



Home Office

# Country Policy and Information Note

## Afghanistan: Humanitarian situation

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# Executive summary

Following the August 2021 Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, the country has faced economic instability, an increase in unemployment rates, a decrease in household income and a deteriorating humanitarian situation. An international freeze on funding has also impacted the healthcare system.

The number of people in need of humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan rose from 14 million in 2020 to 23.7 million in 2024. Food security improved slightly in 2023 compared to previous years but 13.1 million people still face high levels of acute food insecurity. Only 20% of the population has sufficient access to safe drinking water and just over half the population have access to basic sanitation services. Multiple events impacted the levels of internally displaced people in-country, including the deportation of Afghans from Pakistan and earthquakes in Herat province. An estimated 6.3 million people, roughly 1 in 7 Afghans, are internally displaced. This is the largest number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in South Asia and the second largest worldwide.

In general, the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan is not so severe that there are substantial grounds for believing that there is a real risk that conditions amount to torture, or inhuman or degrading treatment as set out in paragraphs 339C and 339 CA(iii) of the Immigration Rules/Article 3 ECHR.

In general, there are parts of the country where it will be reasonable for some people to relocate. Consideration must be given to a person's particular circumstances, including their gender, age and the availability of support networks in-country when assessing if internal relocation is viable.

Decision makers need to read the assessment in full and use relevant country information as the evidential basis for decisions.

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# Assessment

12 August 2024

## About the assessment

This section considers the evidence relevant to this note – that is information in the [country information](#), refugee/human rights laws and policies, and applicable caselaw – and provides an assessment of whether, **in general**:

- the humanitarian situation is so severe that there are substantial grounds for believing that there is a real risk of serious harm because conditions amount to inhuman or degrading treatment as within [paragraphs 339C and 339CA\(iii\) of the Immigration Rules](#)/Article 3 of the [European Convention on Human Rights \(ECHR\)](#)
- internal relocation is possible to avoid persecution/serious harm
- if a claim is refused, it is likely to be certifiable as ‘clearly unfounded’ under [section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002](#).

Decision makers **must**, however, still consider all claims on an individual basis, taking into account each case’s specific facts.

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## 1. Material facts, credibility and other checks/referrals

### 1.1 Credibility

- 1.1.1 For information on assessing credibility, see the instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).
- 1.1.2 Decision makers must also check if there has been a previous application for a UK visa or another form of leave. Asylum applications matched to visas should be investigated prior to the asylum interview (see the [Asylum Instruction on Visa Matches, Asylum Claims from UK Visa Applicants](#)).
- 1.1.3 Decision makers must also consider making an international biometric data-sharing check (see [Biometric data-sharing process \(Migration 5 biometric data-sharing process\)](#)).
- 1.1.4 In cases where there are doubts surrounding a person’s claimed place of origin, decision makers should also consider language analysis testing, where available (see the [Asylum Instruction on Language Analysis](#)).

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**Official – sensitive: Not for disclosure – Start of section**

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**Official – sensitive: Not for disclosure – End of section**

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## 1.2 Exclusion

- 1.2.1 Decision makers must consider whether there are serious reasons for considering whether one (or more) of the exclusion clauses is applicable. Each case must be considered on its individual facts and merits and decision makers should refer to the Country Policy and Information Note [Afghanistan: fear of the Taliban](#).
- 1.2.2 If the person is excluded from the Refugee Convention, they will also be excluded from a grant of humanitarian protection (which has a wider range of exclusions than refugee status).
- 1.2.3 For guidance on exclusion and restricted leave, see the Asylum Instruction on [Exclusion under Articles 1F and 33\(2\) of the Refugee Convention](#), [Humanitarian Protection](#) and the instruction on [Restricted Leave](#).

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### **Official – sensitive: Not for disclosure – Start of section**

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### **Official – sensitive: Not for disclosure – End of section**

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## 2. Convention reason(s)

- 2.1.1 A severe humanitarian situation does not in itself give rise to a well-founded fear of persecution for a Refugee Convention reason.
- 2.1.2 In the absence of a link to one of the 5 Refugee Convention grounds necessary to be recognised as a refugee, the question to address is whether the person will face a real risk of serious harm in order to qualify for Humanitarian Protection (HP).
- 2.1.3 However, before considering whether a person requires protection because of the general humanitarian and/or security situation, decision makers must consider if the person faces persecution for a Refugee Convention reason. Where the person qualifies for protection under the Refugee Convention, decision makers do not need to consider if there are substantial grounds for believing the person faces a real risk of serious harm meriting a grant of HP.
- 2.1.4 For further guidance on the 5 Refugee Convention grounds see the Asylum Instruction, [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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## 3. Risk

- 3.1.1 In general, humanitarian conditions are not likely to be so severe as to result in a breach of paragraphs 339C and 339CA(iii) of the Immigration Rules/Article 3 ECHR. However, decision makers must consider each case on its facts. There may be cases where a combination of circumstances mean that a person will face such a breach.

- 3.1.2 Whilst a country guidance case on Somalia, decision makers should note the Upper Tribunal (UT)'s findings and general approach in [OA \(Somalia\) \(CG\) \[2022\] UKUT 33 \(IAC\) \(2 February 2022\)](#),

'In an Article 3 "living conditions" case, there must be a causal link between the Secretary of State's removal decision and any "intense suffering" feared by the returnee. This includes a requirement for temporal proximity between the removal decision and any "intense suffering" of which the returnee claims to be at real risk. This reflects the requirement in Paposhvili [\[2017\] Imm AR 867](#) for intense suffering to be "serious, rapid and irreversible" in order to engage the returning State's obligations under Article 3 ECHR. A returnee fearing "intense suffering" on account of their prospective living conditions at some unknown point in the future is unlikely to be able to attribute responsibility for those living conditions to the Secretary of State, for to do so would be speculative.' (Headnote 1)

- 3.1.3 In the country guidance case [AK \(Article 15\(c\)\) Afghanistan CG \[2012\] UKUT 00163\(IAC\)](#) (18 May 2012), heard on 14 and 15 March 2012, having considered evidence up to early 2012, the Upper Tribunal (UT) held that, whilst the importance of return and reintegration packages for UK returnees to Kabul should not be exaggerated, they did, nevertheless, place returnees in a better position than that of other IDPs (paragraph 224).

- 3.1.4 The country guidance case [AS \(Safety of Kabul\) Afghanistan CG \[2018\] UKUT 118 \(IAC\) \(28 March 2018\)](#), heard on 25 and 27 September, 24 October, 20 November and 11 December 2017, considered humanitarian conditions in the context of whether it was reasonable for healthy single men without connections or support in Kabul to relocate there. The UT held that '... it will not, in general be unreasonable or unduly harsh for a single adult male in good health to relocate to Kabul even if he does not have any specific connections or support network in Kabul' (paragraph 241(ii)).

- 3.1.5 This case was reconsidered by the UT in the country guidance case [AS \(Safety of Kabul\) Afghanistan \(CG\) \[2020\] UKUT 130 \(IAC\)](#) (1 May 2020), heard on 19 and 20 November 2019 and 14 January 2020, which, whilst not directly addressing whether conditions breached Article 3 ECHR, held that:

'The Panel in the 2018 UT decision found that much of Kabul's population lives in inadequate informal housing with limited access to basic services such as sanitation and potable water. They noted that healthcare provision, although poor, is better in Kabul than elsewhere.

'The evidence before us indicates that the position is unchanged. As was the case when the Panel made its findings in the 2018 UT decision, most of Kabul's population is poor, lives in inadequate housing with inadequate sanitation, lacks access to potable water, and struggles to earn sufficient income to sustain itself in a society without any safety net.

'However, it is also apparent, most notably from [the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs] OCHA's 2020 Humanitarian Needs Overview of Afghanistan, that, in terms of people in need, the situation in Kabul is significantly better than much of the rest of Afghanistan.

'The position today is comparable to 2017. A departure from the findings of the Panel in the 2018 UT decision cannot be justified' (paras 224 to 227).

- 3.1.6 The political and security situation, as well as the socio-economic situation, has changed significantly since conditions were considered by the Upper Tribunal in [AK](#) and [AS \(Safety of Kabul\)](#). Whilst conditions have deteriorated and the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance has increased, the humanitarian situation is not so severe that in general, a single adult male in good health is likely to face a real risk of serious harm. Therefore the country information does not indicate that there are ‘very strong grounds supported by cogent evidence’ to depart from the findings in [AK](#) and [AS](#).
- 3.1.7 However, living conditions vary, and groups who may be particularly vulnerable to serious harm because of their status and circumstances, such as women, children, the elderly and the disabled, may face a higher risk of a breach of Article 3. Decision makers must consider, on the facts of the case, whether a returnee, by reason of their individual circumstances, would face a real risk of serious harm contrary to paragraphs 339C and 339CA(iii) of the Immigration Rules/Article 3 ECHR as a result of the humanitarian situation.
- 3.1.8 The OCHA’s 2020 Humanitarian Needs Overview indicated that in 2019, 6.3 million people, c.16% of the population, were in need of some form of humanitarian assistance. In June 2024 this had risen to 23.7 million, c.55% of the population (see [People in need – numbers and location](#)).
- 3.1.9 A freeze in assets and foreign funding following the Taliban takeover has led to a severely fragile economy, reduced employment, and disruption in public services. The October 2023 earthquake in Herat and the return of Afghan migrants from Pakistan have also added to existing economic challenges. As the economy has shrunk the Taliban has restricted employment, particularly for women. Unemployment rates are high with the World Bank reporting that one in 3 young men aged between 14 and 24 are unemployed. Wages have stagnated and household income has declined with many Afghan families earning less than £0.78p a day with the poverty line set at £25.40 per month or £0.84p a day (see [Economy](#) and [Employment](#)).
- 3.1.10 There were slight improvements in food security in 2023 compared to previous years predominately due to humanitarian food and agriculture assistance. However, according to Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) 13.1 million people (c.29% of the population) are facing high levels of acute food insecurity (Phase 3 or above). Despite this, IPC data shows that 40% of urban Kabul are in Phase 1 which means they are able to meet essential food and non-food needs and 40% are in Phase 2 meaning they have minimally adequate food consumption. IPC data shows marginal improvement in the overall situation for food security since 2020. According to UNICEF 4 million vulnerable people, including 800,000 children under 5, are suffering from severe malnutrition. High unemployment which limits purchasing power, multi-year drought, flooding and earthquakes continue to affect food security (see [Food security](#)).
- 3.1.11 Severe drought, flooding, earthquakes, and poor water management contribute to water insecurity. According to the 2024 HRP, 67% of households suffered from water scarcity in 2023 compared to 48% in 2021. Only 20% of the population has sufficient access to safe drinking water. UNICEF statistics show that access to safely managed water has been marginally improving year on year since 2018. Just over half the population

have access to at least basic sanitation services, this has improved year on year since 2018 when just under half had access to these services. Rural communities were particularly affected by severe droughts, floods and earthquakes in 2023 (see [Water, sanitation and hygiene \(WASH\)](#)).

- 3.1.12 Economic instability and the international freeze on funding has created major challenges for the healthcare system. More than 17 million people have limited or no access to basic health services. Women are particularly affected due to the high cost of treatment, the inability to see male medical staff and lack of a Tazkira (identity card), which around a quarter of Afghan women do not possess. Hospitals face shortages of medicines and medical staff. According to data released by the Taliban, in mid-2022 there were 3,472 active health facilities in the country and across these facilities there were a total of 15,318 beds, although public access to these resources has been reduced (see [Healthcare](#)).
- 3.1.13 Shelter needs have improved over the last two years, however according to OCHA at least 30% of households live in inadequate accommodation, particularly those in rural areas and female-headed households. Data from the MICS showed that in the more populous areas, of those surveyed, most owned their own accommodation. The number of those owning their own accommodation in Kabul was less than in other areas with the number of those renting accommodation being slightly higher in this area. An estimated 390,000 households, approximately 2.7 million people, reside in nearly 900 informal settlements across the country accommodating a mixture of internally displaced people (IDPs) and returnees from Pakistan and Iran. There are an estimated 6.3 million IDPs, around 1 in 7 Afghans, in Afghanistan as of late-2023. Multiple events have impacted the number of IDP's in-country including earthquakes in Herat province in October 2023, and the return of over 500,000 Afghans from Pakistan in September 2023. IDPs are largely reliant on humanitarian organisations to provide aid (see [Accommodation and shelter](#) and [Internally displaced people \(IDPs\)](#)).
- 3.1.14 The lack of direct foreign funding to the Taliban has limited their ability to provide humanitarian support. Instead, foreign aid organisations are providing critical assistance, including food, water, sanitation and health assistance. A decrease in military operations has enabled aid agencies to access previously hard to reach areas. Although challenges in providing support remain due to Taliban restrictions, including the ban on women working in humanitarian response, in April 2024 UNHCR reached 33 out of the 34 provinces countrywide to offer assistance. Data from OCHA shows that in 2023 just under half the population (c.47%) in Kabul required some form of humanitarian assistance and 21% of those in need received assistance. During January to March 2024 285 organisations delivered humanitarian services to 401 districts and OCHA reported that humanitarian partners provided at least one form of humanitarian assistance to 9.9 million people (see [Humanitarian aid](#) and [People in need – numbers and location](#)).
- 3.1.15 For further guidance on assessing risk, see the Asylum Instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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## 4. Protection

- 4.1.1 The state is not able to provide protection against a breach of Article 3 because of general humanitarian conditions if this occurs in individual cases.
- 4.1.2 For further guidance on assessing state protection, see the Asylum Instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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## 5. Internal relocation

