



World Food
Programme

AFGHANISTAN

FOOD SECURITY UPDATE

2nd Quarter June 2023

CHAPTER 01

The data presented in this chapter reference WFP's market monitoring and the World Bank's economic monitor



Inflation

Foreign Exchange

Cereal Price Update

Afghanistan

Economic Overview

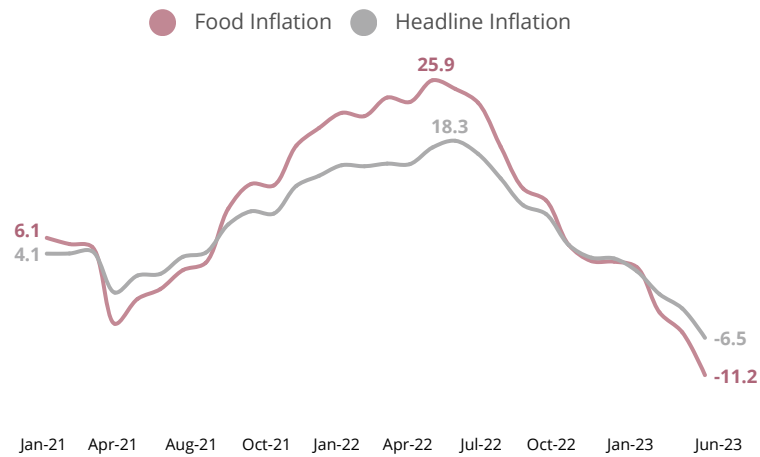
Headline and food inflation have been in decline over recent months

Throughout 2023, food inflation demonstrated a consistent decline, moving from 3.2 percent in January to -11.2 percent by June. This downturn can largely be ascribed to a combined effect of diminishing global and domestic prices for key food commodities, as well as the stability of the Afghani (AFN) throughout the past year. Additionally, regulatory interventions in March 2023 saw substantial reductions in import tariffs for essential food items.²

The AFN has remained stable against the USD since January 2022

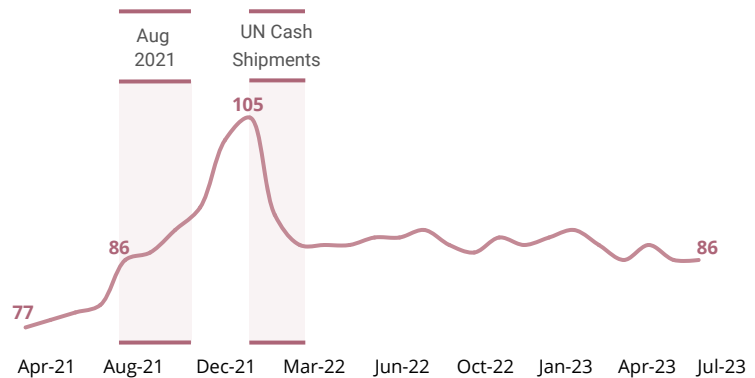
Since January 2022, the AFN has consistently maintained its stability against the USD. This stability was notably cemented between January and March 2022, primarily due to UN cash shipments and controls by the de facto authorities on illicit foreign currency exports. These measures have fortified the AFN rate, with the currency appreciating by 0.4 percent to an exchange rate of 85.8 against the US dollar as of July 24, 2023, compared to its value on August 15, 2021.

Change in Food and Headline Inflation¹



Change in Exchange Rate³

Apr 2021 - July 2023 (AFN/USD)



