

Impacts of Development-induced Displacement on Informal Households –A Case Study from Qala-e-Musa, Kabul–

by

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Abstract

Cities in Afghanistan are experiencing unprecedented growth, which is often accompanied by the negative impacts of car-dependent urbanization such as congestion, air pollution, inefficient use of energy and time, and social inequality of accessibility. Therefore, many inner-city neighborhoods need to be upgraded or readjusted to give way to infrastructure and commercial developments, and generally, to a more modern living environment. These ambitions often lead to manifold displacement and resettlement projects that affect the livelihoods of the residents, including many from informal settlements. Based on research conducted in Qala-e-Musa, Kabul, this paper discusses the impacts of project-induced displacement and redevelopment on affected informal settlement households. This study draws on interviews with displaced households, as well as interviews with key informants during field investigation. The findings highlight that displaced informal households in Qala-e-Musa endure several adverse impacts on their physical, financial and social aspects. The study conclusively argues that housing and planning policies should carefully consider the everyday life activities, issues and needs of communities within neighborhoods.

Keywords: Urbanization, Kabul, Informal settlement, Redevelopment, Livelihood impacts

1. Introduction

Urban redevelopment policies in emerging cities of developing countries often include land readjustment and displacement projects, which is a substantial threat to informal settlements (Patel, Sliuzas, & Mathur, 2015). Recently adopted visions and development plans of new cities and social housing in Afghanistan are aimed at improving the quality of life of the rapidly growing urbanization and empowering local economies (JICA, 2017). These urban plans require investments in urban infrastructure, public facilities, housing development and other services. The implementation of such plans often has profound implications in terms of inhabitant's relocation. This means the displacement of many urban dwellers, especially the squatter settlements, who are frequently located in central and well-located locations. Urban land acquisition for public and private investments, and the subsequent involuntary development-induced displacement and resettlement processes of urban households through urban

renewal and redevelopment policies, are almost inevitable during the current period of fast economic development in many countries (Noorloos & Kloosterboer, 2018). Informal settlements are often the most affected by urban renewal and redevelopment projects (Bogumil Terminski, 2013). The households displaced by such urban development initiatives are either resettled on-site through land-sharing and site reconstruction or off-site, away from their original settlements, mostly in urban peripheries or rural areas.

Development-induced displacement and resettlement occur when people are forced to leave their homes and/or land as a result of development. This subset of forced migration has been historically associated with the construction of dams for hydroelectric power and irrigation but is also the result of various development projects such as mining, agriculture, the creation of military installations, airports, industrial plants, railways, road developments, urbanization, conservation projects, and forestry (Davidson, Zaaijer, Peltenburg, & Rodell, 1993; Koenig, 2011).

Development-induced displacement is a social problem affecting multiple levels of residents, from tribal and village

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communities to well-developed urban areas. Development is widely viewed as an inevitable step towards modernization and economic growth in developing countries; however, for those who are displaced, the result is most often the loss of livelihood and impoverishment.

Project-affected peoples have various rights, including the basic human rights that are common to all people everywhere. They also have legal rights, which vary across jurisdictions. They may have customary or traditional rights and entitlements in some instances. There are also international standards governing how resettlement should be undertaken, what compensation should be provided, and what outcomes are expected. However, these rights and standards do not guarantee that the harm from resettlement can be avoided. Projects that are in the indisputable public interest may have land acquisition requirements that necessitate the resettlement of some people. No matter how effectively this resettlement is undertaken, there is always some negative socio-economic impacts. Based on the general introduction some of the key questions arise that; what constitutes appropriate compensation, how effective are the redevelopment processes being implemented and how can resettlement practice be improved (Davidson, Mirjam, Peltenburg, & Rodell, 1993; Viratkapan & Perera, 2006).

The purpose of this study is to set the scene for a discussion of these and related questions by providing a general overview of resettlement practice and the issues that arise in project-induced displacement and resettlement. This paper is intended to raise awareness of the issues associated with resettlement, especially to people in the impact assessment community who may not be fully familiar with resettlement. There is ongoing improvement in the discourse and practice of resettlement (CRIDA, 2019).

