistan. At this time, out-migration in search of jobs is common among the local people. Part of the reason for this current trend is a lack of economic opportunity in the region due to harsh weather and a lack of availability of land.

People of the region surveyed are poor and vulnerable and their social safety nets are weak. People's main source of income is agriculture—mainly cultivation of potatoes, carrots and wheat. Rust and frost are the primary threats to crops in the region, and the quality and quantity of the harvest is at the whim of unpredictable weather. 46% of people have resorted to borrowing money in the previous 12 months, mainly in order to purchase food.

People of the region suffer from several illnesses such as diarrhea, bone pain, and flu. People spend much of their income for medical care, and are required to borrow money for that purpose because access to quality health services is lacking. It is necessary to travel to urban centers for services. People who can't afford to go to doctors resort to seeking remedies in traditional spheres such as faith healers and Mullahs. Malnutrition, insufficient access to drinking water and inadequate sanitation are deemed as health threats to the local population.

While men are often involved in agricultural occupations, women too share the burden and work in the field alongside the males for a few hours daily. Women are also engaged in handicraft making for taking to market to earn additional income. About 50% of male respondents think their economic condition has not changed in the past year while 30% feel they have experienced improvement from previous years.

The households in the region are electronically advanced compared with other rural communities in Afghanistan. People have a high level of access to electricity, TVs, dish antennae, radios, mobile telephones, motorbikes, tractors, and cars. Most of the households have plots of their own to live on as well as agricultural land to cultivate. The primary source of household heating is wood from local sources.

The level of education is much better in Ajagak compared to other areas of Afghanistan. There are schools for both girls and boys and a kindergarten for young kids. People of the region reported that they received a number of public services, though sometimes the quality of those services may have been poor.

Though the Ajagak region is on an alternative highway connecting Kabul to Bamiyan via Maidan Wardak, its connectivity is marked by challenges due to the roughness and steepness of the road. The rough road is also exposed to flooding during the rainy season. People are unable to gain access to an urban centre

under normal conditions because transportation is expensive. Transportation adds to costs for people who cultivate wheat and potatoes for sale.

Decision-making among communities living in Ajagak is still the prerogative of the elders, mullahs, Khans and Arbabs. People mostly refer to these individuals in the case of disputes or problems. The MRRD-led National Solidarity Program has a deeper reach among people of the region, though it deprives local youth of a voice on issues affecting them because the NSP program largely involves influential elders of the communities in their project which keep the youth in the shadow. 96% of communities in Ajagak have CDCs in their villages.

People receive information from several sources. People have access to TV, radio and telephone sets that connect them to the world. However, the female population largely receives news and information through the males in the family.

People of Ajagak overwhelmingly responded that they have witnessed development in the region in the past decade. There have been new schools and clinics, more bridges have been built and small hydro-dams have been built for locally producing electricity.

Though insecurity is a phenomenon that some people may not associate with the region, findings showed that girls feel insecure while going to school. They have been subjected to violence and harassment in the past. 52% of female respondents reported having fear while going to school. Households also complained of robbery, inflation and financial constraints. People have responded to these challenges with their own survival strategies. People have developed perceptions about mining despite no such activity having happened in the region yet. One factor to explain these perceptions could be the creation of an awareness program by Integrity Watch which has begun a dialogue where people discuss their issues more coherently. Though mining operations have yet to begin people are aware of some possible development such as social development projects and security cordons around the mine.

People already fear losing their land to the mine and they expect fair compensation. Others who have been politically influenced want to rent out their land rather than allow the government to legally acquire it. Land titles are major points of concern for the government because there are multiple and possibly conflicting titles in the country to prove possession of the land.

People of the area anticipate employment opportunities in the mining sector. However, the mining sector is capital-intensive and does not offer many jobs to local people unless they acquire the required mining skills.

Women are vocal and active in the region, and they have to some extent been able to share their household problems with neighbors or other respected people to seek remedies. Integrity Watch during its survey and research found out that women have been forthcoming and sharing their concerns. Women in other parts of Afghanistan are more reserved when it comes to development issues. Women have also been active in seeking remedies and conflict resolution which is one way for them to take part in the socio-political life of the village.

The survey shows that the region is poor economically and people do not have access to regular water. The communities are as male dominated in Aigak as elsewhere in the country, though there are some changes in the status of women.

The communities living around Ajagak see the mining project to provide them with better roads, clinics,

schools, employment and resettlement. However, local people are not receptive to the idea of other people coming to the region to work and they also want the government to return some percentage of the revenue to the local people.

