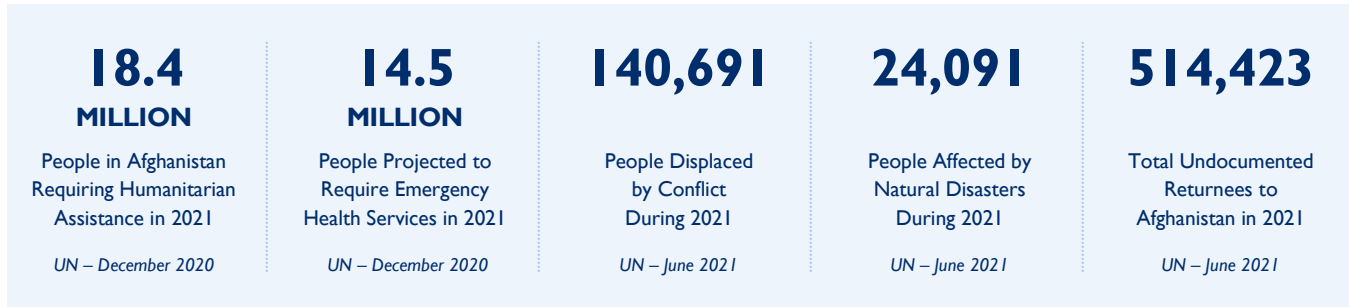




Afghanistan – Complex Emergency

JUNE 11, 2021

SITUATION AT A GLANCE



- Conflict displaced thousands of people and resulted in hundreds of civilian casualties in early 2021.
- Drought conditions, ongoing conflict, and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are driving heightened levels of acute food insecurity among millions of people.
- Poor adherence to COVID-19 mitigation protocols and vaccine misconceptions among the public challenge efforts to slow the spread of the disease.
- The USG announces more than \$266 million in additional funding for humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan.



TOTAL U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN FUNDING For the Afghanistan Response in FY 2021	USAID/BHA ¹	\$157,500,000
	State/PRM ²	\$108,882,795
Total		\$266,382,795

For complete funding breakdown with partners, see detailed chart on page 6

¹USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA)
²U.S. Department of State Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM)

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Conflict Results in Casualties, Displaces Thousands of People in Early 2021

Security conditions have continued to deteriorate in Afghanistan in 2021, with armed clashes, improvised explosive device (IED) detonations, and targeted killings resulting in civilian casualties, displacing populations, and disrupting humanitarian operations. From January 1 to June 6, conflict displaced nearly 140,700 people across Afghanistan, with notable increases in conflict and related displacement in May in Baghlan, Helmand, and Laghman provinces, according to the UN. Additionally, the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) recorded 573 civilian deaths and 1,210 civilian injuries in Afghanistan between January and March, primarily due to ground clashes, IED detonations, and targeted killings. The UNAMA data represents a 29 percent increase in civilian casualties in the first quarter of 2021 compared to the last quarter of 2020, including significant increases in casualties among women and children, as well as a 117 percent increase in the number of casualties caused by indiscriminate use of IEDs. Escalated violence in 2021 continues a trend following the commencement of the Government of Afghanistan–Taliban peace talks in Doha, Qatar, in September 2020; total civilian casualties across the country from September 2020 to February 2021 were 38 percent higher than the total recorded during the same six-month period in 2019–2020.

Active clashes, presence of IEDs, and general insecurity, as well as interferences by parties to the conflict, also continue to create a difficult operating environment for relief agencies in Afghanistan. From January to March 2021, relief agencies reported nearly 440 incidents of impeded humanitarian access, representing an increase compared to the previous three-month period, when nearly 340 incidents were recorded. In the first quarter of 2021, violence and conflict resulted in the deaths of nine humanitarian personnel and injuries to 22 additional staff; relief workers also continue to face risk of abduction or detention. On June 8, armed individuals entered a Baghlan camp of the Halo Trust—a non-governmental organization (NGO) that conducts mine clearance activities—and opened fire, killing 10 people and injuring 16 people, international media report. The UN has called for an investigation into the attack, which underscores the risk faced by humanitarian personnel in Afghanistan, particularly national staff. In addition, demands for illegal fees and other bureaucratic measures often result in the temporary disruption or suspension of humanitarian programs. UN agencies and international and national NGOs, including U.S. Government (USG) partners, remain committed to continue providing assistance in Afghanistan, and continue to call for parties to the conflict to comply with international humanitarian law to protect civilians, relief personnel, and civilian infrastructure, and allow unimpeded humanitarian access.