In the following section, we give a brief description of the study area, the selected research sites, and introduce the research methodology. Section three discusses the identified displacement and resettlement livelihood impacts on affected informal settlement dwellers in Kabul. In section four, we discuss the implications of the research findings and recommendations for future research directions and the final section presents our conclusions.

2. Methodology

2.1 Study area background

In recent years, Kabul city has expanded into a bustling metropolitan area, the exponential growth in this

ancient and important city of Afghanistan has had considerable consequences. From a population perspective, a city which was originally planned for 700,000 people is now home to upwards of five million residents. This surge in population has Kabul grappling with serious challenges including; lack of infrastructure, resources, modern urban management, good governance, access to sustainable human development, provision of public services, equal access to facilities and most importantly dealing effectively with security issues. Security of the capital is of utmost importance with Kabul being home to a considerable concentration of the nation's population as well as housing various diplomatic missions and international organizations. To tackle these challenges, in recent years, numerous important programs are initiated and have been implemented. One such initiative is the alternate road of Wazir Akbar Khan (Qala-e-Musa), this landmark project was initiated by the directive of H.E. President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani and implemented by the Capital Region Independent Development Authority (CRIDA) under its "Upgrading and Renovation of Unplanned Areas Program" to overcome some of the above-mentioned challenges (Fig. 1). The proposed route passes through homes and graveyards, requiring the acquisition of properties and relocation of gravesites having cultural and social sensitivities. While there were immense challenges in the implementation the project, CRIDA was able to effectively overcome the hurdles through their expertise, close coordination with government and non-government organizations, and effective and considerate negotiations with the affected residents. The controversial issue of relocation 4,700 graves was solved by taking (Fatwas) religious decrees issued by the Ulema Council of Afghanistan as per the Islamic rites. After completion of determining the land ownership process and approval of the property prices by the cabinet of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, a total of 181 properties were acquired out of which 179 were private homes. This road, named Jamhoriyat (Republic), is 2.7 km long with 20 m width, starting from the 4th Macroryan intersection passing through Qala-e-Musa and Qala-e-Khater areas and reaching to the British Cemetery in the new intersection which will be called Tawsea (Development) intersection and will be connected to the road extending to Haji Yaqoub square. Construction of this road is not only going to decrease traffic and improve security in Wazir Akbar Khan (Diplomatic enclave) and surrounding areas, but it will also improve the living conditions and access to people living along the route.