- 5.1.1 Internal relocation to Kabul is likely to be reasonable for single men in good health. It is unlikely to be reasonable for lone women and female heads of household. Decision makers must take into account the particular circumstances of the person and consider each case on its facts.
- 5.1.2 In [AK](#), the UT held that internal relocation to Kabul was reasonable, bar some limited categories (lone women and female heads of household). This was confirmed in [AS \(Safety of Kabul\)](#). When considering assistance available to returnees, the UT concluded ‘We see no reason to depart from the finding of the [2018 UT] Panel that a returnee, generally, will be able to access sufficient assistance and funds so as to be in a position to accommodate and feed himself for the first 4–6 weeks in Kabul without earning an income’ (paragraph 245).
- 5.1.3 Food security within Kabul has improved with 80% of the population of urban Kabul, and 85% of the rest of Kabul, in Phase 1 or Phase 2 of the IPC classification in 2024. Food prices are slightly above average in Kabul. However, data from the MICS 2022-23, noted that in Kabul 56.9% of those surveyed (24,607 household members) were in the richest wealth index quintile. The ability to access shelter has improved in Afghanistan generally since 2022, particularly in urban areas where 79% are now deemed live in adequate shelter according to OCHA. (see [Socio-economic situation, Accommodation and shelter](#) and [Food security](#)).
- 5.1.4 Although the cost of living has increased since the findings in [AS \(Safety of Kabul\)](#), the country information does not indicate that there are ‘very strong grounds supported by cogent evidence’ to justify a departure from the UT findings in regard to the humanitarian situation in Kabul that, ‘... it will not, in general, be unreasonable or unduly harsh for a single adult male in good health to relocate to Kabul even if he does not have any specific connections or support network in Kabul and even if he does not have a Tazkera [national identity document]’ (paragraph 253(iii)).
- 5.1.5 However, as held in by the UT in [AS \(Safety of Kabul\)](#):  
‘... the particular circumstances of an individual applicant must be taken into account in the context of conditions in the place of relocation, including a person’s age, nature and quality of support network/connections with Kabul/Afghanistan, their physical and mental health, and their language, education and vocational skills when determining whether a person falls within the general position set out above. Given the limited options for employment, capability to undertake manual work may be relevant.  
‘A person with a support network or specific connections in Kabul is likely to

be in a more advantageous position on return, which may counter a particular vulnerability of an individual on return. A person without a network may be able to develop one following return. A person's familiarity with the cultural and societal norms of Afghanistan (which may be affected by the age at which he left the country and his length of absence) will be relevant to whether, and if so how quickly and successfully, he will be able to build a network' (paragraphs 253 (iv and v)).

- 5.1.6 For further guidance on considering internal relocation and factors to be taken into account see the Asylum Instruction on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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## **6. Certification**

- 6.1.1 Where a claim is refused, it is unlikely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

- 6.1.2 For further guidance on certification, see [Certification of Protection and Human Rights claims under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 \(clearly unfounded claims\)](#).

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# Country information

## About the country information

This contains publicly available or disclosable country of origin information (COI) which has been gathered, collated and analysed in line with the [research methodology](#). It provides the evidence base for the assessment.

The structure and content of this section follow a [terms of reference](#) which sets out the general and specific topics relevant to the scope of this note.

This document is intended to be comprehensive but not exhaustive. If a particular event, person or organisation is not mentioned this does not mean that the event did or did not take place or that the person or organisation does or does not exist.

The COI included was published or made publicly available on or before **3 July 2024**. Any event taking place or report published after this date will not be included.

Decision makers must use relevant COI as the evidential basis for decisions.

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## 7. Socio-economic situation

### 7.1 Basic indicators

<b>Population</b>	43.4 million (2024 estimate) <sup>1</sup>
<b>Life expectancy</b>	Total population- 54.4 years (2024 estimate) <sup>2</sup> Male- 59.8 (2022 estimate) <sup>3</sup> , Female- 66.2 (2022 estimate) <sup>4</sup>
<b>Maternal mortality rate (deaths per 100,000 live births)</b>	620.4 (2022 estimate) <sup>5</sup>
<b>Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)</b>	101.3 deaths (2024 estimate) <sup>6</sup>
<b>Poverty (population living below poverty line)</b>	85% (2022 estimate) <sup>7</sup> Poverty line set at AFN2,268 [£24.99 <sup>8</sup> ]per person per month <sup>9</sup>
<b>Child malnutrition, (moderate or severe, under age 5)</b>	Approx 6.7 million children under 5 years of age with 875,227 children (13%) with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) and 2,347,800 (35%) with Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) <sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> UNFPA, [World Population Dashboard Afghanistan](#), 2024

<sup>2</sup> CIA, [World Factbook Afghanistan](#) (People and society), 1 May 2024

<sup>3</sup> UNDP, [Human Development Reports: Afghanistan](#) (GDI), updated 13 March 2024

<sup>4</sup> UNDP, [Human Development Reports: Afghanistan](#) (GDI), updated 13 March 2024

<sup>5</sup> UNDP, [Human Development Reports: Afghanistan](#) (GII), updated 13 March 2024

<sup>6</sup> CIA, [World Factbook Afghanistan](#) (People and society), updated 1 May 2024

<sup>7</sup> UNDP, [Afghanistan Socio-Economic Outlook 2023](#) (page 45), 18 April 2023

<sup>8</sup> XE.com, [2,268 AFN to GBP](#), 7 May 2024

<sup>9</sup> UNDP, [Afghanistan Socio-Economic Outlook 2023](#) (page 9), 18 April 2023

<sup>10</sup> IPC, [IPC Acute Malnutrition Analysis September 2022 – April 2023](#), 30 January 2023

<b>Literacy rate (age 15 and older)</b>	56% <sup>11</sup>
<b>Expected years of schooling (for a child born today)</b>	8.9 years <sup>12</sup>

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## 7.2 Economy

7.2.1 The UN Development Programme (UNDP) report ‘Afghanistan socio-economic outlook 2023’, published in April 2023, noted that:

‘The August 2021 transition in authority fundamentally altered the political and economic landscape of Afghanistan. Following the takeover, the country has faced considerable economic turmoil alongside a structural shift toward agriculture at the expense of manufacturing and services, which largely catered to the foreign presence since 2001. The country has also entered a period of profound uncertainty about the social and economic role of women.

‘Afghanistan is currently grappling with a fiscal crisis. The cutoff in foreign assistance that previously accounted for almost 70 percent of the government budget, has resulted in a sizable squeeze of public finances. Lacking foreign revenues and reserves, the [De Facto Administration] DFA has lost much fiscal space to alleviate economic hardships. In 2022, the budget deficit was estimated to be 28 percent larger than in 2020, while development spending dropped by 80 percent compared to 2020.

‘The central bank (DAB) has lost most of its tools, and hence its ability, to affect economic events. Hindered by the ability to print money and the freezing of its foreign assets, the DAB struggled to provide adequate liquidity to banks. However, the DAB’s capital controls and deposit withdrawal limits have prevented the complete collapse of the banking system. Overall inflation rose considerably after August 2021 reflecting in good part the depreciation of the exchange rate and the subsequent increase in global food and fuel prices due to the war in Ukraine.

‘The banking system has faced a severe liquidity crisis. Reasons include the cutbacks in foreign aid, DAB’s inability to provide liquidity, heavy deposit withdrawals, and concerns about anti-money laundering and combating financing of terrorism issues (AML/CFT). Bank transfers have become more difficult and more expensive, hindering not only private sector operations but also humanitarian support activities. The microfinance sector, previously reliant on donor grants, shrunk by about half between August 2021 and the end of 2022, harming prospects for micro enterprises and the poor. This is particularly concerning in a country where local economies depend heavily on the vibrancy of micro and small businesses.’

‘... Household incomes have been low and declining over time. The decline has been almost linear over the years, with the exception of the sudden drop in 2021. Of the 45 percent drop in per capita incomes since 2012, two-thirds

<sup>11</sup> UNICEF, [Afghanistan \(AFG\) - Demographics, Health & Infant Mortality](#), no date

<sup>12</sup> US AID [Afghanistan - Education - Country Dashboard](#), no date

of the decline took place in 2021.

'According to the Survey, average monthly household income was only AFN6,489 ( US\$75) [£72.00<sup>13</sup>] in the 30 days prior to August/September 2022, or AFN978 ( US\$11.2) [£11.00<sup>14</sup>] per person per month. Median incomes were AFN6,000 ( US\$69) [£67.00<sup>15</sup>] for households and AFN833 ( US\$9.6) [£9.30<sup>16</sup>] per person. Some 4 percent of households reported that they had no income, while a large share of households (55 percent) had expenditures in excess of what they earn, the deficit on average being AFN4,217 ( US\$48) [£47.20<sup>17</sup>] per household per month.

'The Income Expenditure and Labor Force Survey 2019-20 (IE&LFS2020) set the poverty line at monthly expenditure per person per month of AFN2,268 ( US\$26) [£25.40<sup>18</sup>]. By September 2022 84 percent of Afghans had nominal expenditures below the nominal poverty line of 2020. Taking into account the inflation rate between these two years and also the regional price variation and expenditure on edurables, raises the percentage of those below the 2020 poverty threshold to 87 percent.

'By 2022, 81 percent of households and 84 percent of Afghans reported per capita expenditures below AFN2,268 [£24.89<sup>19</sup>], the national poverty line in 2020.<sup>39</sup> Adjusting that figure for expenditure on durables, which were not taken into account in 2022, as well as for the regional/urban/rural price variation and inflation (22.4 percent) respectively. It should be noted that the WoAA2022 included health expenditures that at 13.8 percent of expenditures were significantly higher than the expenditure on durables in 2020 (4.4 percent of household expenditures). If anything, this should increase the reported rate. The level of per capita expenditure deemed to be the minimum to avoid food poverty was AFN1,330 in 2020. At that nominal level, 89 percent of households and 91 percent of Afghans were below it in 2022. Taking into account the food inflation since 2020 brings both percentages to the mid-90s 41.'<sup>20</sup>

- 7.2.2 The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2022-23, which was implemented by UNICEF in collaboration with the National Statistics and Information Authority (NSIA) and was published in May 2023, surveyed 23,213 households – 4,107 households in urban areas and 19,106 in rural areas. UNICEF and NSIA used information collated in the household questionnaire in relation to household characteristics, such as electricity, internet access, roofing, flooring, ownership of assets etc to construct the wealth index<sup>21</sup>. CPIT has used data from the MICS to produce the table below.

<sup>13</sup> XE.com, [6,489 AFN to GBP](#), 11 June 2024

<sup>14</sup> XE.com, [978 AFN to GBP](#), 11 June 2024

<sup>15</sup> XE.com, [6,000 AFN to GBP](#), 11 June 2024

<sup>16</sup> XE.com, [833 AFN to GBP](#), 11 June 2024

<sup>17</sup> XE.com, [4,217 AFN to GBP](#), 11 June 2024

<sup>18</sup> XE.com, [2,268 AFN to GBP](#), 11 June 2024

<sup>19</sup> XE.com, [2,268 AFN to GBP](#), 31 July 2024

<sup>20</sup> UNDP, [Afghanistan Socio-Economic Outlook 2023](#) (pages 13 & 39, 43-44), 18 April 2023

<sup>21</sup> UNICEF & NSIA [Afghanistan 2022-23 MICS](#) (pages 22-28), May 2023

-	Wealth index quintile					-
Province	Poorest	Second	Middle	Fourth	Richest	Number of Household members
Badakhshan	43.2%	29.2%	18.0%	5.9%	3.7%	6691
Baghlan	36.4%	18.8%	15.1%	15.3%	14.4%	4978
Balkh	9.9%	17.0%	17.1%	21.5%	34.6%	9582
Faryab	25.4%	27.8%	19.6%	16.3%	10.9%	7344
Ghazni	7.6%	19.6%	33.5%	31.5%	7.8%	5746
Helmand	32.1%	23.3%	20.9%	16.4%	7.4%	13644
Herat	18.9%	17.0%	11.7%	17.0%	35.4%	15722
Kabul	2.3%	4.6%	7.9%	28.4%	56.9%	24607
Kandahar	9.7%	21.0%	28.2%	22.0%	19.1%	9074
Khost	1.8%	13.1%	16.8%	24.0%	35.2%	5165
Kunduz	12.6%	20.4%	20.5%	26.8%	19.7%	6509
Nangarhar	20.9%	23.3%	24.7%	20.0%	11.1%	12593
Takhar	17.4%	21.2%	29.2%	22.4%	9.7%	6293

7.2.3 UN OCHA's 'Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan Afghanistan', published in December 2023 noted:

'Following a 20.7 per cent contraction in 2021, the economy contracted by a further 6.2 per cent in 2022. The economy has somewhat stabilized since then with decreased inflation in 2023, an easing of supply constraints, and wider availability of market goods. Between 1 January and 23 October 2023, the Afghani (AFN) appreciated by 20 per cent against the US dollar, making the Afghani the best performing currency in the world in the third quarter of 2023. However, these macro-economic improvements have not translated into better outcomes for all Afghans, with 80 per cent of families earning less than USD \$1[£0.78<sup>22</sup>] a day per household member, leaving the vast majority of the population highly susceptible to shocks. In 2023, 65 per cent of families reported directly experiencing an economic shock, a 20 per cent increase compared to 2022, the Whole of Afghanistan Assessment (WoAA) reports.'<sup>23</sup>

7.2.4 Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) report on the level of food insecurity in Afghanistan. The IPC December 2023 report noted:

'Wheat prices are likely to remain elevated compared to long-term averages but lower than the peak prices observed in mid-2022. The price of wheat flour, which has stabilized after a year-long decline, is expected to increase minimally through February due to seasonality... [however] Afghanistan will

<sup>22</sup> XE.com, [1 USD to GBP](#), 12 June 2024

<sup>23</sup> OCHA, [Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan Afghanistan](#) (page 9), December 2023

still face a deficit requiring an import of about 3 million metric tons. Rice prices are expected to moderately increase, remaining significantly above average, mainly due to international rice price hikes and low household availability due to below-average production.