1. WFP, Data viz, June 2023

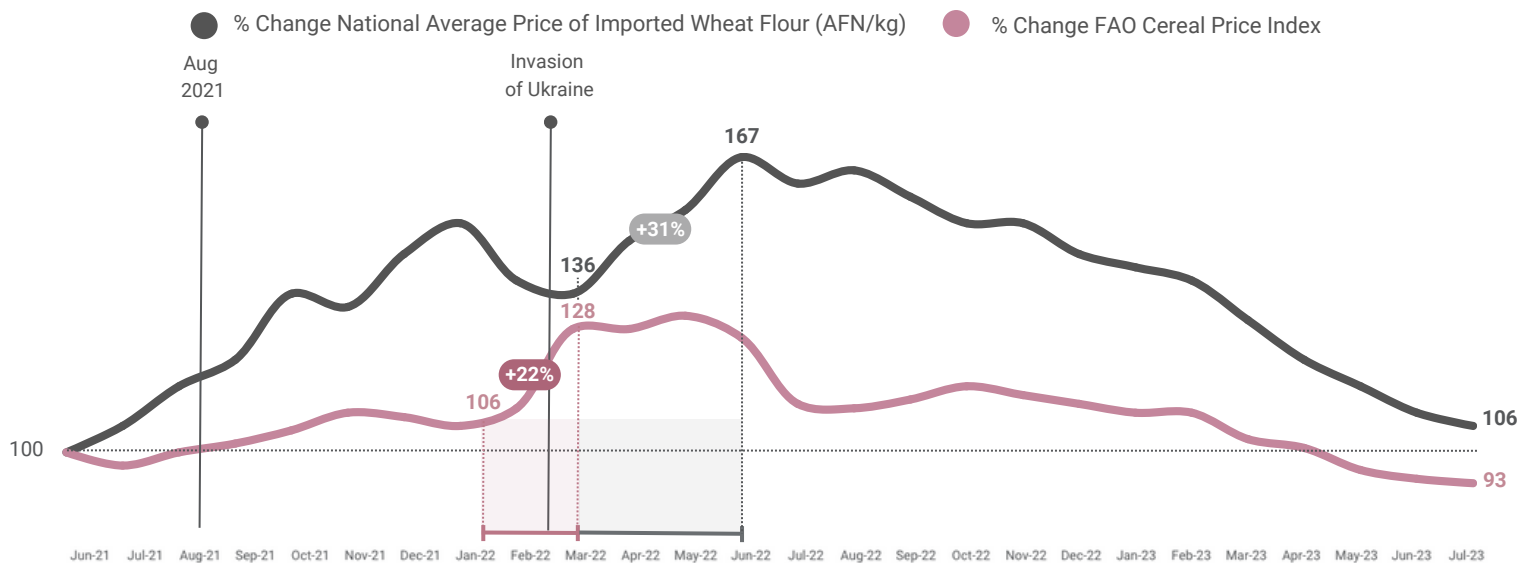
2. World Bank, Monthly Economic Monitor, April 2023

3. WFP, Afghanistan Monthly Market Monitoring, July 2023

Afghanistan

National Cereal Prices Update

A Steady, 1-year Decline in Staple Food Prices



Data Source : WFP Market Monitoring

Note : June 2021 = 100

In Afghanistan, the price of imported wheat flour has continuously declined since reaching its peak in June 2022. Currently, the prices have reached a level similar to the prices observed in June 2021. The price of domestic wheat flour (imported)⁴ was observed to be 35 AFN/kg in July 2023, marking a 6 percent increase from the price observed in June 2021.

The onset of the Ukraine crisis triggered a sharp 20 percent surge in global cereal prices beginning in January 2022. Notably, It wasn't until March 2022 that we observe a corresponding uptick in the Afghan wheat prices. There was a two-month time lag, from January 2022 to March 2022, that we observed the war in Ukraine began to affect the Afghan wheat flour prices.

The recent attacks on Ukrainian ports and grain silos, coupled with the recent uncertainties around the Black Sea Grain Initiative (BSGI), may precipitate a rise or slow the decline in Afghan wheat flour prices, which could manifest as early as September/October 2023

The restrictions on grain exports from Russia to Central Asian countries impacted Kazakhstan's imports. In turn, this significantly reduced grain exports throughout Central Asia including Afghanistan.

The Black Sea Grain Initiative (BSGI) is a deal between the Russian Federation and Ukraine, as well as the Republic of Türkiye and the United Nations, to ensure the export of grain, other food commodities, and fertilizer from three Ukrainian ports on the Black Sea.

Since its inception on 22 July 2022, and through its three subsequent renewals, the BSGI has effectively bolstered significant grain export volumes from Ukraine, thereby aiding in the reduction of global food prices from the elevated levels observed in mid-2022.

WFP acquired over 725,000 metric tons of wheat between September 2022 and July 2023 under this initiative. Afghanistan received a substantial portion, about 130,000 metric tons or about fifth of the total.

