

AFGHANISTAN

Complex Emergency Response

Situation report #3 | 05-15 October 2021

World Vision is responding to the devastating impact of conflict, COVID-19, mass displacement, drought and climate change that has left more than half of Afghanistan's population – **over 18 million people** – **in need of humanitarian assistance.**

10 million of them are children

Our goal: To respond to the acute survival needs and ensure protection of vulnerable children and their families.

We aim to reach one million Afghans

- half of them girls and boys



Our response objectives are to:

- Improve food security for vulnerable households
- Reduce acute malnutrition and disease
- Increase lasting access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene services
- Prevent and respond to the immediate protection concerns of conflict-affected boys and girls



Response Period:

22 September 2021 - 22 March 2022 (6 months)



Funding Goal: US\$15 million

Funding Achieved:

Grants Funding

AHF; UNICEF; ADH; WFP

+ US\$5 million

Private Funding

WORLD VISION SUPPORT OFFICES (12)

+ US\$460,000



People Reached

131,661 girls, boys, women and men

Period: up to 13th October 2021

Sector	Location	Donor	Target Beneficiaries	Total Reached
Nutrition	Ghor	AHF	50,000	11,601
Nutrition	Herat	AHF	10,000	9,230
Nutrition	Herat	UNICEF / PCA	33,000	
Food Distribution	Ghor & Badghis	WFP	201,068	110,830

Overview of the Humanitarian Situation:



Malnutrition and hunger are widespread with **2.7million people facing starvation**.¹ Half of all children under 5 – approximately one million children – are acutely malnourished.² More than 65% of Afghanistan's 35 million people are young and in great need.



According to joint appeal by ACBAR (an agency that embodies 167 national and international NGO members that work in Afghanistan), more than half of the population is in need of humanitarian assistance and one third is food insecure. The drought and the great rise in internal displacement of people since early 2021 have worsened it. Winter that is fast approaching also create further stress the crisis in Afghanistan.



Afghanistan is one of the most aid-dependent countries in the world, with overseas aid flows accounting for 42.9% of its US\$19.8 billion GDP in 2020.³ The economy is at serious risk of collapse without access to humanitarian and development funding. Many state employees have either no work or no pay due to the lack of funding for services.



Assurances for the equal rights of females to carry out humanitarian work and to be present as the recipients of aid have been secured either at national or provincial level, allowing the scale up response activities. This result is the outcome of the humanitarian community working in unity for women's rights to be protected.

¹ www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/en/c/1154300/?iso3=AFG

² www.unicef.org.uk/press-releases/around-10-million-children-in-afghanistan-need-humanitarian-assistance-to-survive-says-unicef/

³ www.worldbank.org/en/country/afghanistan/overview

Key Messages

Children need help now to meet urgent survival needs caused by decades of conflict, climate change, drought, food insecurity, displacement and COVID-19. Afghan girls and boys are among the world's most vulnerable children. Over half of all under-fives face acute malnutrition if they don't get aid immediately. **Children and their families need safe drinking water, proper hygiene, and sanitation, access to emergency health services, and emergency food to prevent disease and death.**

The humanitarian crisis can only be tackled if there is safe and unhindered **humanitarian access**, sufficient, flexible, and sustained **international funding**, and both **male and female aid workers** can operate as part of response teams.

All parties are called on to comply with international humanitarian law and **respect and protect human rights**, including those of women, girls, and ethnic and religious minorities. The right to access livelihoods and education opportunities must be available to women and girls without discrimination.

All Afghan girls and boys need to be **protected from violence** and have the right to **education**. Education is essential to the full development and protection of every child, so girls and boys can enjoy fullness of life and contribute to society.

World Vision has been present in Afghanistan for 20 years, has more than 300 experienced and specialist staff, and will **stay and deliver** life-saving humanitarian and development assistance. In total, we have impacted six million lives. We are neutral, independent and impartial, and deliver assistance based on need, irrespective of creed, colour, ethnicity or religious belief. Working in partnership with faith leaders, local organisations and donor agencies is an essential part of our work.

Response highlights:



Offices in three of the four provinces where World Vision has humanitarian and development operations have reopened: in Herat, Ghor and Faryab. This follows assurances that both male and female humanitarian staff can safely operate and that women and men, girls and boys can benefit from response activities without discrimination.



