



AFGHANISTAN FLOODS
WEEKLY UPDATE
 03 June 2024

UNHCR distribution of tents, NFIs and clothing to flood affected families in Baghlan Province, Northeastern Region. ©UNHCR/Wahid Ahmad Enayat

IMPACT ¹

Northeast Region:

3,987 homes damaged or destroyed.

Western Region:

4,301 homes damaged or destroyed.

Northern Region:

1,983 homes damaged or destroyed.

Afghanistan Floods - Overview

The month of May saw heavy flooding across Northeastern, Northern and Western regions of Afghanistan, brought on by unprecedented rain fall.

Joint assessment teams (JATs) have been deployed across affected areas to carry out inter-agency assessments for the identification of humanitarian needs and to inform response.

In the Northeast region, 3,987 homes have damaged or destroyed as result of the floods across the most affected provinces of Baghlan, Takhar and Badakhshan.

In the Western region, 4,301 homes have been damaged or destroyed, while in the northern region, 1,983 homes have been damaged or destroyed, according to assessments to date.

More than 300 persons have lost their lives, and livelihoods have been critically hampered due to loss of livestock and agricultural land. Widespread damage has been reported to public infrastructure, including roads, health facilities, water and sanitation infrastructure, and schools.

Damage to key infrastructure has resulted in critical gaps in essential services, including lack of safe water, hygiene and sanitation facilities, and gaps in healthcare. Affected families further lack access to dignified and safe living spaces, essential non-food items and hygiene products, while high levels of psychological stress are being reported among survivors.

While humanitarian partners continue to facilitate emergency response, critical gaps remain to address the most immediate needs on the ground. Moreover, communities will require support in the recovery process, including restoring access to essential services, durable housing solutions, and rebuilding livelihoods.

¹ Homes damaged/destroyed across flood affected areas continue to be verified throughout the inter-agency assessment process.

UNHCR's RESPONSE

UNHCR and partners have actively participated in the inter-agency joint assessment teams deployed to conduct surveys to identify the humanitarian impact of the recent floods across the Northern, Northeastern and Western regions of Afghanistan.

At the outset of the floods, UNHCR pre-positioned emergency tents, non-food item (NFI) kits, and clothing, to support distribution activities targeting families affected by the floods. In the Northeast, UNHCR has since provided 473 emergency tents to affected families, 754 NFI kits, and 1,573 sets of clothing, across affected districts of Baghlan, Takhar and Badakhshan provinces. In Ghor province of the Western region, UNHCR has reached 100 families with emergency tents, 349 with NFI kits, and 349 with clothing.

The emergency response to affected families continues, with emergency tents provided to families that have lost their homes, ensuring access to shelter for improved physical safety and protection outcomes. NFI kits and clothing assistance have been similarly delivered to ensure that families have access to essential and basic household items, linked to improved health, hygiene, and protection outcomes for families. NFI kits are composed of blankets, jerrycans, gas cylinder, kitchen sets, buckets, and other key items.

UNHCR, under the umbrella of the Protection Cluster, is leading a protection assessment across flood affected areas to address information gaps on protection risks and concerns resulting from the floods, and to inform the delivery of targeted protection services. The assessment covers the Northeastern, Northern and Western regions, reaching provinces of Baghlan, Badakhshan, and Takhar in the northeast, Faryab in the north, and Herat, Ghor and Badghis in the west, with a total of 1,425 families reached.

Preliminary findings from the 1,425 initial surveys conducted under the Protection assessment (conducted in Takhar, Faryab, Badakhshan, Herat, Baghlan, Badghis Ghor), indicate that 11% of respondents are female-headed households, 20% of households have at least one family member with a disability, and 43% have a pregnant or breastfeeding mother in need of additional support for their children. Out of respondents, 33% indicated that their homes have been severely damaged and 59% that their homes are partially damaged as result of the floods, while the top three needs indicated include food, cash, and permanent shelter. The assessment further indicates that 14% have lost legal documentation as a result of the floods, including Tazkiras, birth certificates, passports, land titles, and others, with 10% of those having lost documents reporting the loss to have led to consequences, including inability to access basic services and assistance, as well as impacting freedom of movement and property ownership. UNHCR and partners on the ground further report high needs for mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services, resulting from exposure to trauma and loss. The assessment is continuing in all the flood affected provinces.

