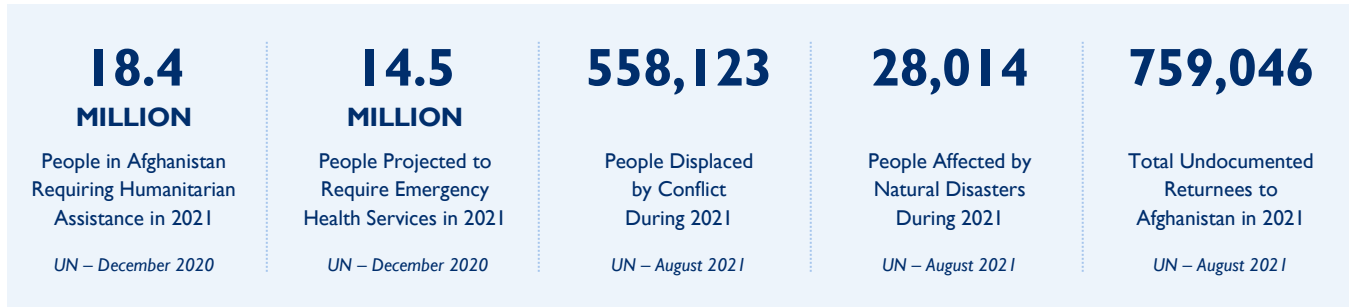


# Afghanistan – Complex Emergency

AUGUST 27, 2021

## SITUATION AT A GLANCE



- Humanitarian agencies remain committed to staying and delivering assistance in Afghanistan, and are preparing commodities for distribution prior to winter.
- Cash shortages, fluctuation in the value of the Afghan currency, and financial instability are contributing to increased prices of basic goods across the country.
- USAID/BHA partner WFP continues to transport urgently needed food assistance into Afghanistan from neighboring countries.



<b>TOTAL U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN FUNDING</b> For the Afghanistan Response in FY 2021	USAID/BHA <sup>1</sup>	\$157,500,000
	State/PRM <sup>2</sup>	\$108,856,953
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$266,356,953</b>

*For complete funding breakdown with partners, see detailed chart on page 6*

<sup>1</sup>USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA)  
<sup>2</sup>U.S. Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM)

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

### **UN, Humanitarian Organizations Adjust Operational Presence While Continuing to Deliver Assistance**

Relief agencies continue to deliver humanitarian assistance across Afghanistan, reaching more than 54,500 conflict-affected individuals in Badakhshan, Kunar, Kunduz, Laghman, Nangarhar, and Takhar provinces and more than 21,700 people affected by drought in Faryab Province between August 16 and 22, according to the UN. Although UN agencies and other relief organizations have evacuated some staff from Afghanistan, most humanitarian agencies are maintaining an operational presence in the country to conduct activities. Despite the dynamic situation, humanitarian actors in Afghanistan continue to operate in alignment with the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and operational independence.

During the week of August 23, USAID/BHA partner the UN World Food Program (WFP) completed the overland transport of 600 metric tons (MT) of emergency food assistance into Afghanistan from neighboring countries. The UN agency is transporting the commodities for distribution to households in various locations across the country. Additionally, WFP brought several new trucks into Afghanistan, bolstering the UN agency's capacity to move food and other vital relief commodities rapidly to populations in need.

Meanwhile, State/PRM partner the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had access to all provinces and was operating in approximately two-thirds of all districts in the country as of August 20. Ongoing activities include protection monitoring, provision of cash assistance, arranging temporary shelter for internally displaced persons (IDPs), and support to a temporary health clinic and mobile health teams for IDPs. Although UNHCR has not observed large scale population movements across land borders to neighboring countries in recent weeks, the UN agency also continues to pre-position essential items, including tents and other relief commodities, to respond to potential refugee arrivals.

In addition, health needs are increasing across Afghanistan, including for nearly 300,000 people newly displaced by conflict from June 9 to August 9. USAID/BHA partner the World Health Organization (WHO) continues to distribute lifesaving medical supplies to partner organizations and health facilities from its stocks in-country, and is working to deliver additional medical supplies into Afghanistan. WHO operates eight offices in Afghanistan and coordinates with local implementing partners to provide health assistance across the country.

### **Cash Shortages, Currency Fluctuation Affect Household Purchasing Power**

Political instability and resultant demand for foreign currency in Afghanistan has resulted in a significant increase in the exchange rate of the Afghan currency; the value of the Afghan afghani fell by approximately 9 percent from August 1 to 22, reaching a record low. As Afghanistan imports most food commodities, any decrease in value of the afghani usually leads to increases in food prices, according to WFP. Accordingly, market monitoring conducted by the UN agency found that the prices of cooking oil, rice, sugar, wheat, and wheat flour increased during the same period, including an average 5 percent increase in the price of wheat, 6.6 percent increase in the price of rice, and 8.6 percent increase in the price of wheat flour across the country. Due to temporary border closures with neighboring countries, prices rose most significantly in northern and northeastern provinces of Afghanistan, with many food items unavailable in markets, WFP reports.

