

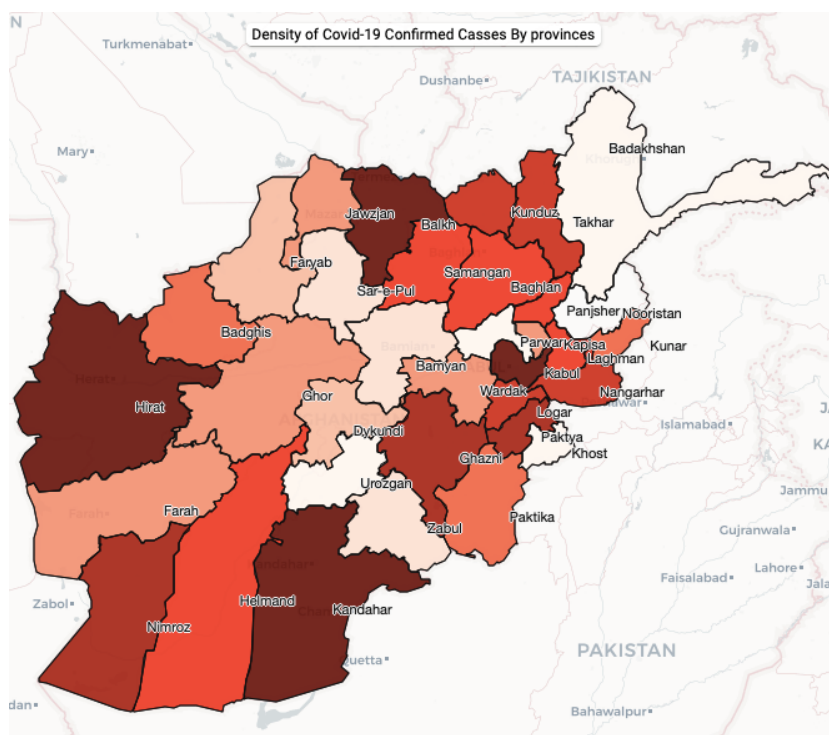
Key Messages: **UPDATED**

- **People confirmed to have COVID-19: 2,171** (as of 4pm, 30 April. Source: Afghanistan Ministry of Public Health - MoPH)
- **Deaths from COVID-19: 64**
- **Samples tested: 10,024**

Key concerns: Border crossing areas, in-country testing capacity, protective equipment for frontline workers, commodity prices, floods, messaging and rumour management, international air services

Situation Overview: **UPDATED**

MoPH data shows that 2,171 people across all 34 provinces in Afghanistan are now confirmed to have COVID-19. Some 260 people have recovered and 64 people have died. Eight healthcare workers are among those who have died from COVID-19. Among the fatalities, 60 had at least one underlying disease, the most common of which are cardio-vascular disease, lung disease, and diabetes. The majority of the fatalities were between ages of 40-69. Men between the ages of 40-69 represent more than 50 per cent of all COVID-19-related deaths. 30,000 diagnostic testing kits are available in-country and the WHO has a supplier in place to provide additional kits as necessary. Cases are expected to increase rapidly over the weeks ahead as community transmission escalates, creating grave implications for Afghanistan's economy and people's well-being. Kabul is now the most affected part of the country, followed by Hirat in terms of confirmed COVID-19 cases.



Source: MoPH

	Age 0-19		Age 20-29		Age 30-39		Age 40-49		Age 50-59		Age 60-69		Age 70-79		Age 80+		Total
	Girls	Boys	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	
# people confirmed with COVID-19	65	73	155	382	99	405	85	249	61	176	39	111	9	26	6	16	2171
# deaths from COVID-19	0	1	0	0	0	7	2	12	1	7	4	16	0	7	1	4	64

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), there have been reports of Moroccan locusts in the northern provinces bordering Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, and desert locusts in the provinces bordering Iran and Pakistan. Control operations in Hirat were recently carried out by the Afghanistan Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), and a control team will shortly be deployed to Uruzgan in the coming days. Similar control operations have been carried

out in Nimroz where around 20 hectares of land were affected by desert locust swarms. Ground operations are underway to control the small swarms of locust through both natural and chemical measures. Based on the current volume of locusts, food security partners do not anticipate extraordinary impact on this season's yield in Afghanistan. However, the situation remains unpredictable as neighbouring provinces in Pakistan, as well as in Iran's southern regions have been affected by massive swarms of desert locusts as of late, potentially devastating crops and increasing food insecurity in those countries.

