



WFP Afghanistan Country Brief

April 2020

World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



Beneficiaries practice physical distancing at a distribution site for cash-based transfers in Nangarhar Province. © FGA

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 insecurity rose dramatically between 2014 and 2017 to a total of 13.2 million people in rural and urban areas according to the Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey 2016-2017 (ALCS).

The [2020 IPC report](#) shows that 10.9 million people are acutely food insecure. The report projects that 10.3 million people (34% of the population) will be in IPC phase 3 or higher from June to November and hence in need of humanitarian assistance.* The provinces of Badakhshan, Daikundi and the urban areas of Herat and Kandahar are classified as emergencies.

WFP has been present in Afghanistan since 1963.



Population (Oct. 2019): **38.34 million**

Human Development Index (2019): **170 out of 189 countries**

Income Level (2019): **Low income**

Chronic malnutrition: **41% of children between 6-59 months**

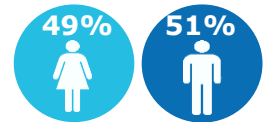
Gender Inequality Index (2018): **143 out of 189 HDI listed countries (UNDP)**

In Numbers

In April, WFP assisted **1.3 million people** in need with **12,400 mt** of food.

WFP disbursed **US\$485,500** in cash transfers to cover families' food needs.

US\$73 million is the net funding shortfall for the next six months (May – October 2020), not including additional needs due to COVID-19.



Operational Updates

- In April, despite lockdowns and movement restrictions across the country to quell the spread of COVID-19, **WFP reached 1,295,831 food-insecure girls, boys, women and men across 24 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces.**
- WFP's emergency response activities included food assistance and cash-based transfers for **947,541 people**. This included seasonal support for **821,492 highly vulnerable people** in 21 provinces and assistance to **23,821 people displaced by conflict** in 13 provinces.
- WFP also assisted **8,288 returnees from Iran and Pakistan** with food or cash and assisted **11,745 people affected by natural disasters** with in-kind food assistance.
- WFP assisted **49,858 people** with a total of **US\$325,539** as part of WFP's social safety nets initiative in Kabul, Kandahar, Kunduz and Nangarhar provinces. WFP is providing a yearlong sustained assistance to help these **families still suffering from the 2018/2019 drought rebuild their lives and livelihoods.**
- As part of its nutrition programme, WFP distributed **609 mt of specialized nutritious foods** for **185,906 children aged 6-59 months** and **45,516 pregnant and lactating women (PLW)** to health centres. WFP further distributed **36 mt** of specialized nutritious foods to prevent the malnutrition of **19,677 girls and boys and PLWs.**
- The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) **transported 335 passengers from 43 different agencies and organizations to 17 locations.** This included **37 passengers** that were flown from Afghanistan to Qatar, as part of the new **international airbridge** (*more on the next page*).

* The UN estimates a higher number (12.44 million people) are likely to experience severe acute food insecurity from June to November. This is due to population figures used by the UN to plan assistance being higher than the official government statistics, on which the IPC report is based.

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Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)

Total CSP Requirement (in USD)	Total Allocated Contributions (in USD)	May – October 2020 Funding Requirements (in USD)
949.22 m*	430.36 m	72.79 m

* based on the budget revision approved in 2020

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.

- The COVID-19 situation in Afghanistan has turned from a health emergency to a food and livelihood crisis.** WFP estimates that more than 16 million people across the country rely on unsustainable livelihoods that will be disrupted by the shocks due to the outbreak of COVID-19.
- In April, **WFP prioritized life-saving seasonal support** to families already selected for assistance who are vulnerable to the impact of COVID-19. WFP distributed food and cash assistance for two months in one go, rather than monthly, to reduce potential exposure to the coronavirus and helping families stay at home during lockdowns.
- Asset creation activities and vocational training were on hold, as physical distancing could not be ensured. Conditionality of the programmes is currently waived and **46,858 food-insecure people** received **725 mt** of food and **US\$43,285** to cover their food needs.
- On 10 April the border with Pakistan re-opened** and the backlog of hundreds of trucks started to clear slowly. Low capacity at the borders is expected to prevail and the **global impact of COVID-19 on supply chains increased the lead time of internationally procured food commodities from 4 to 6 months.**
- Despite of the opening of the border, the food prices in cities remained high. **The price of wheat flour increased by 22 percent and cooking oil by 23 percent** by the end of April, compared to mid-March when the border closure provoked a price peak, according to WFP's daily market price monitoring.
- During the reporting period, all schools in the country remained closed due to potential risk of coronavirus spread, no distribution under school-feeding programme was conducted.
- Commercial flights to and from Afghanistan have been suspended since March. On 23 April, **UNHAS launched an international airbridge** connecting Kabul with Doha, Qatar, three times a week.

Funding

- Funding requirements for the coming six months (May – October 2020) are **US\$166 million**, of which **US\$73 million** remain to be resourced.
- This figure includes additional needs due to COVID-19 outbreak, which are estimated to amount to US\$53 million for 3 million additional people.**
- UNHAS received an initial US\$3.7 million to ensure domestic services facilitating the COVID-19 response and to operate the international airbridge for three months. **The extension of the airbridge by three months will cost an additional US\$1.5 million.**

Donors

Top 5: United States of America, Australia, Japan, the Netherlands and Canada