



WFP Afghanistan Situation Report

February 2024

In Numbers

15.8 million people are 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.

23.7 million people require humanitarian assistance in 2024.

Highlights

- With funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, WFP initiated an innovative project in the Nangarhar province that combines integrated immunization awareness with a comprehensive school feeding programme, targeting teachers, parents.
- The World Bank-funded Maternal Child Benefit Programme (MCBP) finalized field-level agreements with cooperating partners this month. The MCBP aims to enhance maternal and child nutrition outcomes through improved access to nutritious food and increased utilization of health and nutritional facilities and services.

Situation Update

- **Afghanistan's food security crisis persists**, with nearly 40 percent of its population (15.8 million) anticipated to face acute food insecurity in the first quarter of 2024. The August 2021 takeover continues to disproportionately affect girls and women, as strict religious edicts have impeded their access to essential services, especially education, and hindered their participation in activities outside their homes. The [Afghanistan Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2024](#) raises the alarm on the complex humanitarian crisis and the corresponding critical needs. Among the priorities, communities continue to emphasize food as the paramount requirement.
- **Since September 2023, nearly 500,000 undocumented Afghans** from Pakistan, in response to the Government of Pakistan's policy, affecting an estimated 1.3 million Afghans. This influx has strained border crossings and placed additional pressure on the already limited resources within host communities, prompting a need for increased humanitarian assistance. Projections for 2024 indicate that the surge of returnees is expected to continue with an estimated 1.46 million Afghans from Pakistan and Iran anticipated to return during the year. Two years since the regime change, the de facto authorities' approach to refugees and asylum seekers

remains unclear and may undergo adjustments depending on political developments.

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. Standard operating procedures, field-level agreements, staff recruitment, and access negotiations were initiated in February. A mission from the World Bank visited Kabul to discuss project implementation, monitoring, and impact evaluation strategies. The project's inaugural activities are scheduled to commence in March.
- **Afghan Returnees:** Since December 2023, WFP has enrolled over **59,000** returnee households into WFP's winter general food assistance in areas of return, receiving monthly food assistance. At the end of February, WFP reached nearly 312,400 individuals with food (fortified biscuits, specialised nutritious food), multi-purpose cash, cash for food, and nutrition assistance. WFP has been supporting Afghan returnees from Pakistan since the start of the influx in November 2023.
- **Supply Chain:** Following a nationwide ban on the import of salt in November 2023 that led to shortages, WFP has been proactively exploring a

¹ [Afghanistan: Acute Food Insecurity Projection for November 2023 – March 2024](#)

solution by transitioning its salt procurement strategy from international sources to domestic ones. This shift not only ensures a more reliable supply chain but also aligns with WFP's broader objectives of supporting local economies and fostering self-sufficiency. Furthermore, pursuing local procurement avenues reduces dependency on volatile international markets and potential disruptions caused by geopolitical factors.

Emergency Food and Nutrition Assistance

In February, WFP reached **6.4 million** people with emergency food, cash, and nutrition support. This included **4.1 million** with in-kind support, while **2.3 million** received cash-based transfers.

General Food Assistance

- WFP reached **95 percent** of all planned monthly beneficiaries in February.

Nutrition

- WFP provided specialized nutritious foods (SNF) for the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition to **283,400** children aged 06-59 months and **289,100** acutely malnourished pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls (PBW/G). For the prevention of acute malnutrition, WFP provided SNF to **700,100** children aged 06-59 months and 290,500 PBW/G.

School Feeding

- In February, WFP reached 474,00 boys and girls attending **1,769** primary schools and community-based education with on-site and take-home ration support in Jawzjan, Farah, Nangarhar, Zabul and Uruzgan.
- Secondary schools for girls have remained closed since September 2021, when de facto authorities announced that girls were barred from continuing their education beyond sixth grade. Currently, there is no indication of when these schools will reopen.

Resilience and Food Systems

- In February, various livelihood and asset creation projects are ongoing with a total of **9,224** smallholder agricultural market support participants, **9,960** food assistance for training (FFT) participants, and **22,706** food assistance for assets participants currently active.

Supply Chain and Logistics

- In February, WFP dispatched **27,130 mt** of mixed food commodities across Afghanistan, reaching 98 percent of its target for the month. About **43,960 mt** of food is available at WFP warehouses in-country, while **23,055 mt** of food is in transit or within WFP warehouses outside the country.

UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS)

- UNHAS operated **461** flights this year with **2,553** passengers from **68** humanitarian organizations. Of these passengers, **2,189** were domestic flights and **364** were on international flights to/from Doha, Dushanbe, and Islamabad.
- This month, UNHAS transported **5.8 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 in 2024 to deliver emergency food, nutrition and livelihood support to those most in need. WFP faces a funding shortfall of US\$657 million to sustain operations over the next six months (March to August) 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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