Northeast: Over 9,000 people received humanitarian assistance

Fighting between a Non-State Armed Group (NSAG) and Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) continued in Badakhshan, Baghlan, Kunduz and Takhar provinces. On 9 March, one civilian was reportedly killed and five others were injured due to a mortar shell in the Puze Ishan area in Pul-e-Khumri district, Baghlan province.

Last week, 9,779 people affected by conflict received humanitarian assistance in Kunduz province. Moreover, 539 internally displaced persons (IDPs) affected by conflict were assessed and will receive assistance in the coming days in Baghlan province.

East: 10,157 people received humanitarian aid, over 2,000 people displaced in Laghman province during the last week.

On 12 March, a hospital with 100 beds and medical staff was designated in Jalalabad city, Nangarhar province to respond to people with COVID-19. Since 15 March, local authorities announced that all education facilities including madrasas and universities are officially closed in the east as part of measures to prevent the transmission of the COVID-19 virus.
Last week, interagency assessment teams identified 3,955 IDPs to receive humanitarian assistance in the coming days across the eastern part of the country; and 10,157 IDPs received humanitarian assistance in Nangarhar, Laghman, Nuristan and Kunar provinces. In addition, 7,113 returnees, IDPs and people from host communities were reached with emergency outpatient health services. This week, a total of 5,389 children were vaccinated for polio and measles.

**North: Four people confirmed to have COVID-19 in Samangan and Balkh**

Fighting between an NSAG and ANSF continued in Faryab province. According to the Ministry of Public Health, four people were confirmed to have COVID-19 in the north in Samangan (3 people) and Balkh (1 person) provinces as of 15 March.

Last week, 1,631 IDPs affected by conflict received humanitarian assistance in Balk, Faryab and Sar-e-Pul provinces. Also, interagency assessment teams identified 1,421 people displaced by conflict in Balkh, Faryab, Sar-e-Pul and Jawzjan provinces to receive humanitarian assistance in the coming days.

**South: Over 2,000 people received winter assistance in Zabul**

Fighting continued between an NSAG and the ANSF in Hilmand, Kandahar and Zabul provinces.

Last week, 567 IDPs affected by conflict received humanitarian assistance in Kandahar and Zabul provinces; and 2,158 people received winter assistance in Zabul province. Humanitarian partners are conducting needs assessments for IDPs affected by conflict in Kandahar and Nimroz provinces.

**Centre: Almost 3,000 people received humanitarian aid**

On 9 March, a group of children discovered an unexploded ordnance in Azra district, Logar province that subsequently exploded. One child was reportedly killed and six others were wounded. Two and a half million people in Afghanistan are estimated to live within one kilometre of areas known to be polluted with explosive hazards which are in need of immediate mine clearance.

Last week, 1,812 IDPs affected by natural disasters received humanitarian assistance in Daykundi and Paktya provinces. In addition, 1,120 IDPs affected by conflict received cash and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) assistance in Khost and Logar provinces. Interagency assessment teams identified 777 people affected by conflict to receive humanitarian assistance in the coming days in Paktya province.

**West: Strengthening capacity for COVID-19 response**

According to the Ministry of Public Health, in total 14 people in the west in Hirat (13 people) and Badghis (1 person) provinces were confirmed to have COVID-19. All schools in Hirat have remained closed and public gatherings banned until further notice. As of 18 March, 22 people were confirmed to have COVID-19 across the country and health authorities were investigating 51 people presumptively for COVID-19. 171 people tested negative for the virus. The focus of activities in Afghanistan continues to be both preparedness and containment, but the overall health capacity in the country to respond to a widespread COVID-19 outbreak is insufficient.

19 permanent handwashing points (4 for children and 15 for adults) and 12 sanitation facility (10 toilets and 2 bathrooms) are being constructed at the border transit center in Islam Qala. Provincial authorities and the UN identified the need to rehabilitate 6 restrooms at the immigration centre and 8 others at the transit centre. The rehabilitation has already begun.

A total of 560 IDPs were assessed and assisted in Farah province. Needs assessments are ongoing in Badghis, Ghor and Hirat provinces.

For more information on COVID-19 please see Afghanistan update #14.

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