Acute Food Insecurity Levels Remain High Amid Drought Conditions

Approximately 9.5 million people across Afghanistan are projected to experience Crisis—IPC 3—or Emergency—IPC 4—levels of acute food insecurity through November and require urgent, life-saving food assistance, according to the March IPC Acute Food Security Analysis.² Separately, the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) projects that populations in all provinces of the country are likely facing Stressed—IPC 2—or Crisis levels of acute food insecurity through September. Key drivers of food insecurity in Afghanistan include conflict, resultant displacement, and associated livelihood disruptions; impacts of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, including reduced employment opportunities, diminished income, and increased food prices; and below-average levels of precipitation during the 2020/2021 wet season, which limited water availability for agriculture and livestock

² The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is a multi-partner initiative that developed a standardized scale to classify the severity and magnitude of food insecurity. The IPC scale, which is comparable across countries and time, ranges from Minimal—IPC 1—to Famine—IPC 5—for acute food insecurity.

production, according to FEWS NET and IPC.

Between June and September 2021, FEWS NET and IPC project that food security conditions will generally improve for many households, reflecting an expected seasonal increase in food availability and income-generating opportunities and decrease in food prices during the harvest and post-harvest seasons. However, FEWS NET and IPC report that precipitation deficits and high temperatures associated with the 2020/2021 La Niña weather event may result in drought-like conditions through June, likely leading to below-average harvests and adversely affecting food security outcomes into the January–May 2022 lean season—the period when household food stocks are typically at their lowest. Food security actors expect that 2021 wheat and livestock production will decrease by 31 percent and 30 percent, respectively, compared to 2020. In addition, given seasonal patterns of conflict levels in Afghanistan, conflict activity may increase during the spring and summer, generating further displacement, disrupting livelihoods, and negatively impacting household food security, according to FEWS NET.

Food security and livelihoods assistance provided by relief agencies, including the UN World Food Program (WFP) and other USG partners, contributed to mitigating worse food security outcomes in recent months, food security actors report. From January to March 2021, relief agencies delivered food assistance to more than 2 million people across Afghanistan. In 2020, humanitarian organizations reached nearly 7.5 million people in Afghanistan with emergency food assistance and approximately 2.1 million people with livelihoods support, more than double the number of people reached during 2019. With \$112 million in FY 2021 funding, USAID/BHA is supporting WFP to continue delivering emergency food assistance—including cash, in-kind assistance, and vouchers—to food-insecure populations, as well as comprehensive nutrition support, including nutrition services and specialized nutritious foods, to malnourished children and pregnant and lactating women across Afghanistan. USAID/BHA partner the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) also provides nutrition assistance countrywide, while the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) provides technical assistance to bolster coordination among organizations implementing programs to address food insecurity.

COVID-19 Continues to Spread, While Adherence to Preventive Measures and Demand for COVID-19 Vaccine Remain Low

Daily totals of new confirmed COVID-19 cases in Afghanistan have increased sharply in the weeks following the mid-May Eid al-Fitr holiday, surpassing peak figures recorded earlier in the country’s outbreak, the UN reports. Health actors confirmed more than 5,000 new cases and nearly 8,500 new cases during the weeks of May 18–24 and May 25–31, respectively, according to the UN World Health Organization (WHO). The increased caseload is further straining the health care system, with health facilities reporting shortages of medical supplies, oxygen, and beds for patients with COVID-19 and other illnesses. Health agencies report continued risk of COVID-19 spread across the country due to insufficient adherence among the population to public health protocols, such as wearing masks and observing physical distancing measures. The Government of Afghanistan Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) had administered at least the first vaccine dose to more than 630,000 people as of June 3, WHO reports. However, demand remains low amid widespread misconceptions and rumors about the vaccines. In particular, the UN has highlighted the need for greater outreach to displaced, nomadic, and hard-to-reach communities, to counter negative perceptions and ensure equitable access to vaccines. The MoPH and humanitarian agencies are scaling up risk communication and community engagement activities, including to further identify and address vaccine concerns. Health agencies have confirmed more than 82,300 COVID-19 cases in Afghanistan since early January, including 3,251 related deaths, according to WHO. Due to limited public health resources, including insufficient capacity for

COVID-19 testing, and low public demand for tests, health actors note that COVID-19 cases and related deaths in the country are likely underreported.

