



IN NUMBERS



13.5 million

people severely food insecure



293 000

people affected by sudden-onset natural disasters



3.9 million

people affected by drought in need of emergency food and livelihoods assistance



USD 26.2 million

needed for critical livelihood support during the 2019/2020 agricultural season

KEY POINTS

- The deteriorating food security and livelihood situation has continued into 2019, driven mostly by the combination of widespread hostilities, mass displacements, and slow and sudden-onset natural disasters.
- Nearly 30 percent of the population is severely food insecure. They have limited food production, depleted assets and livelihoods, reduced incomes and weakened health.
- The lingering impact of the drought remains and millions of Afghans are expected to be affected during the second half of 2019.
- Record-high floods and landslides affected almost 300 000 people during the first six months of 2019 – a 375 percent increase compared to the previous year.
- The highly probable returns of the displaced population could further compound the situation and influence the agricultural cycle.
- FAO seeks USD 35 million to assist 1.4 million severely food insecure farmers and herders in 22 provinces still struggling to recover from the impact of the drought and subsequent floods through critical livelihood protection assistance during the 2019/2020 agricultural season.

MAP

Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) projected acute food insecurity situation (November 2018–February 2019)



BACKGROUND

The ongoing crisis in Afghanistan has persisted for almost two decades, disrupting and stripping people's livelihoods. This is due to a convergence of factors arising from widespread hostilities, mass displacements, and slow and sudden-onset natural disasters. The deteriorating food security and livelihood situation has continued into 2019, driven mostly by the worst drought in a decade last year. The severe drought in 2018 affected more than two-thirds of the country, destroying the agriculture sector. The drought has limited food production, depleted farmers and herders' assets and livelihoods, reduced people's income by half and weakened their health, prompting Afghans to engage in negative coping mechanisms, including begging, indebtedness and sale of assets and livestock.

Sudden-onset natural disasters caused widespread damage across highly vulnerable provinces already experiencing Emergency levels of food insecurity (IPC Phase 4), such as in Badkhis, Daikundi, Kandahar and Nuristan. In particular, record-high floods and landslides in seven years affected almost 300 000 people during the first six months of 2019 – a 375 percent increase compared to the previous year. The occurrence of the two extreme weather events for six consecutive seasons has hampered the capacity of Afghans to improve their food security and restore their livelihoods. The floods combined with years of insecurity and severely degraded land have intensified the impact of drought, leading to a food security and livelihood crisis.

Poor nutrition has also been reported in many parts of the country. Each year, an estimated 2 million children under the age of five and 485 000 pregnant and lactating women are affected by acute malnutrition. As of the end of June 2018, nearly 208 000 people were displaced by conflict in the first half of 2019 and almost 100 000 people remained in protracted displacement, predominantly in Herat province, with many unable to return due to conflict. New patterns of movement across Afghanistan's borders are raising concerns about the safety and needs of returnees. According to the IPC analysis conducted in September 2018, 13.5 million people are severely food insecure, 6 million more than in 2017 – the majority of whom are surviving on one meal a day. The IPC analysis for 2019 will be completed this month based on the findings of the completed Seasonal Food Security Assessment.

CHALLENGES FACING FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURE

Twenty-two provinces in Afghanistan have worrying levels of food insecurity and acute humanitarian needs, gravely affecting their livelihoods. Households are still recovering from the 2018 drought, such as in Badghis province, where undocumented returnees and displaced households are expected to continue to suffer from Crisis levels of food insecurity (IPC Phase 3). Stressed and Crisis levels of food insecurity (IPC Phases 2 and 3) are likely to emerge as many households rely on markets with below-average incomes.

Hunger and malnutrition levels are alarmingly high and the lingering impact of the drought could further compound the situation. Despite good wheat harvests in 2019 that might have improved the situation for those able to cultivate, it might not be enough to alleviate chronic food insecurity across the country. New food security assessments scheduled for the third quarter of 2019 will confirm current trends.

Returns of Afghan nationals, including growing numbers of internally displaced people and those living in neighbouring countries, is highly probable and could influence the agricultural cycle.

FAO RESPONSE, TARGETS AND FUNDING

2019 PLANNED RESPONSE



1 million people targeted



Restore agricultural production activities through the provision of certified maize, wheat and vegetable seeds, quality fertilizer, tools for nutrition-sensitive kitchen gardens, poultry, and training on good agricultural practices and disaster risk reduction practices



Protect livestock production through the provision of concentrated animal feed, fast-growing fodder crop seeds, deworming treatment and training on animal husbandry



Promote income-generating activities through cash for work and cash+ (unconditional cash, in-kind inputs and training)

RESPONSE TO DATE



549 500 people assisted



Provided 2 744 tonnes of certified wheat seeds to 137 200 drought-affected farmers, allowing them to cultivate 54 880 ha of land and produce 247 400 tonnes of cereal in normal conditions. The 100 kg of wheat seeds and quality fertilizer allow farmers to produce 2 000 kg of wheat, which can feed a family for a year



Provided 3 416 tonnes of concentrated animal feed to 341 600 herders, and dewormed 350 000 heads of their livestock

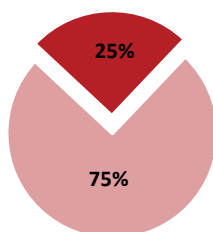


Provided kitchen garden kits, backyard poultry, pulse seeds and training to 56 700 people



Supported 14 000 people through cash-for-work activities for the rehabilitation or construction of water structures

FUNDING



■ Funding to-date:
USD 8.8 million

■ Funding gap:
USD 26.2 million

Throughout the drought response (July 2018 – July 2019), FAO provided critical livelihood protection assistance to 1.6 million severely food insecure people in 17 provinces.

Currently, under the 2019 HRP, FAO is seeking USD 26.2 million to assist 1 million severely food insecure farmers and herders in 22 provinces still struggling to recover from the impact of the drought and subsequent floods by providing critical livelihood protection assistance during the 2019/2020 agricultural season.

FAO requires: USD 35 million **To assist:** 1.4 million people

Resource partners: Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund, the Central Emergency Response Fund and the governments of Belgium, Denmark, France, Japan, Republic of Korea, Sweden and the United States of America.

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