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The 2018-2021 Afghanistan Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) released in December 2017 sought US$430 million to assist 2.8 million people in 2018 with life-saving and protection assistance across the country. The plan’s strategic objectives, which are intended to span the entire life-cycle of the response, focus on the following:

- **SO1** SAVE LIVES IN THE AREAS OF HIGHEST NEED
- **SO2** REDUCE PROTECTION VIOLATIONS AND INCREASE RESPECT FOR INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW
- **SO3** PEOPLE STRUCK BY SUDDEN ONSET CRISSES GET THE HELP THEY NEED, ON TIME

**SCOPE OF REVISED 2018-2021 HRP: DROUGHT RELATED REQUIREMENTS**

Following a winter period which saw a precipitation deficit of 70 percent prevailing across most of the country, making 2017/18 the fifth consecutive year in which the main planting season for wheat (October-February) has been compromised, the Afghanistan Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) has agreed to revise the HRP based on situational analysis which shows that the country is now experiencing a drought. This drought will have a particularly detrimental effect on already chronically food insecure farming households (approximately 2.2 million people), of which 1.4 million will become acutely food insecure and require emergency assistance over the coming months and into the next lean season.

In making this decision, the HCT accept that the planning assumptions upon which the HRP was originally based have now changed (see 2018-2021 HRP, p. 11–12) and that additional activities and requirements stemming from the drought need to be incorporated in order to facilitate a timely response and avert a major humanitarian crisis.

In this regard, while the strategic objectives1 and overall parameters of the HRP remain unchanged and continue to prioritise saving lives in the areas most affected by conflict and natural disaster, the HRP will be adjusted to reflect an activity portfolio which enables urgently needed food and agriculture, livelihoods, WASH and nutrition support to be provided to affected people — mainly rural farmers or agricultural wage labourers. Cross-cutting approaches to protection; gender, age and disability; accountability; and cash-based programming remain unchanged.

Further details on the Afghanistan HRP, including agreement on its scope and priorities, response parameters, and approach to the New Way of Working can be found in the original HRP document.

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1. People in need and to be assisted as a result of the drought will fall under Strategic Objective 1.
THE REVISED 2018-2021 HRP: IN FIGURES

The revised Afghanistan 2018-2021 HRP now seeks US$547 million to reach 4.2 million people with emergency humanitarian and protection assistance across the country in 2018.

This figure represents a 27 percent increase in financial requirements on the original appeal and is directly attributed to the incorporation of drought-related requirements comprising the food security and agriculture, WASH and nutrition sectors as outlined in the May inter-cluster drought contingency plan. Altogether, funding requirements have now increased by $117 million. Although the current adjustment only reflects revised food security, WASH and nutrition requirements, additional funding may be required over the coming months should donor resources not be forthcoming and drought-related displacement and health issues associated with poor nutritional status (such as acute watery diarrhea, measles and other disease outbreaks) materialise. Already this year, 161 measles outbreaks have been reported – a 65 percent increase on those occurring during the same period in 2017 – while 18,200 people in the western region have been verified as having migrated from Herat to Ghor and Badghis due to the drought with additional displacements taking place within these provinces themselves.

Thus, while education in emergencies, emergency-shelter and non-food items, health and protection have maintained their original response plan and requirements, further changes may occur at the mid-year review point should the situation on the ground require it.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

The revised Afghanistan HRP includes evidence from satellite imagery and data analyses carried out by iMMAP and FEWSNET, as well as findings from FAO’s Rapid Assessment of the 2018 Winter Dry Spell conducted over the last two weeks of February, and observations from operational agencies and actors in the field. Major data sources include:

