



AFGHANISTAN

Western Region Drought Response Humanitarian Situation Report # 3

SITUATION IN NUMBERS

15 November 2018

Highlights

- Over 3 million people including an estimated 1.6 million children are affected by the impact of drought across the country. The number of food insecure population is likely to increase to over 6 million people during the lean season
- While some people are returning to their areas of origin, new arrivals continue to settle in the IDP camps. With the onset of winter season, temperatures continued to drop. With reports of an increasing number of patients with acute respiratory tract infections and two winter-related deaths, winterization activities continue to be prioritized. UNICEF has delivered clothes and blankets to over 10,000 drought-affected children in IDP settlements.
- Water, sanitation and hygiene activities continue to be a priority. With partners, UNICEF is providing over 146,500 (95 per cent of target) people with safe drinking water. UNICEF installed culturally-sensitive latrines benefitting over 60,000 people (75 per cent of target) across IDP sites in Herat and Badghis.
- Malnutrition rates remain high amongst displaced children. Of the 19,300 children screened in Herat and Badghis IDP settlements, 1,379 were found to be severe acute malnutrition (SAM) cases and were referred for treatment at facilities in Herat and Badghis provinces.
- UNICEF and partners recently conducted measles campaign reaching over 61,510 children to prevent outbreaks among IDP children.
- The drought response is 60% funded with the generous contribution of several donors. UNICEF urgently require US\$4 million the needs of a quarter million people. UNICEF was forced to suspend some development activities to focus on life saving interventions.

120,420

of children estimated to be displaced to IDP sites and in need of humanitarian assistance in western provinces

(Based on children accounting for 54 per cent of the population as per draft 2019 HNO)

223,000

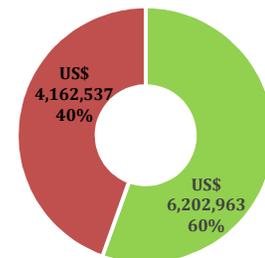
of people estimated to be displaced to IDP sites and in need of humanitarian assistance in western provinces (Source: OCHA, Nov 2018)

1.7 million (Herat, Badghis and Ghor Provinces)

of people affected by drought

(Source: Afghan Humanitarian Country Team Report - 8 August 2018)

UNICEF 2018 Drought Response Needs: US\$ 10.3 million



■ Funding Available ■ Gap

UNICEF Response with Partners

Key Programme Indicators	UNICEF & IPs		Sector	
	Target	Results	Target	Result
Nutrition: children under 5 with SAM admitted for treatment	35,836	10,017	35,836	10,017
Health: children who received measles vaccination	78,400	61,510		
WASH: Number of people accessing safe drinking water	155,000	146,523	250,000	197,112
Child Protection: children accessing psycho-social support	14,794	18,058	31,702	20,342
Education: children and adolescents who accessed Non-Formal/formal education	20,000	7,040	40,000	8,767

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

The drought situation remains dynamic with fluctuating numbers of displaced people as some return while some new IDPs arrive in the temporary settlements. The number of people facing emergency levels of food insecurity has increased by over 74 per cent to reach 3.3 million people compared to last year. According to FEWSNET, the total food insecure population is expected to increase as high as between 6 and 7 million due to a combination of droughts effects, conflict, and weak labour opportunities and remittances from outside the country. The worst affected provinces include Badghis, Daykundi and Badhakshan which will continue under IPC Phase 4 (Emergency) until mid-next year. Apart from fuelling large scale displacements, drought impacts have compounded the already vulnerable and impoverished communities forcing them to engage in negative coping mechanisms such as asset disposal, “selling” of girl children¹ or forced marriages, and withdrawal of children from school. There are reports of continued prevalence of child marriage, child labour and child engagement in all IDP settlements in Herat and Badghis.

According to the recent verification exercise, a total of 223,000 people have been displaced due to drought, of which 148,000 are based in Herat, 70,000 in Badghis and 5,000 in Ghor province². While the displacement trends remained stable in Herat during the month of November, the number of displaced people increased significantly in Badghis due to the worsening food insecurity. In addition, 301,000 people have been displaced due to the conflict this year with 11,000 people being forced to flee their homes over the past weeks. In addition, some 4,700 IDP families have expressed an interest in returning to their areas of origin. They have been provided with non-food items (NFIs) through IOM, and are awaiting a food distribution before the Government facilitates their return home – UNICEF will continue to support them in areas of origin as needed through durable water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) activities, and access to mobile health and nutrition teams (MHNTs). Most IDPs however, have confirmed that they will remain in IDP sites at least through the winter.