'Due to higher demand in early winter (November – December 2023), livestock prices are projected to remain near average levels. However, pasture will be scarce during winter, regenerating to average levels in February/ March 2024 in warmer regions and in April/ May 2024 in higher-elevation areas. Livestock body condition will typically be poor during winter due to limited grazing areas and lower fodder availability through February.'<sup>24</sup>

#### 7.2.5 UN news reported in March 2024 that:

'Since the takeover by the Taliban in 2021, the Afghan economy has contracted by 27 per cent, leading to economic stagnation, according to [UN Development Programme] UNDP. Unemployment has doubled and only 40 per cent of the population has access to electricity.

'Sectors such as finance have "basically collapsed" and there are no major sources of economic activity such as exports or public expenditure, leaving small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and farmers as the lifeblood of the faltering economy.'<sup>25</sup>

#### 7.2.6 World Food Programme (WFP) distribute a food basket that: '... is tailored to local preferences, demographic profile, activity levels, climatic conditions, local coping capacity and existing levels of malnutrition and disease. It is designed to meet the nutritional requirements of a population rather than individuals. ... When people are fully dependent on food assistance, WFP provides 2,100 calories per person'<sup>26</sup>. In their Monthly Market Report for March 2024, published in April 2024, WFP noted that:

'In March 2024, the price of the WFP's in-kind food basket stood at AFN 5,337 [£58.54<sup>27</sup>], reflecting a 1.3% decrease from the previous month. This decline was driven by decreases in the prices of wheat and the appreciation of the Afghani against the USD during this period. Although the price of the food basket decreased in terms of AFN, it led to an increase in terms of USD, indicating an inverse relationship. Among the surveyed markets, Nuristan emerged as the most expensive, with the food basket priced at AFN 6,565 [£72.03<sup>28</sup>], while Baghlan represented the least expensive market, with the same basket priced at AFN 4,606 [£50.53<sup>29</sup>].

'... In 11 provincial capitals, the AFN price of in-kind basket was higher than the national average price, with 5 markets being higher by over 5 percent (Nuristan 23%, Daykundi 17%, Kabul 10%, Kunar and Hilmand by 9% each). While in 23 provinces, the price of food basket was lower than the average price: Baghlan -14%, Takhar - 8%, Logar -7%, Laghman -6%, Jawzjan,

<sup>24</sup> IPC, [Acute Food Insecurity Situation...November 2023 – ...](#) (pages 1 & 9), 14 December 2023

<sup>25</sup> UN News [Afghanistan's economy has 'basically collapsed': UNDP](#), 7 March 2024

<sup>26</sup> WFP, [The WFP food basket](#), no date

<sup>27</sup> XE.com, [5,337 AFN to GBP](#), 9 July 2024

<sup>28</sup> XE.com, [6,565 AFN to GBP](#), 9 July 2024

<sup>29</sup> XE.com, [4,606 AFN to GBP](#), 9 July 2024

Paktya, Kunduz and Paktika by -5% each and the rest was within the range of (>-1% to <-5%).'<sup>30</sup>

7.2.7 The World Bank April 2024 Afghanistan overview noted that:

'The events of August 15, 2021 triggered a sharp contraction and reconfiguration of the Afghan economy and approaches to international aid. Reduced aid drove a steep decline in aggregate demand and widespread disruptions to public services. Afghanistan lost access to the international banking system and offshore foreign exchange reserves as the central bank assets were frozen. Disruption and uncertainty led to sharp declines in investment confidence, and tens of thousands of highly skilled Afghans fled the country.

'... Today, Afghanistan's economic outlook remains uncertain, with the threat of stagnation looming large until at least 2025. The absence of GDP growth coupled with declining external financing avenues for off-budget expenditures paint a bleak picture of the country's economic prospects. Structural deficiencies in the private sector, coupled with waning international support for essential services, are expected to impede any appreciable economic progress. This economic stagnation will deepen poverty and unemployment, with job opportunities expected to decrease and food insecurity expected to increase.'<sup>31</sup>

7.2.8 The World Bank's Development update published in April 2024 noted that: 'Initial deflation may have seemed beneficial for households, but its persistence signals a deep economic slump.'<sup>32</sup>

7.2.9 World Bank's report 'Afghanistan Development Update: navigating Challenges: Confronting Economic Recession and Deflation April 2024', published on 2 May 2024 noted that:

'Over the past two years, Afghanistan's economy has been characterized by a tumultuous downturn, underlined by a staggering 26 percent contraction in real GDP. The aftermath of the Taliban takeover has seen a stark decline in international aid, leaving the nation without any internal engines of growth, and the recent return of Afghan migrants and an earthquake in Herat have intensified these challenges. The October 2023 earthquake damaged critical infrastructure, reducing GDP growth by estimated 0.5-0.8 percent. With no policy levers to stimulate aggregate demand, the economy remains stagnant, with low demand driving a noticeable deflation.

'By February 2024, headline inflation plummeted to -9.7 percent year-over-year, propelled primarily by substantial reductions in food (-14.4 percent) and non-food (-4.4 percent) prices. Core inflation, excluding food and energy, mirrored this downward trajectory, registering at negative 3 percent. While the food sector has benefited from better supply, weakened demand due to low purchasing power is a major driver of the deflationary process that started in April 2023 and is persisting through February 2024. This protracted deflationary process stems from a confluence of factors, including

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<sup>30</sup> WFP, [Afghanistan: Monthly Market Report: Issue 46 \(March 2024\)](#), 18 April 2024

<sup>31</sup> World Bank, [Afghanistan Overview](#), last updated 18 April 2024

<sup>32</sup> World Bank, [Afghanistan Development Update April 2024](#) (page 14), April 2024

the adverse ramifications of the opium ban, the shrinking of the money supply, and the appreciation of the Afghani.’<sup>33</sup>

7.2.10 The Independent reported in May 2024 that: ‘Afghanistan’s finances were on shaky ground even before the Taliban seized power in 2021. The budget relied heavily on foreign aid and corruption was rife. The takeover sent Afghanistan’s economy into a tailspin, billions in international funds were frozen, and tens of thousands of highly skilled Afghans fled the country and took their money with them.’<sup>34</sup>

7.2.11 International Rescue Committee (IRC) noted in May 2024 that:

‘Afghanistan’s economy collapsed after the Republic of the Islamic Emirates of Afghanistan (IEA), commonly known as the Taliban, took control of the country in August 2021. Now, the country finds itself economically isolated, losing development funding that previously subsidized an estimated 75% of Afghanistan’s spending on public services. Meanwhile, the funds of the Afghan central bank remain frozen and inaccessible as sanctions and international restrictions limit foreign financial inflows.

‘Although Afghanistan’s economy stabilized slightly in 2022, it saw negligible growth in 2023. Nearly half of the population lives in poverty and will continue to experience economic hardship.’<sup>35</sup>

7.2.12 WFP’s ‘Afghanistan Food Security Update -1<sup>st</sup> Quarter (March 2024)’ published in May 2024

‘In Afghanistan, there has been a steady decrease in the national average prices of key staple prices throughout previous year. Similarly, the WFP Food Basket prices have declined over the year, marking a 24 percentage point reduction compared to the same period last year. The stabilization of national cereal prices is likely due to a confluence of factors, including a downward trend in global cereal prices, favourable production in Kazakhstan, Iran and Pakistan.’<sup>36</sup>

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## 7.3 Employment

7.3.1 UNDP noted in their April 2023 report that:

‘Regarding unemployment, there is no updated official data. In the Income, Expenditure, Labor Force Survey conducted by the National Statistic and Information Authority (NSIA) in 2019-2020, total unemployment rate was reported as 18.6 percent, 15.2 percent for men and 32 percent for women. However, the Private Sector Rapid Survey conducted by the World Bank for small, medium, and large firms reports the employment declined 61 percent in October 2021 relative to pre-August 2021 period. The decline in men’s employment was 48 percent, and the decline in women’s employment was 75 percent, broadly consistent with the significant decline in economic activity since August 2021. The data clearly show that women were affected much worse by the crisis. However, according to a survey conducted in June

<sup>33</sup> World Bank, [Afghanistan Development Update: Navigating Challenges: ...](#), 2 May 2024

<sup>34</sup> The Independent [The Taliban put Afghanistan’s economy into a tailspin. These ...](#), 1 May 2024

<sup>35</sup> IRC, [Crisis in Afghanistan: What you need to know and how to help](#), last updated 17 May 2024

<sup>36</sup> WFP, [Afghanistan Food Security Update - 1st Quarter \(March 2024\)](#) (page 3), 2 May 2024

2022, in line with the (feeble) economic recovery, employment has improved slightly. Similarly [International Labour Organisation] ILO reports a weak improvement in employment in 2022 relative to end of 2021.<sup>37</sup>

- 7.3.2 World Bank's report 'Afghanistan Welfare Monitoring Survey (AWMS) Round 3' published in October 2023 provided results from a survey conducted from April to June 2023 to assess changes to basic living conditions. The survey re-interviewed households who were surveyed in round 1, covering the period November to December 2021, and round 2, covering the period of July to August 2022. The report for round 3 of the survey is based on a total of 5,175 interviews and noted that:

'The level of unemployment is worryingly high among youth and women. ... among young men looking for a job in the 14 to 24 age group, close to one in three is unemployed, while unemployment is almost twice as high among young women in the same age group. The gender gap in unemployment is more substantial among women in older age cohorts, reflecting the additional challenges that women face in the Afghan labor market. In fact, not only are Afghan women hindered by the constraints on their physical mobility and by the lack of familiarity with the labor market due to their traditional marginal economic role, but they are also disadvantaged by their lack of education and basic literacy. Among women aged 25 and above, the literacy level is abysmally low at 25 percent – meaning that only one in four women is able to read and write, against 61 percent among men in the same age group.

'The increase in unemployment has gone hand in hand with a decrease in the number of hours worked by employed individuals, another symptom of the challenges affecting the Afghan labor market. The shortfall between labor demand and supply in the Afghan labor market manifests itself not only through the observed increase in unemployment but also through a reduction in the number of actual hours worked compared to the period prior to the Taliban takeover.'<sup>38</sup>

- 7.3.3 The World Bank's Development update published in April 2024 noted that: 'While household welfare in Afghanistan has seen some gains due to lower prices, poverty, and vulnerability are still widespread due to limited job opportunities. Households have added more labor to counter the economic downturn, yet this has led to an oversupply of labor compared to the weak demand, causing higher unemployment and underemployment.'<sup>39</sup>
- 7.3.4 The WFP's Food security update published in May 2024 noted: 'Despite stability in the prices of key food commodities, labor wages have stagnated over the past year, and limited employment opportunities have contributed to a decrease in purchasing power. The wages for unskilled labor have remained nearly unchanged compared to the same period last year. Households are facing financial challenges due to high unemployment, reduced economic activity, and slowing down of labour market during winter

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<sup>37</sup> UNDP, [Afghanistan Socio-Economic Outlook 2023](#) (pages 25-26), 18 April 2023

<sup>38</sup> World Bank, [Afghanistan Welfare Monitoring Survey Round 3](#) (page 12-13), October 2023

<sup>39</sup> World Bank, [Afghanistan Development Update April 2024](#) (page 14), April 2024

lean season.<sup>40</sup>

7.3.5 UN OCHA's 'Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan Afghanistan', published in December 2023 noted: 'Increased labour demands have outpaced supply resulting in a doubling of unemployment rates and a 25 per cent increase in underemployment. With one in three young males currently unemployed and women facing limitations to the right to work, both economic well-being and social cohesion are damaged.'<sup>41</sup>

7.3.6 ACAPS report 'Afghanistan- spotlight on social impact', published in April 2024, noted:

'In 2023, the [Interim Taliban Administration] ITA severely restricted professional opportunities for women, and many lost their jobs or were forced to work from home as a result. Those who still have jobs must be accompanied on their journey to work by a Mahram [a male guardian/chaperone]. Women's employment in the humanitarian sector has been banned since December 2022 and, although a workaround exists, humanitarian organisations are hesitant to hire more women. The Mahram requirement also means limited freedom of movement when women enter public spaces, hindering their ability to find new employment or engage in income-generating activities. Female-headed households without a Mahram are, hence, less able to achieve financial independence. Women's shrinking employment options in Afghanistan likely also affect returnee women, particularly female heads of households.'<sup>42</sup>

7.3.7 WFP's Month Market Report for March 2024, published in April 2024, noted:

'In March 2024, the [Month of Month] MoM national average casual labour working days per week increased by 5.8% compared to February 2024, following a significant decrease during the winter season. On average, a casual labour can find 2.1 days of work per week and can gain AFN 307 per day [£3.36<sup>43</sup>]. When examining the expected monthly income for unskilled labour (calculated average working day in a week to be divided by 7 and then multiplied by average daily wage and then multiplied by 30), it is found that on average, a full-time casual labour workers can afford 51% of the WFP food basket. In the least expensive market, Baghlan, a full-time casual labourer can afford 84% of the WFP food basket, which is still not sufficient to meet all their needs. On the other hand, in the most expensive market, Nuristan, the expected monthly income for unskilled labour is low but above average at AFN 3,857 per month [£43.31<sup>44</sup>, equivalent to 59% of the WFP food basket.'<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> WFP, [WFP Afghanistan Food Security Update - 1st Quarter \(March 2024\)](#) (page 4), 2 May 2024