- FAO’s Rapid Assessment of the 2018 Winter Dry Spell in Afghanistan, 2 April 2018 (which shows that farmers have been significantly affected by the lack of water, prompting them to delay planting, reduce field sizes to minimise losses, and/or see the seeds they planted be partially or completely desiccated. The report also highlights the extent to which the lack of ground water is causing water points to dry up and therefore become inaccessible to communities.)
- iMMAP & FEWSNET Analyses, April 2018 (which shows that below average precipitation and above average temperatures since October 2017 have resulted in significant reductions in (1) snow depths, (2) river flows, (3) water level in dams, (4) water tables, and (5) soil moistures. These conditions have already negatively and irreversibly impacted the winter 2017 – 2018 agricultural season and are expected to also negatively impact the spring and summer 2018 agricultural season.)
- Updates from the Early Warning Information Group: Prolonged Dry Spell Conditions, 10 May 2018 (which indicate that areas planted for rainfed wheat is smaller than last year, reflecting dry soil conditions and the use of extended areas for grazing. This has negatively affected both staple food and cash crops – which are expected to be below normal harvest levels – and resulted in a reduction of livestock production and livestock sale prices which have decreased on average between 20-30 percent since October 2017.)

More details appear in the sector-specific sections of this revision. It is important to note that at present, however, the number of people affected by the drought and in need of humanitarian assistance are preliminary estimates based on existing data. As more information becomes available – following completion of the pre-harvest assessment (currently ongoing) and the emergency food security assessment (EFSA) (planned to launch after Ramadan in early July) – these figures will be updated.
SEVERITY OF NEEDS

NATURAL DISASTERS (SLOW AND SUDDEN ONSET)

OVERALL SEVERITY OF NEEDS
As chronically food insecure populations were not included in the original HRP, the inclusion of the 2.2 million rural farming households brings the overall PIn to 5.5 million and the number of people to be assisted in 2018 to 4.2 million.

The following tables summarise the change in original and revised number of people to receive assistance and financial requirements across the three affected sectors (food security and agriculture, WASH, and nutrition).

### TABLE 1: PEOPLE TO RECEIVE ASSISTANCE (ORIGINAL AND REVISED FIGURES)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTOR</th>
<th>ORIGINAL # OF PEOPLE TO BE ASSISTED</th>
<th>REVISED # OF PEOPLE TO BE ASSISTED</th>
<th>ORIGINAL REFUGEE CHAPTER</th>
<th>REVISED REFUGEE CHAPTER</th>
<th>TOTAL # OF PEOPLE TO BE ASSISTED</th>
<th>CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Security &amp; Agriculture</td>
<td>1,650,000</td>
<td>3,050,000</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3,050,000</td>
<td>1,400,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>800,000</td>
<td>1,550,000</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1,550,000</td>
<td>750,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>674,755</td>
<td>773,850</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>773,850</td>
<td>99,095</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 2: FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS (ORIGINAL AND REVISED FIGURES)

While the original HRP reflected financial requirements for 2018 only, the revised appeal includes financial requirements across the affected sectors which will extend into the first few months of 2019. Of the additional $94.7 million required by FSAC, for example, approximately 70 percent ($66.7 million) will be required in 2018 and the remainder in 2019. Likewise, the WASH cluster estimate that 60 percent ($8.5 million) of the total $14.2 million requested for support drought-related activities will be utilised in 2018 with the remaining carrying over into 2019.

2019 financial requirements for sectors not included in this revision will be incorporated into the 2018-2021 HRP in November 2018 following finalisation of the 2019 Humanitarian Needs Overview.
Revised operational response plans include changes in the number of people to receive assistance and related financial requirements, as well as a brief justification for these changes and contact details for more information. The addition of the integrated drought response into the Afghanistan HRP means that funding received can now be monitored on a real-time basis through the Financial Tracking Service.

### THE REVISED RESPONSE PLAN: DROUGHT RELATED REQUIREMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTOR</th>
<th>OVERVIEW</th>
<th>CLUSTER TOTAL</th>
<th>REFUGEE CHAPTER</th>
<th>GRAND TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Security &amp; Agriculture</td>
<td>People to be assisted</td>
<td>1,400,000</td>
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<td>1,400,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial requirements</td>
<td>$94,700,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>$94,700,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>People to be assisted</td>
<td>750,000</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>750,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial requirements</td>
<td>$14,200,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>$14,200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>People to be assisted</td>
<td>99,095</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>99,095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial requirements</td>
<td>$7,665,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>$7,665,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL DROUGHT</td>
<td>Financial Requirements</td>
<td>$116,565,000</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$116,565,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### BACKGROUND

Afghanistan is in the midst of a drought the scale of which has not been seen since 2011 when 2.6 million people across 14 provinces in the north and eastern regions were left food insecure as a result of lower harvests due to drought, and rising food prices world-wide. So far in 2018, more than two thirds of the country – some 20 provinces – have been affected by a severe rain deficit and limited snowfall during the winter season, which has negatively affected water availability during the spring meltdown and impacted both rainfed and irrigated agricultural lands, as well as pastures.