USG Provides \$266 Million for Afghanistan Humanitarian Response

On June 4, the USG announced the provision of more than \$266 million in additional humanitarian assistance through USAID/BHA and State/PRM to support populations in Afghanistan. With the additional support, USG partners will expand the provision of education, health, livelihoods, protection, shelter, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) assistance. USG funding will also support the delivery of emergency food assistance, nutrition support, and cash and voucher assistance across the country. USG partners continue activities to bolster livelihoods; improve food security, health, and nutrition; mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and economic impacts of the pandemic; and provide protection assistance, such as legal documentation, and immediate relief to populations affected by conflict.

KEY FIGURES



34

Provinces reached with support for COVID-19 preparedness and response



2.7 Million

People reached with USAID/BHA-supported WFP food and nutrition assistance from October 2020 to March 2021

U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

COVID-19 PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

In FY 2021, the USG continues to support UN agencies and NGO partners to conduct activities dedicated to preventing, mitigating, and responding to the spread of COVID-19 in Afghanistan. USG partners conducted COVID-19 awareness campaigns, trained community health workers on infection prevention and control measures, and expanded delivery of WASH services. USG partner-supported mobile health teams also conducted outpatient consultations, provided referrals and transportation to isolation and treatment facilities, and advised personnel on proper COVID-19 protocols. UN partners have also provided hygiene kits and medical equipment to frontline health workers, deployed mobile health teams, and supported risk communication and community engagement activities. In response to secondary effects of the pandemic—such as increased food insecurity and protection risks—USG partners are delivering food and multipurpose cash assistance, increasing provision of protection services to affected populations, and supporting efforts to increase livelihoods opportunities for returning refugees. In addition, USG implementing partners have adapted some activities in response to the pandemic as they continue to address other humanitarian needs.

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

The USG supports the delivery of life-saving emergency food assistance across Afghanistan, providing vulnerable populations with locally, regionally, and internationally procured in-kind food assistance; cash transfers for food; and food vouchers. With USAID/BHA support, WFP has also expanded food assistance to support populations who have experienced reduced access to income-generating activities and staple foods in urban communities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, USAID/BHA partner FAO provides households with seeds and livestock feed to bolster agricultural livelihoods recovery and resilience. USAID/BHA

also supports coordination and capacity-building activities among food security actors in Afghanistan to strengthen humanitarian response efforts.

PROTECTION

Armed conflict and insecurity continue to generate serious protection concerns in Afghanistan. Protection risks have worsened during the COVID-19 pandemic, with humanitarian agencies recording increases in child labor, gender-based violence (GBV)—including early and forced marriage—and sexual exploitation and abuse. With support from State/PRM, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) provides protection assistance to refugees and refugee returnees, IDPs, and other vulnerable populations in Afghanistan. Additionally, USG NGO and UN partners support mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) programs, including individual counseling, activities to support development of coping skills, and safe healing and learning spaces for children. USG partners also implement child protection activities and services for GBV survivors, provide legal assistance to returning refugees to access documentation, and integrate MHPSS and other protection measures into education, health, and nutrition programming.



9

Number of USG implementing partners conducting protection interventions



10

Number of USG implementing partners supporting health programming



4

Number of USG implementing partners supporting shelter programming



7

Number of USG implementing partners supporting livelihoods programming

HEALTH

The USG is supporting 10 partners to implement life-saving health activities across Afghanistan to improve community health awareness, bolster outpatient consultation efforts, and provide support to essential health services. USG partners aim to increase equitable access to and utilization of health services among internally displaced persons (IDPs), conflict-affected persons, and vulnerable host communities by supporting hospitals and clinics and deploying mobile health teams to deliver emergency and primary health care services, as well as conducting trainings for local community health workers and health care professionals, providing essential medicines, and supporting vaccination campaigns.

SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS

Shelter needs among populations in Afghanistan remain significant due to ongoing conflict and natural disasters such as floods and landslides, which frequently result in displacement and damage or destruction of houses. USG partners provide emergency shelter for newly displaced people, as well as shelter repair kits, transitional shelter, and multipurpose cash assistance to support the housing needs of IDP and host community populations. Partners also conduct trainings to improve preparedness for natural hazards.