In addition, work opportunities declined by more than 10 percent during the three-week period, reaching the lowest level of work availability for laborers since February, according to WFP. Purchasing power for day laborers declined by an average of 4.4 percent countrywide, and by up to 20 percent in some provinces, primarily due to the increase in the price of wheat. Many households are experiencing difficulties purchasing enough food due to the elevated prices.

Bank closures since the Taliban capture of Afghanistan's capital city of Kabul on August 15 and the subsequent freezing of the Afghan Central Bank's international assets have also severely limited access to cash across the country in recent days, international media report. The lack of cash access is also contributing to increased prices of food and other basic goods. Humanitarian agencies warn that increased food prices coupled with decreased cash availability will negatively impact household coping capacity, as well as hinder humanitarian operations.

## UN Agencies Highlight Urgency of Preparing for Winter Assistance Needs

WFP is appealing for additional international funding to purchase and pre-position food commodities in Afghanistan ahead of the winter, and urges the completion of pre-positioning activities in the coming weeks before snow blocks roads and access to communities in mountainous areas. USAID/BHA partner the International Organization for Migration (IOM)—co-leader of the Afghanistan Shelter Cluster—is conducting response activities ahead of the forthcoming winter season. As part of ongoing shelter assistance, IOM mobile teams have been participating in joint assessments and distributing emergency shelter and relief commodities in accessible locations. The UN organization maintains pre-positioned stocks of shelter and relief commodities in 16 warehouses across the country.

Each year, millions of people across the country require additional support to purchase fuel and heaters, bolster shelters against harsh weather conditions, and meet food needs amid reductions in livestock production and other livelihood activities during the winter, according to the UN. Conflict, drought conditions, and the ongoing socioeconomic impacts of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic have placed additional stress on many households' ability to meet basic needs during the past year, exacerbating humanitarian needs; approximately 12.1 million people are in need of additional humanitarian assistance during the 2021/2022 winter season, compared to nearly 4.9 million people requiring winterization support the previous year. As of mid-August, humanitarian agencies had received \$89.5 million of \$329.1 million required to complete planned winter-related assistance programming, including expanded education, food security, health, nutrition, protection, shelter, and water, sanitation, and hygiene activities in response to winter-related needs.

### KEY FIGURES



**3.5 Million**

People targeted with USAID/BHA-supported WFP food and nutrition assistance

## U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

### FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

The USG supports the delivery of life-saving emergency food assistance across Afghanistan, providing vulnerable populations with locally, regionally, and internationally procured in-kind food assistance; cash transfers for food; and food vouchers. With USAID/BHA support, WFP has also expanded food assistance to support populations who have experienced reduced access to income-generating activities and staple foods in urban communities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, USAID/BHA partner the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) provides households with seeds and livestock feed to bolster agricultural

livelihoods recovery and resilience. USAID/BHA also supports coordination and capacity-building activities among food security actors in Afghanistan to strengthen humanitarian response efforts.



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Number of USG implementing partners conducting protection interventions

## PROTECTION

Insecurity continues to generate serious protection concerns in Afghanistan. With support from State/PRM, UNHCR provides protection assistance to refugees and refugee returnees, IDPs, and other vulnerable populations in Afghanistan. Additionally, USG non-governmental organization (NGO) and UN partners support mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) programs, including individual counseling, activities to support development of coping skills, and safe healing and learning spaces for children. USG partners also implement child protection activities and family services, provide legal assistance to returning refugees to access documentation, and integrate MHPSS and other protection measures into education, health, and nutrition programming.



9

Number of USG implementing partners supporting health programming

## HEALTH

The USG is supporting 9 partners to implement life-saving health activities across Afghanistan to improve community health awareness, bolster outpatient consultation efforts, and provide support to essential health services. USG partners aim to increase equitable access to and utilization of health services among IDPs, conflict-affected persons, and vulnerable host communities by supporting hospitals and clinics and deploying mobile health teams to deliver emergency and primary health care services, as well as conducting trainings for local community health workers and health care professionals, providing essential medicines, and supporting vaccination campaigns.



5

Number of USG implementing partners supporting shelter programming

## SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS

Shelter needs among populations in Afghanistan remain significant due to conflict and natural disasters such as floods and landslides, which frequently result in displacement and damage or destruction of houses. USG partners provide emergency shelter for newly displaced people, as well as shelter repair kits, transitional shelter, and multipurpose cash assistance to support the housing needs of IDP and host community populations. Partners also conduct trainings to improve preparedness for natural hazards.



