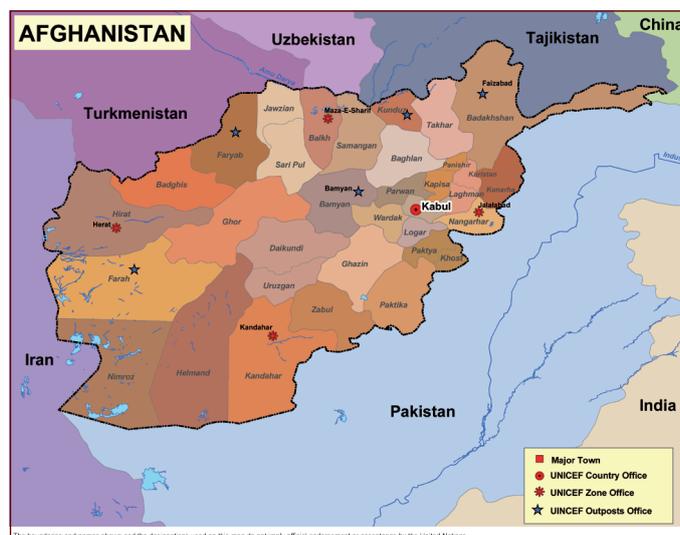


UNICEF HUMANITARIAN ACTION AFGHANISTAN IN 2009



Core Country Data	
Population under five (thousands)	5,002
U5 mortality rate	257
Infant mortality rate	165
Maternal mortality ratio (2000–2007, reported)	1600
% U1 fully immunized (DPT3)	83
Primary school enrolment ratio (2000–2007, net, male/female)*	64/35
% population using improved drinking-water sources (total)	22
% U5 suffering from moderate and severe wasting/stunting	7/54

Sources: *The State of the World's Children 2009*, * Best estimates of social indicators for children in Afghanistan 1990–2005, and Ministry of Education school survey report 2007.

Drought, high food prices, population movements, floods, disease outbreaks, conflict and deportation of Afghan migrants from the Islamic Republic of Iran are the most expected phenomena in 2009. UNICEF Afghanistan through the *Humanitarian Action Report 2009* contributions is planning to reach approximately 3 million children and women through lifesaving interventions in the areas of health and nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene, education and child protection, and provision of non-food supplies.

Summary of UNICEF Emergency Needs for 2009*	
Sector	US\$
Health and Nutrition	4,000,000
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	5,000,000
Education	3,000,000
Child Protection	1,000,000
Emergency Relief and Coordination	2,500,000
Total**	15,500,000

* Funds received against this appeal will be used to respond to both the immediate and medium-term needs of children and women as outlined above. If UNICEF should receive funds in excess of the medium-term funding requirements for this emergency, UNICEF will use those funds to support other underfunded emergencies.

**The total includes a maximum recovery rate of 7 per cent. The actual recovery rate on contributions will be calculated in accordance with UNICEF Executive Board Decision 2006/7 dated 9 June 2006.

1. CRITICAL ISSUES FOR CHILDREN AND WOMEN

In 2008 Afghanistan faced a growing number of natural and man-made disasters. High food prices and droughts threaten approximately 11 million people in 22 provinces across the country. The wheat price rose by 58 per cent throughout the whole country in 2007, but in some markets the increase reached up to 80–100 per cent. By April 2008, prices had raised another 30 to 50 per cent. Over 3 million Afghan refugees live in the neighbouring countries of Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran. Political changes could exacerbate the expulsion of Afghan refugees anytime.

Active military operations, air strikes and insurgencies caused considerable human casualties and restricted access to the civilian population. Over 40 per cent of the country's territory is not accessible to the humanitarian aid workers for extended periods. As of August 2008, a total of 698 civilians had been killed in the fighting between the Government of Afghanistan/coalition forces and anti-government elements. The total number of deaths by August 2008 has been very high compared to the same time in 2007. By end of third quarter of 2008 there have also been 137 serious attacks on NGOs with 88 NGO staff abductions.

There are over 150,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the country, mostly in southern and western areas, including those long-term displaced by conflict, drought and lack of economic opportunities from their places of origin. The ongoing drought and conflict will cause further displacements in the months to come. Floods, disease outbreaks and deportation of Afghan migrants from the Islamic Republic of Iran have also been common phenomena in 2008.

