

AFGHANISTAN EMERGENCY SITUATION REPORT

No. 25 | January 2023



World Health
Organization
Afghanistan

Key Figures (Monthly)

573,604

People reached with
emergency health services

30,401

People received trauma
care services²

2,014 CBM

Medical and Non-Medical
supplies provided

458

Health workers trained

121

Surveillance support
team deployed to
outbreak areas³

Summary of Outbreaks (January 2023)

875

COVID-19 confirmed cases (from
the beginning of the outbreak)

8,919

AWD with dehydration

916,043

Acute Respiratory Infection

2,511

Measles

76

Pertusis

32

Dengue fever



This year, Afghanistan is experiencing one of the harshest winter seasons. WHO has sent medicines and medical supplies to health facilities before the winter started as part of winterization plan.

Overview

In 2023, an estimated 28.3 million people (two thirds of Afghanistan's population) will need urgent humanitarian assistance, a 16% increase from the 24.3 million people needing assistance in 2022. As for health, it is projected that more than 17.6 million people (53% children) will require humanitarian health assistance in 2023, with five million living in urban areas and 12.6 million in rural areas. There have been major barriers to access to healthcare services in rural areas while, at the same time, increased displacement and migration to cities have overburdened the existing health services.

Despite the complex humanitarian situation, which has doubled health threats to the people, WHO will continue to stay and deliver humanitarian services in the country, in collaboration with its health partners. The aim of the Health Cluster for 2023 is to reach the 15.6 million people in need of health assistance. With support from donors, WHO will further scale up its interventions to ensure more access to healthcare services – primary, secondary and tertiary health care – in line with strengthening the health system. WHO will also expand its programs on non-communicable diseases, serving more people facing mental health, psychosocial and drug addiction challenges in 2023.

Outbreak of acute respiratory infection (ARI) in Badakhshan

In early January 2023, an outbreak of acute respiratory infection (ARI)/pneumonia cases was reported in Pamir e Kalan Village, a very remote settlement in the Wakhan District of Badakhshan Province where around 700 people reside. By the end of January, there were 134 ARI cases, reported in Wakhan district including 17 associated deaths (of which seven were children under five years old). WHO and its health partners, in coordination with health authorities, immediately responded to this surge of ARI cases, including active case finding, case management, delivering necessary medicine and supplies, laboratory diagnosis and risk communication. A total of six suspected influenza samples were referred to the national influenza center in Kabul and 15 samples of suspected COVID-19 cases to the central public health laboratory.¹ In addition, health education sessions were conducted to 150 residents in Wakhan District on the prevention, control and health seeking behavior for ARI.

Increasing food insecurity and malnutrition

It is expected that 19.9 million or 46% of the population have been or will be impacted by the crisis (IPC phase 3, 13.8 million) and/or Emergency (IPC phase 4, 6.1 million) between November 2022 and March 2023. Accordingly, four million children and women will face acute malnutrition, as the trend of malnutrition among children under five increased in 2022. In January 2023, about 3,125 children were admitted to the in-patient department with severe acute malnutrition, a 38.3% increase compared to January 2022.

Impact of the ban on women humanitarians in the health service delivery

Responding to the recent ban on women to work in non-government organizations (NGOs) issued in December 2022, the Health Cluster continues to monitor the situation and analyze the impact on health care service delivery. As of 19 January, three partners fully or partially suspended their operations in Kandahar Province, which impacted 23 mobile health teams (MHTs). To sustain service delivery, 47% of partners provide payments to mahram of female staff. Challenges remain in securing and transporting female staff and maintaining compliant work environments, which require separate transportation, office spaces, and permission for field visits.

¹ The laboratory confirmation is pending.