However, following the non-renewal of the BSGI post its third term, which expired on 17 July 2023, and taking into account the recent disruptions in Ukrainian ports and grain silos, there is a foreseeable risk of escalating global cereal prices. This could put upward pressure on wheat flour prices in Afghanistan and may also pose challenge for WFP's procurement efforts directed towards emergency food programming in Afghanistan.

4. The domestic wheat flour (imported) refers to wheat flour originating from foreign countries, but distributed and consumed within Afghan national boundaries.

CHAPTER 02

The data presented in this chapter are collected via mobile surveys



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Restrictions against Women Working
Food Consumption
Coping Strategies
Access to Market and Healthcare

Background and Methodology

WFP has been conducting monthly telephone surveys across all 34 provinces of Afghanistan for over 2.5 years to gain a better understanding of the food security situation and its underlying factors. Starting from 2023, the reporting frequency has transitioned to a quarterly basis, and this specific report presents data collected in June 2023.

The methodology has remained consistent throughout the survey rounds, with a few minor adjustments. Since August 21, 2021, panel surveys have been conducted for 80 percent of the respondents in each round. The results are weighted to ensure geographic and socio-demographic representativeness. It is important to note that due to the nature of this survey being conducted through mobile phones, the results may have an upward bias on key outcomes, as households with cell phone ownership are more likely to be better off.

Sample population at a glance:
MOST RECENT MONTH (JUNE 2023)

1,418 households surveyed



Male-headed households: 96%
Female-headed households: 4%



Average household size:
10.4 members



Urban households: 49%
Rural households: 51%

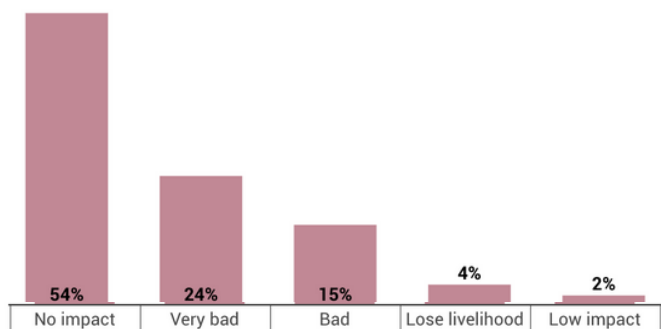


Households reporting having
a member/s with a disability: 16%



Restrictions against Women Working

Impact of the Restrictions on Women Working



De-facto authorities have imposed restrictions on Afghan women, including banning them from most areas of public life, higher education and employment, since taking control of Afghanistan on August 2021. The restrictions had extended on Afghan women from working at non-governmental organizations and United Nations in 2023.

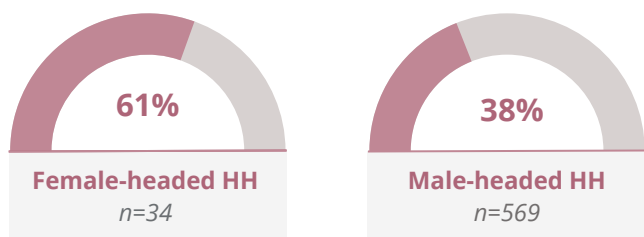
While examining households' perception of the impact of the restrictions on Afghan women's employment and economic participation,⁵ 43 percent of respondents reported that they experienced a negative impact or even lost their primary sources of income.

Female-headed households face disproportionate impact of the restrictions

The restrictions on Afghan women working has especially affected female-headed households; 61 percent of female-headed households are facing a negative (very bad or bad) impact of restrictions, compared to 38 percent of male-headed households.

% of Households Experiencing a Negative Impact of Restrictions on Women Working

FEMALE VS MALE-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS



*With limited sample size for female-headed households, the above findings are only indicative

5. Refers to impact of restrictions against women from work, irrespective of sector



Food Consumption



of people in Afghanistan face inadequate food consumption⁵

Hunger levels have consistently been at critical levels over the past year

While there has been a marginal improvement in food consumption during the recent harvest season coupled with a declining trend in food prices, an overwhelming 87 percent of the population still lacks adequate food consumption.