Despite the improved situation in education in recent years, the disparity between boys and girls remains a big challenge. School enrolment in grades 1–12 has risen from 0.9 million in 2002 to 5.6 million in 2007. The primary school enrolment for girls stands at 35 per cent compared to boys at 64 per cent. The primary school completion rate is 32 per cent for boys and only 13 per cent for girls. There are an estimated 1.2 million girls out of primary school. Only 30 per cent of girls (aged 12 years) reach grade 5 compared to 56 per cent of boys (Sources: Best estimates of social indicators for children in Afghanistan 1990–2005, and Ministry of Education school survey report 2007).

Forty-three per cent of the women who got married are under age 18 and 26 per cent of working children are aged 5–14 years. Around 37,000 children work on the streets in the capital, Kabul. Around 8,000 children are associated with armed groups and armed forces.

With only 22 per cent of the population having access to improved drinking-water sources and 30 per cent to safe sanitation facilities, water and sanitation remain high priorities for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Despite a significant reduction in under-five mortality (25 per cent), health services have yet to reach the marginalized people and those living in the remote and hard-to-reach areas. With maternal mortality ratio at 1,600 per 100,000 live births, Afghanistan has the second worst ratio in the world after Sierra Leone.

Afghanistan is receiving generous contributions from the international community and donors but government capacity in the areas of technical expertise and implementation remains an issue.

2. KEY ACTIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2008

UNICEF's response to emergencies and humanitarian crises has been fully coordinated with the Government of Afghanistan, UN agencies and NGOs. Drought, conflict, population movements and high food prices have been the main emergencies in the country. UNICEF procured nutrition supplies to respond to and manage the burden of severe acute malnutrition in children under age five. The supplies were distributed to 44 therapeutic feeding centres across the country, where health workers are treating around 5,000 children with acute malnutrition. A total of 135 health workers were trained in the management of severe acute malnutrition. Essential drugs were distributed to the provinces to respond to disease outbreaks and other health-related issues. Supplies were used to respond to cholera and measles outbreaks as well as to support IDPs and returnees' concentrated areas. Approximately 100,000 people benefited from health supplies.

The Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MoRRD) with the support of UNICEF, international NGOs and other water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) cluster partners provided water tankering to 17 out of 22 drought-affected provinces. In the remaining five provinces water tankering also started recently using the Central Emergency Revolving Fund (CERF) and other resources, benefiting so far about 800,000 people (out of 1,150,000). At the same time, as part of the long-term drought mitigation, MoRRD and other WASH cluster partners started providing water through the construction of more than 400 community water points, seven strategic water points (high-yield deep wells, equipped with generator and power pump serving) and five piped water supply schemes in different parts of the 22 affected provinces. With all the above-mentioned activities, the provision of water will reach all 1,150,000 people.

UNICEF and the Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees (DACAAR), an international NGO, provided water through water tankering to the 5,639 families returned from Pakistan to eastern provinces. Discussion is underway with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) for providing long-term solutions to water supply for these returnees. Two bore wells have already been constructed for 736 families.

In response to a deadly suicide attack on a school, which eventually killed 75 people, UNICEF provided psychosocial support to 2,600 students and to their teachers as well as to the surrounding community and affected families. In addition, UNICEF procured recreational kits for distribution to schools affected by armed conflict or any other type of violence. The supplies will benefit over 500,000 children.

More than 4,000 children in the returnee and refugee settlements of eastern provinces were provided with education support through the establishment of 50 new community-based schools and the existing formal schools. Over 5,000 families affected by conflict or natural disasters and returnees were provided with non-food supplies. The package included cooking sets, warm clothes, blankets and plastic sheeting.

3. PLANNED HUMANITARIAN ACTION FOR 2009

Coordination and Partnership

Emergency response is coordinated by the Government of Afghanistan, through its Emergency Response Commission, incorporating line ministries. The UN system support is provided through this Commission, along with NGO inputs and coordinated by the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). A Combined Disaster Management Team (CDMT), consisting of UN agencies, NGOs and local authorities, is tasked with practical implementation of emergency response and reports to the Commission.

The humanitarian cluster approach was rolled out in May 2008 with UNICEF being the lead in nutrition, WASH and education. The cluster roll-out brought a good sense of coordination among different actors and serves efficiently in resource mobilization and division of labour for ongoing and emerging emergencies.

Linkages of HAR with the Regular Programme

Emergency preparedness and response activities are fully integrated into the main programme sectors of UNICEF's Country Programme 2009. In addition to mainstreaming support to national and area-based capacity-building, each programme sector is also responsible for ensuring that a humanitarian response element is included in its annual work plan to support the development of emergency response capacity and management among government counterparts.