World Vision now has life-saving mobile **health and nutrition** teams operating in the three provinces. These are focused on providing primary health care – and are a first point of contact for people from host and displaced communities who are sick. They also assess the nutritional status of children, pregnant and lactating women. Some 50% of girls and boys attending are malnourished. Mobile health clinics, staffed by women and men, have met the health needs of 10,056 people (2,151 girls, 1,986 boys, 4,856 women, and 1,063 men), within only the period of around two weeks (27 September – 13 October).



WFP **food assistance** operations are sped up and running in Ghor, Faryab and in Badghis,⁴ trying to race with the winter season that is approaching fast. In recent days almost 100,000 individuals have received food via distributions (27 September-13 October). Both Ghor and Faryab are suffering the worst hunger in Afghanistan.⁵



Work on water, sanitation and hygiene has started in Faryab to further support the population.



Response Plan is being prepared and finalized in the next few days. This will take into account the funding restrictions that are in place and how they require us to revise and adjust our activities to ensure compliance.




Some media engagement has been made, with support from Support Offices


- [NBC News NOW](#) (US)
- [ABC Radio National](#) (AUS)
- [Recording](#) on a roundtable event participated by World Vision New Zealand addressing New Zealand Government on the need of Afghanistan with World Vision Afghanistan National Director opened the event


⁴ World Vision has not yet secured assurances from the provincial authorities for women to be working but this programmes has gone ahead due to its urgent life-saving nature.


⁵ <http://www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/en/c/1154300/?iso3=AFG>


Key Concerns:


 Of the US\$1.2 billion pledged for Afghan humanitarian and development aid at September's High-Level Ministerial Meeting, as of September 27 only \$131 million had been received - 21.7% of what is required this year. Pledges need to be converted into hard cash.


 The roll-back of fundamental rights and their significantly gendered impact on access to basic services is causing concern. The hard-won human rights of Afghan women and girls to access health care, livelihoods and education are already being threatened. Despite public statements by the Taliban expressing commitment to human rights, the Taliban are curtailing access to secondary education for girls, and multiple credible sources report human rights abuses, including against ethnic and religious minorities. In some provinces, the Taliban at local level have not yet provided assurances that both male and female humanitarian workers can safely and freely work, travel or visit projects.


 The Taliban have not been recognised as the official government by any international government. This and other funding, financing and donor restrictions and requirements are hampering the flow of funding into the country and efforts by humanitarian agencies and state bodies to pay staff and cover operation costs. On 24 September, the US Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) issued two general licenses authorising humanitarian activities in Afghanistan and for transactions related to the exportation or re-exportation of agricultural commodities, medicine, medical devices, replacement parts and components, or software updates in Afghanistan. This should ease World Vision's ability to pay taxes, fees, and duties but other governments also have funding and due diligence requirements that must be met.


 The banking system is struggling with a lack of liquidity and limiting access to funds. It is short of local and foreign currency reserves. Salaries are going unpaid and people are running short of money and being forced to sell family assets to survive.


 The economy is hit by shortages that are driving up food, fuel and transportation costs.


 There are very limited international and domestic flights, especially for the people who wish to fly out. Neighboring countries have also expressed their rejections on accepting Afghan migrants/refugees. Visas are available on entry but those using the UN flight route need to have visas for Pakistan too, and the application process is complicated and slow.

 Bringing back expats is becoming highly challenging as the existing UN air bridge via Pakistan is not viable option for many nationalities. The need for an alternative air bridge has been raised at different levels. Having expats back in the country is highly crucial as the national workforce is moving out.

 There are no customs tax formalities making the shipment of relief goods uncertain. This is hampering the flow of core imports. WFP is managing to ship food across the Pakistan border. Recently the de facto authorities have announced that all aid assistance transported by UN and International organizations are exempted from all taxes.

 There are just weeks left to get food aid prepositioned into remote regions before winter snows arrive, cutting off remote areas. Food aid also needs to reach internally displaced people. More than 3.5 million people are internally displaced.

 Aid agencies are juggling to manage response operations, while also supporting staff who wish to leave Afghanistan.

 The Afghan health system, whose funding is administered by the World Bank, is on the point of collapse. Hospitals are running out of medicines, doctors and nurses are unpaid, or leaving Afghanistan, and health services are closing or partially operating. This comes as the country potentially faces a fourth wave of COVID-19 and a malnutrition crisis.