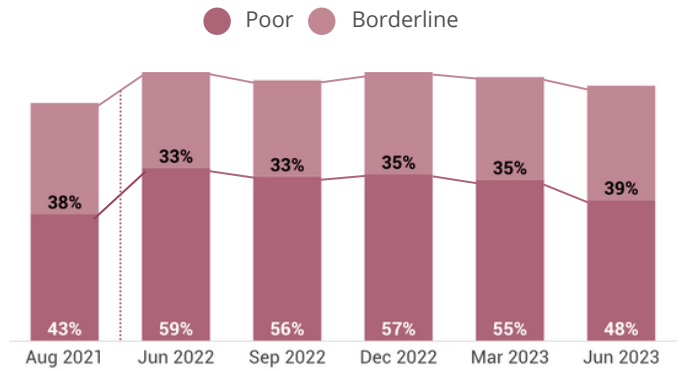
Households with Person with Disabilities (PwDs) remain disproportionately impacted

Households with PwDs are more likely to experience poor food consumption, with 63 percent having poor food consumption compared to 45 percent of households without PwDs.

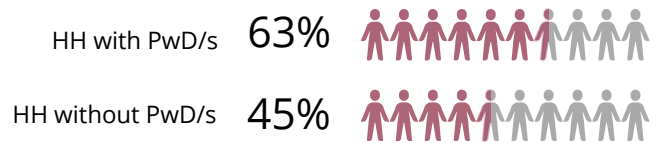
The prevalence of poor food consumption varies by income source

Households with no income or non-agricultural wage labor are more likely to have poor food consumption, with 57 percent experiencing it. In contrast, households with salaried employment demonstrate a relatively lower prevalence of poor food consumption, which is 20 percentage points lower than those with no income.

Food Consumption Group

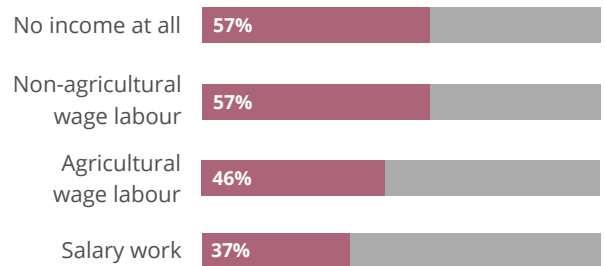


Proportion of Poor Food Consumption by Household with PwDs



Proportion with Poor Food Consumption

BY PRIMARY INCOME SOURCE (%)



5. Based on the Food Consumption Score indicator which is calculated according to the types of foods consumed during the previous 7 days, the frequencies with which they are consumed and the relative nutritional weight of the different food groups. Inadequate food consumption refers to the households classified with Borderline or Poor food consumption.



Coping Strategies

People are still taking drastic measures to meet immediate food needs

In June 2023, 42 percent of households resorted to high coping strategies, a 6 percentage point increase from the previous survey in April 2023. Compared to the same period last year, four out of five coping strategies have shown gradual improvements.

Through there was a decline in the proportion of households with high coping strategies over the first quarter of the year, dropping from 57 percent in January to 36 percent in April 2023, this number slightly reverted to 42 percent by June 2023.

During the same period, the prevalence of poor food consumption has improved from 58 percent in January 2023 to 48 percent in June 2023. This suggests that the households are compromising food quality, limiting their food portion and reducing the number of meals to meet food consumption.

Consumption-based Coping Strategies

ONE YEAR COMPARISON

June 2022 VS June 2023

Proportion of households which have used the following strategies at least once in the past seven days



Rely on less preferred and less expensive food

87% (-2% compared to June 2022)



Borrow food or rely on help from a relative or friend

77% (No change compared to June 2022)



Reduce the number of meals eaten in a day

40% (-3% compared to June 2022)