Displaced families living in temporary and poorly insulated shelters face not only the risk of harsh winters but also the risk of flash floods, especially those residing on dry-river beds. Most recently a number of families in these high risk areas have relocated to higher ground. In addition, the risk of acute respiratory infection is very high during the winter season particularly among children due to indoor pollution as families burn wood to keep themselves warm. With 68 per cent of the internally displaced populations living in Herat reporting not intending to return to their areas of origin there is need for the government and humanitarian actors to develop durable solution beyond the current humanitarian response

Due to lack of adequate food and access to other basic needs, the nutritional status of IDP children and pregnant and lactating women (PLW) continue to deteriorate. Recent assessment conducted by the Nutrition Cluster indicate that 25 per cent of children aged 0-59 months are acutely malnourished. It is estimated that over 50,000 children under five and about 20,500 pregnant and lactating women (PLWs) are currently displaced in Herat and Badghis as a result of drought. Timely and scaled up emergency nutrition response is required to avoid malnutrition related morbidity and mortality among this at-risk population.

Furthermore, on a weekly basis, during the month of October an average of 1,800 displaced children were diagnosed with diarrhoeal diseases in Herat and Badghis IDP sites. As of November, these numbers remain stable and agencies are promoting increased sanitation and hygiene behaviours. In early November, increased cases of bloody diarrhoea, reaching outbreak levels, were recorded, particularly in Badghis. However, by mid-November, these cases declined significantly. Similarly, despite the presence of outbreaks of Crimean-Congo Haemorrhagic fever (CCHF) in Herat province, there were no reported cases among displaced people.

Humanitarian leadership and coordination

UNICEF continues to actively advocate for children at different forums such as the Humanitarian Country Team and Inter-Cluster Coordination mechanism. UNICEF continues to lead the WASH and Nutrition clusters, Child Protection in Emergencies sub-cluster and the Education in Emergencies (EiE) Working Group. While, OCHA leads on overall coordination. At sub-national level in the Western Region, UNICEF co-leads the EiEWG with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). The cluster focal points support cluster coordination in Herat and Badghis, and meetings are organized on ad-hoc basis. Government line departments attend WASH and Health Cluster meetings on a regular basis.

¹ Selling of girls: child marriage triggered by the impact of the drought on affected populations, with girls being given in marriage to repay household debts or relieve the financial burden

² OCHA, 2018 – [Humanitarian Snapshot \(30 Oct – 05 Nov\)](#)

Humanitarian Strategy

UNICEF's support focuses on the provision of life-saving interventions through an integrated approach which speaks to the humanitarian-development continuum. This approach responds to the needs of both drought-affected IDPs in settlements, as well as those in the drought-affected areas of origin. UNICEF also continues to work closely with the Government through capacity building and advocating for them to invest in long-term solutions to the drought in the areas of origin.

For the nutrition response, UNICEF provides treatment services for children with acute malnutrition through existing health facilities at place of origin. At area of displacement, a full package (treatment and prevention) of emergency nutrition services such as treatment of acute malnutrition, micronutrient supplementation, counselling services on appropriate infant and child feeding practices are being provided to children under five of age, and to pregnant and lactating women (PLW) through integrated MHNTs. For health, the strategy is to reduce mortality/morbidity in IDPs communities through the establishment of integrated mobile/fixed health and nutrition teams to render emergency basic health care services, and implementation of measles and polio vaccinations.

The WASH strategy focuses on the prevention and management of water-borne disease outbreaks among drought-affected people by providing lifesaving water and sanitation services to the displaced population and those remaining at their place of origin. WASH continues to prioritise durable solutions in places of origin wherever possible to encourage families to stay where they are if they do not have protection concerns. To increase IDP communities' awareness on public health-related issues, communication for development activities are ongoing through engagement of community based groups, polio community mobilisers and hygiene promoters and dissemination of emergency related information, education and communication (IEC) materials.