<sup>41</sup> UNOCHA, [Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan Afghanistan](#) (page 9), December 2023

<sup>42</sup> ACAPS, [Spotlight on social impact \(October 2023 to February 2024\)](#) (page 3), 25 April 2024

<sup>43</sup> XE.com, [307 AFN to GBP](#), 9 July 2024

<sup>44</sup> XE.com, [3,857 AFN to GBP](#), 9 July 2024

<sup>45</sup> WFP, [Afghanistan: Monthly Market Report: Issue 46 \(March 2024\)](#), 18 April 2024

## 7.4 Education

- 7.4.1 For information on access to education, see the Country Policy and Information Note on [Afghanistan: Unaccompanied children](#).
- 7.4.2 For updates on access to education, see [Afghanistan - Education Updates | ReliefWeb](#)

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## 8. Humanitarian situation

### 8.1 Overview

- 8.1.1 UN OCHA's report 'Global Humanitarian Overview 2024- Afghanistan', published on 8 December 2023, noted that:

'Afghanistan is experiencing the residual impact of decades of conflict, years of drought conditions, and chronic and continued poverty. The situation worsened after the severe economic decline experienced in the immediate aftermath of the Taliban takeover in August 2021. Despite the significant reduction in active military fighting, the crisis in Afghanistan remains first and foremost a protection crisis, aggravated by severe climate change impacts which have today created a water crisis – both urban and rural. Additionally, food security, health, nutrition, shelter, and education needs remain high. In 2024, an estimated 23.3 million people will require humanitarian assistance to survive.'<sup>46</sup>

- 8.1.2 The Bertelsmann Stiftung, 'BTI 2024 Country Report Afghanistan, covering the period of 1 February 2021 to 31 January 2023, published in March 2024 noted that:

'During the period of review, Afghanistan has been facing severe humanitarian and environmental disasters. In 2022, natural calamities endangered the lives of tens of thousands of Afghan families in numerous areas across the country. The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) of Afghanistan reported that in March 2023, strong rains and flooding caused the destruction of over one thousand houses, resulting in the creation of more than eight thousand internally displaced persons (IDPs). ... Severe environmental problems, such as soil degradation, air and water pollution, and drought, are observable in Afghanistan but are still not addressed by the [Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan] IEA. ... Nearly half of the population lacks access to clean, safe water, with large cities being the most affected. The disposal of solid waste is an additional formidable obstacle for Afghanistan's big cities, where economic activity is robust.'<sup>47</sup>

- 8.1.3 Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund's annual report 2023 noted:

'Afghanistan continues grappling with the consequences of four decades of armed conflict, natural hazards including severe impact of climate change, economic decline resulting in high levels of poverty, ... A large part of the population of Afghanistan is exposed to increased vulnerability, linked also to severe limitations of the public health system, increase of costs for food and

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<sup>46</sup> UNOCHA, [Global Humanitarian Overview 2024- Afghanistan](#), 8 December 2023

<sup>47</sup> BTI, [BTI 2024 Afghanistan Country Report](#), March 2024

other essential goods, and again required multi-layered humanitarian assistance throughout 2023.<sup>48</sup>

8.1.4 The International Organization for Migration (IOM) in their ‘Afghanistan Crisis Response Plan 2024’, published in May 2024, noted that:

‘Afghanistan is highly prone to natural hazards, whose frequency and intensity are increasing due to climate change. Three years of consecutive La Niña conditions have led to drought and floods, threatening livelihoods. Nearly three-quarters of rural communities experienced severe drought and over 21,000 Afghans were affected by floods in 2023. Rising temperatures are rapidly altering precipitation patterns across the country, diminishing people’s access to water.’<sup>49</sup>

8.1.5 OCHA noted in June 2024 that:

‘Recovery from 40 years of conflict and entrenched poverty is increasingly challenged by stubbornly high-levels of food insecurity and malnutrition, protracted displacement, widespread explosive ordnance contamination, recurrent natural disasters, communicable disease outbreaks, climate change effects, political estrangement and heavily conditioned aid, as well as increasingly – since August 2021 – the imposition by the De-facto Authorities (DfA) of ever-more restrictive policies on women and girls’ rights and basic freedoms which have hindered their access to assistance and services, as well as their involvement in public life.’<sup>50</sup>

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## 8.2 People in need – numbers and location

8.2.1 IOM in its Afghanistan Crisis Response Plan 2024 states:

‘Afghanistan remains one of the world’s worst humanitarian crises. In 2024, an estimated 23.7 million people – more than half of Afghanistan’s population – are projected to require humanitarian assistance.

‘... Afghanistan’s population is estimated to pass 44.5 million in 2024, up from 36.8 million just five years ago, with 52 per cent of the population under 18 years old – one of the highest youth populations in the world. In 2024, an estimated 15.8 million people will experience crisis and emergency levels of food insecurity through March (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC 3+)). While conflict-related displacement has drastically decreased since 2021, an estimated 6.3 million individuals—roughly 1 in 7 Afghans—are experiencing long-term displacement, many who left their homes as early as 2012. This is the largest number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in South Asia and the second largest worldwide. Afghans, and in particular women and girls, face increasing needs, risks and vulnerabilities in Afghanistan as well as in neighbouring countries. As a result of these combined challenges, the humanitarian community foresees that 23.7 million people, two thirds of the population, will require urgent humanitarian assistance in 2024.’<sup>51</sup>

<sup>48</sup> AHF, [Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund Annual Report 2023](#), 2 May 2024

<sup>49</sup> IOM, [Afghanistan Crisis Response Plan 2024](#) (page 4), 8 May 2024

<sup>50</sup> OCHA, [Afghanistan: The Cost of Inaction \(June 2024\)](#), 10 June 2024

<sup>51</sup> IOM, [Afghanistan Crisis Response Plan 2024](#) (page 4), 8 May 2024

- 8.2.2 The OCHA's glossary in their 'Global Humanitarian Overview' defines people in need as: ' ... a subset of the affected population and are defined as those members-
- whose physical security, basic rights, dignity, living conditions or livelihoods are threatened or have been disrupted, AND
  - whose current level of access to basic services, goods and social protection is inadequate to reestablish normal living conditions with their accustomed means in a timely manner without additional assistance.'<sup>52</sup>
- 8.2.3 In 2019, the number of people in need of some form of humanitarian assistance was recorded by the OCHA as 6.3 million<sup>53</sup> (using population data from worldometer<sup>54</sup> for 2020 this was approximately 16% of the population). In June 2020 this had risen to 14 million<sup>55</sup> (using population data from worldometer<sup>56</sup> for 2020 this was approximately 36% of the population 40%) and by 2021 the number had reached 18.4 million people<sup>57</sup> (using population data from worldometer<sup>58</sup> for 2020 this was approximately 36% of the population 40%). In June 2024 OCHA noted that 23.7 million people (using population data from worldometer<sup>59</sup> for 2020 this was approximately 55% of the population ), including 9.2 million children, were in need of humanitarian assistance<sup>60</sup>.
- 8.2.4 The BTI 2024 Country Report Afghanistan noted that: 'In 2021, approximately 90% of the Afghan population lived below the poverty line, which was set at \$2 per day, according to Afghan media. By mid-2022, two-thirds of Afghan households were unable to afford food and essential non-food items, forcing many individuals to engage in low-productivity jobs to increase their income.'<sup>61</sup>
- 8.2.5 CPIT has produced the below table using data from OCHA 2024, covering 2023, Humanitarian action population data<sup>62</sup> and population data from the IPC analysis<sup>63</sup> .

<sup>52</sup> OCHA, [Glossary | Global Humanitarian Overview](#), 2022

<sup>53</sup> OCHA, [Afghanistan Humanitarian Needs Overview 2020](#) (page 4), 17 December 2019

<sup>54</sup> Worldometer, [Afghanistan Population](#), 2024

<sup>55</sup> OCHA, [Afghanistan Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021](#) (page 4), 19 December 2020

<sup>56</sup> Worldometer, [Afghanistan Population](#), 2024

<sup>57</sup> OCHA, [Afghanistan Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022](#) (page 4), 7 January 2022

<sup>58</sup> Worldometer, [Afghanistan Population](#), 2024

<sup>59</sup> Worldometer, [Afghanistan Population](#), 2024

<sup>60</sup> OCHA, [Afghanistan: The Cost of Inaction \(June 2024\)](#), 10 June 2024

<sup>61</sup> BTI, [BTI 2024 Afghanistan Country Report](#), March 2024

<sup>62</sup> OCHA, [Population | Humanitarian Action](#), 2024

<sup>63</sup> IPC, [Afghanistan: Acute Food Insecurity Situation for March - April 2024....](#), 27 May 2024

Area	Estimated population	Number in need	% of the population in need	Total Number reached (periodical)	% of the population reached
Kabul	7,202,561	3,393,245	47%	729,410	21%
Ghazni	2,518,656	1,254,079	50%	169,762	13%
Hilmand	2,273,865	1,267,152	56%	172,756	13%
Hirat	3,538,967	1,737,682	49%	513,733	29%
Kandahar	3,178,180	1,592,940	50%	200,125	12%

8.2.6 For updates on humanitarian aid, see [Updates | ReliefWeb](#)

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### 8.3 Food security

8.3.1 The definition of Acute Malnutrition used by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is: 'Acute Malnutrition is expressed by the thinness of individuals or the presence of oedema'<sup>64</sup> (swelling caused by the accumulation of fluid in the body tissues<sup>65</sup>).

8.3.2 The IPC record food insecurity in phases numbering 1-5. Phase 1 relates to 'people in food security' who are able to meet essential food and non-food needs, phase 2 is 'people stressed' who have minimally adequate food consumption but are unable to afford some essential non-food expenditures, phase 3 is 'people in crisis' those who have food consumption gaps leading to acute malnutrition or are marginally able to meet minimum food needs by using essential assets or through crisis coping strategies, phase 4 is 'people in emergency' meaning those who have large gaps in their access to food resulting in very high acute malnutrition- they may be able to mitigate these gaps but only by employing emergency livelihood strategies and asset liquidation, phase 5 is 'people in catastrophe' meaning those who have an extreme lack of food and other basic needs and starvation, death, destitution and extreme acute malnutrition are evident<sup>66</sup>. When OCHA refer to food insecurity this relates to the IPC Phases where levels are Phase 3 and above<sup>67</sup>.

8.3.3 WFP uses the term food consumption and this ' ... is calculated according to the types of foods consumed during the previous 7 days, the frequencies with which they are consumed and the relative nutritional weight of the

<sup>64</sup> IPC, [IPC Brochure Understanding the IPC Scales](#), no date

<sup>65</sup> WHO, [Management of severe acute malnutrition in children 6–59 months of age...](#), 9 August 2023

<sup>66</sup> IPC, [IPC Brochure Understanding the IPC Scales](#), no date

<sup>67</sup> OCHA, [Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan Afghanistan](#) (page 11), December 2023

different food groups. Inadequate food consumption refers to the households classified with Borderline or Poor food consumption.’<sup>68</sup>

- 8.3.4 The IPC Acute Malnutrition Analysis, published in January 2023, projected figures for April 2023 noted: ‘Of 34 provinces and one urban area (Urban Kabul) included in the IPC Acute Malnutrition (IPC AMN) analysis, two provinces are classified in IPC AMN Phase 4 (Critical), twenty-three in IPC AMN Phase 3 (Serious) and the remaining 10 in IPC AMN Phase 2 (Alert)during the current analysis period of Sep–Oct 2022.’ 875,227 children under the age of 5 are suffering from Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) and 2,347,800 children are suffering with Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM). Figures also show there are 804,365 pregnant and lactating women are suffering from acute malnutrition<sup>69</sup>.
- 8.3.5 OCHA noted in a report on ‘Humanitarian needs and response plan Afghanistan’ published in December 2023 that: ‘While 2023 witnessed marginal improvements in food insecurity following the provision of substantial levels of food and livelihoods assistance over the 2022/2023 winter, Afghanistan continues to experience high rates of hunger and malnutrition, amid difficult climate conditions, limited income generating opportunities for its growing population and ongoing barriers to basic services.’<sup>70</sup>
- 8.3.6 The IPC December 2023 report noted:  
‘Afghanistan’s economy remains exceedingly fragile, and the food insecurity remains alarmingly high. In October 2023, during the post-harvest season, approximately 13.1 million people, accounting for 29 percent of the total population (based on 2024 Flowminder national population estimates) are facing high level of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above). The main drivers of this acute food insecurity include challenging economic conditions, high unemployment rates compounded by the limited access to income that reduced purchasing power, in a context of continued high prices of food and agricultural inputs, reduced livelihood opportunities and decreased remittances. The adverse impact of extreme and variable climatic conditions, particularly the multi-year drought experienced between 2021 and 2023, continues to be felt in 2023. Additionally, other natural hazards such as flooding and earthquakes further compromise the limited coping capacity of the population, resulting in the persistence of a severe food insecurity situation... Compared to the same period of previous years, the decrease of number of people facing high food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) during the lean season (November 2023 - March 2024), and especially in Emergency (IPC Phase 4), can be attributed predominantly to the extensive, timely and efficient delivery of humanitarian food and agriculture assistance.’<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> WFP, [Afghanistan Food Security Update - 1st Quarter \(March 2024\)](#) (page 8), 2 May 2024

