Background

The combined impact of a series of acute droughts since 2018, the protracted political crisis and conflict that affected the country for over forty years and economic collapse in the second half of 2021 generated a hunger crisis of unprecedented proportions. High acute food insecurity persists across Afghanistan due to a combination of a collapsing economy and drought that has resultedin nearly 20 million[i] Afghans of food insecure, classified in Crisis or Emergency (IPC Phases 3+), between March and May 2022.

Situation Overview

• Climate Outlook

A weak to moderate La Niña event has affected Afghanistan since October 2021 and continued through the May 2022 wet season. Cumulative precipitation in the March to May 2022 spring season has been below average across Afghanistan, with dry weather forecast to continue until the end of May. Below-average precipitation has already stressed rainfed crops and rangeland areas in the north and northeast regions, the center of rainfed production. Vegetation conditions are also below average in some downstream irrigated areas as of mid-May, reflecting the severity of the below-average precipitation season this year. Low soil moisture and above - average temperatures, below average rainfall are most likely through at least the end of September due to the ongoing La Niña. Indications of snow cover are in line with the last 10-year average, but reduced snow depth, higher than average temperatures and drier than normal soil conditions are a cause of concern. The low soil moisture along with low water

availability in many basins will most likely lead to below-average second crop cultivation in the coming months[iiiii].

• Crop Outlook

The below average precipitation, above average temperature, and low soil moisture resulting from the ongoing La Niña, compounded by spiralling household debts and the inability of farmers to procure and use fertilizers resulted in a below average first season crop, mainly wheat, andwill likely affect the second season crops- mostly rice, maize, and cash crops, with northern rainfed areas and downstream irrigated areas worst affected. Wheat production losses have increased in severity and extent in 2022, according to FEWS NET[iv] estimates, compared to 2021.
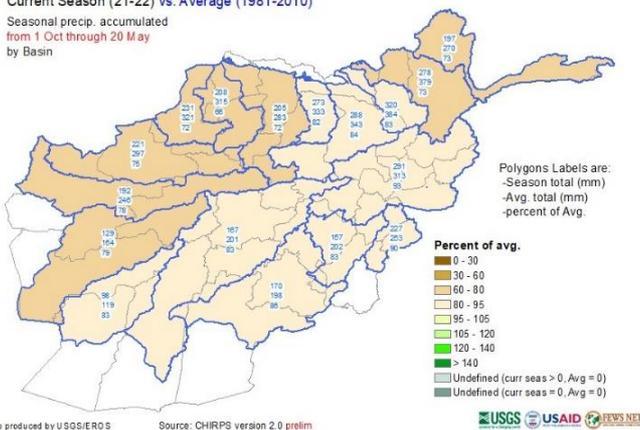

Wheat field in Kuz Kunar district, Nangarhar : Photo credit@FAO

Wheat production loss outlook in Jawzjan and Nimroz highlights more than 40 percent below average, 30-40 percent below average in Badghis, Ghor, Faryab, Sar-e-Pul, Balkh, and Samangan in the north, and 20-30 percent below average in Herat and Farah in the west, Kunduz in the north, Daykundi, Zabul, and Ghazni in the south, and Badakhshan in the east. Field visits conducted by FSAC Regional focal points are showing that the majority of the rainfed farmers had a below average harvest. Similarly, for irrigated lands, field observations also show a below average harvest. Wheat fields in some areas of Samangan, Balkh, Jawzjan, Faryab, and Sar-e-Pul provinces were affected by floods during early May- the heading stage, thereby contributing to the reduced harvests. Many rural households will likely exhaust food

stocks atypically early in the post-harvest season, though the worst impacts will be felt during the next lean season prior to the 2023 harvest[v]
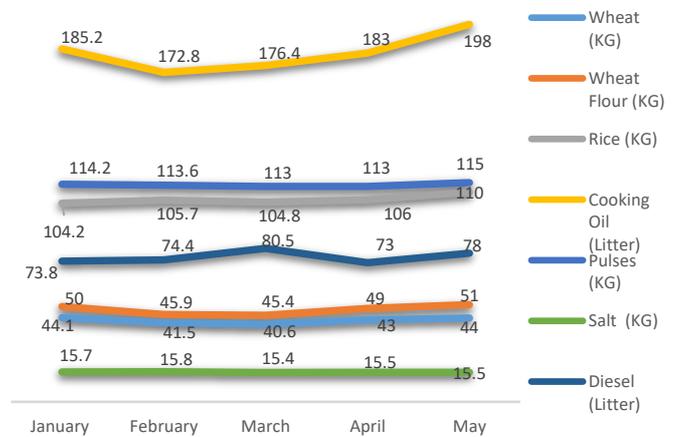
- **Livestock Outlook**

Based on Afghanistan's 2022 Pre-Lean Season Assessment (PLSA), 82.7 percent of households own livestock, while 12 percent depend solely on livestock rearing as their only source of livelihood. As the livestock sector significantly contributes to household income, livestock farmers have been affected by the ongoing La Niña and economic decline. Typically the price of livestock increases during May and July in the lead up to Eid-ul-Azha. WFP monthly market price bulletin indicates that the trafficking of Afghan livestock to neighbouring countries has had positive effects on prices as demand is increasing, but will soon have negative implications on pastoralist livelihoods. The increased sales which are as a result of distress selling due to the expected lack of/ reduced fodder availability is a irreversible coping mechanism. Given the continued below-average precipitation and above-average temperatures forecasted, pasture conditions are likely to deteriorate rapidly in many areas in the coming months, which will likely lead to worsening livestock body conditions and reduced livestock prices in worst affected areas particularly in the north and northeast regions[vi].

