

UNICEF HUMANITARIAN ACTION

AFGHANISTAN

DONOR UPDATE

25 JULY 2007

- Flash floods, heavy snow fall, landslides, disease outbreaks and armed conflict have affected thousands of Afghan children and their families since the beginning of this year.
- Some parts of the country in Northern and Western regions still suffer from the effects of the drought.
- The deteriorating security situation hampers humanitarian operations and access to affected populations
- UNICEF urgently requires US\$ 7 million to respond to the needs of children and women



Deportee children from Iran in Zaranj transit centre, Nemroz Province, May 2007

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1. ISSUES FOR CHILDREN

The year 2007 started with an early and unexpected number of flash floods and population movement as result of heavy rains and armed conflict. From January up to end June 2007, over 28 floods were reported in all regions of the country affecting over 10,000 families. During this period the country also experienced a variety of natural and man-made disasters such as heavy snow falls, landslide, disease outbreaks, armed conflict and influx of Afghan refugees from Iran.

Afghanistan has a maternal mortality ratio of 1,600 deaths per 100,000 live births which accounts as one of the highest in the world. The infant mortality rate is 165 per 1,000 live births whereby one child out of every four does not survive his/her fifth birthday. Among under-five children, 7 per cent suffer from acute malnutrition and 54 per cent of them are chronically malnourished. The nutrition figures could be higher in the areas affected by drought, where access is denied and humanitarian services are difficult to deliver. Immunisation coverage for DPT1, DPT3 and measles is estimated at 88, 76 and 64 per cent respectively. Whereas health services are available in 82% of districts, there is a significant population without access to such services, therefore requiring campaign-style high impact interventions with outreach.

Two million children of primary school age (54 per cent) are out of school with an estimated 1.3 million of them being girls. As per Ministry of Education figures provided in 2006, 3,929 schools do not have buildings, 535 school buildings are damaged and 1,481 schools need additional classrooms; overall there are 2219 schools which have useable buildings. Only 23 per cent of the entire population has access to safe drinking water. Access to sanitation facilities is as low as 12 per cent.

The security situation in the country is deteriorating; more areas have fallen into active military operation zones between the Government/Coalition forces and Anti-Government Elements (AGE) which hampers humanitarian operations and access to affected populations. As of May 2007, approximately 41% of districts were inaccessible to the UN on a permanent/semi-permanent basis. In January 2007, 1,500 families were displaced in the Southern province of Helmand as a result of armed conflict. Around 15,000 families were displaced due to the fighting in the south in the latter part of 2006. Civilians are victims of armed conflict on both sides and are allegedly used as human shields during conflict by anti-government elements (AGE). According to the UN Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA), 600 civilians have been killed in the military operations and suicide attacks up to June either by Government/coalition forces or by AGE.

There are more than 1.3 million illegal Afghan migrants living in Iran. The Government of Iran started the deportation of illegal Afghan migrants since 21st April 2007 where 136,812 individuals (3,933 families) have been deported so far. The Government of Pakistan is also planning to close 4 Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan likely to result in an estimated 150,000 Afghans returning to Afghanistan. The Government is planning to launch a joint appeal to address this situation and to date assistance to deportees/returnees has been dependent on the UN and other international partners.

School incidents and threats against students and teachers continue to terrorize education in Afghanistan. Thirty one attacks against schools, mainly torching schools and explosions were reported in all parts of the country during 2007 up to June. Deliberate attacks on girl students and women teachers resulted in at least 4 deaths and 6 injuries. Only in the four southern provinces of Helmand, Kandahar, Uruzgan and Zabul, out of a total of 740 schools, it is estimated that 262 (unconfirmed) of them are no longer providing education services to students.

Polio eradication remains a major challenge in Afghanistan. A massive 4-stage polio campaign to vaccinate more than 7 million children under the age of five has been undertaken by the Government of Afghanistan, UNICEF and WHO. Five cases of polio (four type 1 & one type 3) have been confirmed since the beginning of 2007 in the districts of Kajaki and Nade-Ali of Helmand, Maiwand of Kandahar, Mehtarlam of Laghman and Jalalabad of Nangarhar province.

