

FSAC AFGHANISTAN RESPONSE MONITORING UPDATE JANUARY 2022

Background

The protracted political crisis that faced Afghanistan for forty years led to one of the deadliest conflicts across the globe. Civilians were exposed to daily deadly risks which resulted in mass displacement and livelihoods losses. While the country suffered from conflict impacts, cyclical droughts, underemployment, high food prices and the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic caused severe damage to the coping capacity and decimated hopes of recovery for the population.

Afghanistan is today in one of the world's most severe food security crises. The combined impact of an acute drought – the worst for more than three decades – and economic collapse in the second half of 2021 has generated a hunger crisis of unprecedented proportions in Afghanistan, with some 22.8 million people projected to be facing acute food insecurity (IPC3 and IPC4)ⁱ by the start of 2022.

The ruptures in financial systems, drastic income losses, reduced purchasing power, high food prices are contributing to a worsening of the situation risking complete asset depletion. This is further compounded by decreased remittances, shortage and high cost of critical agricultural inputs. Overall the severity of need is radically increasing – people's basic and even extreme coping measures are exhausted, while government services have abruptly halted and remain at risk of imminent collapse.

FSAC Achievements in 2021

Despite various operational challenges such as the collapse of government, access restrictions, funding constraints, and cash liquidity challenges especially after August 15, 2021 - under the HRP 2021, the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC) was able to reach a total of 17.1 million people against the target of 16.2ⁱⁱ millionⁱⁱⁱ people in all 34 provinces. Lifesaving food assistance was provided to 13.8 million people, out of which 10.9 million were supported with in-kind food assistance and 2.9 million people with cash assistance. Livelihood protection assistance was delivered to 3.2 million people out of which, 214,438 people were assisted through livelihoods asset creation/rehabilitation activities, 2,223,677 people received livelihoods assistance in-kind and 827,327 people received livelihoods assistance in cash.

Situation Overview

• Crop and Livestock

Following significantly lower-than-average winter precipitation and higher-than-average temperature associated with La Niña in 2021, which affected 25 provinces in Afghanistan, the country was projected to face a wheat deficit of up to 3 MMT. In rural areas assessments showed that even after harvest more than 4 out of 5 farmers and herders did not have access to critical agricultural inputs while livestock owners were unable to store enough feed for their animals. According to the Seasonal Food Security Assessment 2021, 92% of the farmers reported lack of seeds, 83% were faced with difficulties in cultivation and another 64% were faced with problems in raising livestock.

As of January 2022, the country is currently in the 2021/22 winter season- which coincides with the lean period. Planting of the main wheat crop has been completed in most provinces. The overall crop outlook is looking positive, with many fields having a healthy vegetative growth, however wheat fields in the north, northeast, west and southern provinces are showing signs of moisture stress.



Wheat development in Nangahar: Photo credit@FAO

• Climate Outlook

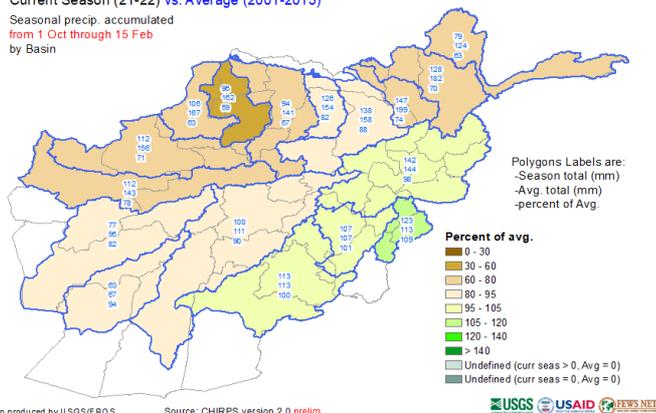
A weak to moderate La Niña event is already affecting Afghanistan. While there was lower-than-average precipitation received from December 2021 to early January 2022 in most parts across the country the precipitation from late December 2021 through the 3rd week of January 2022 improved wet season precipitation performance. Areas in south-east are now moving towards

a positive anomaly while concerns remain in northern rainfed wheat cultivating areas.