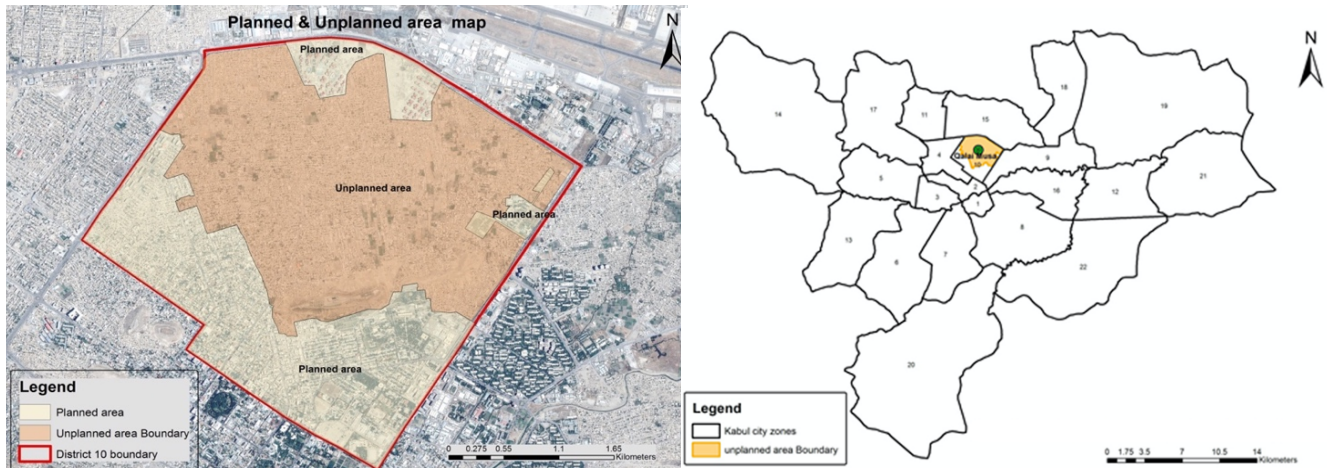


Fig. 1 (A) Map of the selected research site. (B) Location of Qala-e-Musa area in Kabul city Zones. drafted by author 2019.

2.2 Research site

This research is been conducted on an informal settlement in 10th district of Kabul city encompasses an area of 1289 ha. The total planned area is 539 and Qala-e-Musa encompasses 749 ha area alongside Kabul Airport road. The site is among the largest informal settlement in Kabul. It is surrounded by new, well-planned residential and commercial areas. Due to its location and physical characteristics, Existing land-use patterns not only have a significant impact on the development of the future land use plan, but they affect circulation within the area and the demand for community facilities and services as well.

As Aria Township and air force, residential blocks are located within the boundary of Qala-e-Musa, it affects its vicinity land uses concerning socio-economic and cultural aspects. Therefore, these areas have also been considered while preparing the upgrading development plan. These two townships impact will help the development process in terms of lifestyle and quality of life transformation of informal settlements. (see Fig. 2 and Table 1)

As Qala-e-Musa is an unplanned area and According to the



Fig. 2 Aerial photo of the study area during development.

Housing Typology, which is based on the construction material, four types of housing have seen in this area. Majority of the houses are made of Mixed-brick wooden flat roof with concrete floor and some houses are made of Mudbricks with wooden beams, recently concrete houses also have been made in this area. The houses are irregular and unstable; orientation is another problem which has not taken into consideration while constructing the houses. Some houses are made of modern and new construction materials which do not have any suitable consistency with each other and not match with the residential character of the area.

2.3 Data collection and analysis

The research uses a mixed-method, primary data collected using household interviews (189) (see Table 2), focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and field observations during fieldwork conducted between July and August 2018. Interviews, with households to be displaced, were carried out

Table 1 Overview of research site.

Existing Land use of Qala-e-Musa	
Land-use type	Area (Ha)
Air Force Res. Blocks	19.88
Agriculture Area	97.25
Hills	4.99
Greenery	33.27
Area Township	59.22
Cemetery	21.78
Sport Complex	0.68
Parking Lots	2.64
Masjid	1.4
Residential	326
Commercial	3.33
Educational Institute	2.5

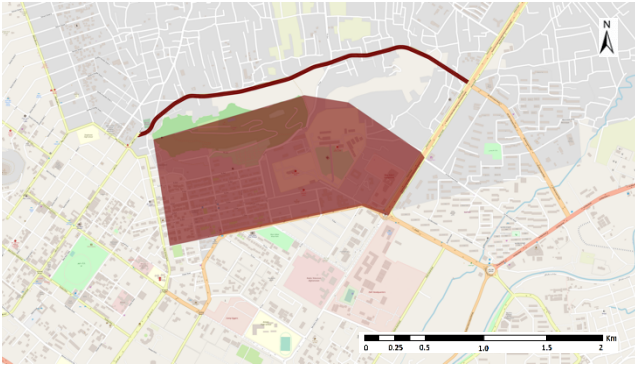


Fig. 3 Satellite image showing Qala-e-Musa redevelopment site, drafted by author (2019).

to obtain insights into their experiences with displacement. And semi-structured interview data were collected from a purposive subset of the survey population during the same period.

2.4 Household surveys

In August and October 2018, CRIDA research and development department division have located approximately 363 households in the study area and succeeded in surveying 189 households, consisting of 1723 individuals. Surveys were conducted with the male and/or female head of household and the questionnaire focused on topics including property and asset ownership, housing typology, household income, household composition, and demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. The questionnaire includes contact information (addresses and/or telephone numbers) for the household to obtain information on how to locate each household after displacement.