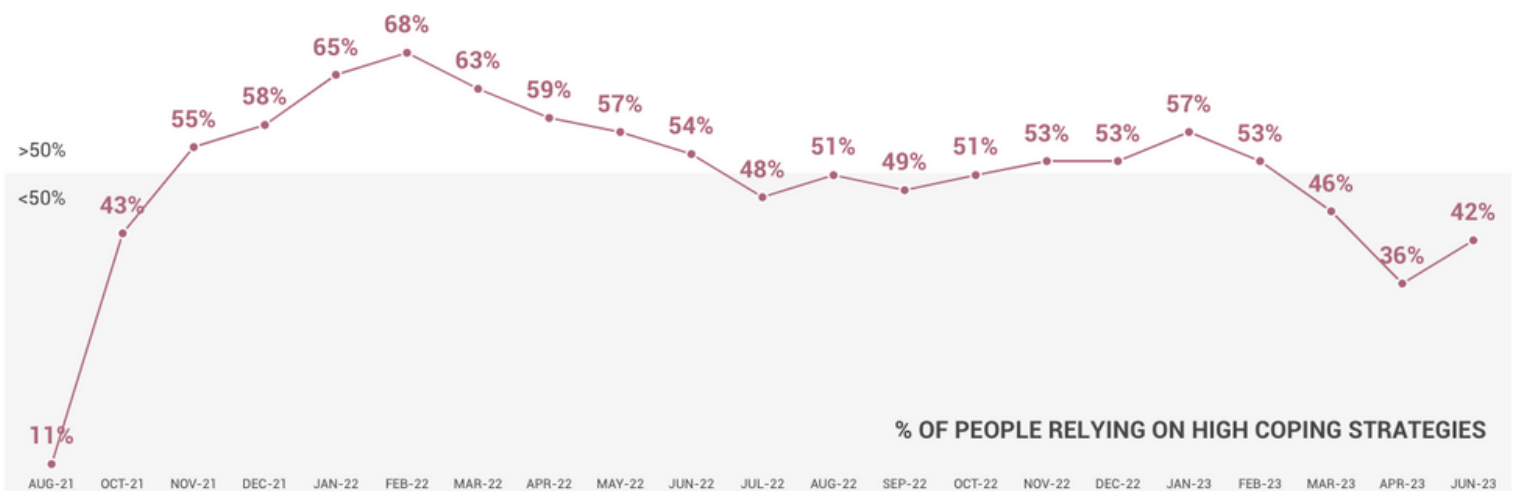
Limit portion size of meals at meal times

56% (-15% compared to June 2022)



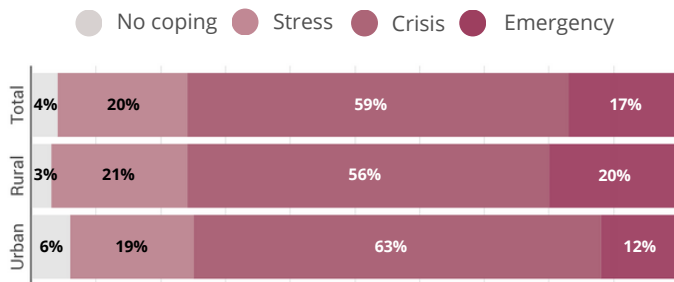
Restrict adult consumption so small children can eat

59% (-6% compared to June 2022)



Coping Strategies

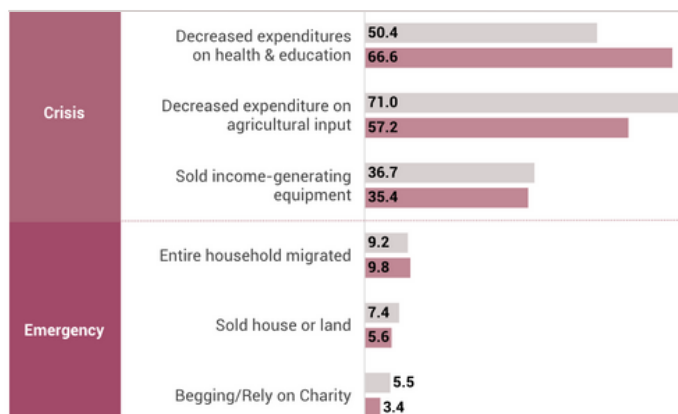
Livelihood Coping Strategies⁶



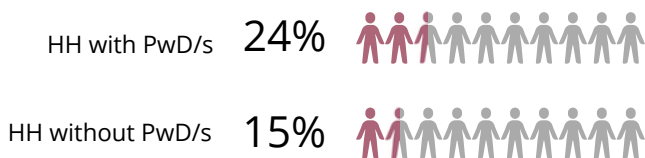
ONE YEAR COMPARISON

● June 2022 ● June 2023

Proportion of households which have used the following strategies at least once in the 30 days



Proportion of Emergency Coping by Household with PwDs



5. The livelihood-based coping strategy index is designed to measure the extent of livelihood coping households need to utilise as a response to lack of food or money to purchase food during the 30 days prior to the survey. This involves longer-term alteration of income-earning or food production patterns and one-off responses such as asset sales due to lack of food.