3

Number of USG implementing partners supporting livelihoods programming

## LIVELIHOODS AND EDUCATION

With USG funding, partners deliver livelihoods programming and skills training to support sustainable refugee reintegration and boost opportunities for vulnerable host community populations; activities include courses to increase literacy, business knowledge, and skills development. State/PRM partners support returning refugees, IDPs, and host communities in Afghanistan by providing access to skills training and adult literacy courses, in addition to access to education for Afghan refugees and host community children in Pakistan. Partners also work to ensure IDP and returning refugee children have access to learning spaces and accelerated

learning programs to help children prepare for enrollment in formal schools, as well as support initiatives to improve infrastructure in schools within host communities.



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Provinces reached with support for COVID-19 preparedness and response

## **COVID-19 PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE**

In FY 2021, the USG continues to support UN agencies and NGO partners to conduct activities dedicated to preventing, mitigating, and responding to the spread of COVID-19 in Afghanistan. USG partners have conducted COVID-19 awareness campaigns, trained community health workers on infection prevention and control measures, and expanded delivery of WASH services. USG partner-supported mobile health teams also conducted outpatient consultations, provided referrals and transportation to isolation and treatment facilities, and advised personnel on proper COVID-19 protocols. UN partners have also provided hygiene kits and medical equipment to frontline health workers, deployed mobile health teams, and supported risk communication and community engagement activities. In response to secondary effects of the pandemic—such as increased food insecurity and protection risks—USG partners are delivering food and multipurpose cash assistance, increasing provision of protection services to affected populations, and supporting efforts to increase livelihoods opportunities for returning refugees. In addition, USG implementing partners have adapted some activities in response to the pandemic as they continue to address other humanitarian needs.

### **CONTEXT IN BRIEF**

- Ongoing insecurity and frequent natural disasters continue to displace populations and generate humanitarian needs throughout Afghanistan. The UN estimates that more than 4.9 million people remain in protracted displacement in Afghanistan, while natural disasters, such as avalanches and floods, affect approximately 250,000 Afghans each year. In 2021, drought and the socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are further exacerbating humanitarian needs.
- The Taliban seized Afghanistan’s capital city of Kabul on August 15, following the successive capture of several provincial capitals and territory in early August.
- On October 25, 2020, the U.S. Chargé d’Affaires to Afghanistan, Ambassador Ross Wilson, re-declared a disaster for FY 2021 for Afghanistan due to the ongoing complex emergency.

## USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE AFGHANISTAN RESPONSE IN FY 2021<sup>1</sup>

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	AMOUNT
<b>USAID/BHA</b>			
Implementing Partners	Economic Recovery and Market Systems (ERMS); Health, Humanitarian Coordination, Information Management, and Assessments (HCIMA); Multipurpose Cash Assistance (MPCA); Protection; Shelter and Settlements; WASH	Countrywide, Balkh, Farah, Ghazni, Helmand, Herat, Kabul, Kandahar, Kapisa, Khost, Konar, Laghman, Loghar, Nangarhar, Paktia, Wardak, Zabul	\$12,500,000
FAO	HCIMA	Countrywide	\$500,000
	Agriculture	Badghis, Balkh, Farah, Faryab, Ghazni, Herat, Jowzjan, Kandahar, Nangarhar, Nimroz, Sar-e-Pul, Zabul	\$6,000,000
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies	Disaster Risk Reduction Policy and Practice (DRRPP), Food Assistance—Cash Transfers, Health, Shelter	Badakhshan, Badghis, Daykundi, Ghor, Herat, Kandahar, Nuristan	\$1,200,000
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	DRRPP, HCIMA, Shelter and Settlements	Countrywide; Balkh, Herat, Kabul, Kandahar, Kunduz, Nangarhar, Paktia	\$8,000,000
UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF)	HCIMA, Nutrition, WASH	Countrywide	\$16,500,000
UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	HCIMA	Countrywide	\$800,000
WFP	Food Assistance—Cash Transfers, Vouchers, Local, Regional, and International Procurement; Nutrition	Countrywide	\$112,000,000
<b>TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING</b>			<b>\$157,500,000</b>
<b>STATE/PRM</b>			
Implementing Partners	Health, ERMS, Protection	Countrywide	\$24,400,000
IOM	Health	Countrywide	\$2,900,000
UNHCR	Education, ERMS, HCIMA, Health, MPCA, Protection, Logistics Support, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Countrywide	\$30,400,000
		Pakistan	\$25,400,000
		Regional	\$24,300,000
UN Population Fund (UNFPA)	Health, Protection	Countrywide	\$1,456,953
<b>TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING</b>			<b>\$108,856,953</b>
<b>TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE AFGHANISTAN RESPONSE IN FY 2021</b>			<b>\$266,356,953</b>

<sup>1</sup>Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. Funding figures reflect publicly announced funding as of August 27, 2021.

## PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for disaster responses around the world can be found at [interaction.org](https://www.interaction.org).
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietarily, and environmentally appropriate assistance.

- More information can be found at:
  - USAID Center for International Disaster Information: [cidi.org](https://cidi.org)
  - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at [reliefweb.int](https://reliefweb.int).

USAID/BHA bulletins appear on the USAID website at [usaaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work](https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work)