Using this contact information collected during the baseline survey as well as word of mouth, information was obtained on the post-displacement locations of approximately 189 households.

3. Recognize and measure the Impacts

This section discusses the livelihood impacts experienced by informal households during the displacement.

Table 2 gives a summary of the identified impacts of redevelopment and/or displacement on the livelihood of affected informal households. The compensation categorized into 3 cocategories (category1 is 8,000 Afghani/m², category 2 is 27,000 Afghani/m² and category 3 is 54,000 Afghani/m²) are according to act.22 of the land acquisition law no.1321 of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (CRIDA, Planning and

Policy, 2019).

The findings of the statistical analysis focused on the mean, variance and standard deviation, to structure the important indicators while investigating the priorities in the respondents' view.

3.1 Loss of Social networks

Poverty and insecurity in Afghan cities are intricately intertwined with conditions of "informality." The term and the realities it describes refers to living situations in which basic needs and activities such as work, housing, and social security are unprotected by-laws and standards.

Informal households in Kabul claimed that social networks are crucial in their everyday lives. Informal settlement dwellers depended on the networks as one of their job searching strategies. Merchants and small shop owners reported that they rely heavily on the networks with the wholesalers located in the inner-city where they get commodities and pay after selling them. Others mentioned that friends in their networks are the ones who inform them when there is a job opportunity. Also, community-based savings groups provide crucial financial support opportunities. Despite this importance, resettlement can disturb existing social networks.

We found that social network destructions, such as regular gatherings of the residents of the neighbourhood, their self-organised literacy courses, the bakery of the female households, the nearby school for their girls, all these things were seriously endangered. Fortunately, the households managed to find places not far from their old residence, enabling the family to keep up social relations.

For the households to be displaced, the anticipated impact on their social networks varies according to the relocation options. Respondents to be resettled to the adjacent municipality perceive the risk of losing customer-seller networks for home-based businesses.

3.2 Insecurity of tenure

The problem of the informality of land and housing is widespread but takes on different forms in the various study locations. Most questionable is the situation in Kabul, where the World Bank estimated that 69 % of its total urban area is informal and lacks municipal acceptance, thereby accommodating 80 % of the total city population. This development has been very effective in preventing homelessness in the Afghan capital, but lack of legal status and exclusion from service provision in these settlements pose

serious problems for inhabitants.

The insecurity of tenure was the immediate and highest adverse impact by informal households yet to be displaced in Qala-e-Musa. According to the survey, involuntary relocation can lead to a form of tenure insecurity. Such perceptions of insecurity were experienced by many dwellers. Two main reasons could explain their insecurity. First, for the households living in high-risk locations, will be resettled by the government and compensated with land plots in remote areas, where they would have lack of facilities and services and their socioeconomic conditions will be ruined. However, at the time of the survey, which households that would be entitled to new plots were not yet known. Most of the respondents living in high-risk zones placed themselves in a relatively weak negotiation position. For example, regarding their compensation, most the households located at high risk had fear that they don't have any right to compensation until the city authority recently decided that all the houses will at least be given land at a safe location. Second, the households who knew they would be compensated, where the land was to be

perceived insecurity of tenure associated with the feeling that they will not receive fair compensation, as the government categorized by housing typology, to justify the demolition. Therefore, many respondents cited insecurity concerning property value.

3.3 Loss of income after induced development

Informality is the basic feature of urban livelihoods in Afghanistan. This is not only in terms of land and housing but also concerning work and income opportunities. Informal employment is a lifeline for the great majority of the urban population. The problem is, as the main source of livelihoods, the informal economy is characterised by irregularity, low wages, unreliability, high competition and seasonality. Despite being the single most important source of work, its size is not sufficient to accommodate the steadily growing urban population. Although the number of households with no loss in income has the highest rate shown in table 3, while the majority of households lost their income from renting their properties and homes-based businesses as per the demolition

