



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Afghanistan Country Brief March 2019



Balqisa, who cares for her two grandchildren, receives food in Kandahar in early March after her home was washed away during severe flooding. Photo: WFP/Afghanistan

Operational Context

Situated between Central and South Asia, with a committed Government, rich natural resources, and a young and diverse population, Afghanistan has the potential to make significant progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

However, a complex and protracted conflict combined with other challenges—including climate change and natural disasters, demographic shifts, limited job opportunities, pervasive gender inequalities, food insecurity and transparency concerns—has dramatically constrained the country's wider development efforts.

Food security rose dramatically between 2014 and 2017 to a total of 13.2 million people according to the Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey 2016-2017 (ALCS).

Rural communities accounted for 9.5 million of the total food insecure population, according to ALCS. However, the September 2018 Emergency Food Security Assessment (EFSA) found this figure to have risen to 16 million people mostly due to drought.

WFP has been present in Afghanistan since 1963.



Population: 30 million

2015 Human Development Index: 169 out of 188

Income Level: Low income

Chronic malnutrition: 31% of children between 6-59 months

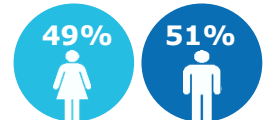
Gender Inequality Index: 153 out of 160

In Numbers

Three instances of **severe flooding** across 11 provinces affected more than 175,000 people across the country, according to recent assessments.

US\$74.51 million is the net funding requirement for the next six months (April – September 2019), with a US\$40 million contribution anticipated from the US.

WFP assisted more than **2 million people** with **18,650 mt** of food and **US\$359,900** in cash transfers to cover their food needs in March.



Operational Updates

- In March, **WFP reached 1.82 million women, men, girls and boys in 24 provinces with emergency assistance**, based on initial field reports. WFP and partners distributed 18,500 mt of food and transferred US\$180,000 to cover families' food needs.
- Nearly **1.7 million people affected by drought**, 56,000 people displaced by conflict and 3,000 vulnerable returnees from Pakistan and Iran were assisted.
- **Heavy rains caused flash floods across the country** and more than 175,000 people have been identified as needing food assistance. WFP's response began the day after the first flood and has reached 78,000 people in nine provinces, with assessments and distributions ongoing. The floods have struck 11 provinces, many of them drought-affected where the ground was too dry to absorb rainwater.
- In March, assistance to flood-affected families in urgent need was prioritized, and **WFP's drought assistance will begin scaling down** through the end of June.
- Nearly 2,000 drought-affected people in Farah Province received **cash transfers** of US\$153,400. In addition, 300 people in Kabul received US\$26,500 as seasonal support to cover their food needs. Cash transfers reached fewer people than planned in March due to lack of funding and new agreements being signed with partners.
- WFP provided **nutritious food to treat malnutrition for 120,000 children and 50,000 pregnant and nursing mothers** and delivered food for the prevention of malnutrition to another 100,000 children. Some malnutrition treatment programmes faced shortages in March due to delays in delivering the specialized nutritious food from Pakistan.
- In Kandahar, participants of an **asset creation project completed 300 meters of flood protection walls**, which protect nearby houses and roads from flooding. A nearby bridge was also rehabilitated, connecting 12 villages to the main road. Nearly 35,000 people will benefit from these assets.

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Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)		
Total CSP Requirement (in USD)	Total allocated Contributions (in USD)	Apr-Sep Funding Requirements (in USD)
890 m*	214 m	74.51 m

* based on 2019 budget revision

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food (SDG target 2.1)

Strategic Outcome 1: Vulnerable people in Afghanistan are able to meet their food and nutrition needs during and immediately after emergencies through 2022

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities:

- Emergency food assistance

Strategic Outcome 2: Vulnerable people in Afghanistan are increasingly able to meet their food and nutrition needs on their own by 2022

Focus area: Resilience

Activities:

- Livelihood support
- Emergency preparedness capacity strengthening

Strategic Result 2: End malnutrition (SDG target 2.2)

Strategic Outcome 3: Vulnerable people at each stage of the life cycle in target areas have improved nutrition by 2022

Focus area: Resilience

Activities:

- Prevention and treatment of malnutrition

Strategic Result 4: Sustainable food systems (SDG target 2.4)

Strategic Outcome 4: People throughout the country have a wide range of fortified, nutritious food products available to them at affordable prices by 2022

Focus area: Resilience

Activities:

- Nutritious food system strengthening

Strategic Result 6: Policy coherence (SDG target 17.14)

Strategic Outcome 5: National and subnational institutions have a strengthened policy approach to food security and nutrition by 2022.

Focus area: Resilience

Activities:

- Enhancing policy coherence on food security and nutrition

Strategic Result 8: Enhance global partnerships (SDG target 17.16)

Strategic Outcome 6: The humanitarian community has enhanced capacity to respond to needs throughout the country through 2022

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities:

- Common service provision (SCOPE, supply chain, ICT)
- UN Humanitarian Air Service

WFP's Country Strategic Plan for Afghanistan has a WFP Gender & Age Marker score of 3, "fully integrates gender." A gender transformative approach with integration of Protection and Accountability to Affected Populations is applied across all strategic outcomes.

- **In Kapisa Province, WFP helped to inaugurate a new Food Security and Nutrition Agenda** at provincial level, a collaborative effort with the Government of Afghanistan, UNICEF and FAO. Fifteen provinces have now established an agenda, affirming their support in ensuring zero hunger is a development priority. WFP aims to reach all 34 provinces by the end of 2019.
- **Post-distribution monitoring among displaced families** in Herat City, Herat, and Qala-e-Naw, Badghis, showed a **poor food consumption score of 27 and 39 percent** of the population, respectively. More than half of the people are undecided if they want to return to their areas of origin, mainly due to insecurity. Displaced people living in sites will need continued livelihood support in case they cannot return to their villages.
- Thanks to WFP's digital assistance platform **SCOPE, 30,000 displaced families in Herat received food baskets tailored to their household size**. In Badghis, 19,000 households have been registered and food distribution is ongoing.
- The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) transported 2,015 passengers from 95 different agencies and organizations to 19 locations across the country.

Challenges

Access

- Food delivery to 33,400 people in Kandahar was put on hold in mid-March due to security and access problems in the area, while other planned distributions were implemented without major obstacles. **WFP is working to resolve the issue in Kandahar.**

Supply Chain

- In March, **Afghan authorities issued 327 exemption certificates** for 8,100 mt of specialized nutritious foods, vegetable oil and yellow split peas for tax-free import of humanitarian cargo, though **delays in the port of Karachi are still affecting WFP's imports, which WFP is working to resolve**. At the end of the month, 2,140 mt of food was waiting for clearance at the port.

Funding

- **Total requirements** for the coming six months (April – September 2019) **are US\$130.6 million**, and the shortfall for the same period is US\$ 74.51 million. A contribution of US\$40 million is expected from the United States to help cover these shortfalls.
- The **2019 budget to keep UNHAS operational at the level of assessed need is US\$19.7 million**, similar to 2018. Recent agreements with the Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund for US\$2 million and the United States for US\$5 million, in addition to forecasted cost recovery, have reduced major shortfalls and **UNHAS is expected to remain operational until mid-December 2019.**

Donors

WFP Afghanistan's top five donors for 2019 based on funding received at 31 March: Australia, the Republic of Korea, The Netherlands, Canada, Japan, and Russia.