



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Afghanistan Country Brief October 2023



Grandmother Ziba speaks with a WFP food monitoring staff. One of her daughters died in the Herat earthquake, leaving two small grandchildren in Ziba's care. ©WFP/Hasib Hazinyar

Operational Context

Afghanistan remains one of the world's largest humanitarian crises with 29.2 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. Decades of conflict, extreme climate shocks, and severe economic decline characterised by high unemployment, cash shortages, and rising food prices have plunged millions into poverty. Between May and October 2023, an estimated 15.3 million people are acutely food insecure, including 3.4 million that require sustained humanitarian support to prevent catastrophic levels of hunger.

In response to unprecedented levels of hunger and vulnerability, WFP scaled up humanitarian operations to reach 23 million people with emergency food, nutrition, and livelihood support in 2022 and plans to support 21 million people in 2023. Present in Afghanistan since 1963, WFP's current Country Strategic Plan (2018-2023) has adapted to the new operating environment, providing lifesaving support to those who need it most, while continuing, where possible, to support long-term community resilience, gender, and education initiatives.



Population: **41.7 million**

2021 Human Development Index: **180 out of 191 countries**

Income Level: **Low income**

Chronic malnutrition: **54% of children between 6-59 months (WB)**

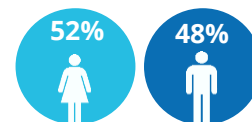
In Numbers

24,691 mt of food distributed

US\$8.3 million in cash-based transfers made

US\$840 million six months (December 2023 - May 2024) net funding requirements.

4.4 million people assisted
in October 2023



Operational Updates

- In October, WFP reached **4.4 million** people with emergency food, cash, nutrition, and livelihoods support. WFP distributed **24,691 mt** in-kind assistance and made cash-based transfers totalling **US\$8.3 million** across various programmes.

General Food Assistance

- In October, WFP reached **2 million** people with in-kind food assistance and **1 million** people received cash-based transfers (including commodity and value vouchers). WFP is working around the clock to mobilize and [transport](#) food to remote regions which are expected to become inaccessible this coming winter. WFP aims to scale up assistance to 6.5 million people with food during the winter across 386 districts, subject to the availability of resources.

Nutrition Support

- WFP provided specialized nutritious foods for the prevention of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) to over **472,000** pregnant and breastfeeding women (PBW) and children aged 6-59 months. WFP provided malnutrition treatment services to more than **629,000** PBWs and children.
- WFP continues to support **251 active mobile health and nutrition teams (MHNT)** across Afghanistan. Further guidance is pending on the MHNT transition to fixed health clinics as mandated by facto authorities.

School Feeding

- WFP provided fortified biscuits or Bread+¹ to more than **633,200 primary school students**.
- Cash-based transfers for secondary-level schoolgirls remain on hold, while secondary schools are closed to girls across the country.

Asset Creation and Livelihoods

- WFP reached **156,000 people** through food assistance for asset creation schemes, and **14,000 people** through food assistance for training schemes in 26 provinces, both aiming to strengthen community resilience.

¹ Bread+ is an initiative where WFP works with local smallholder farmers and bakeries to produce nutritious bread for schoolchildren using local ingredients.

Country Strategic Plan (2018-2023)

CSP Requirements	Allocated Contributions	Six-month Net Funding Requirements
US\$9.81 b	US\$3.73 b	US\$840 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Vulnerable people in Afghanistan are able to meet their food and nutrition needs during and immediately after emergencies through 2022

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities:

- Emergency food assistance
- Prevention and treatment of malnutrition of crisis-affected

Strategic Outcome 2: Vulnerable people in Afghanistan are increasingly able to meet their food and nutrition needs on their own by 2022

Focus area: Resilience building

Activities:

- Livelihood support
- Emergency preparedness capacity strengthening

Strategic Result 2: End malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 3: Vulnerable people at each stage of the life cycle in target areas have improved nutrition by 2022

Focus area: Resilience Building

Activities:

- School feeding

Strategic Result 4: Sustainable food systems

Strategic Outcome 4: People throughout the country can have access to a wide range of fortified nutritious food products at affordable prices by 2022

Focus area: Resilience Building

Activities:

- Nutritional value chains

Strategic Result 6: Policy coherence

Strategic Outcome 5: People throughout the country can have access to a wide range of fortified nutritious food products at affordable prices by 2022

Focus area: Resilience Building

Activities:

- Policy coherence support on food security and nutrition

Strategic Result 8: Enhance global partnerships

Strategic Outcome 6: The Humanitarian community has enhanced capacity to respond to needs throughout the country through 2022

Focus area: Resilience Building

Activities:

- Common service provision (SCOPE, Supply Chain, ICT)
- UN Humanitarian Air Service

2023 Donors

Asian Development Bank, Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund, Australia, Canada, China, European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, India, Islamic Development Bank, Japan, Kuwait, New Zealand, Norway, Private Donors, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund, United Kingdom, and USA.

Herat Earthquake Response

- The three 6.3-magnitude earthquakes that shook Herat in October have affected more than 150,000 people. Dozens of villages were flattened, leaving houses in rubble. On 12 October, a dust storm destroyed hundreds of tents in Herat, displacing 300 households from various villages.
- WFP quickly dispatched food within 8 hours since the first earthquake and food were in the hands of affected populations within 24 hours. WFP provided 103,700 affected people with mixed food items and 26,200 received fortified biscuits and specialized nutritious food.
- WFP needs US\$22.9 million to support over 100,000 earthquake-affected people for seven months. Of which, only 35 percent (US\$8 million) of the requirements have been confirmed. WFP plans to provide a three-month full ration of food assistance followed by four months of half rations under vulnerability targeting. The plan includes cash-for-work and food-for-assets for six months.

Afghan Returnees

- In early October, the Government of Pakistan officially [announced](#) that all migrants living without legal status would have to exit the country by 1 November. This has triggered an influx of Afghan refugees flocking to the borders, with daily arrivals recorded at 8,000 per day. This number is expected to rise in the coming weeks.
- WFP is supporting Afghan returnees from the Spin Boldak and Torkham borders with food and nutrition assistance. WFP's resources are stretched. Given the limited availability of food stocks and concurrent needs caused by the earthquakes in Herat, it has been using food commodities from its regular emergency operations, which need to be replenished immediately as these are to be prepositioned in preparation for winter.
- To support 590,000 returning Afghans (84,150 families) from November 2023 to March 2024, WFP requires US\$27.5 million.

Market Monitoring

- The average prices of all food items in October were significantly higher than pre-pandemic. Except for wheat grain, wheat flour and cooking oil, all food commodities were also significantly higher compared to June 2021.

Funding Shortfalls

- WFP faces a funding shortfall of **US\$840 million** to sustain operations over the next six months (December 2023 – May 2024) and calls for urgent funding of US\$400 million to help the most vulnerable 7 million people survive the upcoming harsh winter.