With 2017’s wheat production already reported to be 57 percent below the 5-year average, the 2018 harvest is forecasted to be even lower – down from 4.2 million MT to 3.5 million MT. This has negatively impacted the availability of fodder, led to a deterioration in the body condition of livestock and resulted in the distress selling of animals. Across the 20 provinces, sheep prices have decreased by around 40 percent while fodder prices have increased by 100 percent. Milk production has also decreased by up to 40 percent due to the poor feeding of animals.

Satellite imagery of vegetation conditions shows that planted areas are under severe stress (with much lower vegetation density compared to the average), indicating either crop failure or that arable land has not been cultivated. Farmers

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2. Given that a significant proportion of the Afghan population exhibit some form of chronic need – more than one third has been classified as food insecure for years – the needs presented in the 2018 HNO, and which formed the basis of the 2018-2021 HRP, stem from crisis as a result of conflict, disaster or large-scale population movement. With the drought now threatening to tip chronically food insecure rural farming households into a state of acute food insecurity however, this group will now be included in the HRP for 2018 and the first few months of 2019 as required. For more details on the prioritisation approach of the humanitarian community in Afghanistan, see the 2018 HNO pg. 7.

have also reported notable decreases in the hectares of irrigated and rain-fed wheat they have been able to cultivate this year (26 percent and 66 percent, respectively) based on limited water availability which has meant that they have had no choice but to reduce their wheat planted area.

The most affected livestock communities are expected to be small livestock holders (around up to 10 animals including large and small ruminants) who are unable to access fodder, and whose pasture area is limited (mobility) and under stress (overgrazed). These people are at particular risk of severe food insecurity as once their flocks are drastically reduced – by either death/diseases or distress sales – the core breeding animals may be endangered, leading to no reproduction or milk.

RESPONSE

Overall, $546,565,000 is required to implement activities outlined within the revised Afghanistan HRP. Of this, $116,565,000 is required to meet the immediate needs of drought-affected people, prevent large-scale displacement and health outbreaks, and minimise the risk of further deterioration in food security and nutrition status.

The revised HRP outlines emergency food security and agriculture, WASH and nutrition actions required to address the immediate impact of the drought and mitigate the likelihood of further humanitarian needs arising. In this regard, it reflects both the immediate actions and pre-emptive steps needed to respond to the current crisis and avert a catastrophic one from occurring.

It is premised upon humanitarian actors implementing joint programming through a multi-sectoral response which enables multiple entities to piggy-back upon the largest component of the response – in this case food security and agriculture – and provide complementary and mutually reinforcing assistance. In this regard, of the 1.4 million people to receive six months’ food assistance (either in-kind or cash), 500,000 small holder farmers will also receive agriculture and livestock-based livelihoods protection assistance, while more than half will receive emergency water support in addition to community sensitisation and awareness raising on safe hygiene practices. Additionally, 36,000 children under two will receive blanket supplementary feeding support designed to prevent spikes in acute malnutrition. Livelihoods protection assistance is especially critical to preserve nutritious food sources of affected communities as agriculture and livestock are the most severely impacted by the drought.

In order to avoid asset depletion, migration, and malnutrition, assistance (food and livestock support) should start immediately in some locations, and continue through the 2018-2019 winter period and into the peak hunger season4 in 2019 as necessary. While the exact implementation plan has yet to be developed, it is anticipated that four months food assistance will be delivered in 2018 with the remainder delivered in 2019. As not all provinces will be impacted in the same way and to the same degree, it is envisaged that humanitarian actors will launch a tiered response in which activities will be implemented in the provinces in sequential order – with those most severely affected responded to first, followed by those moderately affected.

