



ACTED AFGHANISTAN

DROUGHT EMERGENCY APPEAL **Situation analysis and proposed response**



ACTED

SITUATION AND NEEDS ANALYSIS

Summary

Following the official government declaration of drought in Afghanistan in June 2021 (the second drought declared in four years) and worsening humanitarian situation, ACTED is launching a Drought Response Appeal to provide urgent lifesaving and recovery assistance to the most severely affected populations.

**EMERGENCY DROUGHT
APPEAL 2021**
30 MILLION USD
REQUESTED TO ASSIST
1 MILLION BENEFICIARIES
ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Following significantly lower than average precipitation and higher than average temperature over the 2020-2021 winter in Afghanistan, associated with the La Niña weather event, **severe drought conditions have been experienced throughout 2021, especially in the western, northern and southern regions.** As the country slowly recovered from the severe drought in 2018 and lingering effects that remained, and were aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the conflict, **this second drought in four years is expected to have a significant impact across a large part of the country.**

The drought conditions are anticipated to have an impact on both rain-fed and irrigated agricultural crop production, especially cereal production during the main growing and cultivation season (May to September), and on pasture conditions and livestock health. Overall, the country faces severe food insecurity, malnutrition and lack of economic opportunities, with **93% of the population (35 million people) living on less than 2 USD a day and in need of a social safety net and 18.4 million people in need of humanitarian assistance.** With 80% of the population living in rural areas, **approximately 50% of Afghan households derive part of their income from agriculture, which employs around 40% of the country's workforce and accounts for 90% of the country's manufacturing, as well as making up for around 25% of the country's GDP.**

PROJECTED JUNE - NOVEMBER 2021	
 9.5M 30% of the population People facing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) IN NEED OF URGENT ACTION	Phase 5 0 People in Catastrophe
	Phase 4 2,743,000 People in Emergency
	Phase 3 6,720,000 People in Crisis
	Phase 2 12,233,000 People in Stressed
	Phase 1 9,694,000 People in food security

IPC Overview. April 2021

Food security and agriculture

The 2021 harvest for a range of crops is expected to be below average due to the effects of drought. According to the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC), total wheat production in 2021 will be 25% less than in 2020 based on initial estimates, and overall the country is facing a national shortfall of 2.46m MT of wheat due to the poor harvests, and a 62% reduction in area under cultivation compared to 2020. Additionally, **decreases in rice and vegetable production are also anticipated to be high, with rice production down 20%, vegetable production down 25-30%, and fruit production expected to be down a staggering 80% in some locations.** In addition, livestock mortality will further erode food security and increase risks of malnutrition, with livestock production to be down 30% across the most affected provinces.

Water, sanitation and hygiene

While Afghanistan has sufficient water for its population and production in aggregate terms, access, storage and efficiency of water use are extremely low due to mismanagement, destruction of systems, and lack of infrastructures and investment, with 88% of irrigation done through informal systems. **Overall, it is estimated that 90% of Afghanistan's water consumption is for agricultural purposes, of which over 50% is lost due to inefficient systems and management.** When faced with drought conditions, these issues result in severe WASH needs and water scarcity, especially in rural areas, leading to a lack of access and availability of water.

Priority locations and affected population

According to OCHA, 12.2 million people - 30% of the population - in Afghanistan are going to face emergency or crisis levels of food insecurity from September to December 2021, which is supported by the latest IPC findings and projections (released in April 2021), that anticipate **around 30% of the population to be in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) and Phase 4 (Emergency) from June to November 2021**. Additionally, 2.5 million people are in need of emergency WASH assistance. The most severely drought-affected areas are the western, northern and southern provinces of the country.

Drought priority provinces (September 2021)