Table 2 Indicators of impacts on four livelihood capitals in study area. (*=Least significant, **=Significant and ***=Very Significant)

No		Indicators	Respondents Views			Mean	Variance	SD	Sign.
1	Social	Social	Better	The same	Worse	63.0	1297	36.01	**
			102	56	31				
2	financial	Decrease & potential loss of income)	No loss	Home-based Business/Empl oyment	Loos of income from renting	61.3	122.3	11.06	*
			73	51	60				
3	Readjustment	Destination	Did not Move	Moved to Adjacent precinct	Moved to a further precinct	62.3	5766.3	75.9	***
			150	20	17				
		Demolition	Completel y Demolishe d	Partial Demolition (40-60) %	Minor Demolition (10-20) %	63	1083	32.9	**
			26	89	74				
		Loos of Infrastructure	Better	The same	Worse	62.3	1336.3	36.5	**
			55	102	30				
4	Entitlement	Perceived insecurity of tenure	Low	Not At all	High	62.3	1126.3	33.5	**
			30	60	97				
		Compensation	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	61.6	7109.3	84.3	***
			159	15	30				

acquired by the government for the development, also of their houses. the study found that the number of households

without occupations increased after redevelopment.

The number of workers in their most common employment types before slightly decreased after the project. These changes in income were attributed to the increased distances to new places of job opportunities, the cost of transportation to areas of job opportunities, and a lack of job and business opportunities in the new area. This lack of employment opportunities resulted in the risk of inability to use previous skills and ways for income generation. Among the lacking opportunities that meet the skills of the resettled people include informal employment, such as buying food from wholesale markets and reselling in the neighbourhoods, becoming home-based merchants and casual workers. Renting small house units for income generation and using space in their houses for home-based shops is common in many informal settlements in Kabul. Thus, according to the households, receiving only one small house as compensation will result in a loss of space for income generation. Specifically, the owners of homes for rent anticipate a loss of income from renting small houses. The loss of income and loss of space is the reason most households to be displaced on-site perceived the risk of losing their self-employment as a result of the loss of capital for investment and operational spaces. Moreover, in addition to the loss of self-employment opportunities, the households to be relocated off-site anticipate also a loss of wage employment as a result of distance.

The nature of job opportunities in the study area points to why poor urban families are struggling to survive. First, access to quality work opportunities is often determined by connections, which not many people have. Besides, the types of occupations usually available in the informal sector do not offer regular numbers of workdays, leading to lower compensation. Other jobs are also seasonal, forcing workers to frequently jump from one employment to another. High flexibility is required to make and maintain a living. Many members of the study area regularly switched between and within occupational categories and households pursued various labour mobilisation strategies in response to seasonal changes.

3.4 Readjustment after the project

In this section three indicator are considered including displacement, demolition and access to infrastructure. Access to basic infrastructure and services is interpreted in the context of Kabul as access to facilities, such as the city centre, schools,

hospitals, markets, water, electricity, and public transportation. Our research found that most of the affected households have reasonable accessibility to infrastructure and public facilities, as shown in table 2. Majority of the household remained in the area with partial or minor demolition to their properties. In general, resettled households reported betterment in access to public facilities a decreased distance to the city centre and fair markets located in the inner-city.

The households displaced to a further municipality anticipate impacts due to the loss of good accessibility to important locations. However, the households to be resettled adjacent municipality were concerned by the potential loss of income.

4. Discussion

Understanding residents' views and perceptions are important to the adverse impacts of the development-induced displacement. The resident's perceptions, priorities and ambitions reflect their experience of everyday activities, quality of life and continuity in way of development regarding current urban challenges.