To complement this integrated approach and address the current measles outbreaks – which typically occur where vaccination rates are low and poor health infrastructure exists – a supplementary immunisation activity (SIA) campaign, supported by GAVI, the Ministry of Public Health, UNICEF and WHO, will commence nationwide in August (starting with the 14 cold climate provinces first) and October (followed by the remaining 14 hot climate provinces).

Where possible the SIA campaign will be coordinated with food distribution sites to improve coverage and accessibility of immunisation and health promotion to drought-affected people. This will ensure that those receiving emergency food, WASH and nutrition assistance also receive preventive services. As the SIA is a development-related activity, details relating to implementation and budget requirements fall under the One UN Framework and not the HRP.

4. The hunger season occurs at different times across the country. Findings from the EFSA will also be used to inform the operational plan and the time-frame for geographical implementation.
Drought has severely impacted the food sources of people associated with agriculture, livestock and agricultural labour — three out of the four major livelihood groups in Afghanistan. Both staple food crops and cash crops are expected to be below normal harvest levels in 2018, with winter wheat – the major crop during the annual agriculture season feeding the staple demand across the country – already well below normal levels. Livestock products are major sources of nutritious food and income for vulnerable farmers, especially women headed households. In recent months, livestock production has reduced suggesting a sharp increase in the number of pastoral households that are distress selling their animals at lower prices, and endangering core breeding stocks.

Limited or no harvest and reduced livestock production will lead to food insecurity and reduced income for those households that are reliant on agriculture. The food security cluster’s response will include support to agriculture, livestock farmers and agricultural labourers. Currently, a pre-harvest assessment is ongoing by MAIL (with the results expected in June) followed by an EFSA to be carried out by FSAC, FAO, and WFP at the beginning of July (with the results expected in August).

Based on the estimated drought severity impact across the 20 most affected provinces, FSAC recommends food security assistance for up to 1.4 million rural people (200,000 households) at risk of severe food insecurity. Assistance will be in the form of in-kind food or cash-based transfers costing up to $14 million per month, for a maximum of 6 months and a total cost of $84 million. FSAC is planning to provide 4 months assistance in 2018 and two months in early 2019 based on when seasonal needs are the highest.

FSAC also recommends livelihood assistance for up to 500,000 rural people (72,000 households) who are vulnerable small holders farmers and livestock keepers. Assistance will be in the form of agriculture inputs (summer and winter crops), vegetable seeds and poultry kits, and livestock feed, fast growing fodder crops, and livestock vaccination/de-worming/treatment campaigns costing up to $10.5 million. FSAC is collaborating closely with MAIL on food and livestock protection assistance.

In addition to the above food security and livelihood responses, FSAC and its partners are closely monitoring the situation for signs of large-scale migration due to drought.

**Contacts**

Cluster Coordinator/Co-Lead: Abdul Majid, Coordinator (abdul.majid@fao.org); Eric Kenefick, Co-Lead (eric.kenefick@wfp.org)

Operational Partners: ACTED, ABM, ACF, ActionAid, ADA, Afghanaid, ANCC, AREA, CARE international, Caritas Germany, CoAR, Concern, CRS, DRC, FAO, HRDA, IR, IRC, Madera, Medair, NCRO, NEI, NPORRA, NRC, OHW, ORCD, ORCD, Oxfam, PAC, PIN, RCDC, RI, SCI, Shelter for life, SI, SOFAR, UNHCR, WFP, WHH, World Vision, ZOA

Inputs provided by the Food Security & Agriculture cluster
The drought has had a devastating effect on pre-existing water sources, with many areas experiencing acute water shortages. In some parts of the western region of Afghanistan, water consumption has dropped below 5 litres per person per day forcing people to spend an average of 4-5 hours collecting drinking water per day as well as relying on unprotected water sources for drinking, exposing them to water borne diseases (Rapid WASH needs assessment, Moqur district, February 2018). Water shortages are likely to persist in many areas until November – December 2018, leaving an estimated 750,000 people in need of WASH services across seventeen provinces, of which eleven are likely to be severely affected.