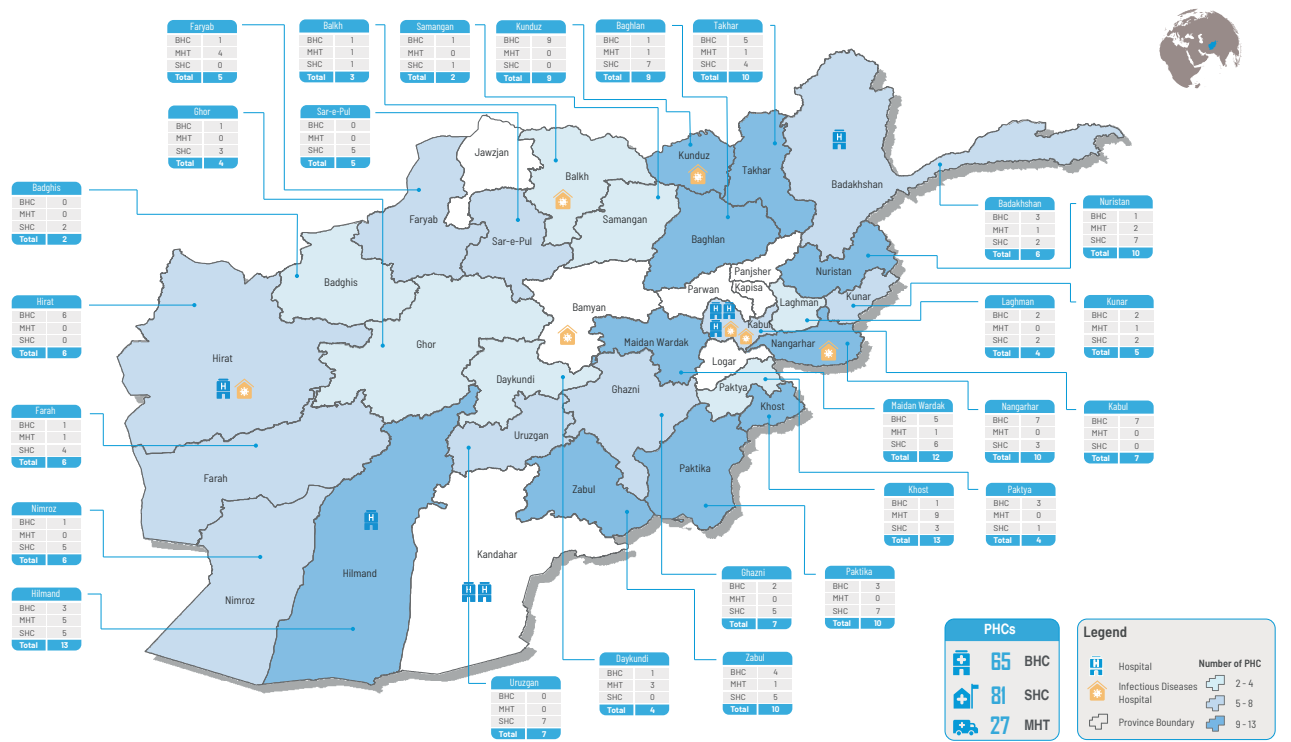
² The number of people who received trauma care services both in outpatient department and inpatient department of WHO-supported health facilities (PHC and hospitals)

³ A WHO-supported surveillance support team consists of an epidemiology focal point to facilitate data collection and a laboratory focal point to support sample collection from suspected cases as well as the National Disease Surveillance and Response (NDSR) in investing alerts and outbreaks

Afghanistan, WHO Supported Hospitals & Primary Health Care Services (PHCs) in the White Area



WHO SUPPORTING 8 HOSPITALS and 7 INFECTIOUS DISEASES HOSPITALS and 173 PHCs by 18 IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS in 30 PROVINCES

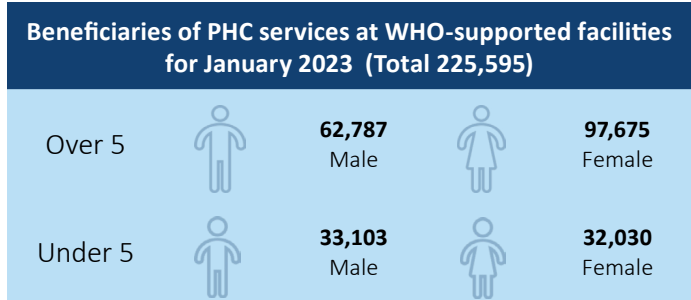


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Sustaining the Health Service Delivery

WHO has expanded its effort on delivering healthcare services to the people of Afghanistan at ever-increasing levels. In partnership with 18 health partners, WHO is currently supporting 15 hospitals (including seven infectious disease and COVID-19 hospitals), and 173 primary healthcare (PHC) facilities to improve healthcare access in underserved (white) areas, where 225,595 people received services in January 2023. The PHC facilities supported include 65 Basic Health Centers (BHCs), 81 Sub Health Centers (SHCs), and 27 Mobile Health Teams (MHTs).