In this study, four essential sectors have been identified,

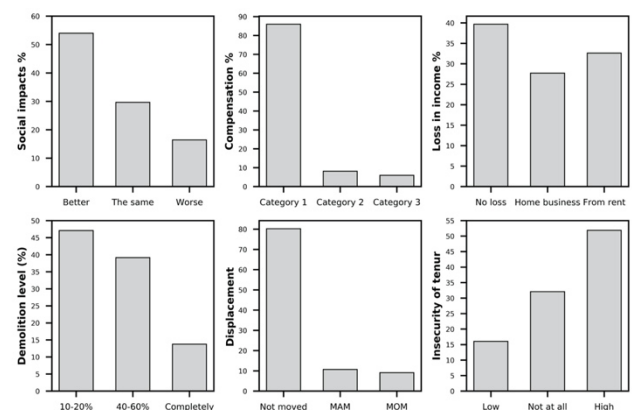


Fig. 4 Bar graphs for all analysed indicator.

looking at social and economic impacts and displacement and land tenure. These have been integrated and connected as the result of induced development produced by the project. Figure 4. Is the result of a multi-criteria assessment and weighing system through data analysis. The graphs show that there is a high potential for future redevelopment in Kabul city. The development potential based on each criterion is indicated the aforementioned table; based on improvement in social impact, compensation provided to the households and the lowest displacement index shows the effectiveness of infrastructure induced-development in the study area. To conclude this discussion, the specific successor of this project along with recommendations for future redevelopment are summarized as

follow:

4.1 Improvement in the traffic situation

As a result, the project transferred the informal site into one of the largest urban redevelopment projects in Kabul and has been recognized for bringing residents closer to the city centre, which has greatly reduced their commuting times and needs for a private vehicle and managed urban sprawl.

The traffic assignment conducted for this route indicates that almost 15,000 PCU will be using this route daily. On the other hand, the result indicates that the current PCU amount of Wazir Akbar Khan and surrounding routes are 18,000 PCU. Result of this analysis shows that the construction of the new road will decrease congestion and traffic jams and commuting from security restricted (Green area) area of Kabul city (CRIDA 2019).

Based on the intended concept of urban accessibility in this study, the provision of good urban accessibility contributes directly to the boosting of the socio-economic activities. Simply this means more economic opportunities to the local poor households, reducing urban poverty, eliminating the social exclusion, and this is why good urban accessibility can efficiently contribute to the enhancement of the quality of urban life and to make informal areas sustainable.

4.2 Increased land value

Land value is the value of a piece of property, including both the value of the land itself as well as any improvements that have been made to it (Investopedia, 2019). Within the framework of informal settlements, the most important factors to value a piece of land are the access way and the location. This is not the case in the historical and old fabric of the city where the process of land valuation is different. Therefore, parcels closer to arterial road and main streets tend to have higher value and are least desirable for redevelopment due to their relatively higher market values while parcels with no driveway have lower value and are more desirable for infill development.

4.3 Low-cost apartments as a solution

To ensure a smooth relocation process and to prevent any impact, negotiations between the dwellers with the national assembly member and developers should be conducted on the matters regarding the price and the design of housing unit, temporary shelters and other compensations and claims. Households must be briefed on the relocation policy and the

proposed plan, questions about their new homes

The low-cost housing should comprise of one and two-storey low-cost houses, and low-cost high-rise apartments, where the displaced households should be given the choice of selecting different types of housing.

4.4 Planning implication

For the implementation of future induced development projects, some serious and untiring efforts are needed which must be according to Afghanistan's specific contexts such as economy, society and politics especially through the interventions of the governmental bodies and the private sector developers.

Initially, all those who are involved directly or indirectly with redevelopments such as the Afghan government, international donors and stakeholders should maintain a long term and highly compelling development vision with its essential drivers. In the near term, the development will be supported by it in such a way that households can take benefit of it sooner or later and also assist in the sustainable development of the area.

Furthermore, though a significant level of land transfer and housing development is taking place in Kabul, overlapping claims on land, weak systems of land administration, and inadequate enforcement of land ownership underpin low intensity and low-efficiency development. Improving the security, legally enforceability and marketability of land rights requires significant investment in land administration systems, alongside large-scale programmes of formal land registration, which can also play an important role in enabling the transformation of current land use. By registering land, low-income households are given security of tenure beneficial to themselves that can allow for further investment in durable, better quality housing.