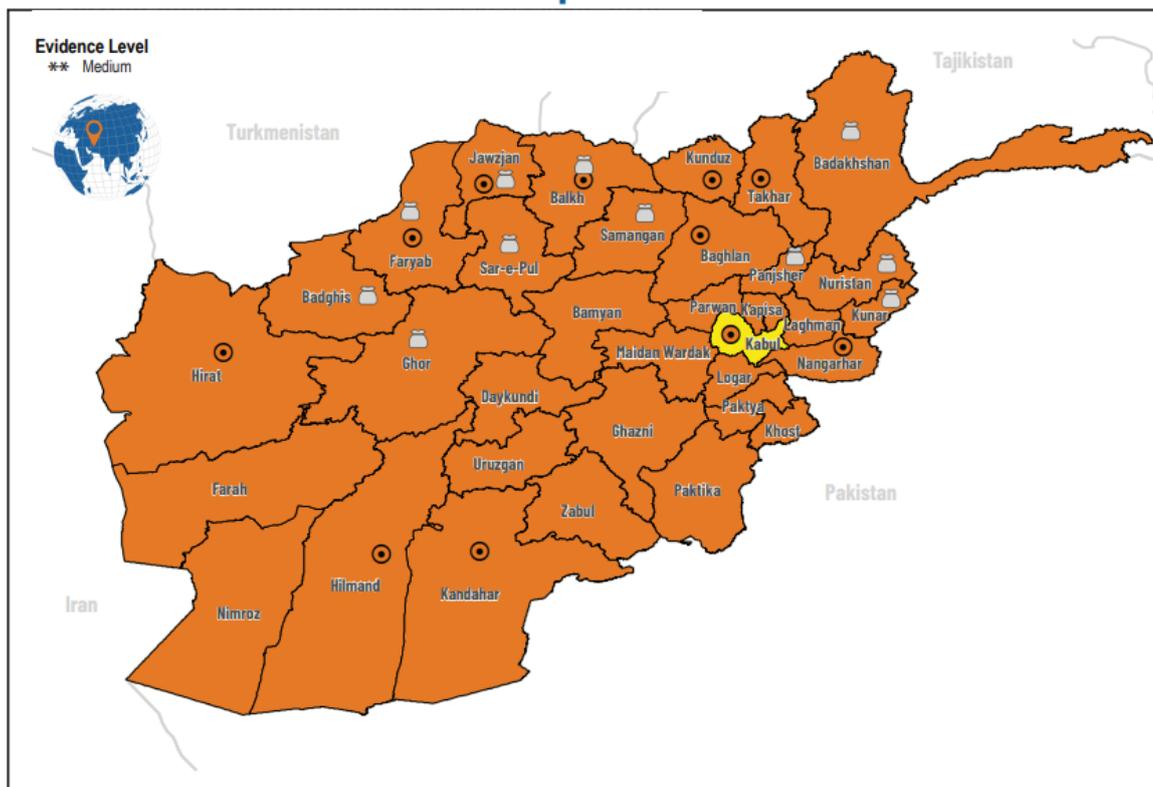
<sup>69</sup> IPC, [Afghanistan Acute Malnutrition Oct2022 Apr2023](#), 30 January 2023

<sup>70</sup> OCHA, [Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan Afghanistan](#) (page 11), December 2023

<sup>71</sup> IPC, [Acute Food Insecurity Situation...November 2023 – ...](#) (pages 1 & 9), 14 December 2023

8.3.7 An IPC map showed areas of food insecurity (Phase 2 shown in yellow and Phase 3 shown in orange) between March - April 2024<sup>72</sup>.

### Current situation: March - April 2024



8.3.8 In the above map Kabul was reflected as being in Phase 2 levels of food insecurity and urban Kabul was recorded as being in Phase 3. The table below using data from the IPC analysis portal<sup>73</sup> showed that 80% of the population of urban Kabul was recorded as being in Phase 1 and Phase 2. The overall rating of Phase 3 is explained in the IPC technical manual which states: ‘An area is classified according to a specific IPC phase when at least 20 percent of the population in the area are experiencing the conditions related to that phase or more severe phases’<sup>74</sup>.

Area	Area Phase	Total Population	Phase 1 (%)	Phase 2 (%)	Phase 3 (%)	Phase 4 (%)	Phase 5 (%)
Kabul	2	880,592	40%	45%	15%	0%	0%
Kabul urban	3	6,321,969	40%	40%	15%	5%	0%

8.3.9 CPIT has produced the below table using data on the IPC analysis portal<sup>75</sup>. The table gives a breakdown of the more populous areas in Afghanistan and

<sup>72</sup> IPC, ‘[Acute Food Insecurity Analysis March- October 2024](#)’, 27 May 2024

<sup>73</sup> IPC, ‘[Afghanistan: Acute Food Insecurity Situation for March - April 2024...](#)’, 27 May 2024

<sup>74</sup> IPC, ‘[IPC Technical Manual 3](#) (page 40), 2021

<sup>75</sup> IPC, ‘[Afghanistan: Acute Food Insecurity Situation for March - April 2024...](#)’, 27 May 2024

shows food insecurity phases (1-5) over a period of time from April 2020 to April 2024. The IPC provided a full explanation of the [food insecurity phases](#).

	Apr-May 2020	Aug-Oct 2020	Mar-May 2021	Sep-Oct 2021	Mar-May 2022	Sep-Oct 2022	Apr-Apr 2023	Oct-Oct 2023	Mar-Apr 2024
Badakhshan	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3
Baghlan	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Balkh	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3
Balkh urban	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3
Faryab	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3
Ghazni	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	2	3
Hilmand	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Hirat	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3
Hirat urban	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3
Kabul	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	2
Kabul urban	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Kandahar	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Kandahar urban	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3
Khost	2	3	2	3	3	3	3	2	3
Kunduz	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Nangarhar	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Takhar	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

8.3.10 WFP's 'Afghanistan Food Security Update -1<sup>st</sup> Quarter (March 2024)' published in May 2024, noted:

'Hunger levels have consistently remained at a critical high throughout the year. Despite a slight improvement in food consumption during the spring wheat planting (April-May) and harvest season (July-August), the situation remains dire. The proportion of households experiencing poor food consumption, which had marginally decreased to 48 percent in June 2023, rose again to 54 percent by September 2023 and remained high at 53 percent in March 2024.

'Female-headed households are disproportionately affected by negative food consumption outcomes. As of March 2024, 86 percent of female-headed households are experiencing poor food consumption, which is 34 percentage points higher than that observed in male-headed households.

'Food consumption outcome varies by household's primary income source. Households relying on non-agricultural wage labor are more likely to

experience poor food consumption, with 65 percent reporting poor food outcomes. In contrast, only 37 percent of households with small businesses and 36 percent of households with salaried employment report similar issues.

‘ ... Households continued to allocate more than 80 percent of income on food. Although the prices of key food commodities remained stable, the proportion of income spent on food has consistently been high over the past year, with limited working opportunities and a persistent deflationary trend. In a region-wise analysis, the northern region (Balkh, Faryab, Jawzjan, Samangan, and Sar-e-pul provinces) reported the highest food expenditure share, with 91 percent of income spent on food. This trend can potentially be attributed to the impact of drought and limited casual labour opportunities, further exacerbated by delays in the spring planting season.’<sup>76</sup>

8.3.11 UN OCHA noted in their Humanitarian update for November 2023 that:

‘Afghanistan endured its worst drought in 30 years last year, compounding the challenges it now faces in its third consecutive year of drought-like conditions, something which has kept levels of food insecurity in Afghanistan among the highest in the world. This is mainly due to the impact on the agriculture sector, which contributes 25 per cent to the country's GDP and serves as a lifeline for 80 per cent of the population, whose livelihoods are directly or indirectly reliant on it. Thirty out of 34 provinces are grappling with severe or extremely poor water quality. Desertification has affected over 75 per cent of the land in northern, western, and southern regions. Rain-fed agriculture, upon which 60 per cent of the population depends, is threatened due to changes in precipitation patterns.’<sup>77</sup>

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## 8.4 Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

8.4.1 According to UNICEF data 30% of the population have access to safely managed drinking water services<sup>78</sup> while the 2024 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan states that only 20% of the population report sufficient access to safe drinking water. UNICEF describe safely managed drinking water from an improved source that is accessible on premises, available when needed and free from faecal and priority chemical contamination<sup>79</sup>.

8.4.2 CPIT has produced the below table using data from UNICEF<sup>80</sup> to show access to safely managed drinking services and basic drinking water services from 2018 to 2022.

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
% of population using safely managed drinking water services	27%	27%	28%	29%	30%

<sup>76</sup> WFP, [Afghanistan Food Security Update - 1st Quarter \(March 2024\)](#) (pages 8 & 12), 2 May 2024

<sup>77</sup> UNOCHA, [Afghanistan: Humanitarian Update, November 2023](#) (page 1), 7 January 2024

<sup>78</sup> UNICEF, [Afghanistan \(AFG\) - Demographics, Health & Infant Mortality](#), 2022

<sup>79</sup> UNICEF, [Access to drinking water](#), no date

<sup>80</sup> UNICEF, [Data Warehouse](#), no date

- 8.4.3 UNICEF data notes that 56% of the population are using at least basic sanitation services<sup>81</sup>. Basic sanitation services are described by UNICEF as ‘use of improved facilities that are not shared with other households’<sup>82</sup>
- 8.4.4 CPIT has produced the table below using data from UNICEF<sup>83</sup> to show how access to basic sanitation services has been improving since 2018.

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
% of population using at least basic sanitation services	49%	51%	53%	54%	56%

- 8.4.5 OCHA’s report ‘Afghanistan Humanitarian Response Plan 2024’, published on 23 December 2023 noted:

‘...multiple districts in the Northern, Northeastern and Southern regions are exhibiting considerable WASH needs [the source does not define considerable WASH needs] due to high drought stress, limited access to safe drinking water, low sanitation coverage, reported acute malnutrition, acute watery diarrhoea (AWD) outbreaks, and service gaps. Unfortunately, the prospects for near-term improvement in these areas remain bleak without sustained and high-value investments in WASH infrastructure, including sanitation systems and water resource management.

‘... The 2023 [Whole of Afghanistan Assessment] WoAA sheds light on the pressing WASH needs across the country. A staggering 74 per cent of rural communities endured severe drought in the preceding year, affecting 19 provinces. This resulted in dried springs and diminished groundwater in wells. The scarcity of water, both in rural and urban areas, has intensified due to recurring droughts, ... Monthly household water expenditures surged from 185 AFN [£2.00<sup>84</sup>] in 2021 to 317 AFN [£3.50<sup>85</sup>] in 2023, indicative of the growing crisis...’<sup>86</sup>

- 8.4.6 In March 2024 UNICEF reported that:

‘A series of earthquakes and aftershocks hit western Afghanistan in October 2023, killing more than 1,480 people, injuring close to 2,000 and affecting more than 275,000 people in nine districts. Over 30,000 houses were damaged, and 258 water systems were destroyed across the western province leaving children and families with no shelter, no safe water, inadequate sanitation and hygiene facilities.

‘... Since October 2023, UNICEF has been trucking safe water through emergency water trucking to 27,300 people displaced by the earthquakes. At the height of winter, UNICEF continued to deliver, overcoming harsh weather and blocked roads to reach children and families.

<sup>81</sup> UNICEF, [Afghanistan \(AFG\) - Demographics, Health & Infant Mortality](#), 2022

<sup>82</sup> UNICEF, [Sanitation Statistics](#) no date

<sup>83</sup> UNICEF [Data Warehouse](#), no date

<sup>84</sup> XE.com, [185 AFN to GBP](#), 3 July 2024

<sup>85</sup> XE.com, [317 AFN to GBP](#), 3 July 2024

<sup>86</sup> OCHA, [Afghanistan Humanitarian Response Plan 2024](#)(page 19 & 64), 23 December 2023

- 8.4.7 'UNICEF also installed 80 water reservoirs, 415 mobile toilets in villages, schools, child-friendly spaces and clinic and distributed hygiene supplies including buckets, jerrycans and water purification tablets to 4,060 affected people.... UNICEF... repair[ed] 21 broken water supply systems which are serving over 23,000 people.'<sup>87</sup>

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## 8.5 Healthcare

- 8.5.1 The World Health Organization (WHO) noted in 2024 that 17.9 million people in Afghanistan needed health assistance and 9.5 million people had limited or no access to basic health services<sup>88</sup>.

- 8.5.2 Health Cluster and WHO's 'Bulletin March 2024', published in April 2024 noted that per 10,000 population there were 10.3 health workers, 3.9 doctors, 4.0 nurse and 2.4 midwives<sup>89</sup>.

- 8.5.3 In August 2022 the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) reported that:

'To prevent the collapse of the secondary-health-care system, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) launched the Hospital Resilience Project (HRP), supporting 33 hospitals with a total capacity of 7,057 beds and reaching about 26 million people. The support includes paying the salaries of nearly 10,500 health workers (of whom around one-third are women) and buying medical supplies to limit the disruption of treatment of patients. It also includes cash assistance to buy fuel to run ambulances, ensure power continuity, provide food for patients and carry out necessary maintenance work.'<sup>90</sup>

- 8.5.4 Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), report 'Persistent barriers to access healthcare in Afghanistan', published in February 2023, noted:

'This research finds that Afghans still struggle with access to healthcare due to a combination of increased widespread poverty, and a further weakened public health system: factors that exacerbate the already existing health needs. As highlighted in the past, the healthcare delivery model in Afghanistan has not been sustainable, remaining under-funded and under-resourced, lacking qualified personnel, equipment, medicines and medical supplies. The economic, banking and liquidity challenges are at the heart of the current humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan and greatly contribute to the difficulties people face in accessing and affording essential services, including healthcare. The unmet medical and humanitarian needs continue to soar as the social, political and economic situation continues to deteriorate.