UNICEF Afghanistan is trying to alleviate the suffering of children and women affected by the growing number of natural and man-made disasters by providing lifesaving activities in the areas of health, nutrition, WASH, education and child protection and the provision of non-food supplies. UNICEF's humanitarian interventions are guided by its *Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies*, which provide the minimum required lifesaving interventions in the event of emergencies. Humanitarian activities in 2009 will focus on the people affected by all kinds of natural and man-made disasters. UNICEF-supported programmes are expected to reach at least 3 million children and women in 2009.

Health and Nutrition (US\$ 4,000,000)

For 2009, the overall goal is to reach some 500,000 vulnerable children among the displaced, returnees, host communities and impoverished through the following key activities:

- Distribute essential emergency drugs and equipment to 150,000 persons, particularly IDPs, returnees and drought-affected population through health centres and mobile clinics;
- Undertake nutrition assessment, provide technical support, strengthen nutritional surveillance and provide nutritional supplies, including micronutrients, to therapeutic feeding centres and community-based therapeutic care centres for 5,000 severely malnourished children and 100,000 pregnant/lactating women, focusing on food insecure areas;
- Develop and strengthen capacity at health facility and household levels in the prevention, detection and management of malnutrition;

- Vaccinate against measles and administer vitamin A to 100,000 children, particularly IDPs, returnees and children affected by natural and man-made disasters;
- Provide rapid response to diarrhoeal and acute respiratory disease outbreaks, with a planning figure of 150,000 children in high-risk areas.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (US\$ 5,000,000)

For 2009, the overall goal is to reach about 1 million displaced persons, returnee families and drought-affected communities, focusing particularly on children and women, through the following key activities:

- Provide water to drought-affected communities and to IDPs and returnees with the planning figure of 200,000 people;
- Provide 1,000 sanitation facilities, promote hygiene and chlorination of wells and organize communication campaigns for the control of diarrhoeal diseases in the event of outbreaks for at least 5,000 families and surrounding schools, with special emphasis on IDPs, returnees and areas affected by outbreaks;
- Repair 1,000 water points and piped water schemes in drought-affected areas, mainly schools;
- Provide 60,000 collapsible water containers to IDPs and families affected by natural and man-made disasters;
- Construct 10 strategic bore wells and 400 community water points (bore well/dug well equipped with handpump) along with hygiene education in affected provinces for 200,000 people.

Education (US\$ 3,000,000)

For 2009, the overall goal is to reach over 500,000 children through the following key activities:

- Construct 30 cost-effective schools in remote areas for 15,000 children with possible community contribution;
- Provide psychosocial support to traumatized and war-affected children in 1,000 schools across the country;
- Procure teaching/learning materials and teacher support for 20,000 students with special focus on IDP and returnee areas.

Child Protection (US\$ 1,000,000)

For 2009, the overall goal is to reach children affected by armed conflict and natural disasters through the following key activities:

- Create child-friendly play areas for over 8,000 children in the IDP/deportee concentrated areas and for children affected by armed conflict and/or natural disasters;
- Strengthen monitoring of child rights' violations and abuse through existing Child Protection Action Networks (CPANs) and continue to co-chair, coordinate and develop the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) on children affected by armed conflict violations (Security Council Resolution 1612);
- Support community-based psychosocial/child-friendly corners in the IDP/deportee concentrated areas. Activities will cover setting up the places, training volunteers/teachers/peer educators and developing relevant materials;
- Conduct mine-risk awareness programmes with special focus on training of peers, implementation of community based interventions, advocacy and materials development in close collaboration with the UN Mine Action Centre in Afghanistan (UNMACA) at national and regional levels;
- Trace and reunite separated children in the event of natural/man-made disasters, in close collaboration with child protection and human rights organizations under the ongoing tracing programmes;
- Strengthen community and caregivers' capacity to develop community-based alternative options for children deprived of parental care.

Emergency Relief and Coordination (US\$ 2,500,000)

For 2009, the overall goal is to support in coordination with the Government and UN agencies the humanitarian coordination system, information management system, assessment and capacity-building, and provide logistical assistance at national and subnational levels. UNICEF will procure and preposition non-food supplies for 30,000 families with a standard package of family kits, tarpaulins, blankets, warm clothing for women and children and collapsible water containers at provincial hubs.