The WASH cluster has carried out inter-agency contingency planning exercises in three regions where partners have agreed to scale-up WASH emergency services in response to the drought, including:

- Drought mapping to locate the exact communities and settlements that are facing or will face the severe water shortages;
- Prepositioning of water kits including purification chemicals and water storage facilities in strategic locations;
- Emergency water trucking (EWT) as short-term, life-saving activities;
- Rehabilitation of boreholes, drilling strategic boreholes for facilitating water trucking to stop the displacement;
- Provision of water supply by rehabilitating /extending existing water sources and drilling of new water sources in already affected areas;
- Provision of hygiene kits including water containers, community and household’s sensitization on safe water practices and on appropriate hygiene behavior for drought affected communities;
- Water treatment (desalination) where aquifer yield salty water, mobilization of communities and authorities to implement water harvesting options e.g. aquifer recharge dams and desalination.

Contacts

Cluster Coordinator/Co-Lead: Ramesh Bhusal, Coordinator (rbhusal@unicef.org); Rashid Yahya (rashid.yahya@dacaar.org), NGO Co-Lead; Abdul Malik Temory (malik.temory@mrrd.gov.af), National Co-lead (MRRD); Ghulam Tariq, NGO Co-lead (ghulam.tariq@nca.no)


Inputs provided by the Water, Sanitation & Hygiene cluster
The impact of drought on nutritional status is highly linked to reduced access to safe water, health concerns and increased likelihood of food insecurity in the months to come with the impact possibly more severe in provinces with pre-existing high rates of malnutrition. An estimated 125,000 acutely malnourished children under five and 32,750 pregnant and lactating women (PLW) will be in need of life saving emergency nutrition services across the 20 drought affected provinces. Of these, the nutrition cluster plans to assist 89,350 children under five and 9,745 PLW for emergency nutrition assistance. This includes: 26,285 moderately acutely malnourished (MAM) children under five and 9,745 PLW who will receive treatment of MAM services; 23,535 severely acutely malnourished (SAM) children under five will be treated through outpatient programmes; and 3,530 SAM children with medical complications who will need in patient treatment services. In addition, in coordination with the food security cluster's food assistance response, 36,000 children under two will receive supplementary food through the blanket supplementary feeding programme (BSFP).

The following activities will be implemented to mitigate the short term impact of drought on the nutritional status of vulnerable children and PLW:

- Early case finding and treatment of acute malnutrition by strengthening community screening and referral;
- Scale up of emergency nutrition services through fixed and integrated mobile nutrition teams;
- Coordination with food security and agriculture cluster partners on joint delivery of food assistance (either in-kind or cash) and BSFP;
- Micronutrient supplementation to children under five and women of reproductive age through coordination with Ministry of Public Health and UNICEF;
- Coordination with NID (national immunisation days) and Polio Vitamin A supplementation programmes to ensure maximum coverage is achieved in drought affected provinces;
- Delivery of essential nutrition supplies to facilities and ensuring stock maintenance;
- Awareness raising on infant and young child feeding practices in collaboration with the USAID Initiative for Hygiene, Sanitation and Nutrition (IHSAN) in Afghanistan and through nutrition counsellors.

Contacts

Cluster Coordinator: Anteneh Dobamo, Coordinator (adobamo@unicef.org)

Operational Partners: AADA, ACF, ACTD, AHDS, AKHS, BARAN, BDN, CAF, Caritas G., CHA, FHI360, HADAAF, HEERO, HNTPO, IMC, InterSOS, MEDAIR, MMRCA, MoPH, MOVE, MRCA, OHPM, ORCD, PU-AMI, SAF, SCI, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, WVI

Inputs provided by the Nutrition cluster
This document is produced on behalf of the Humanitarian Country Team and partners.

This document provides the Humanitarian Country Team’s shared understanding of the crisis, including the most pressing humanitarian needs, and reflects its joint humanitarian response planning.

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