

*The start of the 2018/19 wet season is erratic despite above-average precipitation*

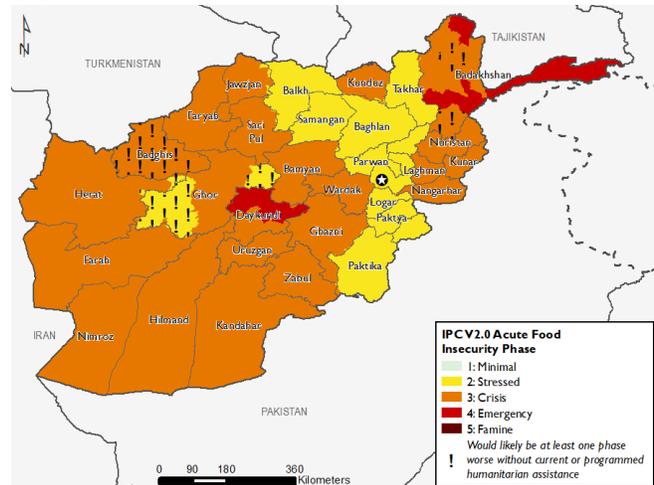
**KEY MESSAGES**

- Humanitarian food assistance is preventing more severe outcomes, as a result some areas are facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3!) and Stressed (IPC Phase 2!) outcomes. However, areas of Daykundi, extreme northern and central Badakhshan, and the Wakhan Corridor continue to experience Emergency (IPC Phase 4) acute food insecurity. Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes continue across the rest of the country.
- Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes are anticipated to remain wide spread until the harvest in May. The number of households facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes is likely to increase due to the continued effects of the 2018 drought and ongoing conflict. Badghis and most areas in Badakhshan and Daykundi are anticipated to be in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). Households in these areas face large food consumption gaps as they have very few assets, significantly below-average incomes, and have difficulty accessing food.
- Since the start of the precipitation season in October, precipitation has been above-average facilitating winter wheat planting, increasing the availability of agriculture labor opportunities. However, labor wages are below-average due to increased competition, limiting poor households' income. Area planted of winter wheat is currently 50 to 60 percent complete. Planting continues in most areas, although in higher elevated areas planting has stopped due to the ground freezing.

**CURRENT SITUATION**

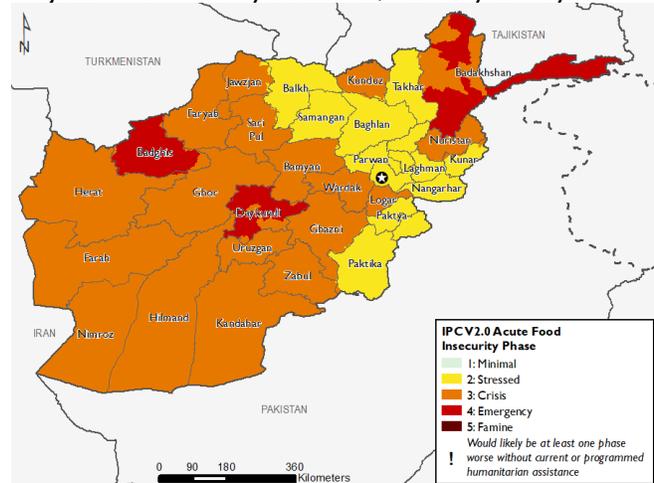
The current precipitation season has been above-average to date across most areas of the country facilitating winter wheat planting, however the central highlands are currently experiencing abnormal dryness. Planting is ongoing with 50 to 60 percent of irrigated and rainfed winter wheat area planted, except in areas of the north, northeast, and center highlands as the ground has frozen. Planting facilitated some labor opportunities across the country. However, due to below-average labor wages, continued above-average labor competition, and road blockages due to snow and conflict, income from labor is significantly below-average. The largest increase in wheat prices compared to the same time last year was observed in Faizabad, Hirat, and

Projected food security outcomes, December to January 2019



Source: FEWS NET

Projected food security outcomes, February to May 2019



Source: FEWS NET

This map represents acute food insecurity outcomes relevant for emergency decision-making. It does not necessarily reflect chronic food insecurity. To learn more about this scale, click [here](#).