Using an integrated approach, education serves as the entry point for delivering inter-sectoral activities within learning spaces, including training of teachers on psycho-social counselling and support, and establishing gender-segregated latrines, and conducting hygiene training. UNICEF supports the provision of child protection services including integrated psycho-social support, child protection case management, and referral services to assist the most vulnerable children living under extremely stressful conditions

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

Nutrition

As of 15 November, over 10,000 children with SAM (28 per cent of target) in the Western Region have been admitted into a treatment programme. This includes 1,379 from Herat and Badghis IDP settlements – where 19,370 children have been screened since the start of the response in July. Treatment for these IDP SAM cases is being provided through the 21 available MHNTs in the IDP settlements, of which seven are UNICEF-supported (3 in Herat & 4 in Badghis). With the aim of promoting durable solutions for nutrition responses in the areas of origin, UNICEF and partners are providing emergency nutrition support through 117 nutrition facilities (24 in Badghis, 38 in Ghor, 39 in Herat and 16 in Farah), to support malnourished children and women in the drought-affected districts of Western Region. In addition, UNICEF provides Ready-to-use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) to all nutrition partners operating in the IDP settlements. A total of 22,178 mothers in IDP settlements have been reached through infant and young child feeding (IYCF) counselling services. A total of 22,178 mothers in IDP settlements have been reached through infant and young child feeding (IYCF) counselling services.

UNICEF is working with cluster partners to revise the IYCF target given recent assessments. The current target only includes Herat IDPs who were the only ones available as disaggregated at the time of planning. The nutrition cluster organizes meetings on bi-weekly basis at Herat aiming to improve coordination among implementing partners. Key areas of focus in the next month will focus on addressing the fact that fewer people are visiting the mobile clinics due to the cold weather. Partners are currently exploring winterization options and ways to ensure the consistency and predictability of general food distributions so that we do not see an increase in food insecurity among families, as well as malnutrition among children and mothers.

Health

Since the start of the response, two rounds of measles supplementary immunisation activity (SIA) were conducted in both Herat and Badghis reaching 61,510 children (78 per cent of target). To date, there have been no reports of outbreaks of vaccine preventable diseases in IDP settlements. Pregnant/lactating women and children are increasingly accessing health services which are also providing health education, 8,588 (exceeding target) have been reached through seven functional UNICEF-supported Mobile Health and Nutrition Teams (MHNTs). At the request of the IDPs UNICEF and partners operate both mobile and fixed structures/tents to increase access and predictability of services. Referred cases are then taken to nearby government-run health facilities.

In Afghanistan, the number of polio cases has almost doubled in 2018, with 19 cases reported so far, compared to 10 at the same time last year, due to worsened security and greater inaccessibility. During the latest November Campaign, a total of 31,261 children under five years of age were vaccinated in Herat (16,562) and Badghis (14,699). Due to security concerns over 1 million children under 5 years old are currently inaccessible during recent polio immunization campaigns

In total, 1,919 pregnant women and families with new-borns, received safe delivery kits and emergency new-born kits, (21 per cent of the target). To increase coverage for this intervention, emergency new-born kits are being distributed to two health facilities close to IDPs settlements. In the areas of origin, eight UNICEF-supported mobile health teams (MHTs) provided health services to remote and under-served population in five districts of Badghis province. Between January and September 2018, a total of 5,537 pregnant women received health services (83 per cent coverage), 1,689 pregnant mothers received safe delivery kits (25 per cent), and 4,106 children received penta-3 (61 per cent coverage).

WASH

As of 15 November, UNICEF water trucking reached 146,523 people (95% of target) in both Herat and Badghis IDP settlements. Due to some recent rain in two districts of Badghis province (Jawand and Abkamary), UNICEF and NGO partner World Vision have stopped emergency water trucking for some 38,600 people given that now there is sufficient water in reservoirs – however, this activity remains on standby in case needs resurface. UNICEF continues to implement durable solutions through regular WASH programmes, and is reaching 33,100 drought-affected people in five districts of Badghis province.

A total of 60,160 people, including children and women (75 per cent of target) have gained access to functional toilets, adhering to cultural norms, including clearly labelled and separate male and female latrines. In the spirit of integrated approaches, latrines and water tanks have been installed near child-friendly spaces and temporary learning spaces to enable children and teachers to access it easily.

Some 160,000 people have received WASH specific messages, namely on hand-washing with soap, where 48 women and men are actively working as hygiene promoters. UNICEF plans to reinvigorate these efforts ahead of the winter, especially with the continued movement of IDPs. In several IDP settlements, UNICEF distributed over 12,000 family hygiene kits benefitting over 100,000 people (129 per cent of the target).

Compared to the previous month when a weekly average of 1,800 displaced children were diagnosed with diarrhoeal diseases in Herat and Badghis IDP sites, the situation has remained generally stable in November as agencies continue to promote increased sanitation and hygiene activities. Similarly, there is a significant decline in the number of cases for bloody diarrhoea compared to the first weeks of November when it was almost reaching outbreak levels particularly in Badghis.