'... In 2022, Afghans struggled to access quality and timely healthcare due to widespread poverty and a weakened public health system that remained unable to cope with the growing health needs. And we have seen access to quality healthcare becoming even more challenging for women. The cost of

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<sup>87</sup> UNICEF, [Safe water, sanitation facilities and supplies for every child](#), 22 March 2024

<sup>88</sup> WHO, [WHO integrated response to the Afghanistan humanitarian crisis: 2024–2025...](#), 2024

<sup>89</sup> Health Cluster/WHO, [Afghanistan Health Cluster Bulletin, March 2024](#), 25 April 2024

<sup>90</sup> ICRC, [Afghanistan: A health-care system on life support](#), 13 August 2022

medical care, the cost of transport, the lack of quality healthcare near people’s homes, and conflict have all been major obstacles for years.<sup>91</sup>

8.5.5 The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2022-23, which was implemented by UNICEF in collaboration with the National Statistics and Information Authority (NSIA) and was published in May 2023, surveyed 23,213 households- 4,107 households in urban areas and 19,106 in rural areas. Using information from the MICS<sup>92</sup> CPIT has produced the table below which shows the percentage of married women aged between 15 and 49 who had a live birth in the 2 years preceding the survey and the antenatal care they received.

Area	Medical doctor	Nurse/ midwife	Traditional birth attendant	Community health worker	Other/ missing	No antenatal care
Urban	41.4%	45.7%	0.1%	0.8%	0.0%	12.0%
Rural	29.8%	43.4%	0.4%	0.9%	0.1%	25.4%
Kabul	48.6%	42.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.3%

8.5.6 In August 2023 ICRC reported that the Hospital Resilience Project was due to end on 31 August 2023. In an article on their website from August 2023 they stated:

‘The Hospital Resilience Program was conceived as an emergency stopgap measure intended to prevent the country’s healthcare system from collapse following the change of authority in the country in August 2021. The ICRC’s goal was to temporarily maintain the country’s secondary health to enable the authorities to organize themselves to assume responsibility for the health-care system.

‘A planned handover of responsibility was to occur on 31 August 2023, at which point the Afghan authorities would assume financial responsibility for all the hospitals. This has been planned with transparency, and the health authorities have shown their willingness and determination to assume control and meet people’s health-care needs. However, we are now speaking with donors in the hope of extending certain aspects of this program.’<sup>93</sup> A footnote at the end of the article noted that as of April 2023 the government had resumed responsibility for 8 of the 33 supported hospitals. ICRC operational facts and figures for 2023 note that up until December 2023 they were still providing contributions to running costs for the remaining 25 hospitals.<sup>94</sup>

8.5.7 The Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR) article titled ‘Afghanistan’s Healthcare Crisis’ published in June 2023 noted that:

‘In the wake of the Taliban’s resurgence, around 2,000 health centres established by international organisations closed down.

<sup>91</sup> MSF, [Persistent barriers to access healthcare in Afghanistan](#), 6 February 2023

<sup>92</sup> UNICEF & NSIA [Afghanistan 2022-23 MICS](#) (pages 72,73 and 74), May 2023

<sup>93</sup> ICRC, [The ICRC continues to assist the massive humanitarian needs in...](#), 28 August 2023

<sup>94</sup> ICRC, [Afghanistan: Operational Facts and Figures – 2023](#), 20 February 2024

‘According to Taliban government data, there were 3,472 active healthcare facilities in the country up to the third quarter of 2022.

‘These included 725 hospitals (207 public and 518 private) as well as 1,075 primary health centres. The country’s healthcare facilities had a total of 15,318 beds.

‘According to this official data, this marked a rise from the same period in 2021, when there were 697 hospitals (193 public and 504 private) and 1,003 primary health centres, offering 14,131 beds.

‘However, public access to these resources has been reduced. In 2020, there was one public health centre for every 11,250 people. By 2022, the ratio dropped to one for every 11,600 people.

‘There is also a desperate need for essential resources. With local clinics lacking critical equipment, patients are routinely referred to Kabul for diagnostic procedures including CT scans, sonographies and MRIs. Doctors report that medicine shortages frequently left them no choice but to prescribe simple painkillers to most patients.’<sup>95</sup>

#### 8.5.8 The New Humanitarian reported in September 2023 that:

‘The ICRC is far from the only international group still working to bolster the Afghan healthcare system...

‘USAID, for example, has spent \$309.3 million on 13 Afghan health programmes over the last two years. The EU is also continuing its support, last week announcing a newly opened EU-funded health centre in the western province of Herat that can treat up to 15,000 people. Qatar has also pledged to provide life-saving medicine to 11 of the nation’s 34 provinces.

‘However, the World Health Organization says it’s not nearly enough for the 14 million Afghans in need of vital health services this year. It is warning that the health sector still requires a further \$413 million in assistance, with the WHO itself calling for an additional \$125 million for its Afghan operations, including for its efforts in 33 hospitals.’<sup>96</sup>

#### 8.5.9 An article in the October 2023 edition of ‘Ethics, Medicine and Public Health’ written by A.H Hamdana and others noted that: ‘Major challenges faced by the Afghan healthcare system include the cessation of international funding due to the humanitarian crisis, the shortage of medicines and the failure to deliver salaries to healthcare workers. More than 90% of healthcare facilities are at risk of closure, leading to an estimated 4.8 million unattended pregnancies and 51,000 maternal deaths between 2021 and 2025.’<sup>97</sup>

#### 8.5.10 A December 2023 article in VOA noted that:

‘Since the Taliban’s seizure of power in Afghanistan in 2021, the nation’s public health sector has been on life support, with foreign aid agencies stepping in to pay health workers and sustain hospitals and local health centers.

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<sup>95</sup> IWPR, [Afghanistan’s Healthcare Crisis](#), 13 June 2023

<sup>96</sup> The New Humanitarian, [Afghan doctors warn of healthcare crisis as ...](#), 25 September 2024

<sup>97</sup> Hamadana A H and others, [Maternal health in Afghanistan amidst current...](#), October 2023

'The country's donor-dependent economy has teetered on the brink of collapse as foreign donors cut off development assistance and imposed sanctions on governing Taliban entities.

'The International Committee of the Red Cross, or ICRC, paid supplemental salaries for more than 10,000 doctors, nurses and staff at 33 hospitals serving 26 million people across Afghanistan. It also "paid for drugs and other medical supplies, as well as running costs of the hospitals, like electricity, ambulance services, lab tests and food for patients," Diogo Alcantara, an ICRC spokesperson, told VOA.

'The ICRC program ended in August [2023], but the donor-funded payments have continued. Now, the United Nations children's agency, UNICEF, has picked up the tab, paying the salaries of more than 27,000 Afghan health workers, including 10,000 women. The salary payment program serves as a "lifeline in retaining the health workforce and preventing further brain drain" in Afghanistan, according to Kate Pond, a UNICEF spokesperson.'<sup>98</sup>

8.5.11 USAID's 'Complex emergency' factsheet (published December 2023) noted:

'Women's access to health care services is also limited, due to high costs and restrictions from receiving treatment from male doctors. Additionally, nearly a quarter of Afghan women do not possess a tazkira, or Afghan identity card, which is required to access education, employment, health services, housing opportunities, and, in some instances, humanitarian assistance. Displaced women and women living in rural areas have particularly limited access to obtaining a tazkira due to the high cost; the need for a mahram, or male guardian, to accompany them to a government administrative office; and travel time to reach such offices ... '<sup>99</sup>

8.5.12 Human Rights Watch (HRW) in their report "'A disaster for the foreseeable future"- Afghanistan's healthcare crisis', published February 2024 claimed:

'After the Taliban takeover, Afghan hospitals faced a sharp reduction in funds (which had been provided in large part through the former government's budget), coupled with the loss of staff who had fled the country or stopped working out of fear or cuts in pay.

' ... In 2022, Afghanistan suffered a severe measles epidemic directly linked to malnutrition among children as well as a drop in vaccinations. Healthcare workers have also reported an increase in diarrhea and respiratory diseases linked to poor nutrition, especially among children.

' ... Many staff working with local Afghan humanitarian organizations told Human Rights Watch that since the Taliban takeover it has become a challenge to import medicine into the country and that they have faced shortages as a result. Problems with the banking system and frequent disruptions to cross-border trade with neighboring countries such as Pakistan have exacerbated the situation.'

' ... Access to mental health support has diminished because of a loss of funding from foreign donors for health care in general, with mental health

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<sup>98</sup> VOA News, [Donors Pay Afghan Health Workers While Number of Female ...](#), 12 December 2023

<sup>99</sup> US AID, [Afghanistan Complex Emergency Fact Sheet](#) (page 4), 22 December 2023

services generally the first to be cut.’<sup>100</sup>

- 8.5.13 WFP’s Afghanistan food security update published in May 2024 noted that: ‘About one-thirds of households have trouble accessing and/or receiving health care. ... The vast majority of households (82 percent) cited lack of money as a major reason for having difficulties in accessing health care, followed by far distance to hospital (7 percent).’<sup>101</sup>
- 8.5.14 WHO reported in May 2024 that: ‘Afghanistan is grappling with significant health challenges marked by a fragile healthcare system and unequal access to services, particularly in rural areas. This is due to issues such transportation difficulties, shortage of healthcare professionals, and limited access to quality healthcare services.’<sup>102</sup>
- 8.5.15 For further information on access to healthcare, see the Country Policy and Information Note on [Afghanistan: Medical treatment and healthcare](#).

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## 8.6 Accommodation and shelter

- 8.6.1 Using information from the MICS<sup>103</sup> CPIT has produced the table below which shows the number of households interviewed in various provinces and the breakdown of ownership of dwellings for those surveyed.

Province	Households interviewed	Ownership of dwelling				
		Owned by a household member	Not owned	Rented	Other	Missing/ don't know
Badakhshan	654	93.2%	6.8%	3.8%	2.9%	0.0%
Baghlan	672	85.4%	14.6%	10.8%	3.8%	0.0%
Balkh	599	74.8%	25.2%	20.2%	5.1%	0.0%
Faryab	671	91.8%	8.2%	4.3%	3.9%	0.0%
Ghazni	665	81.1%	18.9%	8.8%	10.1%	0.0%
Helmand	659	75.2%	24.8%	14.2%	10.6%	0.0%
Herat	809	71.7%	28.3%	23.9%	4.4%	0.0%
Kabul	813	57.6%	42.4%	37.4%	4.9%	0.0%
Kandahar	792	69.1%	30.8%	19.4%	11.5%	0.1%
Khost	672	78.7%	21.3%	16.9%	4.4%	0.0%
Kunduz	665	77.8%	22.2%	18.0%	4.2%	0.0%
Nangarhar	816	69.3%	30.7%	21.0%	9.7%	0.0%

<sup>100</sup> HRW, “A Disaster for the Foreseeable Future” ... (pages 16, 17, 19, 34-35), 12 February 2024

<sup>101</sup> WFP, [Afghanistan Food Security Update - 1st Quarter \(March 2024\)](#) (page 11), 2 May 2024

<sup>102</sup> Health Cluster/WHO, [Afghanistan Health Cluster Bulletin, April 2024](#) (page 2), 23 May 2024

<sup>103</sup> UNICEF & NSIA ‘[Afghanistan 2022-23 MICS](#)’ (pages 19, 20 & 27), May 2023

Takhar	666	88.2%	11.8%	6.8%	5.0%	0.0%
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- 8.6.2 Global Shelter Cluster, who support people affected by disasters and internally displaced people affected by conflict<sup>104</sup>, and UNHCR’s ‘Shelter/NFI Cluster immediate priorities and funding gaps June -December 2023’, published in July 2023 noted:

‘Across the country, Shelter & [Non-Food Items] NFI needs remain high and widespread, growing tenfold compared to five years ago, predominantly driven by underlying economic challenges and sudden onset shocks. Across all population groups, households continue to report Shelter along with Food and Livelihood as their top three priority needs, and a staggering 79 per cent of all households’ report need for shelter repair support . Majority of households (84 percent) are unable to repair their shelter due to financial barriers associated with costs of material and labour. About one-third of the households’ report feeling unsafe in their shelters due to poor structural state of the shelter, conditions that may exacerbate in the event of a sudden shock. With livelihood loss and increased debt one of the biggest drivers of underlying need, within urban areas, rental assistance continues to be reported as the third highest priority need amongst IDPs.

‘... Across the country, more than 510,000 people, including children, elderly, disabled people and more than 71,000 individuals under women headed households, remain in poor, inadequate and often overcrowded shelters and unprotected from the elements. These conditions are of greater concern to women and girls, who owing to the growing restrictions on their movements and their access to essential services and livelihoods spend prolonged periods indoors, with impact on their wellbeing, social, physical, and psychological status.’<sup>105</sup>

- 8.6.3 OCHA’s Humanitarian action report on ‘Emergency shelter and NFI’ published in January 2024 stated:

‘While displacement induced by conflict has reduced in the past few years, the sudden influx of forced returnees, economic shocks, recurrent floods, earthquakes, and other natural disaster events expected to continue into 2024. These events, compounded by residual shelter needs for more than 30,000 families affected by the earthquakes in Herat, seasonal winter and shelter needs for forced returnees...

‘While shelter needs have continued to improve over the last two years, these needs remain considerable especially among rural, recent-returnee and female-headed households with three out of four households facing shelter issues. According to whole of Afghanistan, 30 percent of households live in inadequate shelters. This is similar across population groups – except for refugees (78 per cent) and is heightened for rural HHs [Households] (33 per cent) compared to urban ones (21 per cent).

