Conflict, natural disasters, internal displacement and cross-border movements continue to increase food insecurity in Afghanistan. Unemployment, crop pests and natural hazards, such as drought and flooding, increase the vulnerability of already severely food-insecure populations, many living in hard-to-reach areas.

Objectives

FAO is working with partners in the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster to:
- Provide life-saving assistance.
- Protect livelihoods.
- Strengthen emergency preparedness and response capabilities of cluster partners.

Activities

**Restore agricultural production**

- high-quality agricultural inputs (summer crop seeds, certified wheat seeds and fertilizers) | kitchen gardening support | training on wheat crop production best practice | equipment and supplies to control locust and sunn pest infestations

**Recover livestock production**

- livestock protection inputs (fodder crop seeds and concentrated animal feed) | backyard poultry support | training on livestock husbandry best practice | animal health services (vaccinations, deworming and treatment)

**Strengthen food security coordination**

- developing and/or updating contingency plans | timely and better coordinated food security assessments | response capacity development | IPC | harvest assessments | disaster damage assessments

The current drought is affecting farming households in two thirds of the country – affected households are in need of urgent food, agriculture, livelihoods and nutrition support.
Acute food insecurity situation (August – November 2017)

Situation analysis

2.2 million people chronically food insecure, of which 1.4 million people at risk of acute food insecurity due to drought

2/3 of the country is affected by drought

71% of the population lives in rural areas

55% of the population lives below the poverty line

Impact on food security

The current drought is expected to detrimentally affect already chronically food insecure farming families (some 2.2 million people), of which 1.4 million will become acutely food insecure over coming months. Affected people – rural farmers and agricultural wage labourers – require emergency assistance into the next lean season.

Most of the country experienced a precipitation deficit of 70 percent during winter and into the spring. In March, FAO’s Rapid Assessment of the 2018 Winter Dry Spell in Afghanistan showed farmers are delaying planting crops or reducing field sizes to minimize losses, with damage and losses to wheat production already visible. Both staple food crops and cash crops are expected to be below normal harvest levels in 2018.

In recent months, livestock production has reduced. Because of poor nutrition, the body condition of animals has deteriorated, with deaths already reported. Immediate support is required to avoid large-scale drought-induced displacement, including migration from rural to urban areas. Because of the dry conditions, locust and sunn pest have moved earlier than usual to wheat fields. Locust has compounded the situation in pastures with already scarce vegetation because of the drought.

Across the country, families who rely on agriculture for their livelihoods face displacement due to recurrent violence, exposure to natural hazards and crop pests, and lack of, or limited access to, livelihood opportunities.