



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Afghanistan Country Brief May 2020



WFP vocational skills training participant sews face masks in Herat to prevent the spread of COVID-19. © WFP/JeanNoel Melotte

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 May, WFP assisted **1.5 million people** in need with **13,918 mt** of food.

WFP disbursed **US\$1.4 million** in cash-based transfers to cover families' food needs.

US\$113 million is the net funding shortfall for the next six months (June – November 2020), including additional needs due to COVID-19.



Operational Updates

- In May, despite nationwide measured lockdowns and movement restrictions across the country to quell the spread of COVID-19, **WFP reached more than 1.5 million food-insecure** girls, boys, women and men across **31 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces**.
- WFP's emergency response activities through food assistance and cash-based transfers for **1,089,885 people** included seasonal support for **960,984 highly vulnerable people** in 21 provinces and assistance to **18,683 people displaced by conflict** in 12 provinces.
- WFP also assisted **14,917 returnees from Iran and Pakistan** with food or cash and assisted **10,745 people affected by natural disasters** with in-kind food assistance.
- WFP assisted **83,986 people** with a total of **US\$702,360** as part of WFP's social safety nets initiative in Badghis, 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 **788 mt of specialized nutritious foods** for **181,062 children aged 6-59 months** and **52,962 pregnant and lactating women (PLW)** to health centres. WFP further distributed **118 mt** of specialized nutritious foods to prevent the malnutrition of **14,751 girls and boys and PLW**.
- The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) **transported 656 passengers from 81 agencies and organizations to 19 locations**. This included **227 passengers** that were flown from Afghanistan to Qatar, as part of the **international airbridge** put in place until commercial air transport to Afghanistan resumes.

* 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)	June – November 2020 Funding Requirements (in USD)
949.22 m*	430.36 m	113 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 May and June, WFP plans to reach 2.4 million people with food and cash assistance, with more than 30,000 mt of food and US\$6.24 million in cash-based transfers. WFP will provide 1.8 million of these beneficiaries with seasonal support to cover critical food gaps in the coming months. The majority of these seasonal support beneficiaries are in rural areas and will receive in-kind food assistance. WFP will reach **420,000 beneficiaries critically affected by COVID-19 lockdown measures in urban areas with cash assistance for the first time.**
- 20 all-terrain Kamaz trucks from WFP's Regional Logistics Hub in Kampala are expected to arrive in Afghanistan in mid-June, after a prolonged goods declaration and customs clearance process. This addition will increase WFP's **monthly average fleet capacity from 10,000 mt to 14,000 - 15,000 mt**, to deliver food to families in hard-to-reach locations, where normal trucks get stuck.
- With schools remaining closed, on 1 May, **WFP started the provision of monthly take-home rations** of high energy biscuits (for both boy and girl students) and fortified vegetable oil (for girl students only), and cash-based transfers to secondary school girls' parents/guardians, to prevent the deterioration of students' nutrition in view of COVID-19's severe economic impact.

Access

- 133 mt of wheat flour were offloaded by villagers in Mirzaka district, Paktya Province on 11 May. WFP negotiated with the community elders in the district, and on 20 May, WFP received a formal apology from six community leaders of Mirzaka district. **On 31 May, WFP fully recovered the 133 mt of wheat flour** and safely distributed this to intended beneficiaries.
- Social media posts by Taliban claimed that they had assisted families in need. **The pictures of families with WFP food were taken after the distribution. WFP has no relationship with the Taliban to provide food.** WFP provides assistance to food insecure families across the country, regardless of the party in control of the area, based solely on the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence.

Funding

- Funding requirements for the coming six months (June – November 2020) are **US\$204 million**, of which **US\$113 million** remain to be resourced.

Donors

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