‘Equally, according to whole of Afghanistan, 63 per cent of households report at least one shelter issue, a reduction from 84 per cent in 2022. This is,

<sup>104</sup> Shelter Cluster, [About Us](#), no date

<sup>105</sup> Shelter Cluster, [Shelter/NFI Cluster Immediate Priorities and Funding Gaps...](#), 27 July 2023

however, higher among female headed households and recent-returnee populations (76 per cent). The range of shelter issues reported by households includes minor damage to roof (30 per cent), leaking during rain (29 per cent) and damage to walls (29 per cent) and lack of insulation from cold & heat (14 per cent).

‘... The sudden influx of 1.3 million documented and undocumented returnees from Pakistan is projected to continue to 2024, triggering emergency shelter, NFI, seasonal winter needs and shelter repair and transitional shelters support for more than 530,000 documented and undocumented returnees at border points and the need for shelter repair and transitional shelter needs at points of destinations.

‘Despite a decrease in the number of settlements over the past two years, a large population of internally displaced persons (IDPs) still residing in 893 informal settlements, with an estimated 450,000 households, which includes recent returnees from Pakistan. De facto authorities (DfA) are likely to continue to push for the return of IDPs and people living in informal settlements and clearance of informal settlements, particularly those sitting on government and private land. In 2024, the Cluster anticipates that vulnerable IDPs will remain in urgent need of emergency shelter /NFI assistance in lieu of their risk of eviction.’<sup>106</sup>

8.6.4 See also [Internally displaced people \(IDPs\)](#).

8.6.5 Up-to-date information on the number of people assisted with emergency shelter and NFI needs can be found on [Afghanistan: Emergency Shelter and NFI | ReliefWeb Response](#).

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## 8.7 Internally displaced people (IDPs)

8.7.1 UNHCR estimate that in Afghanistan there were 3.22 million people internally displaced by the end of 2023<sup>107</sup>, although data from Internal Displacement and Monitoring Centre (IDMC) stated that at the end of 2023 there were 4.2 million displaced people<sup>108</sup>. The 2024 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan refers to a figure of 6.3m internally displaced people<sup>109</sup>.

8.7.2 UNHCR’s Global Focus report states: ‘...In addition to those who are internally displaced, Afghanistan continues to host 1.46 million IDP returnees, some 76,000 refugees who returned in 2023, and over 52,000 refugees. These groups urgently require both immediate protection and humanitarian assistance, as well as livelihoods support.’<sup>110</sup>

8.7.3 OCHA’s Humanitarian action report on ‘Emergency shelter and NFI’ published in January 2024 stated:

‘While displacement induced by conflict has reduced in the past few years, the sudden influx of forced returnees, economic shocks, recurrent floods, earthquakes, and other natural disaster events expected to continue into

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<sup>106</sup> OCHA/ Humanitarian Action, [Emergency Shelter and NFI](#), 3 January 2024

<sup>107</sup> UNHCR, [Afghanistan | Global Focus](#), no date

<sup>108</sup> IDMC, [Afghanistan](#), last updated 14 May 2024

<sup>109</sup> UNHCR, [Country - Afghanistan \(Islamic Republic of\)](#), no date

<sup>110</sup> UNHCR, [Afghanistan | Global Focus](#), no date

2024. These events, compounded by residual shelter needs for more than 30,000 families affected by the earthquakes in Herat, seasonal winter and shelter needs for forced returnees, the heightened risk of evictions for IDPs residing in informal settlements, has resulted in 6.6 million people in need of shelter/NFI assistance. Additionally, anticipated El Niño conditions in 2024 introduces the risk of above-normal precipitation and warmer temperatures, leading to flooding, landslides, and potential displacement.

'... The sudden influx of 1.3 million documented and undocumented returnees from Pakistan is projected to continue to 2024, triggering emergency shelter, NFI, seasonal winter needs and shelter repair and transitional shelters support for more than 530,000 documented and undocumented returnees at border points and the need for shelter repair and transitional shelter needs at points of destinations.'<sup>111</sup>

- 8.7.4 The International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) noted in their briefing titled 'Displaced people in Afghanistan's cities need support' published in February 2024 that:

'Afghanistan has one of the largest populations of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the world. Nearly 6.6 million people were living in internal displacement in Afghanistan as of December 2022, a number that has decreased to 3.2 million according to the latest UNHCR estimates. Pressure by the de facto authorities for IDPs to return to their areas of origin and departures by IDPs to neighbouring countries contributed to the drop in numbers.

'Multiple disasters have impacted those already displaced and created new displacement patterns: the deportation of Afghan nationals from Pakistan continues, after half a million were deported in the autumn/winter of 2023 alone, and a series of earthquakes in Herat province in October 2023 directly impacted the many IDPs and returnees who had been displaced due to previous disasters and conflict. They now have to start over again. More displacement is projected, given the decision by the Government of Pakistan to return all Afghans in a phased process and the threats of eviction handed to IDPs in informal settlements across the country.'<sup>112</sup>

- 8.7.5 UN OCHA 'Humanitarian update February 2024', published in April 2024, noted that:

'Kabul's informal settlements (KIS) are currently home to more than 6,000 households (42,000 people) – a combination of internally displaced persons (IDPs), cross-border returnees, refugees and host communities – the majority of whom are long-standing residents. The 40 settlements are spread across 11 districts of Kabul Province, with communities from various provinces across Afghanistan, including Baghlan, Balkh, Helmand, Kabul, Kapisa, Kandahar, Kunduz, Laghman, Maidan Wardak, Nangarhar, Paktya, Parwan and Uruzgan.

'Residents of KIS are exposed to multiple protection concerns, including eviction threats due to municipal authority allegations they are living on government-owned land or other land ownership disputes. Despite residing

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<sup>111</sup> OCHA/ Humanitarian Action, [Emergency Shelter and NFI](#), 3 January 2024

<sup>112</sup> IIED, [Displaced people in Afghanistan's cities need support](#) (page 1), 5 February 2024

in temporary shelters, some have lived there for over a decade and the duration of their displacement remains indefinite. The recent surge in returns from neighbouring countries, notably from Pakistan triggered by the introduction of new policies affecting undocumented Afghans and refugees has worsened existing challenges. Since September 2023, hundreds of thousands have returned from Pakistan and Iran to all corners of the country, with a significant influx observed particularly in Kabul, Kandahar and Nangarhar, which are already grappling with protracted displacement, overburdened local resources and services and straining humanitarian capacity.<sup>113</sup>

8.7.6 IOM noted in April 2024 that:

‘Since 15 September, there has been a notable surge in the number of returnees to Afghanistan, taking place primarily through the Torkham and Spin Boldak border crossings, following the announcement on 3 October by Pakistan’s national Apex Committee of the plan to repatriate over a million foreigners without valid documents, mostly Afghans. There have been over 548,900 returnees recorded up to 06 April 2024, with numbers increasing from less than 200 per day in early October to more than 30,000 by early November.’<sup>114</sup>

8.7.7 IOM also noted in their ‘Afghanistan Crisis Response Plan 2024’, published in April 2024, that:

‘IOM predicts that over 900,000 people are expected to be newly displaced in 2024 (up from 500,000 in 2022). This is added to a population of some 5.5 million already in protracted displacement. Living conditions [f]or families and individuals in displacement, and in displacement affected areas, are rapidly deteriorating due to the uncertain context. Logistical challenges resulting from the takeover are impacting the cost of living, at the same time as there are severe shortages of cash and uncertainty around the capacity and ability for public service delivery to resume, even at its previous limited levels. These disruptions will have significant impacts on people’s lives and livelihoods and will in turn feed into migration decision-making.’<sup>115</sup>

8.7.8 The Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (PMoIRA) to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva (UNOG) co-ordinated the ‘National report submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21’ for the UN Universal Periodic Review (UPR ) published in April 2024 noted that: ‘Afghanistan has one of the highest numbers of IDPs in the world. Conflict-related internal displacement has created food insecurity, access to shelter and water, and financial instability in the country. The Taliban has no concrete action plan in place to protect the rights of IDPs. It is largely reliant on UN agencies and international humanitarian aid organisations to respond to the specific needs of IDPs.’<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> OCHA, [Afghanistan: Humanitarian update, February 2024](#) (page 3), 25 April 2024

<sup>114</sup> IOM, [Border Consortium Emergency Border Operations 24 March...](#), (page 1), 22 April 2024

<sup>115</sup> IOM, [Afghanistan Crisis Response Plan 2024](#) (page 5), 26 April 2024

<sup>116</sup> PMoIRA, [National report submitted pursuant to ...](#) (page 18), 22 April 2024

8.7.9 Data from May 2024 from the IDMC country profile for Afghanistan noted that between 2022 and 2023 639,000 people were internally displaced as a result of 97 disaster events (which included flood, earthquakes, storms, droughts and other climate related disasters). The same source stated:

‘In 2023, no new conflict displacement was recorded, but IDPs continued to face challenges. For example, evictions increased significantly because the Taliban pushed many IDPs living in informal settlements to go back to their areas of origin, arguing that people were no longer fleeing conflict. One of the largest evictions took place in Kabul in July, after which humanitarian organisations pointed out that conditions in areas of return were not conducive to IDPs bringing their plight to a sustainable end.

‘... Also, hundreds of thousands of Afghan refugees and undocumented migrants from neighbouring Pakistan and Iran had to return to Afghanistan in the last quarter of 2023, as both governments aimed to address the issue of undocumented migrants. Some people were deported, while others returned by their own means. Upon arrival, many had nowhere to go or went back to areas already hosting a significant number of IDPs living in protracted displacement with limited access to basic services and livelihood opportunities. These conditions put them at risk of returning to a life of internal displacement, but comprehensive data was limited.’<sup>117</sup>

8.7.10 IDMC noted in May 2024 that: ‘... in October... a series of high-magnitude earthquakes and aftershocks struck the western province of Herat, triggering 380,000 internal displacements and destroying at least 10,000 homes. Increasing social restrictions meant more women and girls were indoors when the earthquakes hit, which in part explains why they accounted for around 60 per cent of the dead and wounded.’<sup>118</sup>

8.7.11 UNHCR reported on 5 July 2024 that:

‘The Government of Pakistan’s decision to extend the validity of proof of registration (PoR) cards for Afghan refugees in April until 30 June 2024 has provided temporary relief to those fearing repatriation, and ensured continued access to essential services. The announcement follows a period of increased press reports regarding the roll-out of Phase II of the “Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Plan (IFRP)”. While returns have slowed considerably since the height of returns in November/December 2023, anxiety at the community level remains high, particularly regarding access to education and women’s rights in Afghanistan. UNHCR has intensified its advocacy with the Government of Pakistan to extend the validity period of PoR cards beyond 30 June and continues to closely monitor movement trends.

‘More than 610,000 Afghans returned from Pakistan between 15 September 2023 and 31 May 2024. Returns have been steadily increasing since March this year, with May showing a significant increase of approximately 40,000 returns.’<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> IDMC, [Afghanistan](#), last updated 14 May 2024

<sup>118</sup> IDMC, [Afghanistan - Earthquakes extend cycle of conflict and disaster...](#), 14 May 2024

<sup>119</sup> UNHCR, [Update: Afghanistan Situation #35; As of 1 June 2024](#), 5 July 2024

8.7.12 World Food Programme reported on continuing deportations of Afghans from Pakistan in its June 2024 Situation Report:

‘In June, Pakistan continued its efforts to expel Afghan migrants, affecting hundreds of thousands of individuals. This ongoing deportation initiative has seen approximately 150,000 Afghans expelled from Pakistan since the start of the year. Among the total returnees, 49 percent are female. This group includes 29 percent who are girls, and notably, children make up 59 percent of the returnee population.

‘The surge in returnees has placed considerable pressure on existing vulnerable services, which, combined with limited humanitarian support due to insufficient funding, has left populations struggling to make ends meet. With the reiteration of the expulsion at the end of June, the country expects to see a higher influx in the coming months.

‘... Afghan Returnees: Daily rates of return in June remained lower than 50 households per day at each border crossing point with Pakistan (100 returnees families). A new phase of the repatriation plan was expected to start after Eid, which is anticipated to see an increase in border arrival. Since January, WFP has provided assistance to over 50,000 returnees.’<sup>120</sup>

8.7.13 Amnesty International reported: ‘On 10 July, the Pakistan government announced a one-year extension to the validity of the Proof of Registration (PoR) cards of Afghan refugees. This will allow 1.45 million registered Afghan refugees to stay in Pakistan until 30 June 2025, but still leaves the fate of 80,000 ACC [Afghan Citizen card] holders and thousands of undocumented refugees hanging.’<sup>121</sup>

8.7.14 UNHCR reported in its Afghanistan Situation; Afghan Returns, Weekly Update 07 July – 13 July that a total of 1,596 UNHCR-assisted returns from Pakistan took place during the reporting week (voluntary repatriation as well as forced returns). The Year-to-date Return Trends table provides a weekly total of the number of UNHCR-assisted returns. The total for the year (2024) to 13 July is 37,600<sup>122</sup>.

8.7.15 For information on the current number of IDPs see the UNHCR Operational Data Portal for [Afghanistan](#) or IDMC country profile on [Afghanistan](#).