Despite the complex nature of emergencies in Afghanistan, the Government is enhancing its capacity in emergency coordination and response. The National Emergency Commission under the

leadership of the Vice-President played an important role in emergency response against floods, returnees as well as joint resource mobilization with the UN and international NGOs.

2. UNICEF RESPONSE: ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS

The latest Government of Afghanistan – UNICEF Programme of Cooperation started in 2006 with a focus on development and system-building across the country. UNICEF's key programme intervention areas are health and nutrition, education and gender equality, water and sanitation and child protection. Emergency activities are an integrated part of each programme and implemented in close collaboration with Government and other UN/NGO partners.

Health and Nutrition:

- Measles and Tetanus vaccination campaigns were conducted in the Southern and Western Provinces and 396,192 children under the age of 12 and 177,981 women of child bearing age were vaccinated against Measles and Tetanus respectively.
- Medical supplies, emergency health kits & ORS for 140,000 people was procured and dispatched to zonal Offices for emergency preparedness and response. 50 Emergency Health Kits and 50,000 sachets of Oral Re-hydration Salt (ORS) have already been delivered to Kunar and Kandahar Provinces in response to the floods.
- Training of 16 care providers in management of severe childhood malnutrition has been completed in the southern provinces. Nutrition supplies for 2,000 malnourished children & micronutrient tablets for 5,000 pregnant women were procured and delivered to provincial health departments in the southern region. So far 395 malnourished children have been treated in the Therapeutic Feeding Units.
- In eight drought affected provinces of the country, 65,496 Kg of BP5 were distributed, benefiting 219,780 children under the age of five and 43,956 pregnant women.
- UNICEF is supporting Nargarhar teaching hospital to strengthen management of childhood diseases for reducing infant and child mortality. The support includes medicines and staff cost for a period of 3 months.

Water and Sanitation

- The construction of 343 community water points in the South is ongoing and the technical assessment for implementation of 200 hand pump water points in Panjwai district of Kandahar and 1,200 family latrines are in progress. The procurement of materials for 100 water points and construction of 200 latrines for the south is completed. An additional 300 community water points and one strategic water point are planned in the south, west, and northern drought-affected areas. Planning has also started for implementing activities to increase access to water and sanitation for Afghan returnees in the south and west, targeting 10,000 families.

Education and Child Protection:

- UNICEF procured 130 tents and 3,000 floor mats to cover the emergency needs of 40,000 student and 1,300 teachers. So far over 4,000 students have benefited from distribution of emergency education supplies, in response to natural disasters and attacks on schools, to ensure school functionality.
- The construction of 13 Cost Effective Schools in the Northern Provinces of Samangan and Baghlan is ongoing. Local communities are involved in all aspects of this work and over 6,240 students will benefit from this project. Building cost-effective schools is one of the strategies of UNICEF to address the shortage of classrooms in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and communities. UNICEF is utilizing all possible resources, including from emergency funds to build 247 schools in 2007, many of them already completed.

- A national workshop on Education in Emergencies was conducted with full participation of Ministry of Education, provincial education departments, NGOs, Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority and UNICEF, to address education concerns in emergencies, particularly in insecure areas. As a result UNICEF is developing a psychosocial support package and recreational kits targeting 40,000 students across the country.

Humanitarian Response and Coordination

- Family kits (blankets, tarpaulin hygiene and cooking utensils) and warm clothing (jackets,) were provided to 12,879 families affected by natural and man-made disasters covering a total population of about 90,000. Provision of non-food items complemented food assistance provided by WFP and the contribution from other UN agencies, Government and Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) as a single package.
- Procurement of non-food supplies (family kit, blanket, tarpaulins, warm cloths and jerrycans) for 40,000 families is in progress to assist IDP families in the south, families affected by natural disasters and those returning from Pakistan and Iran.
- An Avian/Human Influenza simulation exercise was conducted in UNICEF Afghanistan Country Office supported by UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia. The country office management team, programme sections, Operation units and Zonal Offices participated in the exercise. The simulation revealed a number of gaps resulting in steps being taken to strengthen emergency preparedness for A/H influenza.
- Two armoured vehicles were ordered and will be deployed to Kandahar to support monitoring of lifesaving interventions for women and children. This will help the office to comply with Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS) and ensure staff safety during field trips.
- A two-day workshop was conducted with the main partners in emergency response, in order to derive a draft multi-sectoral rapid assessment tool for use during the initial stages of a disaster.

CONSTRAINTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

- Active military operations particularly in the South and Southeast hamper assessment of affected areas and delivery of humanitarian assistance directly by the UN. Given restrictions in access by the UN, there needs to be reliance on NGO implementing partners and monitoring through triangulation.
- As a result of the conflict in the south and west, and attacks aimed at anti-government elements (AGE) by foreign forces, the civilian population has also undergone casualties. The combined activities of foreign forces in combating AGE as well as engaging in development work through the Provincial Reconstruction Teams has also affected the channelling of aid by governments toward purely development-oriented entities. As security deteriorates, there is a danger of not differentiating between soldiers and aid workers, and challenging people's perceptions about the neutrality of aid workers.
- IDPs are largely short-term and localized but could turn into a long term and chronic problem if military operations continue and Iran and Pakistan impose forced deportation of Afghan refugees.
- School incidents and an increase in the number of polio cases remain a major concern requiring extensive communication, resource mobilization and strong political support at different levels.
- Strengthening and engaging community structures in programme delivery will ensure better results, quality and sustainability, and more ownership by communities. Such initiatives are

also likely to impede the advances made by the insurgency. UNICEF is looking at a significant partnership with Community Development Councils as part of the Government's National Solidarity Programme.

- In areas where assistance to communities and project implementation is hampered by insecurity and difficulty in access, realistic opportunities with communities needs to be exploited to make quick and sustainable impact interventions.

3. APPEAL REQUIREMENTS AND RECEIPTS

UNICEF Afghanistan's emergency funding requirement for the year 2007 was presented through the UNICEF Humanitarian Action Report (HAR). The total funding requirements were US\$15,961,912. To date only US\$ 9,578,646 has been received.

Education represents the largest part of UNICEF's emergency requirements for 2007 followed by humanitarian response and coordination, and water and environmental sanitation.

Table 1. Funding received against 2007 Humanitarian Action Report and Flash Appeal (US\$)

Appeal Sector	Requirements by Sector	Funds Received (US\$)	Unmet requirements (US\$)	% Unfunded
Health and Nutrition	1,908,636	2,204,471	0	N/A
Water and Sanitation	2,093,548	2,518,170	0	N/A
Education	8,013,631	1,517,052	6,496,579	81
Child Protection	275,775	50,460	225,315	82
Humanitarian response and coordination	3,670,322	3,288,493	381,829	10
Total*	15,961,912	9,578,646	7,103,723	44

* The total includes a maximum recovery rate of 7%. The actual recovery rate on contributions will be calculated in accordance with UNICEF Executive Board Decision 2006/7 dated 9 June 2006

Table 2. Funds received by donor (US\$)

Donor	Funds Received (US\$)	Sector
Funds received against Humanitarian Action Report		
Canada	3,879,315	Health and nutrition, water and sanitation, child protection, education and humanitarian assistance
Australia	1,097,987	Immunization, water and sanitation, child protection
Netherlands	617,000	Humanitarian assistance
** CERF	762,803	Immunization, water and sanitation, child protection, education and humanitarian assistance
Global Humanitarian Funds	700,000	Health and nutrition, water and sanitation, child protection, education and humanitarian assistance
US Natcom	50,001	
Japan Natcom	28,484	
Subtotal	7,135,590	

Donor	Funds Received (US\$)	Sector
Funds received against Flash Appeal		
Norway	1,198,050	Health and nutrition, water and sanitation, and humanitarian assistance
Norway	397,202	Nutrition supplies
Norway	167,045	Nutrition supplies
CERF	680,759	Health and nutrition
Subtotal	2,443,056	
GRAND TOTAL*	9,578,646	

* The total includes a maximum recovery rate of 7%. The actual recovery rate on contributions will be calculated in accordance with UNICEF Executive Board Decision 2006/7 dated 9 June 2006

** These CERF funds have just been received and will be used to support 10,000 returnees and deported families from Iran.

UNICEF expresses its gratitude to those donors who have already contributed generously to its emergency interventions and looks forward to receiving additional support from other donors. The timely provision of resources will allow UNICEF to diminish the suffering of the Afghan children and their families.

Details of the Afghanistan emergency programme can be obtained from:

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