



AFGHANISTAN



# Food Security Update

Round Five: January 2022

## The food security situation remains alarming.

**95%** of people have insufficient food consumption



**With each passing month, new waves of people are turning to drastic measures to feed their families.**

Two-thirds of the population (66 percent) are now resorting to crisis coping strategies – a staggering eight percentage point increase from the previous month and a sixfold increase since 15 August.<sup>1</sup> Many (60 percent) are resorting to four or more strategies, and parents are increasingly restricting their own meals just so their children can eat (66 percent).

**People are being left with few alternatives as their incomes fall.** Eight in ten (81 percent) income-earning households experienced a significant decrease in income in January, with Kabul hit the hardest (88 percent). Worse still, some households were even forced to brave the cold month of January with no income earned at all (18 percent).

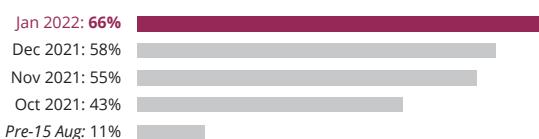
**Amid dropping incomes, people are spending most of what remains on food.** Across the country, a huge proportion (80 percent) of household income was spent on food in January, leaving little to spare for other essential survival needs, and underscoring just how dire the need for emergency food assistance is.

**To make matters worse, market access deteriorated across all regions;** as heavy snowfall and rain blocked roads in January, 17 percent of households reported being unable to access markets in the previous two weeks, compared with 3 percent in December.

**As of end-January, 95 percent of the population have insufficient food consumption.** Some areas saw a deterioration, such as the Central Highlands and North regions where food consumption is already the poorest. In addition, the number of people with severe food insecurity increased in Kabul, North and West regions.

### People are turning to drastic measures

% adopting crisis-coping strategies:



Coping strategies employed at least once a week:

- ⌚ 92 percent are consuming less preferred food
- ⌚ 77 percent are limiting portion sizes
- ⌚ 76 percent are borrowing food

## FURTHER FINDINGS

**Hunger continues cutting across socioeconomic divides**, and households of all education levels are badly impacted, as in the previous month. All education levels saw an increase in reliance on crisis coping mechanisms in January, though this was most pronounced among households with lower-educated heads (68 percent).

### Female-headed households are resorting to drastic measures far faster<sup>2</sup>

**Indicative data suggest that female-headed households** are struggling the most, with nearly 100 percent facing insufficient food consumption. Far more of these households are also turning to drastic measures (85 percent) than male-headed households (62 percent).

**Demand for health services is mounting, but only half of people have access.** In January, 77 percent of households reported requiring access to health services in the last two weeks, an increase from the 73 percent in December and 55 percent in November. But access to healthcare remains consistently low, with around half of households facing access challenges. This is mostly due to a lack of money (88 percent), or long distances to hospitals (11 percent).

**Concerns continue shifting towards livelihoods disruptions.** While worries about job losses remain the top concern (42 percent), anxiety about disruptions in livelihood sources is on the rise, moving from the fourth highest top concern in December, to the second highest in January (23 percent). Concerns about food prices have also risen (to 16 percent).

**Most households do not receive remittances** (95 percent), but for the small proportion who do, remittances are mostly used to buy food.

**Diets remain poor**, though there was no significant change in January. The average household consumed animal protein and dairy a little less than once a week prior to 15 August, but now they may only be accessing these food groups once a month.

Diets have shrunk since pre-15 August.<sup>3</sup> In seven days, the average household now consumes:

STAPLES	VEGETABLES	PULSES
7.0 days up from 6.9	1.5 days down from 1.8	1.0 days down from 1.3
FRUITS	DAIRY	PROTEINS
0.3 days down from 1.9	0.3 days down from 0.7	0.4 days down from 0.8

### Sample population at a glance:<sup>4</sup>

- Male-headed households: 96 percent
- Female-headed households: 4 percent
- Average household size: 10.6 members
- Urban households: 52 percent
- Rural households: 48 percent
- Households reporting having a member/s with disability: 21 percent
- Level of education of the head of the household:
  - Lower education: 41 percent
  - Primary education: 19 percent
  - Secondary education: 10 percent
  - Post-secondary education: 30 percent

This factsheet updates Afghanistan's food security situation based on four rounds of data collected via telephone surveys across 34 provinces between 19 July and 21 December. The first round is from 19 July to 15 August; the second round is from 21 August to 22 October; the third round is from 23 October to 21 November; the fourth round is from 22 November to 31 December; and the fifth round is from 3 January to 2 February. Since 21 August, panel surveys are conducted for 80 percent of respondents in each round. Results are weighted to ensure socio-demographic representativity. The questionnaire was updated on January 3 to include questions on income sources, income changes, and remittances.



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1. Changes over the last month refer to comparisons between the fourth round of surveys (22 November to 31 December) and the fifth round of surveys (3 January to 2 February). There are slight variations in the figures for the fourth round in the previous published edition of Food Security Update due to revised cut-off dates.

2. The findings for female-headed households are indicative due to a small sample size.

3. Comparisons of diets are between the first round of surveys (19 July to 15 August) and the fifth round of surveys (3 January to 2 February).

4. The sample population refers to the fifth round of surveys (3 January to 2 February).

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## WFP Response

WFP aims to meet the food and nutrition needs of more than **23 million people** in 2022.

To meet the task at hand, WFP requires US\$ 220 million per month.