About one-fifth of households are resorting to emergency coping strategies

In June 2023, 17 percent of households relied on emergency coping strategies. This suggests that these households are striving to address their immediate food needs, which could ultimately leading to a more chronic state of food insecurity.

People are increasingly sacrificing health and educational opportunities

The proportion of households cutting back on agricultural input expenses reduced from 71 percent in June 2022 to 57 percent in June 2023. Conversely, households decreasing expenditures on health and education witnessed a 16 percentage point rise during the same period.

This shift indicates that, amidst internal and external shocks, households are sacrificing health and educational opportunities, prioritizing agricultural production to meet their food requirements.

Households with persons with disabilities remain disproportionately impacted

About one-fourth of these households (24 percent) resort to emergency coping strategies for sustenance, which is 9 percentage points higher than households without persons with disabilities.

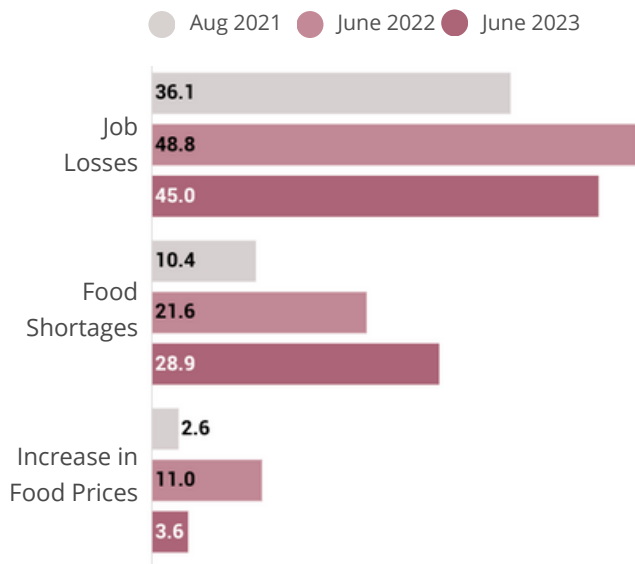
Stress coping indicates a reduced ability to deal with future shocks due to a current reduction in resources or increase in debts. Crisis coping directly reduces future productivity, including human capital formation. Emergency coping affects future productivity but are more difficult to reverse or more dramatic in nature.



Concerns and Access

Top Concerns

% CITING THE TOP CONCERN



Job loss and food shortages remained the biggest concerns

In line with the decline in both global and domestic prices of major food commodities over the past year, the proportion of households concerned about an increase in food prices dropped from 11 percent in June 2022 to 3.6 percent in June 2023.

Nevertheless, a significant number of households (45 percent) remain apprehensive about potential job losses, followed closely by concerns of food shortages (29 percent). This suggests that while food price concerns have eased, broader economic uncertainties persist in influencing household anxieties.

Market Access



18%

of households facing difficulties in accessing market

One in five households is facing difficulties in accessing markets

Lack of money have been reported as a major reason preventing accessing markets at 84 percent, which is a 6 percentage point increase from April 2023.

Health Access



34%

of households facing difficulties in accessing health care

One-third of households has trouble accessing health care

The vast majority of households (86 percent) cited lack of money as a major reason for having difficulties in accessing health care, followed by far distance to hospital (4 percent).

This report updates Afghanistan's food security situation based on 16 rounds of data collection via telephone surveys across 34 provinces. Since August 2021, panel surveys are conducted for 80 percent of respondents in each round. Results are weighted to ensure socio-demographic representativity.

WFP Response:

WFP is working to meet the food and nutrition needs of millions of people in Afghanistan. In 2023, WFP requires US\$2.2 billion to deliver emergency food, nutrition, and livelihood support to those in need.