Region	Province	WASH severity	FSAC severity	Nutrition severity	IPC Phase (June – November 2021)	IPC Phase 3+ population (#)	IPC Phase 3+ population (%)
Northwest	Faryab	High	High	High	Phase 4 (Emergency)	485,175	45
	Jawzjan	High	High	High	Phase 3 (Crisis)	227,551	40
	Balkh	High	High	High	Phase 3 (Crisis)	557,458	37
	Sarepul	High	High	High	Phase 3 (Crisis)	186,301	30
	Samangan	High	High	Medium	Phase 3 (Crisis)	150,671	35
Northeast	Badakhshan	Medium	High	High	Phase 4 (Emergency)	579,748	55
	Takhar	Medium	High	High	Phase 3 (Crisis)	226,048	20
West	Herat	High	High	High	Phase 3 (Crisis)	716,626	35
	Ghor	High	High	High	Phase 4 (Emergency)	344,012	45
	Badghis	High	High	High	Phase 3 (Crisis)	192,354	35
East	Kunar	Medium	High	High	Phase 3 (Crisis)	149,818	30
	Nuristan	Low	High	High	Phase 3 (Crisis)	40,954	25
South	Kandahar	High	High	High	Phase 3 (Crisis)	350,534	40

The impact of the drought is, and will be, very severe for the poorest and most vulnerable small-holder farmers reliant on rain-fed wheat production, as the area of rain-fed wheat planted in 2021 has decreased by 62% from the 2020 level, with the resulting yield also down 47% against the prior year. In addition, the effects of the drought are depleting many already poor and vulnerable household's financial and asset reserves as they struggle and resort to extremely negative coping strategies, with the poorest and most vulnerable households incurring catastrophic levels of debt.

Many households continue to rely on negative coping mechanisms to survive, including child labour, early and forced marriage, and risky irregular migration, and are therefore taking on heightened protection risks as a result. **80% of the working population in Afghanistan relies on the informal labour sector for income**, including especially unskilled and casual labour associated with agricultural production. Thus, decreased agricultural production and market shocks reduce income and livelihoods opportunities, and along with reduced purchasing power are causing acute food consumption gaps and severe food insecurity, and exacerbate other multi-sectoral needs. Moreover, reductions in snowmelt and rainfall are causing acute water scarcity and significantly decreasing access to safe drinking water.

Unfortunately, long-term forecasts indicate that the drought will continue into 2022, and the next main lean season (late January to late April 2022) is expected to be more intense and arrive earlier, leading to a further deterioration in the food security situation across the country. Hence, **an immediate, early and prolonged effort to combat the effects of the drought are critical to improving and ensuring the food security of Afghanistan**.

ACTED'S PROPOSED RESPONSE

RATIONALE

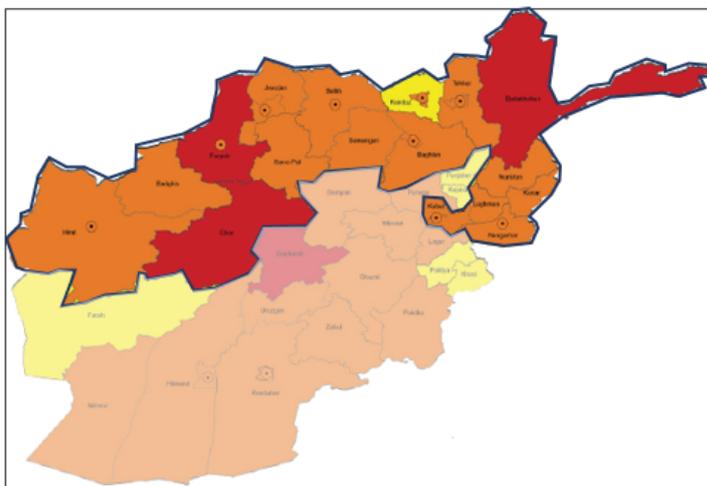
Due to high food consumption gaps, high rates of asset depletion and high levels of negative coping mechanisms, urgent action is required through emergency food and livelihoods assistance, which should be complemented with early recovery responses to build longer-term resilience. **The provision of unconditional multi-purpose cash is needed for the most vulnerable**, food insecure and/or displaced households, **the provision of quality seeds (primarily for winter wheat cultivation) is urgently needed for farmers**, while **urgent livestock protection** support is needed for herders and livestock owners.

Additionally, **there is a high need to improve access to safe drinking water**. ACTED proposes to target the provinces most severely impacted by drought, where the impact of La Niña has adversely affected crops and pasture, and will target the most food insecure households and smallholder farmers in their area of origin and communities with the most severe water needs, as well as displaced drought-affected households.