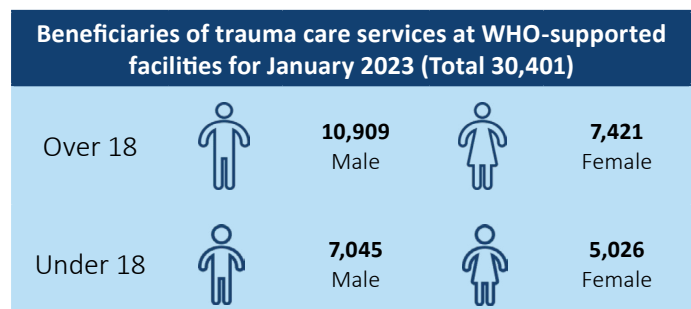
Services provided at WHO-supported health facilities for January 2023	
225,595	Individuals received outpatient (OPD) consultations
7,690	Women received antenatal care (ANC)
4,441	Women received prenatal care (PNC)
856	Institutional deliveries
209,805	Patients received essential drugs for their basic health services
5,025	Child bearing age (CBA) women and under 5 children received TT2+, measles, and PENTA-3 Vaccination
5,411	Women received Family planning services and awareness
67,615	People living in remote and underserved areas received health education and awareness
17,916	Pregnant and Lactating Women received nutrition screening and Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) counselling
50,780	# of children under 5 screened for malnutrition:
793	# of children under 5 with malnutrition received treatment services



Trauma and Physical Rehabilitation Care Services

WHO is supporting the provision of trauma, emergency care, and physical rehabilitation services across the country by providing medical/non-medical supplies to 204 critical trauma care facilities and 67 blood banks, capacity building, and full operational support of a rehabilitation center in Paktya. In January, 30,401 people received trauma care services at the WHO's supported facilities.

In January 2023, WHO trained 18 physicians and specialists on intensive care unit (ICU) management in Kabul; 55 physicians and nurses from Nangarhar, Laghman, Kunar and Herat on infection prevention and control (IPC); and 100 blood bank staffers on safe blood transfusion in Kabul Central Blood Bank.

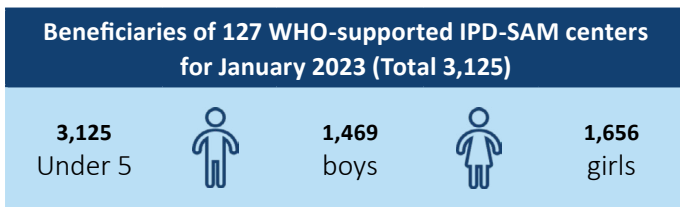


Service Provided at WHO-supported facilities (January 2023)	
2,781	people received physiotherapy
9,059	people received psychological counselling
3,269	people who received blood transfusion
11,400	people who received minor surgical operation
2,008	people who received major surgical operation

Nutrition in Emergencies

To respond to food insecurity and malnutrition, WHO has enhanced its case management of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) through operational support of 127 In-Patient Department-Severe Acute Malnutrition (IPD-SAM) centers (116 hospitals and 11 Comprehensive Health Centers plus (CHC+s)), providing medical and non-medical supplies and training health care workers on case management and nutrition surveillance.

In January 2023, there were 3,125 malnourished children (1,469 boys; 1,656 girls) with medical complications admitted and treated in these WHO-supported IPD-SAM centers. The figure increased by 38.3% compared to January 2022.



Infectious Hazard Preparedness/ Surveillance

WHO has been working closely with MoPH on its national disease surveillance response (NDSR) for early detection and verification of alerts as well as investigations and immediate responses to public health hazards. Regular updates on disease outbreaks are available in the weekly situation reports in this link: [Afghanistan’s infectious disease outbreak situation reports](#).

Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI)

An outbreak of ARI cases was reported in January 2023 in Pamir e Kalan Village in the Wakhan District of Badakhshan. WHO has coordinated with stakeholders and dispatched medicines and medical supplies to Pamir Kalan Village which were prepositioned at district level as a part of the winterization. Also, an epidemiologist from WHO supported the NDSR investigation team, improving their response. In addition, 20 ARI injectable, 46 ARI oral, five pneumonia-related pieces of equipment, and antibiotics were delivered to WHO’s seven regional offices for ARI case management.