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## 9. Humanitarian aid

9.1.1 The Interpreter, which publishes commentary and analysis on international issues<sup>123</sup>, noted in an article published in September 2023 that:

‘Between August 2021 and September 2023, US\$6.9 billion in humanitarian aid was pledged to Afghanistan by international donors. While concerns remain about the efficiency of aid allocation and disbursement, it helped those in need of urgent assistance and prevented the collapse of the economy. This aid generated short-term employment, prevented a shortage of goods, and preserved the value of the Afghani (Afghanistan’s currency)

<sup>120</sup> WFP, [WFP Afghanistan: Situation Report, June 2024](#), 9 July 2024

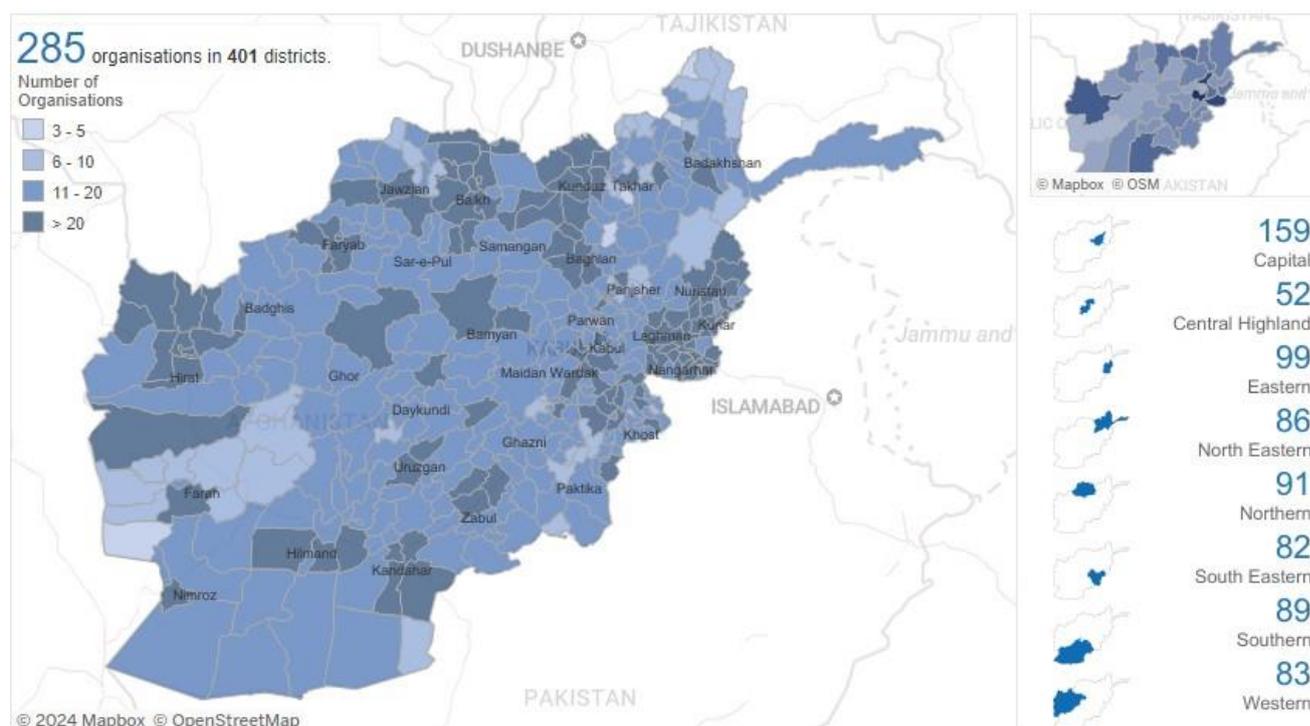
<sup>121</sup> AI, [Pakistan: One-year extension of UN-registered Afghan refugees a welcome...](#), 11 July 2024

<sup>122</sup> UNHCR, [Weekly Update 07 July - 13 July 2024; As of 13 July 2024](#), 13 July 2024

<sup>123</sup> The Interpreter, [About The Interpreter](#), no date

against major foreign currencies, supporting the banking system and decreasing inflation.’<sup>124</sup>

9.1.2 OCHA reported that during the months of January to March 2024, 285 organisations delivered humanitarian services to 401 districts<sup>125</sup>. The diagram below shows the distribution of the humanitarian services<sup>126</sup>.



9.1.3 OCHA’s report on Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP) published in December 2023 noted that:

‘The humanitarian situation in Afghanistan has witnessed significant shifts in the operational context since August 2021, marked by decreased military operations which has enhanced access to previously hard-to-reach areas. However, this positive momentum has been offset by a notable increase in bureaucratic and administrative interferences (BAI) affecting humanitarian operations, particularly in 2022 and 2023. This surge in BAI-related challenges follows the [De-Facto Authorities] DfA’s introduction of new procedures and regulations for coordinating humanitarian response. Humanitarian access in 2023 has further been constrained by the issuance of two directives – one in December 2022 and the other in April 2023 – banning Afghan women from working for I/NGOs and the UN respectively.

‘... These regulatory developments are anticipated to continue to affect the access landscape in Afghanistan in 2024 and will require dedicated and likely enhanced efforts to minimize their impact on humanitarian operations.

‘... Between January and October 2023, humanitarian partners reported 1,529 access-related challenges, marking a 21 per cent increase from 2022

<sup>124</sup> The Interpreter, [Why humanitarian aid is vital to Afghanistan](#), 27 September 2023

<sup>125</sup> OCHA, [Who Does What, Where \(3W\) Dashboard](#), no date

<sup>126</sup> OCHA, [Who Does What, Where \(3W\) Dashboard](#), no date

and a threefold rise from 2019 figures. Predominantly, these incidents (65 per cent) involved active interference in humanitarian programming, followed by movement restrictions on agencies, personnel, or goods (17 per cent), and violence against humanitarian staff, assets, and facilities (11 per cent). This stark reality is reaffirmed by the third round of access severity mapping, which identified 90 per cent of districts experiencing 'moderate' to 'high' access challenges, in humanitarian action.<sup>127</sup>

#### 9.1.4 The New Humanitarian reported in January 2024 that:

'As 2023 wore on, international aid organisations confronted growing concern over who they would be able to assist during Afghanistan's brutal winter months, with their budgets being slashed due to the global economic downturn.

'This came to a head from October when back-to-back events forced them to balance the existing needs of the 15.8 million Afghans already facing food insecurity with the new needs of millions more displaced by disasters and forced evictions from neighbouring countries.

'When the western province of Herat was struck by the first in a series of earthquakes on the morning of 7 October, it was only a few days after the caretaker government of Pakistan announced its plan to deport up to a million Afghans it said had been living in the country without proper documentation. It was also just after 25 government-run hospitals lost their international funding and the World Food Programme announced it would have to cut more than 10 million Afghans from its assistance operations.

'...These shocks compounded existing aid budget shortfalls, and for many Afghans, especially those living in remote areas, they are having a very real impact on their lives, particularly in the winter months when travel – and therefore work opportunities – are greatly hindered for weeks, sometimes months, at a time.

'Amid a global aid budget crunch driven by inflation and the war in Ukraine, the UN's humanitarian response plan for Afghanistan was only 45.4% funded in 2023, well below the 75.7% that donors managed in 2022 and typical levels of funding over the last decade.'<sup>128</sup>

#### 9.1.5 The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) quarterly report to the United States Congress, published in April 2024 noted:

'Since U.S. forces withdrew from Afghanistan in August 2021, the United States has appropriated or otherwise made available \$17.19 billion in assistance to Afghanistan and to Afghan refugees ... This includes more than \$2.80 billion in U.S. appropriations for Afghanistan assistance, largely for humanitarian and development aid, and \$3.50 billion transferred to the Afghan Fund that is intended to protect macro financial stability on behalf of the Afghan people and could, in the long-term, include recapitalizing Afghanistan's central bank, should the conditions materialize.

'... Additionally, Afghanistan continues to suffer from drought and its location along seismic fault lines puts vulnerable Afghan communities at-risk for

<sup>127</sup> OCHA, [Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan Afghanistan](#), (Pages 28 & 34), December 2023

<sup>128</sup> The New Humanitarian, [In a neglected part of Afghanistan, foreign aid cuts ...](#), 30 January 2024

earthquakes. The local economy is fragile and weakened further by the Taliban's lack of economic management skills and their exclusion of women from the work force, leaving Afghanistan reliant on foreign donor assistance. This quarter, State told SIGAR that "donors have expressed frustration at the Taliban's restrictive actions, especially actions repressing women and girls, but continue to find pragmatic, principled ways to contribute to UN programs and to provide humanitarian support to the Afghan people.

'...The UN is seeking \$3.06 billion for its 2024 HRP to assist 17.3 million of an estimated 23.7 million Afghans in dire need. According to the UN Financial Tracking Services, only \$237.1 million (7.7%) of the HRP is funded, as of April 2024. The UN said the humanitarian system in Afghanistan is facing a severe funding shortage, forcing UN agencies to make "increasingly painful" decisions to cut life-saving food, water, and health programming. This dire humanitarian situation has led aid workers to "ruthlessly" restrict assistance to only those most urgently in need"<sup>129</sup>

9.1.6 UNHCR reported in May 2024 that:

'UNHCR and partners in Afghanistan reached an estimated 346,600 people with humanitarian assistance in 33 out of 34 provinces countrywide in April 2024. Among those reached, 170,800 people received cash assistance while 175,800 benefitted from in-kind and other individual assistance, including protection, core relief items (CRIs), shelter, seasonal support and community-based interventions. Assessments were also carried out for 204,600 people to determine their specific needs.'<sup>130</sup>

9.1.7 OCHA reported in June 2024 that:

'Between January and March 2024, humanitarian partners reached 9.9 million people with at least one form of humanitarian assistance and at least one million people with three different types of sectoral support. Although this represents a broad reach in absolute terms, 87 per cent of the 9.9 million people reached overall received food assistance, highlighting the extent to which food security and agriculture coverage continues to drive response figures, while also overshadowing the millions of people who will require multiple rounds of assistance throughout the year to ensure their needs are adequately met.'<sup>131</sup>

9.1.8 The OCHA annual report published in June 2024 noted that: 'As in 2022, Afghanistan received the most allocations from the pooled funds in 2023, with \$135 million from the Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund and \$54 million from [Central Emergency Response Fund] CERF. This enabled UN agencies and partners to deliver life-saving assistance to 1.2 million people, including some 77,000 people affected by an earthquake in the Herat region in October 2023.'<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> SIGAR, [Quarterly Report to the United States Congress](#) (page 5 & 44), 30 April 2024

<sup>130</sup> UNHCR, [Afghanistan: Situation Update #34](#), 1 May 2024

<sup>131</sup> OCHA, ['Afghanistan: Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2024'](#), 4 June 2024

<sup>132</sup> OCHA, [Annual Report](#) (page 32), 5 June 2024

# Research methodology

The country of origin information (COI) in this note has been carefully selected in accordance with the general principles of COI research as set out in the [Common EU \[European Union\] Guidelines for Processing Country of Origin Information \(COI\)](#), April 2008, and the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation's (ACCORD), [Researching Country Origin Information – Training Manual](#), 2024. Namely, taking into account the COI's relevance, reliability, accuracy, balance, currency, transparency and traceability.

Sources and the information they provide are carefully considered before inclusion. Factors relevant to the assessment of the reliability of sources and information include:

- the motivation, purpose, knowledge and experience of the source
- how the information was obtained, including specific methodologies used
- the currency and detail of information
- whether the COI is consistent with and/or corroborated by other sources

Commentary may be provided on source(s) and information to help readers understand the meaning and limits of the COI.

Wherever possible, multiple sourcing is used and the COI compared and contrasted to ensure that it is accurate and balanced, and provides a comprehensive and up-to-date picture of the issues relevant to this note at the time of publication.

The inclusion of a source is not, however, an endorsement of it or any view(s) expressed.

Each piece of information is referenced in a footnote.

Full details of all sources cited and consulted in compiling the note are listed alphabetically in the [bibliography](#).

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# Terms of Reference

The 'Terms of Reference' (ToR) provides a broad outline of the issues relevant to the scope of this note and forms the basis for the [country information](#).

The following topics were identified prior to drafting as relevant and on which research was undertaken:

- Socio-economic situation
  - Basic indicators, including statistics on life expectancy, literacy, schooling, poverty rates, levels of malnutrition
  - Economy
  - Employment
  - Education
- Humanitarian situation
  - Numbers and location of people in need
  - food security
  - water for drinking and washing
  - accommodation and shelter
  - healthcare
  - IDPs
- Support providers, including government and international and domestic non-government organisations
  - whether government is purposely withholding or not delivering support services, if so to which areas/groups

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# Version control and feedback

## Clearance

Below is information on when this note was cleared:

- version **3.0**
- valid from **12 August 2024**

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### **Official – sensitive: Not for disclosure – Start of section**

The information in this section has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use.

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### **Official – sensitive: Not for disclosure – End of section**

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## Changes from last version of this note

Update to country information and assessment in line with that.

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## Feedback to the Home Office

Our goal is to provide accurate, reliable and up-to-date COI and clear guidance. We welcome feedback on how to improve our products. If you would like to comment on this note, please email the [Country Policy and Information Team](#).

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## Independent Advisory Group on Country Information

The [Independent Advisory Group on Country Information](#) (IAGCI) was set up in March 2009 by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration to support them in reviewing the efficiency, effectiveness and consistency of approach of COI produced by the Home Office.

The IAGCI welcomes feedback on the Home Office's COI material. It is not the function of the IAGCI to endorse any Home Office material, procedures or policy. The IAGCI may be contacted at:

### **Independent Advisory Group on Country Information**

Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration

1st Floor

Clive House

70 Petty France

London

SW1H 9EX

Email: [chiefinspector@icibi.gov.uk](mailto:chiefinspector@icibi.gov.uk)

Information about the IAGCI's work and a list of the documents which have been reviewed by the IAGCI can be found on the Independent Chief Inspector's pages of the [gov.uk website](#).

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