As WASH cluster lead, UNICEF is consistently coordinating and monitoring the situation on the ground, scaling up response efforts to reach the most affected population who remain in dire need of humanitarian assistance. Through the WASH cluster, over 240,000 people are accessing safe drinking water at present. In order to have a coordinated WASH response in the field, UNICEF is inviting partners to monthly and weekly WASH coordination meetings at the national and provincial level respectively.

Education

UNICEF supported the Provincial Education Directorates (PED) with the establishment of over 170 temporary learning spaces (TLS) in Badghis and Herat IDP sites, benefitting 7,040 children and adolescents (35 per cent of target). This included the provision of 44 tents and 28 make-shift learning spaces, and the distribution of classroom teaching and learning materials, as well as recreational materials and early childhood development (ECD) kits. To support these activities, 116 teachers (36 per cent of target) received a full package of EiE, including active learning and participatory teaching methods, teaching evaluation and assessment, collecting learning evidence, as well as psycho-social support. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education (MoE) PEDs, with the support of UNICEF, is identifying locations to address potential additional education needs, should the displaced population return to their places of origin.

UNICEF is promoting an integrated approach bringing together education, child protection, and other sectors to help children regain a sense of normalcy, stability, structure and hope in their daily lives, as well as to mitigate possible negative psycho-social impact. For instance, in locations where learning or recreational spaces are limited for example, UNICEF is encouraging teams to use child-friendly or teaching/learning spaces in alternating shifts.

However, limited funding for EiE and capacity of partners on the ground remains a key challenge for the sector to achieve its targets. In addition, insufficient number of qualified teachers, teaching and learning materials, and limited learning spaces have impacted the capacity to significantly scale-up the education response. Without urgent additional funding, some 31,000 children and adolescents in IDP settlements remain out of school and will continue to be unable to access some form of education.

With winter approaching, there is a concern that children's attendance will be negatively impacted. UNICEF is working with partners to winterize these spaces and provide heating facilities while ensuring fire safety. UNICEF is in the process of procuring prefab-like structures (connexes) to replace tents so that they may better retain heat. In areas where tents have already been used as TLS, floor mats are being installed.

UNICEF and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) are supporting MoE and PEDs in the coordination of the sub-national EiE response (sub-national EiEWG). Since June 2018, the EiEWG has been regularly meeting on a bi-weekly basis in Herat, and a joint EiE/CPIE coordination mechanism was established in Badghis.

Child Protection

UNICEF's Child Protection response focuses on the provision of community-based psycho-social support (PSS), and timely and appropriate case management services that are age appropriate and gender-sensitive. Monitoring reports by six child protection monitoring teams in Herat (2) and in Badghis (4) covering all IDP settlements, showed that child marriage is still prevalent, which is triggered by negative coping mechanisms to repay household debts, or relieve financial burdens. Since the onset of the response 161 cases of Child marriage (63 cases among IDPs in Badghis) have been registered including "selling" of girls (child marriage triggered by the impact of the drought on affected populations, with girls being given in marriage to repay household debts or relieve the financial burden). This is still an under-reported figure as communities are very scattered and the monitoring capacity is limited.

To date, UNICEF has reached 18,058 children with psycho-social support services (122 per cent of target), 324 children with case management services (8 per cent of target), and 25,290 community members through awareness raising activities (exceeding target). This was achieved through 22 CFS (8 in Herat and 14 in Badghis), with the support of two psychosocial counsellors and 12 child protection monitoring teams. Achievements in the area of case management has been challenged by lack of sufficient number of qualified social workers, and enough services to refer the children to. UNICEF is considering options to enhance the case work capacity by bringing in more expertise, and training existing and potential partner staff to increase coverage.

As of 1 November 2018, UNICEF partnered with a local NGO, WASSA to scale up response to better meet PSS and case management needs in Herat, and fill in the gap for the cluster in PSS, where present. This partnership is in line with UNICEF's commitment at the Grand Bargain to expand its work with local civil society organisations. Moreover, UNICEF winter support and non-food items benefitted 10,074 children and their families (29 per cent of the target). The winter clothes kits and blankets will help protect children from the harsh, cold weather, and will decrease risks of ARI among under five years of age children.

Security

The general the security situation in the Western Region remains unpredictable. Armed clashes continue to account for majority of security incidents, followed by IED detonations. However, the rise in electoral related incidents across the country also affected the region, particularly during the first half of November. Despite these challenges, and in line with its commitment to stay and deliver, UNICEF advocated for a new Security Risk Assessment to expand the operating radius, or "blue zone", for both Herat and Badghis; and to review the feasibility of road missions from Herat to Qala-i-Naw.