Lumpy skin disease (LSD) incidences have been reported both in Kandahar (4 cases) and in Helmand (1 case). FAO is planning to provide training for cooperative members, diary producers, and livestcok onwers across the regions on the identification and management of LSD and Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever (CCHF). LSD is a viral disease of cattle that has dramatic effects on rural livelihoods, which are strongly dependent on cattle. The disease reduces milk production and may lead to sterility in bulls and fertility problems in females. It damages hides, and causes death due to secondary bacterial infections[vii]. CCHF is an important tick-borne human pathogen endemic in Afghanistan. The virus can infect a large number of wild and domesticated mammalian species and some avian species. However the virus does not cause severe disease in these animals, but can produce viremia[viii].

- **Markets**

WFP market price monitoring shows that staple commodity prices in the month of May *(wheat grain, wheat flour , cooking oil, pulses, sugar and salt)* increased compared to last month and remained significantly above last year, the 2 year average and the month of June 2021 before the political transition in the country. The price of wheat increased by 2% compared to last month, 26% compared to last two years average and 45% compared to June 2021. Similarly, the price of rice increased by 4% compared to last month, 15% compared to the last two years' and 24% compared to June 2021. In addition, the price of oil increased by 8% compared to last month, 82%
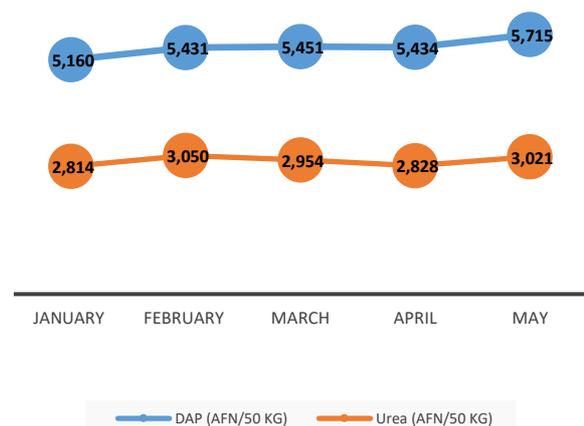
compared to the last two years' average and 48% compared to June 2021.

Food Commodity Prices 2022 (AFN)

According to the Joint Market Monitoring Initiative (JMMI), 100% of key informants (KIs) interviews in Badakhshan, Samanagan, Jawzjan, Daykundi, Farah, Kunduz, Kunar, Kabul, Ghazni, Zabul, Nimroz, Laghman, Balkh, Baghlan, Badghis and Bamyan reported and increase in the food prices in the last 30 days prior to data collection, compared to the national average of 89%. Regarding market functionality, 16% of KIs reported having faced difficulties obtaining enough commodities to meet demand in the 30 days prior to data collection. The three most frequently cited reasons were financial constraints and inability to purchase supplies(93% of KIs), limited availibility of imported items and commodities (30%) and supplier not providing (25%)[ix].

Di-ammonium phosphate, popularly known as DAP, is a preferred fertilizer in Afghanistan because it contains both nitrogen and phosphorus which are primary macro-nutrients and part of the 18 essential plant nutrients. The DAP prices increased by 5% compared to last month, 103% compared to last year's same time, 100% compared to June 2021, and 57% compared to the last two years' average.

DAP and Urea prices in 2022

Urea is a source of nitrogen, an essential nutrient crucial for crop growth and development. Urea is the most important nitrogenous fertilizer in the country because of its high N content (46%N). Urea prices increased 7% compared to last month, 142% compared to the last year, 66% compared to last 2 years' average and 136% compared to June 2021.