Afghanistan Accumulated Precipitation

Current Season (21-22) vs. Average (2001-2015)

Seasonal precip. accumulated from 1 Oct through 15 Feb by Basin

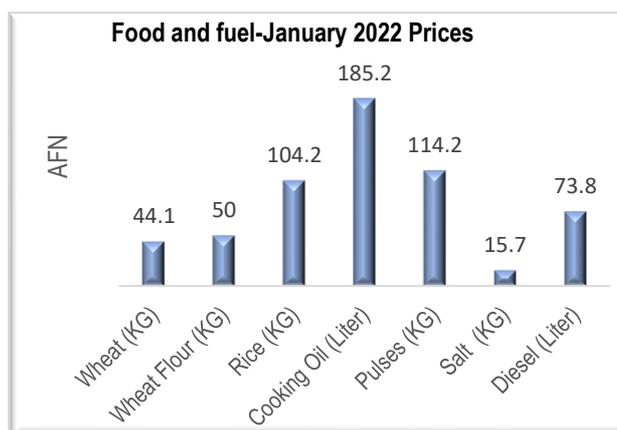


Negative snow depth anomalies were observed at higher elevations in the northeastern and central highlands of the country. As of January 23, snow water volumes improved to above-average, and above last years levels in most of the western and southern basins. Snow water volumes are still below average in some northeastern and northern basins. The below-average precipitation and above-average temperatures are expected through May 2022^{iv}.

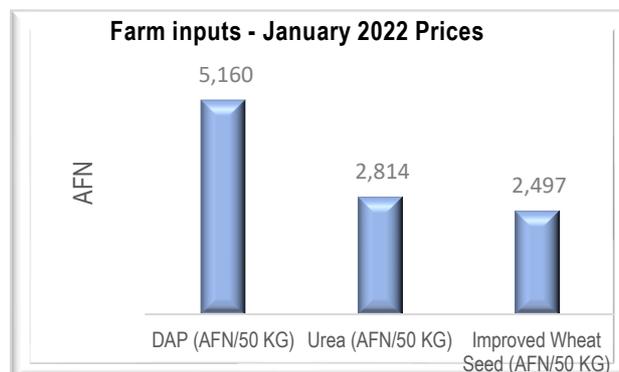
Markets

Most local markets remained relatively functional^v but market access deteriorated across all regions; as heavy snowfall and rain blocked roads in January 2022. In a WFP assessment, 17% of households reported being unable to access markets in the previous two weeks, compared with 3% in December 2021^{vi}. The increasing exchange rates and the loss of efficiency in some markets has led to price increases in basic commodities such as wheat, oil, pulses and fuel, thereby affecting the access to a diversified food basket. Based on WFP Market Monitoring data, food prices were unstable, with many commodities especially food items rising in price in Afghani in January 2022 compared to the previous month, to June 2021 and the same period (January) in 2021^{vii}.

The exchange rate continued to rise hitting a new record (monthly) high at 104.6 AFN/USD likely caused by a lack of cash (USD) in markets and banks, and a very high demand for it. Looking at commodities in the food basket, assessed in the main cities, the average monthly price for wheat increased in January by 5%, making it is 40% above the price of January 2021. The price of cooking oil rose by 1.5% in January 2022 while the price of pulses increased by 3.8% which is 27% higher compared to January 2021. The average monthly price for rice increased by 2.8 % and peaked at 104.2 AFN/Kg which is 20% above the price of January 2021 for high quality rice and increased by 1.1% and peaked at 55.8 AFN/Kg which is 14% above the price of January 2021 for low quality rice.