Maimana at 13.5 percent, 6.8 percent, and 6.5 percent, respectively. Wheat prices in other monitored markets remained stable. The average Terms of Trade (ToT) of sheep to wheat in November was 233 KG of wheat per live female sheep. Compared to the five-year average the ToT deteriorated by 12.9 percent. This is negatively affecting the ability of households to earn income from livestock sales further decreasing household incomes.

Approximately 766,300 undocumented and over 15,600 documented Afghans returned from Pakistan and Iran in 2018 through mid-December. Conflict continues to drive further displacement with just over 316,000 people displaced as of December 4<sup>th</sup>. All provinces besides Kabul and Panjshir reported households leave the province due to conflict and/or drought. As winter continues, IDPs without shelter are exposed to the harsh climate and have severe difficulty accessing food. Specifically, conflict in Ghazni Province cut off supply routes to Jaghori and Malistan districts restricting food and market availability. Commodity prices have increased, and fuel is in short supply. As per field reports, more people continue to leave their homes for Ghazni City, Bamyán, and Kabul.

According to the Food Security & Agriculture Cluster (FSAC) about 3.9 million people in the 22 worst drought affected provinces are being targeted for humanitarian food assistance through in-kind or cash distributions. In October and November, WFP reached nearly 1.6 million drought-affected people with food assistance in 20 of the drought-affected provinces, providing more than 27,000 MT of food and transferring over US \$1.45 million cash assistance. Meanwhile, prepositioning of food and nutrition supplies continues in remote areas in nine provinces, to cover the needs of an estimated 450,000 people. However, due to the remoteness of some areas and snowpack assistance has yet to be delivered. In addition, FAO provided vaccinations (PPR) to an estimated 5 million animals and (FMD) to 375,104 animals. As a result of humanitarian food assistance, areas of Badakhshan and Badghis are facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3!) outcomes. Also, as a result of humanitarian assistance, eastern and western Ghor provinces are facing Stressed (IPC Phase 2!). Most other areas of the country are in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) or Crisis (IPC Phase 3) with areas of Daykundi and Badakhshan facing Emergency (IPC Phase 4) outcomes.

## UPDATED ASSUMPTIONS

Most assumptions used to develop [FEWS NET's most likely scenario for October 2018 to May 2019](#) remain unchanged. However, the following assumptions have been modified:

- Wheat and wheat flour prices remain stable and have not been impacted by the devaluation of the Afghan Afghani (AFN) against the US dollar.
- Typical winterization programs, delivering food assistance to households for the winter have not been completed to date, potentially affecting household food stocks during the lean season.

## PROJECTED OUTLOOK THROUGH MAY 2019

Even though market wheat prices and supply remain near normal, household purchasing power will likely continue to decrease as households continue to have significantly below-average incomes and disruption of normal livelihoods. Households are employing emergency coping strategies such as reducing the frequency and quantity of meals for an extended period, selling off all livestock, begging, migrating, and/or relying on illegal activities. Household food stocks were depleted atypically early and coupled with the broad disruption to labor markets most areas of the country are likely to face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and Stressed (IPC Phase 2) through May. Badghis and areas of Daykundi and Badakhshan provinces will likely be in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) as poor households will continue to experience large food consumption gaps. These households will likely sell their livelihood assets as they have no food stocks and are rely on significantly below-average incomes and coping strategies to purchase food. Humanitarian food assistance is planned and funded, however FEWS NET has yet to confirm the timing of food assistance distribution and it is not reflected in our mapping.

## ABOUT THIS UPDATE

This monthly report covers current conditions as well as changes to the projected outlook for food insecurity in this country. It updates FEWS NET's quarterly Food Security Outlook. Learn more about our work [here](#).