

WFP Afghanistan Situation Report

January 2024

In Numbers

15.8 million people projected to be acutely food-insecure between November 2023 and March 2024, including 3.6 million people in Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 4 (emergency).

4 million people are acutely malnourished, including 3.2 million children under the age of 5 years.

23.7 million people – require humanitarian assistance in 2024.

Highlights

- WFP began to lay the groundwork for its new social safety net - maternal and child benefit programme – a 15-month initiative funded by the World Bank and to be implemented jointly with UNICEF.
- Approximately 3,500 mt of wheat soy blend is stuck on the Pakistan and Afghanistan border amid post-election tensions and civil unrest. Further delays in transportation pose a significant threat to an estimated 378,000 pregnant women who would be assisted under the treatment of malnutrition programme.

Situation Update

- **Pakistan is facing several challenges**, including incidents of grenade attacks, suicide bombings, blockages of major highways and general civil unrest. The closure of the vital Pakistan-Afghanistan border crossing at [Chaman](#) since November 2023 has posed access challenges, complicating the situation in Afghanistan by impeding the flow of people and essential goods between the two countries.
- **The lack of rain, especially snow, this winter has left millions of Afghans fearing another year of drought.** The Food and Agriculture Organisation is predicting the May to September harvest to be severely impacted. Given that over 80 percent of Afghanistan's population depends on agriculture for their livelihood, the implications of this prolonged drought – now entering its fourth year - are particularly dire on families and the country's economic stability.
- **Since September 2023**, nearly [500,000](#) refugees have returned to Afghanistan through the Torkham and Spin Boldak borders, following the Government of Pakistan's directive on the repatriation of undocumented refugees and immigrants. The interim Prime Minister of Pakistan has maintained strict migrant restrictions, urging the incoming government to continue a deportation plan that has already expelled about 475,603 Afghan citizens lacking legal documentation.

WFP Response

- **Maternal and child benefit programme:** WFP will be implementing a comprehensive 15-month maternal and child benefit programme (MCBP) this year jointly with UNICEF. Progress has been made this month in establishing standard operating procedures, field-level agreements, recruitment efforts, and access negotiations. A mission from the World Bank visited Kabul to discuss project implementation, monitoring, and impact evaluation strategies. The project's inaugural activities are scheduled for March, marking an important milestone in its advancement.
- **Afghan Returnees:** Since the start of the support to Afghan returnees (since November 2023) from Pakistan, WFP has reached 308,595 individuals through the provision of food (fortified biscuits, specialised nutritious food), multi-purpose cash, cash for food and nutrition assistance.
- **Supply Chain:** WFP has intensified engagement with the de facto authorities to address ongoing supply chain issues that is hindering operations. These include the national ban on imported salt in November 2023, which has led to four WFP trucks carrying the commodity being stuck at the border. Consequently, WFP is distributing food baskets (in some areas) without salt. A waiver, set to expire in March 2024, is currently in effect to allow the entry of salt into Afghanistan.

Returnees from Pakistan receive lifesaving assistance from WFP in Torkham. WFP-Afghanistan

Emergency Food and Nutrition Assistance

In January, WFP reached **7.4 million** people with emergency food, cash, and nutrition support.

General Food Assistance

- After some delays earlier in the month, WFP distributions stand at 84 percent for in-kind assistance and 33 percent for cash-based transfers.

Nutrition

- Due to a shortage in wheat soy blend (WSB+) caused by supply chain issues, WFP prioritized the implementation of a targeted supplementary feeding programme (TSFP) over a blanket supplementary feeding programme (BSFP) in certain districts this month, reaching **1.7 million** pregnant women and girls and children.

School Feeding

- In January, WFP reached **392,243** boys and girls attending primary schools and community-based education with on-site and take-home ration support in Jawzjan, Farah, Nangarhar, Zabul and Uruzgan.
- Unfortunately, secondary schools for girls remain closed, with no information regarding their reopening.

Resilience and Food Systems

- Various livelihood and asset creations projects are ongoing with **4,798** smallholder agricultural market support participants, **31,787** food assistance for training (FFT) participants, and **128,121** food assistance for assets participants currently active.

Supply Chain and Logistics

- WFP dispatched **25,508 mt** of mixed food commodities across Afghanistan, reaching 99 percent of its target for the month. About **42,420 mt** of food is available at WFP warehouses in-country, while **34,000 mt** of food is in transit or within WFP warehouses outside the country.

UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS)

- UNHAS operated **238** flights in January with **1,281** passengers from 55 humanitarian organizations. Of these passengers, **1,098** were domestic flights and 183 were on international flights to/from Doha, Dubai, Dushanbe and Islamabad.
- This month, UNHAS transported 3.4 mt of light humanitarian cargo, which included crucial medical equipment, medicines, vaccines and other essential operational supplies.
- Weekly flight schedules and route maps can be found on the [Humanitarian Booking Hub](#).

Resourcing Update

- WFP requires US\$1.98 billion to deliver emergency food, nutrition and livelihood support to those most in need. WFP faces a funding shortfall of US\$759 million to sustain operations over the next six months (February to July) and calls for urgent funding support to help the most vulnerable 7 million people survive the harsh winter and lean season.

WFP's needs are reflected in Afghanistan's 2024 Humanitarian Response Plan.

**Distribution figures for January are subject to change following validation.*

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