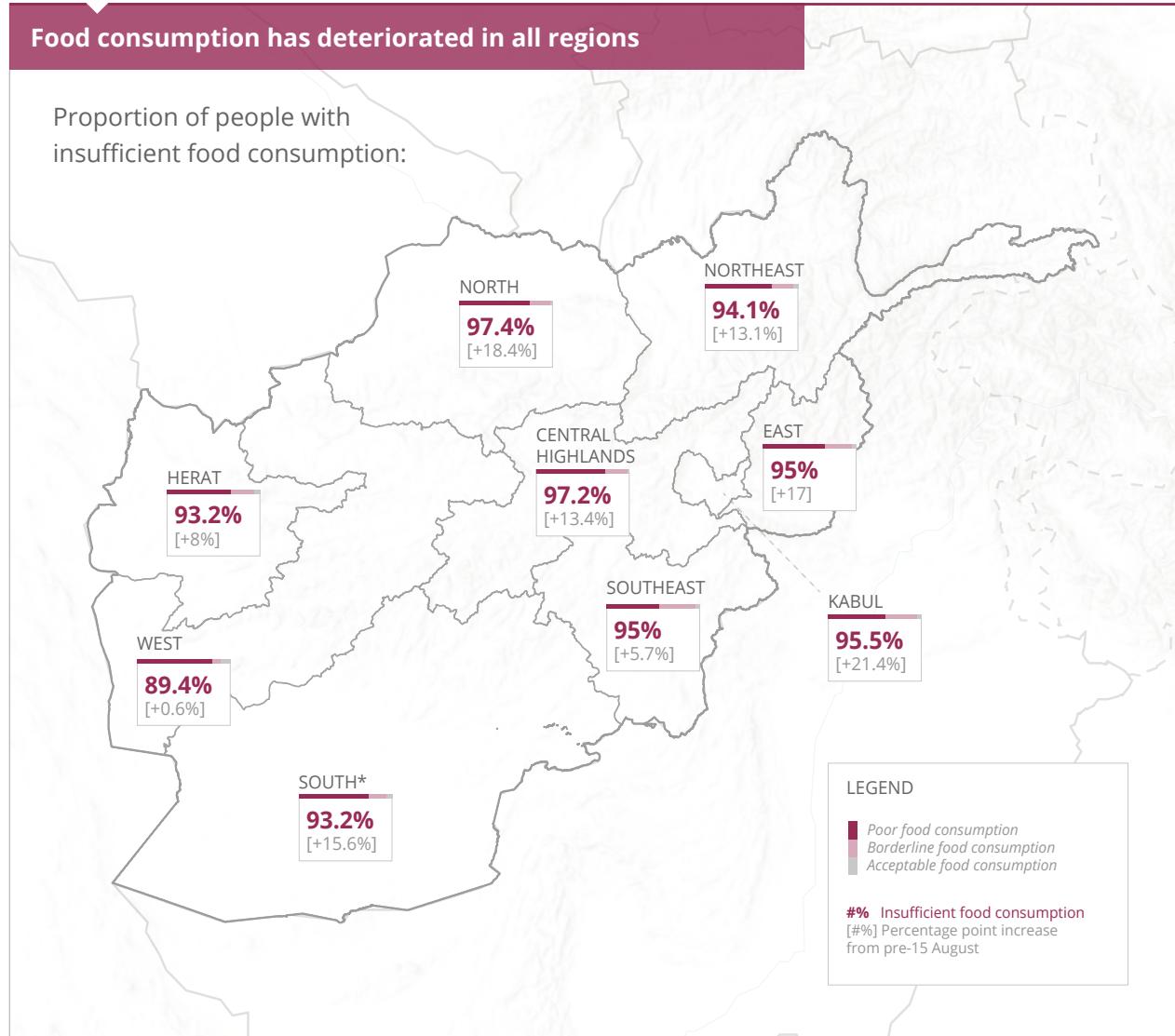
Learn more at this [scale-up factsheet](#) and the [latest updates](#).

## FOOD CONSUMPTION AND COPING STRATEGIES, AFGHANISTAN

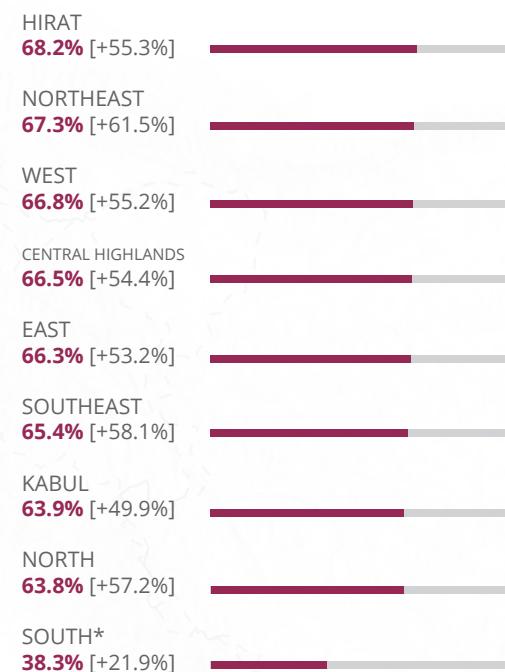
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### Food consumption has deteriorated in all regions

Proportion of people with insufficient food consumption:



Proportion of people employing crisis coping strategies:



The increase in brackets refers to the percentage point increase from pre-15 August.

\*Data for the South region are indicative only, due to a smaller sample size