ZOOM IN ON... THE 2018 RESPONSE

Lessons learned from the 2018 Afghanistan drought response highlight the need for early response to help prevent internal displacement and a further deterioration of needs, as well as the provision of multi-sectoral and prolonged assistance to mitigate and recover from the longer-term effects. Despite significant interruptions to markets and finance in August 2021, overall markets remain functional in Afghanistan and the availability of cash is anticipated to gradually improve, and thus cash based interventions are expected to remain a high priority and effective modality for food assistance, and could even play a role in strengthening local markets by providing cash injections. **Multi-purpose cash is the fastest assistance modality, and will allow the most affected and vulnerable households to prioritize and address their own needs most effectively.** However, acute inflation and price volatility is a key consideration for cash responses. Cash is also anticipated to be highly effective in urban areas. Finally, ACTED operates an Emergency Response Mechanism (ERM) which has the capacity for the rapid assessment and delivery of cash to displaced and vulnerable households at scale across the majority of its provinces of intervention.

PRIORITY PROVINCES TARGETED FOR THE RESPONSE



PRIORITY SECTORS



**MULTISECTOR
EMERGENCY
RESPONSE**



**FOOD SECURITY
AND AGRICULTURE**



**WATER,
SANITATION AND
HYGIENE (WASH)**

PROPOSED RESPONSE PLAN

OBJECTIVE			ACTIVITIES	BENEFICIARY TARGET
MULTISECTOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE	Emergency life-saving multi-purpose assistance to cover food consumption gaps and multi-sectoral needs	Target the most food insecure and vulnerable populations classified as IPC 4 with severe food needs and high food consumption gaps, including IDPs, shock-affected HHs, returnees, women-headed HHs, etc. Based on lessons learned, vulnerable households present many multi-sectoral needs, especially displaced HHs and during the winter season, therefore a multi-sectoral assistance package is required.	Unconditional multi-purpose cash assistance (including winterization)	30,000 households (210,000 people)
FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURE	Emergency agriculture and livelihoods assistance to improve food production and income	Mitigate the impacts of the drought conditions by improving agricultural and livestock production and reduce food insecurity for the upcoming cultivation seasons. Improve/rehabilitate local irrigation and flood protection infrastructure, and livelihoods assets, which aims to help mitigate and improve water scarcity issues for consumption, crops and livestock. Provide small-scale livelihoods assistance to reduce income gaps and lack of economic opportunities or more urban households.	Provision of quality, improved drought-resistant certified seeds Provision of animal feed/fodder and deworming medicine (small to medium scale farmers) Provision of animal vaccination campaigns Cash for work (livelihoods assets) Kitchen gardening in rural areas (vegetable seeds and training) Backyard poultry rearing in rural areas (provision of inputs and training)	60,000 households (420,000 people)
WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)	Emergency WASH assistance targeting drought-affected areas	Improve water supply access and quality in the most severely drought affected areas.	Rehabilitation of wells and boreholes, and installation of reservoirs Repairing and installation of hand pumps Rehabilitation of solar, gravity and mixed water systems Water storage tanks and installation of handwashing stations for public institutions (schools and health facilities) Provision of water kits with purification tablets Provision of basic water quality control tools for community-based self-monitoring	84,000 households (588,000 people)
	Emergency WASH assistance targeting displaced drought-affected households	Improve water supply access and quality for displaced drought-affected households.	Reconstruct/rehabilitate dysfunctional water pumps and systems Provision of vouchers/cash for water (in urban settings) Water trucking as a last resort Hygiene kits and water kits for displaced HHs Latrines and WASH facilities for displaced HHs	26,000 households (182,000 people)

DROUGHT APPEAL FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

Sector and activity	Locations	Target HHs	Budget (est. USD)
Emergency life-saving multi-purpose assistance to cover food consumption gaps and multi-sectoral needs	West Northwest Northeast	30,000	10,000,000
Emergency agriculture and livelihoods assistance to improve food production and income	West Northwest Northeast	60,000	10,000,000
Emergency WASH assistance targeting drought-affected areas	West Northwest Northeast	84,000	7,000,000
Emergency WASH assistance targeting displaced drought-affected households	West Northwest	26,000	3,000,000
	TOTAL	150,000	30M USD

ACTED AFGHANISTAN 2021 AT A GLANCE

IN NUMBERS

-  **6.3 million beneficiaries**
-  **1,000+ staffs**
-  **USD 30M budget**
-  **50+ offices**
-  **18 provinces**

PROVINCES OF INTERVENTION