COVID-19 and the Human Rights of LGBTI People – The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

According to a [new report](#) released by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) people may be particularly vulnerable during the COVID-19 pandemic. People living with compromised immune systems, including some persons living with HIV/AIDS, face a greater risk from COVID-19:

- **Access to Health Services:** LGBTI people regularly experience stigma and discrimination while seeking health services, leading to disparities in access, quality and availability of healthcare. Laws that criminalise same sex relations or that target transgendered persons due to their gender identity or expression, exacerbate negative health outcomes for LGBTI people, as they may not access healthcare services for fear of arrest or violence.
- **Deprioritisation of required health services:** Given overloaded health systems, treatment of LGBTI people may be interrupted or deprioritised, including for HIV treatment and testing, hormonal treatment and gender affirming treatments for transgendered people. The report recommends that decisions about scaling back services be medically-based and data-driven and should not reflect bias against LGBTI people.
- **Domestic violence and abuse:** Due to stay-at-home restrictions, many LGBTI youth are confined in hostile environments with unsupportive family members or co-habitants. This can increase their exposure to violence, as well as their anxiety and depression.
- **Access to work and livelihood:** LGBTI people are more likely to be unemployed and to live in poverty than the general population. Many in the LGBTI community work in the informal sector and lack access to paid sick leave, unemployment compensation, and coverage. Additionally, due to discriminatory paid leave policies that do not cover all genders equally, LGBTI people may not be able to take time off from work to care for family members.

OHCHR emphasises six key actions that States and other stakeholders can take:

1. Specific efforts should be made to ensure that LGBTI people are not subjected to discrimination or fear retribution for seeking healthcare. Health services that are particularly relevant to LGBTI people should not be deprioritised on a discriminatory basis.
2. Measures to address the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic should consider the particular vulnerabilities of the LGBTI people, including older persons and the homeless, and ensure that LGBTI people are fully covered.
3. Political leaders and other influential figures should speak out against stigmatisation and hate speech directed at the LGBTI people in the context of the pandemic.
4. Shelters, support services and other measures to address gender-based violence during the COVID-19 pandemic should take steps to include the LGBTI population.
5. States should not use states of emergency or other emergency measures to roll back existing rights and guarantees that apply to LGBTI people.
6. Measures restricting movement should provide protection for trans and gender non-conforming persons. Law enforcement officials should be instructed and trained not to discriminate against this population.

Response: [UPDATED](#)

Humanitarians continue to scale-up responses to COVID-19 needs. Over the last reporting period, humanitarian partners have delivered WASH kits and tailored hygiene promotion activities to more than 100,000 people, have reached almost 84,000 people with COVID-19 awareness raising materials, and have supported more than 29,000 women and children with Psychosocial Support services to cope with the emotional consequences of COVID-19. Almost 1.2 million bars of soap have been distributed. For a detailed update of response activities please see the [operational Situation Report](#).

Cross Border Concerns: [UPDATED](#)

The Milak crossing (Nimroz) is open only to commercial traffic and undocumented, documented citizens of Afghanistan; the Islam Qala-Dogharoon land border crossings (Hirat) remain open on both sides for documented travellers and commercial traffic. According to the Border Monitoring Team of the Directorate of Refugees and Repatriation (DoRR), a total of 9,987 citizens of Afghanistan returned from Iran through the Milak and Islam Qala borders between 19-25 April 2020, an 18 per cent decrease from the previous week (12,250). 7,858 people returned voluntarily and 2,129 were deported from Iran. IOM has provided post-arrival humanitarian assistance to 2,782 people (28 per cent of all undocumented Afghans from Iran) at its transit centres in Hirat and Nimroz. While the number of people returning from Iran this week has been in line with normal average return rates, IOM emphasises that the scale of humanitarian needs among this group have increased. Close to 100 per cent of returnees are now in need of humanitarian post-arrival assistance, compared to the 20 per cent previously estimated. UNHCR's latest [border monitoring report](#) further highlights this need and indicates that 71 per cent of returnees from Iran are returning due to fears surrounding COVID-19 and the lack of employment opportunities in Iran.