Moreover, in many developing cities, government plans for urban spatial development have been designed without adequate consultation with communities. In the context of Afghanistan, the local council head (wakeel guzar) have local knowledge, information and community networks that can be mobilized to make civic engagement meaningful and effective, and they know community issues and assets. Their advice and input is representative of a wide range of citizens in their community and can encourage the households to participate.

Finally, based on the bar-graph, the corresponding p -

Table 3 Estimation of correlation coefficient ρ of induced development components.

<i>Indicators</i>	Social	Loss of infrastructure	Financial (compensation)	Financial (Income)	House demolition level	Physical (Destination)	The insecurity of land tenure before resettlement
Social impacts	1						
Loss of infrastructure	0.17 ns	1					
Compensation	0.94 ***	-0.15 ns	1				
Financial (Income)	0.71 ***	-0.55 **	0.67 **	1			
House demolition level	0.60 **	0.89 **	0.55 **	0.82 ***	1		
Physical (Destination)	0.94 ***	-0.15 ns	0.99 ***	0.69 ***	0.62 **	1	
Insecurity of land tenure	-0.97 ***	-0.39 *	-0.02 ns	0.72 **	0.42 *	0.11 ns	1

values of each indicator estimated in table 6 indicate that the relationship of most indicators was found to be significant.

The specific elements assessed in the study have been summarized as in Table 3.

The correlation coefficient ρ is used to characterize the linear relationship between two continuous variables. Estimates of the correlation (r) that are close to 0 indicate little association between the two variables, whereas values close to 1 or -1 indicate a strong association. The sign of the correlation estimate, either positive or negative, reflects the direction of the relationship. This type of data has a variation between the subjects as well as variation within the repeated measurements on each subject which is accounted for.

5. Conclusion

The current rapid growth of cities in Afghanistan is characterised by different ambitions that are increasing the number of urban populations displaced from provinces and returning refugees from neighbouring countries, especially informal settlement dwellers.

The socioeconomic-based evaluation has been applied to a variety of indicators and their characteristics and interactions, whose dynamics depend on the development type and how local communities take advantage of the proposed development. These also depend on the different characteristics of the built environment, related use functions and features of the communities. Finally, as the involved indicators are interconnected, a systemic perspective should be applied to make the development process more efficient.

Furthermore, clear and transparent guidelines on compensation and entitlements for each displacement type need to be disclosed in the early stage and discussed with

affected households. Based on this information, affected households can then engage appropriately with related stakeholders for inclusive project implementation.

Also, our research shows that resettled informal settlement dwellers experienced several impacts on their livelihood, including social disarticulation, potential loss of income, insecurity of tenure, and other basic amenities, of which the intensity is varied depending on the property. Most of these risks are more severe in the case of moving to a further precinct than moving to the adjacent precinct. They mainly derive from exclusion in decision-making processes and the consequent lack of consideration of needs and the interests of resettled households. This should be adequately addressed in unplanned settlement relocation laws and policies.

The households to be resettled should be key actors in resettlement planning and decision-making on crucial issues, such as housing design, resettlement site selection, and livelihood security. Although we acknowledge that some resettled informal dwellers who were living in poor and unsafe housing conditions before their relocation might benefit from an improved shelter in safer locations, this study confirms that the current exclusionary practices are more likely to lead to the impoverishment of affected informal households than to improvements in their livelihoods.

By identifying displacement impacts, this study provides a general picture of the potential impacts of urban displacement and resettlement processes on informal settlement dwellers. We argue that both the pre-and post-displacement impacts should be considered in the practice of the livelihoods affected informal households, are to be effectively protected and improved through induced development.

Although impacts might differ by induced development

site, our empirical findings offer important insights into the impacts of redevelopment projects on informal households. We acknowledge that some of the impacts perceived by the households to be relocated, for example, housing-related risks and loss of access to jobs, might be influenced not only by the planning practices, but also by their needs, interests, acceptance, or resistance toward the relocation. Therefore, we encourage conducting more in-depth research into the planning and decision-making processes by all stakeholders, for example, on how government and different actors and their interaction fit into the bigger picture of the processes.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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