UNHCR and partners have initiated a comprehensive protection response to ensure services reach those in need, including provision of psychosocial first aid, identification of vulnerable individuals and persons with specific needs (PSNs), and dissemination of information through community outreach volunteers (COVs) and awareness raising on available humanitarian services, complaints and feedback mechanisms (CFM), and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA). Referrals to relevant service providers are also being conducted through static services, mobile response, and community engagement teams. Over 1,454 individuals have been assisted with protection services in the Western region since the onset of the emergency.

Protection Cluster partners, including UNHCR, IMC, ACTED, ABWSO, NRC, IRC, WAW, AWSDC, AKAH, Mission Aid, Concern Worldwide, ORCD, IOM, OHW, HALLO and ARCS, are actively delivering protection response to affected populations, including psychological support services, positive parenting and resources on individual therapy for resilience, awareness and counselling sessions, community dialogue, and have established child friendly spaces. Mine Action partners have additionally been engaged under Protection response to deliver information on explosive ordnance contamination around flash flood impacted areas, to offer explosive ordnance risk education, and other urgent responses.

The Shelter Cluster, co-led by UNHCR, with IOM as cochair agency, continues to coordinate the emergency shelter response to flood affected areas. The collaborative efforts of Shelter Cluster partners, including IOM, CWW, IMC, AKAH, ME, ACTED, WAW, SCI, WVI, WASSA, UNICEF, RRAA, Cordaid, CRS, and UNHCR have been instrumental in providing emergency shelter and non-food item (NFI) assistance to affected families across the affected provinces. Shelter Cluster partners continue to volunteer staff to participate in joint assessment teams and respond to the needs of affected people. Across the three provinces, more than 6,413 families have received emergency shelter and NFI assistance including tents, tarpaulin, nonfood items, MPCA, clothing and others.



Bazar Sang Atach of Muqur district, Badghis Province, Western Region. ©UNHCR/COV Shurkriya Karimi

OTHER SUPPORT NEEDS

The situation facing flood affected communities urgently demands response, with critical needs including shelter, non-food items, medical aid, hygiene kits, and other basic relief items. Response teams are working to provide immediate and life-saving assistance, with the objective to inter-link first line response with long-term resilience and recovery initiatives for a region repeatedly affected by natural disasters. While inter-agency assessments are underway across affected areas, preliminary findings raised by assessment teams indicate that key gaps requiring response include:

1. Immediate need for life-saving emergency shelter and NFI assistance, including emergency shelter kits (e.g., tents and plastic tarpaulin), repair tools kits, and other core relief items (CRIs), to protect affected families from the elements and to replace basic household items.
2. Shelter repair and rebuilding assistance for families whose homes have been destroyed or damaged, supporting their quick recovery and the restoration of built infrastructure, prior to the onset of the winter season. At this time, partners do not have sufficient funds to support recovery efforts beyond the initial emergency phase. Longer-term recovery efforts are crucial in supporting families to rebuild their lives and underpin self-reliance for resilient communities.
3. Emergency stockpiles of tents and NFI kits must be replenished, ensuring Cluster capacities are adequate in-country to respond to sudden onset emergencies.
4. Structural and non-structural disaster risk reduction approaches at the household and community level must be implemented to reduce the risk of floods. Key high impact interventions include construction of embankments, inclusion of flood-control elements in shelter design, establishment of early warning systems, and zoning regulations to prevent construction and/or settlements in flood-prone areas.
5. Site election and settlement planning support to enable the relocation of communities residing in flood-prone areas, as part of broader disaster and risk management strategy.

