Surviving or Thriving?

Introduction

The goal of this project is to highlight and determine where in Afghanistan boys between the ages of 0-14 are the most vulnerable, the most susceptible to violence, and thus where there is the most need. Decades of war and instability Afghanistan remains one of the poorest countries in the world. With approximately 42% of the population falling between the ages of 0-14, children are particularly vulnerable. Of the total numbers of vulnerable populations boys make up 29% of that number, making them the population most in need according to through The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

This project sets out to calculate and determine the risk of violence and the regions where boys between the ages of 0-14 are most vulnerable using 4 vulnerability factors; access to services, levels of food insecurity, conflict displacement rates, and potential natural disaster impacts. By focusing on vulnerability and risk, one can determine which regions in Afghanistan have populations of young boys most in need of humanitarian services, aid and strengthened child protection programs.

Given waning international interest in the ongoing conflict, increasingly tightened budgets for international aid from the United States, and shifting political concerns throughout the west the need to focus aid in the most critical locations is becoming progressively necessary. By using sex and age disaggregated data and combining both risk and vulnerability, one can direct aid to those populations most in need.

Levels of Protections Needed for Boys by Province

Overall, this data shows that there are pockets of Afghanistan where boys are more at risk and more vulnerable than other regions. Based on sex and age disaggregated data one is able to determine the total numbers of boys with high, moderate and low levels of need throughout the country. The highest need, 24% of the male population ages 0-14, can be found in the southern region around Kandahar province.

This is largely due to their high food insecurity levels, high levels of conflict displacement and high incidences of conflict in the region. The lowest levels of need, 22% of the male population ages 0-14, can be found in the north west and central regions of the country.

This analysis shows how important age and sex disaggregated data is for effective program implementation. With this information, governments, aid and humanitarian organizations can better focus limited resources by specifically targeting Afghanistan’s most vulnerable populations.

Limitations

Access to accurate and timely data was the most considerable limitation of this study. While the Central Statistics Organization of Afghanistan has compiled ample data despite only having been founded in 2011, there were often large gaps. Accurate population data is hard to come by and the last time that a census was conducted was in 1979. Much of the population data that is available currently is ad-hoc and largely estimates by the Afghan government and the United Nations.

The most comprehensive data can be found through The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. However, when compared against data found through other organizations, such as The United States Agency for International Development, there were often noticeable discrepancies. For this project, the data primarily came from The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Results

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References:


Data Sources:

- The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
- Central Statistics Organization of Afghanistan
- The Worldwide Incidents Tracking System

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