Afghanistan's frontier with Pakistan at Spin Boldak and at Torkham remains mainly closed due to COVID-19-related restrictions, however limited exemptions have been granted for the return of stranded nationals from Afghanistan and

Pakistani to return to their respective countries. On 28 April, more than 3,500 Afghanistan nationals returned from Pakistan to Afghanistan. The process was reportedly orderly and health screening procedures were followed. Pakistan has announced twice weekly border openings, on Tuesdays and Saturdays, to allow Pakistan and Afghanistan nationals to return to their countries of origin.

Pakistan continues to facilitate the movement of cargo trucks and containers into Afghanistan through the Torkham and Chaman border crossing points three days per week (Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays). Humanitarians emphasise the critical importance of maintaining a reliable flow of traffic for humanitarian cargo and advocate for special consideration to expedite humanitarian food and relief items through border crossings.

Borders with Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan remain open only for commercial traffic and crossings of passport holders back into Afghanistan.

Operational Issues: **UPDATED**

'**Measured lockdowns**' aimed at limiting the exposure of residents to COVID-19 continue throughout the country, resulting in closures of sections of each city and/or movement limitations. Humanitarian personnel have received permission to continue their duties amidst the movement restrictions; however, NGOs report periodic delays and complications. Humanitarians continue to urge the Government to employ a national approach to these issues so that individual negotiations are not required on a case-by-case basis. The closure of government institutions due to movement restrictions may create new coordination challenges for humanitarian agencies.

Due to the unprecedented scale of the COVID-19 pandemic, many countries continue to be affected by global supply shortages. Global and national-level efforts are currently underway to address pipeline issues. A COVID-19 Supply Chain Task Force has been established – under the leadership of the UN Secretary-General and WHO Director-General – to improve the availability of essential supplies for COVID-19.

The European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations is considering setting up an EU Humanitarian Air Bridge (EU HAB) to facilitate delivery of humanitarian supplies and staff between the EU and third countries. Conceived as a temporary initiative for 3 to 6 months, it will act in complementarity with the logistical services included in the UN Global Humanitarian Response Plan. All humanitarian actors selected by EU Member States, Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, Civil Society and UN Agencies can benefit from the facility.

Kam Air is currently serving 10 domestic destinations across the country with varied frequency: Mazar-e-Sharif (one flight per day), Kandahar (one flight per day), Farah (two flights per week), Nimroz (two flights per week), Tirinkot (two flights per week), Hilmand (two flights per week), Ghor (one flight per week), Faryab (two flights per week) and Badakhshan (two flights per week). Flights to Hirat are currently suspended, however, Kam Air will add three special flights to Hirat between 29-31 April, while the flight schedule from 1 May onwards will depend on the situation in the west.

The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) has started airbridge service connecting flights from Kabul to Doha. Flights into Doha accommodate transiting passengers only. Today's flight carried 18 passengers to connecting flights in Doha and enabled 14 humanitarian staff to return to Kabul to support ongoing operations. The next flight is planned for Tuesday, 5 May. Thereafter, UNHAS will continue its weekly flights as per previously announced schedule on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays. UNHAS has circulated updated booking guidance.

More Information – Links: **UPDATED**

WHO

- [WHO's latest information on COVID-19](#)
- [WHO COVID-19 Global Dashboard](#)
- [Interim guidance: Health system response to COVID-19 in the context of internally displaced persons, refugees, migrants and returnees in the Eastern Mediterranean Region](#)

Inter-Agency Standing Committee

- [IASC-endorsed COVID-19 guidance – new materials available](#)

UN and others

- [UNHCR: Livelihoods Short Guidance on COVID-19 Response](#)
- [Ministry of Public Health: COVID-19 Dashboard](#)
- [Relief Web: COVID-19 Response Page](#)
- [WFP: 2020 Global Report on Food Crisis](#)
- [IOM: Dashboard on impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on human mobility](#)
- [Oxfam: Briefing note on the impact of COVID-19 on Women in Afghanistan](#)

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