The average monthly price of diesel decreased by 2.6% compared to last month. The prices of agricultural inputs followed a similar trend as food prices. Due to high demand and decreased supply from Iran, Pakistan, and Turkmenistan, the price of fertilizer increased for Di-ammonium Phosphate and UREA by 6.5 and 14.9%, respectively. Work opportunities significantly declined, by 13.9% compared to the last month and by 47% compared to January 2021. Both casual labor/wheat and pastoralist Terms of Trade (ToT) deteriorated by 6.1% and 10%, respectively, compared to December 2021, due to a significant increase in wheat prices and slightly reduced wages.



Conflict and Displacements

From 1 January 2021 to December 2021, 710K^{viii} people fled their homes due to conflict. About 43K people were displaced from August to December 2021. A total of 33 out of 34 provinces had recorded some level of forced displacement. Although there has been a push by the de-facto authorities encouraging the displaced to move back to the areas of origin, many of the IDPs remain displaced as a lack of livelihoods opportunities is preventing them from returning to their areas of origin.

Natural Disasters

A 5.3 magnitude earthquake struck in Qadis District, Badghis Province in the Western Region of Afghanistan on January 17, 2022. The earthquake was preceded by a smaller earthquake and was felt in Badghis, Ghor and Hirat Provinces. The earthquake reportedly resulted in human casualties and damage to homes and infrastructure in

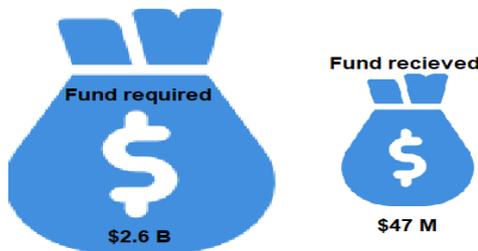
Qadis District, Badghis Province. Initial reports indicated that 26^x people were killed, four people injured, and hundreds of houses were damaged or destroyed. Heavy rains in the area prior to the earthquake reportedly rendered mud brick houses more vulnerable to damage. Preliminary reports indicated that food, shelter, and non-food items, as well as heating materials are most urgently needed.

- ### Humanitarian Response Planning 2022

The combined impact of an acute drought and economic collapse in the second half of 2021 generated a hunger crisis of unprecedented proportions in Afghanistan, with some 22.8 million people projected to face acute food insecurity (IPC3 and IPC4) by the start of 2022. The La Niña event in 2022 will likely result in IPC Phase 2 + provinces slipping into worse Phases. FSAC will meet urgent food needs, protect, and stabilize vulnerable households in IPC Phase 3+ through the provision of timely and adequate nutritious food. Food assistance will be provided to prevent loss of life and support the rehabilitation of local food and market systems.

To address the high levels of food insecurity FSAC will scale up emergency life-saving food assistance in cash or in-kind for 21.6^x million food-insecure men, women and children will receive lifesaving food assistance, including: 20.5 million multiple shock affected people in IPC Phase 3+, 200,144 undocumented returnees, 72,000 refugees, 504,370 IDP's, 150,000 natural disaster affected people and 72,000 Pakistani refugees. Food assistance is designed and adapted to the different needs of different groups, across seasons and across geographic areas, and informed by post-distribution monitoring which underscores that punctual, limited assistance is no longer sufficient to offset the crisis context.

A total of 10,7 million vulnerable and food insecure people will also receive assistance to protect and promote livelihoods, including: 10.5 million people facing acute food insecurity (IPC 3 +), 100,000 conflict affected IDP's, and 100,000 natural disaster affected people in 'crisis' and 'emergency' levels of food insecurity (IPC 3 and 4), focusing on both rural and urban areas and livelihoods.



The FSAC will require US\$2.6 billion to cover the urgent food assistance and livelihood needs under the 2022 HRP. Of the US\$2.6 billion required by FSAC, US\$46.9^{xi} (1.8% of the required funding) has been received as of January 2022.

Humanitarian Assistance

In January 2022, FSAC partners have provided assistance to 8.2 million^{xiii} people in all 34 provinces. This represents a further scale up compared to the already important achievements in 2021.