LIVELIHOODS AND EDUCATION

With USG funding, partners deliver livelihoods programming and skills training to support sustainable refugee reintegration and boost opportunities for vulnerable host community populations; activities include courses to increase literacy, business knowledge, and skills development. State/PRM partners support returning refugees, IDPs, and host communities in Afghanistan by providing access to skills training and adult literacy

courses, in addition to access to education for Afghan refugees and host community children in Pakistan. Partners also work to ensure IDP and returning refugee children have access to learning spaces and accelerated learning programs to help children prepare for enrollment in formal schools, as well as support initiatives to improve infrastructure in schools within host communities.

CONTEXT IN BRIEF

- Ongoing conflict and frequent natural disasters continue to displace populations and generate humanitarian needs throughout Afghanistan. The UN estimates that more than 4.9 million people remain in protracted displacement in Afghanistan, while natural disasters, such as avalanches and floods, affect approximately 250,000 Afghans each year.
- USAID/BHA supports a three-pronged approach to providing humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan: address the emergency needs of individuals affected by conflict, natural disasters, and acute food insecurity; enhance humanitarian coordination, data collection, and analysis; and strengthen and integrate national-level disaster risk reduction capacity.
- State/PRM supports the sustainable voluntary return of Afghan refugees while preserving asylum space in host countries through humanitarian diplomacy and assistance, as well as initiatives that ensure that areas hosting returning refugees can support all members of the community.
- On October 25, 2020, the U.S. Chargé d’Affaires to Afghanistan, Ambassador Ross Wilson, re-declared a disaster for FY 2021 for Afghanistan due to the ongoing complex emergency.
- The USG is supporting humanitarian partners to adapt and increase programming, particularly in the health, protection, and WASH sectors, to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 and respond to the outbreak in Afghanistan, especially for IDPs, returned refugees, and other crisis-affected populations.

USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE AFGHANISTAN RESPONSE IN FY 2021¹

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	AMOUNT
USAID/BHA			
Implementing Partners (IPs)	Economic Recovery and Market Systems (ERMS); Health, Humanitarian Coordination, Information Management, and Assessments (HCIMA); Multipurpose Cash Assistance (MPCA); Protection; Shelter and Settlements; WASH	Countrywide, Balkh, Farah, Ghazni, Helmand, Herat, Kabul, Kandahar, Kapisa, Khost, Konar, Laghman, Loghar, Nangarhar, Paktia, Wardak, Zabul	\$12,500,000
	HCIMA	Countrywide	\$500,000
FAO	Agriculture	Badghis, Balkh, Farah, Faryab, Ghazni, Herat, Jowzjan, Kandahar, Nangarhar, Nimroz, Sar-e-Pul, Zabul	\$6,000,000

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)	Disaster Risk Reduction Policy and Practice (DRRPP), Food Assistance—Cash Transfers, Health, Shelter	Badakhshan, Badghis, Daykundi, Ghor, Herat, Kandahar, Nuristan	\$1,200,000
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	DRRPP, HCIMA, Shelter and Settlements	Countrywide; Balkh, Herat, Kabul, Kandahar, Kunduz, Nangarhar, Paktia	\$8,000,000
UNICEF	HCIMA, Nutrition, WASH	Countrywide	\$16,500,000
UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)	HCIMA	Countrywide	\$800,000
WFP	Food Assistance—Cash Transfers, Vouchers, Local, Regional, and International Procurement; Nutrition	Countrywide	\$112,000,000
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING			\$157,500,000
STATE/PRM			
Implementing Partners (IPs)	Health, ERMS, Protection	Countrywide	\$24,400,000
IOM	Health	Countrywide	\$2,900,000
UNHCR	Education, ERMS, HCIMA, Health, MPCA, Protection, Logistics Support, Shelter and Settlements, VASH	Countrywide	\$30,400,000
		Pakistan	\$25,400,000
		Regional	\$24,300,000
UN Population Fund (UNFPA)	Health, Protection	Countrywide	\$1,482,795
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING			\$108,882,795
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE AFGHANISTAN RESPONSE IN FY 2021			\$266,382,795

¹ Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. Funding figures reflect publicly announced funding as of June 11, 2021.

PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for disaster responses around the world can be found at [interaction.org](https://www.interaction.org).
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietarily, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
 - USAID Center for International Disaster Information: [cidi.org](https://www.cidi.org)
 - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at [reliefweb.int](https://www.reliefweb.int).

USAID/BHA bulletins appear on the USAID website at [usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work](https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work)