Advocacy

We continue to advocate at local, national, regional and global levels to ensure that the rights and needs of boys and girls are protected and prioritised by key decision makers, including the Taliban, as well as donors, governments, and humanitarian actors, in their strategies, policies, and operations.

We ask for:

Safe and unhindered humanitarian access:

It is crucial that those in need – including women, girls, boys, and members of ethnic and religious minorities – can access humanitarian assistance without discrimination. The ability of female aid workers to safely and freely operate is indispensable to ensure principled humanitarian action and that women and girls have access to life-saving services.

Sufficient, flexible and sustained funding:

Despite funding commitments to the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) pledges totaling US\$1.2million must be converted into cash. The needs and rights of boys and girls must be prioritised in funding strategies and decisions, including through the integration of gender equity measures. We call on donors to help cover the increased costs facing humanitarian actors in the current context.

Support for Afghans who left or are leaving:

We call on governments, including neighbouring countries, to keep borders open and allow access to their territory to Afghans seeking safety and protection, especially women, children, ethnic and religious minorities, journalists, activists, and human rights defenders. We further call on them to suspend deportations and forcible returns of Afghan nationals and adopt a moratorium on repatriations. We ask governments to support current asylum seekers in their territory and upscale resettlement and special visa programmes.

Protection for impartial humanitarian assistance:

We call on decision-makers to ensure that sanctions or counterterrorism measures do not impact impartial humanitarian activities, and that waivers, licences or other relevant mechanisms are in place in this regard.

Developments:



A G20 Summit on Afghanistan took place on 12 October to discuss potential strategies to address the current crisis.

- The EU announced that it will increase its funding for humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan to a total of 1 billion EUR, and leaders agreed in principle to channel the funds through UN agencies and international organizations on the ground. Regarding the financial stability of the country, leaders agreed to cooperate with the International Organizations, International Financial Institutions, including Multilateral Development Banks, and invited the World Bank to explore how to redirect support to humanitarian efforts. The G20 leaders also stressed the importance of providing support to the education and health sectors in ways that go beyond delivering emergency aid, and stated clearly that specific funding targets in humanitarian assistance should be focused on programs in favor of women and girls.
- The following key areas of engagement emerged from the summit: the recognition of the pressing humanitarian needs, the importance of the continued presence of the UN and humanitarian community, the cruciality of preventing the collapse of the economic and financial system, the centrality of human rights and women's rights, and the importance of preventing Afghanistan from becoming a safe haven for extremist groups. The issue of potential flows of refugees and the need to support to asylum seekers were also discussed, and the G20 urged the Taliban to respect their own commitment to allow the safe passage to Afghans who wish to leave the country, and committed to support hosting countries and to work with UNHCR to relieve pressure on countries in the region. Education, non-discrimination, and the importance of principled humanitarian action were also prominent in the summit's discussions, as well as the prevention of human trafficking and trafficking of narcotics and weapons. Leaders stressed the importance of borders and the airspace remaining open, and committed to support the reopening of Kabul airport. The G20 stated its support to the presence of UNAMA in Afghanistan in carrying out its mandate, including its role of coordination of international aid.
- The Chair's Summary of the meeting can be accessed [here](#)

...Advocacy:

Last week, the **Human Rights Council** decided to appoint, for a period of one year, a special rapporteur to monitor the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, with the following mandate:

- (a) To report on the developing situation of human rights, and to make recommendations to improve it;
- (b) To assist in fulfilling the human rights obligations arising from international treaties that Afghanistan has ratified;
- (c) To offer support and advice to civil society;
- (d) To seek, receive, examine and act on information from all relevant stakeholders pertaining to the situation of human rights in Afghanistan;
- (e) To integrate a gender perspective and survivor-centered approach throughout the work of the mandate;
- (f) To present a written report to the Human Rights Council at its fifty-first session and to the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh session. The resolution emphasizes the Council's concern for the humanitarian situation, and has strong language on non-discrimination, especially in relation to women and girls, and ethnic and religious minorities.

The full text of the resolution is available [here](#)



With the health system within Afghanistan on the point of collapse, more and more people are coming to community mobile clinics such as this one in Herat, operated by World Vision. In the last two weeks alone, we served more than 10,000 girls, boys, women and men, especially those from vulnerable communities.
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Learn more about World Vision's response:
www.wvi.org/emergencies/afghanistan

We would like to thank
our generous partners:



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