8,025,192 people received food assistance



193,051 people supported with livelihoods protection assistance



- ### Access

In the first week of January 2022, rain and heavy snowfall impeded humanitarian activities. Some humanitarian partners reported that they were not able to carry out some of their ongoing activities due to movement challenges resulting in delays in delivering humanitarian assistance, Road closures were reported in the West where heavy snow closed roads between Chaghcharan City and surrounding districts. In the Centre, several highways were affected by heavy snow fall including the Kabul- Ghazni highway which was blocked in the Rawza area of Ghazni city and a road in Kotali Shamsuddin that connect Malistan, Nawur, Abband and Zanakhan districts. In the South, heavy rainfall caused several road closures and damages to small bridges and culverts that were previously damaged by Improvised Explosive Device explosions^{xiii}.

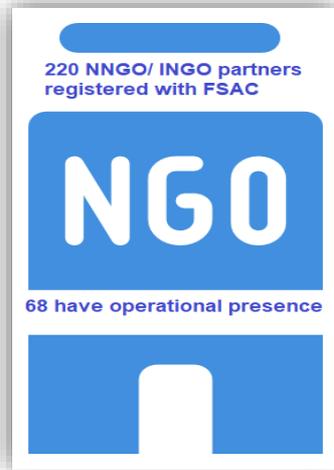


ActionAid team movement in Ghor Province: Photo credits@ActionAid

Since August 15, 2021, the conflict decreased considerably. The reduced level of conflict has resulted in improved humanitarian access. Partners now have access to all provinces/urban and rural areas that were previously inaccessible due to armed conflict. Cases of interference by de-facto authorities have been reported in Badghis, Badakhshan, Kandahar and Laghman provinces, however, these are being addressed at district and provincial level.

Partner Capacity

Supported by over 220 registered FSAC partners, of which 68^{xiv} partners are operational in 34 provinces. Women staff participation in humanitarian activities has slightly improved, provinces like Badghis are still however still requiring women to be accompanied by their Mahram.



Planned Cluster Activities

FSAC will continue to monitor the food security situation through a review of the key food security drivers and to provide updates on a regular basis, depending on the evolving situation and available data sources. FSAC is conducting the 2022 Pre-Lean Season Assessment in collaboration with WFP and the Assessment Working Group (AWG). The PLSA 2022 will target 11,300 households in all 34 provinces of the country. Out of 34 provinces, for 11 provinces with major urban areas, these urban centers will be assessed as separate analytical domains. Assessment sampling will consist of 25 clusters analytical domain, and 10 households in each cluster. Data collection started in the last week of January 2022 and will take 20 days. The PLSA data will feed into the upcoming IPC Analysis, supported by the FSAC and its partners, to be conducted in March with the report expected in April 2022,

ⁱ <https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/en/c/1155210/?iso3=AFG>

ⁱⁱ https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/hrp_2021_onepager_q4_dashboard_dec_2021_v01.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ 14.2 million was originally planned under the HRP. 2M households were added under the Flash Appeal due to the increased
^{iv} January 24, 2022 (usgs.gov)

^v <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Cash-Based%20Transfers%20in%20Afghanistan%2C%20January%202022.pdf>

^{vi} <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/afghanistan-food-security-update-round-five-january-2022>

^{vii} <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/WFP-0000136154.pdf>

^{viii} <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/afghanistan/idps>

^{ix} <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/earthquake-badghis-province-afghanistan-flash-update-no-1-18-january-2022-1000>

^x <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/afghanistan-humanitarian-response-plan-2022-january-2022>

^{xi} FSAC Interactive Dashboards

^{xi} <https://fts.unocha.org/appeals/1100/summary>

^{xii} HRP 2022 Dashboard 01 Jan V03 copy (humanitarianresponse.info)

^{xiii} https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/afghanistan_humanitarian_weekly_9_january_2022.pdf

^{xiv} Partners that have operational presence (currently implementing and reporting to FSAC)

FSAC Contacts

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