• Conflict and Displacements

From January 1, 2021 to May 20, 2022, 823,700 people fled their homes due to conflict across the country. Although the de-facto authorities are encouraging the displaced to move back to their areas of origin, many of the IDPs remain displaced as a lack of livelihood opportunities is preventing them from returning to their areas of origin[x]. To facilitate a principled return, the UN is advocating for proper engagement with the authorities and displacement affected communities to support safe returns supported by other durable solutions, and also ensure that humanitarian assistance and services to those IDPs who elect to remain continues
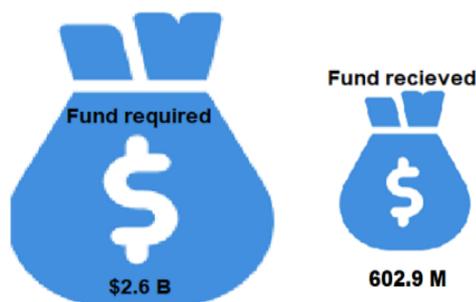
• Natural Disasters

Between January to April 2022, 46,039 people in Badghis, Herat, Ghor, Hilmand, Nimroz, Kunar, Laghman, Nangarhar, Badakhshan, Takhar and Kunduz provinces were affected by natural disasters. Of these 20,748 people were affected by floods, 25,256 people were affected by earthquake and 35 people were affected by landslide or mudflow[xi].

• Humanitarian Response Planning 2022

In 2022, 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 million food-insecure men, women, and children that includes 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. 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+), focusing on both rural and urban areas.

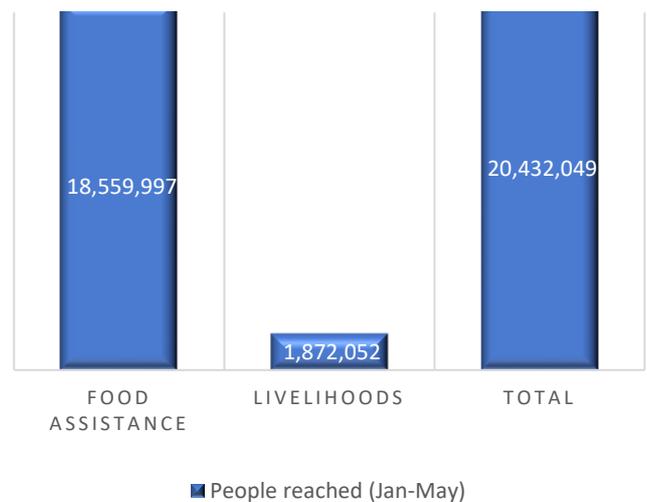The FSAC requires US $2.6 billion to cover the urgent food assistance and livelihood needs under the 2022 HRP, and US $586 million (23% of the required funding) has been received as of April 2022.

• Humanitarian Assistance

Between January and May 2022, FSAC partners supported 20.4 million[xii] people (*see FSAC interactive dashboard*). About 18.5 million people were supported with food assistance and 1.87 million people with livelihood assistance (*agriculture and livestock support*) in all 34 provinces. For food assistance, most of these beneficiaries received one to five rounds of assistance. Of the 18.5 million people supported with food, 18.2 million were in IPC Phase 3 and 4 locations. Due to the increased needs, IPC Phase 4 beneficiaries are receiving 75% of the recommended basket while IPC Phase 3 populations are receiving 50% of the recommended food basket in cash or kind. As these beneficiaries are supposed to receive multiple rounds of assistance, more funding is required to complement and complete the assistance package.

**HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE-
JANUARY - MAY ACHIEVEMENT**

FOOD ASSISTANCE	18,559,997
LIVELIHOODS	1,872,052
TOTAL	20,432,049

■ People reached (Jan-May)

• Access

There were no major access issues reported in the month of May. Some level of interference by the de-facto authorities in the implementation of interventions was reported in most regions, but these were resolved locally without major impact on the delivery of assistance.

• Partner Capacity

Supported by over 266 registered FSAC partners, of which 82 partners are operational[xiii] in 34 provinces. Despite some improvement in women's staff participation in humanitarian activities, women staff are still not allowed to fully participate in humanitarian work.

Fund required
$2.6 B

Fund recieved
602.9 M

- **Planned Cluster Activities**

FSAC will conduct the following activities in the month of June:

- Support the management of the AHF 1ˢᵗ Standard Allocation.

- Seasonal Food Security Assessment and IPC Planning
- Seasonal Food Security Assessment and IPC Lesson Learning Workshop
- June FSAC meeting.

i https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/afghanistan-ipc-acute-food-insecurity-analysis-march-november-2022-issued-may

ii Afghanistan - Key Message Update: Tue, 2022-05-31 | Famine Early Warning Systems Network (fews.net)

iii Afghanistan - Seasonal Monitor: Wed, 2022-05-25 | Famine Early Warning Systems Network (fews.net)

iv Afghanistan - Seasonal Monitor: Wed, 2022-05-25 | Famine Early Warning Systems Network (fews.net)

vAfghanistan - Key Message Update: Tue, 2022-05-31 | Famine Early Warning Systems Network (fews.net)

vi Afghanistan - Remote Monitoring Report: Fri, 2022-04-29 | Famine Early Warning Systems Network (fews.net)

vii https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/1fcf63b0-80e9-4f8e-825f-10ea6e998479/

viii https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6669593/

ix https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/afghanistan-joint-market-monitoring-initiative-jmmi-7-17-may-2022

x https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/afghanistan/idps

xi https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/afghanistan/natural-disasters-0

xi https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/afghanistan/idps

xiii Have running projects and are reporting to FSAC