Security in the region is good but some people think that security will be affected soon from both the Maidan and Parwan sides. One interpretation of this perception is the dispute of Hazaras with the Kuchis, with the Hazaras playing up Kuchis as a security threat in order to stop Kuchis from returning to the region.

The region needs investment and it will transform the life of people when the project is carried out – but only if done responsibly and responsively. One unintended consequence of the project may be that over time it may bring inter-ethnic inclusivity and thus build badly-needed national social capital.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: List of villages

Number of village	Valley name	Village Name	Total Number of households in the village	Number of male interview	Number of female interview	Total Number of interview
1	Kalo valley	Paikotal	12	12	12	24
2	Kalo valley	Naworak	11	11	11	22
3	Kalo valley	Sangak	9	9	9	18
4	Kalo valley	Seyakhak	11	11	11	22
5	Kalo valley	Shinya	30	30	30	60
6	Kalo valley	Kotinik vQadem	12	12	12	24
7	Kalo valley	Ahangar	18	18	18	36
8	Kalo valley	Jamati	7	7	7	14
9	Kalo valley	Sar-e-Sang	19	19	19	38
10	Kalo valley	Burghosonak	20	20	20	40
11	Kalo valley	Kaferi	11	11	11	22
12	Kalo valley	Qul-e- Bala	7	7	7	14

13	Kalo valley	Ori Dah	2	2	2	4
14	Kalo valley	Jawqul	22	22	22	44
15	Kalo valley	KuhnaQala	6	6	6	12
16	Kalo valley	Akhunda	2	2	2	4
17	Kalo valley	Dahwali	1	1	1	2
18	Kalo valley	Dasht-e-Qala	3	3	3	6
19	Kalo valley	Sar-e-Gar Gargara	23	23	23	46
20	Kalo valley	Dahan-e- Gargara	7	7	7	14
21	Kalo valley	Charkota	3	3	3	6
22	Kalo valley	Sadat	15	15	15	30
23	Kalo valley	Sar-e- yak	16	16	16	32
24	Kalo valley	Meyana	15	15	15	30
25	Kalo valley	ShashBurjah	11	11	11	22
26	Kalo valley	Dahwalak	5	5	5	10
27	Kalo valley	Bulagh	6	6	6	12
28	Kalo valley	Mirak	11	11	11	22
29	Kalo valley	Paytao	7	7	7	14

30	Kalo valley	Qal-e-Safid	28	28	28	56
31	Kalo valley	Now Jao	9	9	9	18
32	Kalo valley	KuhnaQala	9	9	9	18
33	Kalo valley	Kut-e- Zard	7	7	7	14
34	Kalo valley	Jawqul- Qala Pain- Qala Bala	5	5	5	10
35	Kalo valley	TapiMohajer	17	17	17	34
36	Kalo valley	Qala Haji Asghar	13	13	13	26
37	Kalo valley	QalaBakhshi By	18	18	18	36
38	Kalo valley	Araba	9	9	9	18
39	Kalo valley	Sukhtagi	9	9	9	18
40	Kalo valley	Qala Mir Abbas	3	3	3	6
41	Kalo valley	Qalawakil	11	11	11	22
42	Kalo valley	Dasht-e-Kamperi	4	4	4	8
43	Kalo valley	Dahan-e- Asyagak	10	10	10	20
44	Kalo valley	Koti Pain	4	4	4	8
45	Kalo valley	KotiBala	5	5	5	10
46	Kalo valley	Dahan-e- Sabzgardan	7	7	7	14

47	Kalo valley	Sabzaab Pain	10	10	10	20
48	Kalo valley	SabzaabBala	17	17	17	34
49	Kalo valley	Bareki	15	15	15	30
50	Kalo valley	Dehan-e- Nala	9	9	9	18
51	Kalo valley	Pai Mori	11	11	11	22
52	Kalo valley	Dahan-e- Khushkak	14	14	14	28
53	Kalo valley	Chambara	7	7	7	14
54	Kalo valley	Dahan-e- Zoo	20	20	20	40
55	Arek valley	GENDERGAL ULYA	40	40	40	80
56	Arek valley	GENDERGAL SUFLA	30	30	30	60
57	Arek valley	GENDERGAL SUFLA	36	36	36	72
58	Arek valley	SADATGENDERG AL	35	35	35	70
59	Arek valley	QaryaKhushkak	21	21	21	42
60	Arek valley	QaryaGhulamy	20	20	20	40
61	Arek valley	Arak Sufla	55	55	55	110
62	Arek valley	Arak Ulya	33	33	33	66
63	Behsoo d district	KHARZAR	16	16	16	32

64	Behsood district	DEWAL	13	13	13	26
65	Behsood district	HAJAGAK	3	3	3	6
Total			895	895	895	1790

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