Funding

In line with Afghanistan's multi-year inter-agency 2018-2021 Humanitarian Response Plan (revised in May to include drought financial needs), UNICEF revised its 2018 humanitarian action for children (HAC) appeal to US\$38.8 million to also meet the increased humanitarian needs of children and their families affected by the drought. Approximately US\$10.3 million is required to meet drought-induced needs in the Western Region, as the resultant population displacement has increased the need for safe water, health, child protection, and education and winter responses.

Despite the generous contribution of donors for the 2018 HAC, a US\$ 4 million (40 per cent) funding gap remains. UNICEF has stopped some of its development activities, shifting the resources to meet the most pressing humanitarian needs. However, without additional funding, UNICEF will not be able to support some quarter

million of drought-affected IDPs. The nutrition crisis will continue, critical WASH services will go undelivered, placing children at increased risks of disease outbreak and harsh winter conditions.

Funding Requirements for the Drought Response in the Western Region*					
Appeal Sector	Requirements	Funds available		Funding gap	
		Funds Received Current Year	Carry-Over	\$	%
Nutrition	811,000	651,680		159,320	20%
Health	962,000	276,000		686,000	71%
WASH	6,034,500	3,527,170		2,507,330	42%
Child Protection (<i>inc. NFIs and Winter Support</i>)	1,658,000	1,673,113		(15,113)	-1%
Education	900,000	75,000		825,000	92%
Total	10,365,500	6,202,963		4,162,537	40%

*These needs are included in the 2018 Afghanistan HAC which requires an overall US\$38.8 million.

UNICEF Afghanistan: www.unicef.org/afghanistan

UNICEF Afghanistan Humanitarian Action for Children Appeal: <http://www.unicef.org/appeals/afghanistan.html>

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Annex A

SUMMARY OF DROUGHT RESPONSE PROGRAMME RESULTS July-15 Nov 2018

High Frequency HPM Indicators	UNICEF and IPs				Cluster/Sector Response			
	2018-19 Target	Total Results	% of the target achieved	Change since last report ▲▼	2018 -19 Target	Total Results*	% of the target achieved	Change since last report ▲▼
NUTRITION								
Number of children under 5 with SAM admitted for treatment*	35,836	10,017	28%	▲3,891	35,836	10,017	28%	▲3,691
Number of PLW counselled on IYCF	4,536**	22,178	-	▲15,431	4,536**	22,178	-	▲15,431
HEALTH								
Number of children who received measles vaccination	78,400	61,510	78%	▲32,753				
Number of pregnant/lactating women and children benefited from essential health services and health education (through MHTs)	8,000	8,588	107%	▲1,998				
Number of pregnant women & new-borns who benefited from distribution of NFI (new-born kits, family kits, clean delivery kits)	8,960	1,919	21%	▲1,515				
WATER, SANITATION & HYGIENE								
Number of people accessing safe drinking water	155,000	146,523	95%	▲3,900	250,000	197,112	79%	▲1,574
Number of people accessing functional latrines	80,000	60,160	75%	▲16,040	120,000	75,540	63%	▲25,980

Number of people reached with key hygiene messages	155,000	160,000	103%	▲52,500	250,000	227,227	91%	▲119,727
Number of people covered with family hygiene kits	80,000	103,307	129%	▲24,627	120,000	117,358	98%	▲33,358
CHILD PROTECTION								
Number of children accessing psycho-social supports through child-friendly spaces	14,794	18,058	122%	▲10,373	31,702	20,342	64%	▲12,314
Number of children supported through case management	4,025	324	8%	▲78	9,058	373	4%	▲112
Number of caregivers and children sensitized and prevented from resorting to the use of negative coping strategies	22,609	25,290	112%	▲6,862	50,869	25,552	49%	▲6,330
Number of affected children and their families receive winter clothes and Non-Food Item (includes blankets and kitchen sets)***	35,000	10,074	29%	▲7,948				
EDUCATION								
Number of children and adolescents who accessed Non-Formal/formal education	20,000	7,040	35%	▲2,530	40,000	8,764	22%	▲3,884
No of teachers trained on EIE	325	116	36%	▲116	650	152	23%	▲152

* SAM target includes needs for IDPs in IDP sites in Badghis and Herat, as well as in the areas of origin in Badghis, Ghor and Farah

** Target to be revised based on new disaggregated population figures – to be included in next sitrep

***Cluster results under this activity are being led by IOM