Health workers respond to an outbreak of acute respiratory infection in Pamir Kalan Village in Badakhshan

COVID-19

COVID-19 vaccination activities continue to be conducted at fixed sites in all provinces. Approximately 166,000 individuals were vaccinated in January and 32.3% of the total population has received at least one vaccine dose. In addition, WHO is preparing a COVID-19 immunization campaign with microplanning and procurement of dry supplies. Materials were prepared and training sessions have been scheduled in the 17 participating provinces. The campaign is planned to start by mid-February with the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

WHO has continued to support the operations of 35 COVID-19 laboratories in 34 provinces through the provision of diagnostic equipment/supplies, rehabilitation of infrastructure, and capacity building.

Measles

In response to local outbreaks, rapid vaccination responses were conducted in affected villages to vaccinate children with the measles vaccine. In January 2023, over 1,000 children were vaccinated in Kandahar, Helmand, Zabul, Uruzgan and Paktya provinces.

Case management of infectious diseases

WHO has continuously supported the operations of the national infectious disease hospital in Kabul, which is the referral point for the Kabul region (central and eastern regions). WHO also continues to support the capacity building of healthcare workers on case management of various infectious diseases. In January, WHO conducted training on case management of respiratory infections such as ARI, measles, pertussis, and chickenpox in Kabul (2-5 January, 23-26 January). A total of 70 physicians and nurses working in hospitals in Kabul Province were trained on case definition, transmission, diagnosis, case management and prevention measures.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) and Drug Addiction

WHO launched the roll-out training of a mental health gap action program (mhGAP) intervention guide (version 2.0) on 28 January in Nangarhar. The mhGAP training is expected to improve the assessment, management and follow-up of mental, neurological and substance use disorders in non-specialized care settings. A total of 57 medical doctors working at provincial/district hospitals and basic health centers and MHTs in Kunar and Nangarhar were trained. WHO has continued its operational support of the national mental health hospital in Kabul. With 100 beds, this is the only facility in the country that provides tertiary mental health care services. In Khost, WHO has operated four MHPSS outreach teams to provide mental health counseling services for those affected by the 22 June earthquake.

Female Specialized Services

WHO is supporting the operations of the national advanced referral center for survivors of violence in Kabul, which provides medical treatment and counseling for survivors of violence. In January, 137 survivors of violence cases were received at the center and provided with the required healthcare services, treatment and counselling.

WHO is also working on building the capacity of healthcare workers to provide care in cases of violence and related health problems. WHO carried out training on “Preventing and responding to sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (PRSEAH) and health response to survivors of violence in emergency setting,” from 21 to 25 January in Nangarhar Province. There were 30 healthcare workers, primarily medical doctors and nurses, who received 13 training modules, including history taking, physical examinations, wound and burn management and rape management.

Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) at Health Facilities

WASH in healthcare facilities and the provision of water, sanitation and healthcare waste management are essential for patient safety. To date, WHO has established proper WASH facilities in 24 health centers (12 PHC facilities and 12 hospitals) in nine provinces (Paktika, Khost, Ghazni, Takhar, Kunduz, Samangan, Badakhshan, Faryab and Kabul). Approximately 24 bore wells, 24 water supply systems with reservoirs and solar power systems, and 11 incinerators are expected to be installed in these health facilities in February 2023.

Health Information Management

WHO has regularly updated data sets and dashboards of the Health Resources and Services Availability Monitoring System (HeRAMS), underserved (white) area analysis and trauma care service. WHO participates in the white area mapping review task force with MoPH. Based on the agreed definition with the task force, the number of underserved populations changed from 13.3 million to 9.5 million.⁶ WHO is also adding new dashboards for disease outbreaks, monitoring programme activity, and training in February 2023. For more information please access: [WHO's open-access health information portal](#).

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

To ensure proper oversight of project implementation, WHO has conducted systematic and regular monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities through 30 monitoring officers on the ground using specific tools developed for each type of health intervention. In January, WHO conducted monitoring visits to 78 PHC facilities, 96 therapeutic feeding units (TFUs), four family health houses (FFHs) and eight hospitals (including three COVID-19 hospitals). Following these visits, WHO followed up with the implementing partners on areas for improvement identified and ensured that mitigation measures were made. In addition, WHO conducted two bilateral meetings with the implementing partners to review the implementation status and identify the best pathway to ensure quality healthcare services as a part of M&E.

Operational Logistics Support

WHO provided 2,014 cubic meters (CBM) of medical and non-medical supplies in January 2023, which will benefit over 3 million people in 34 provinces, through 27 health facilities across the country including;

- 1,529 Inter-Agency Emergency Health Kits (IEHK) composed of 1,393 basic modules and 136 supplementary modules to 17 health facilities across 14 provinces, including Afghan Indonesia Hospital in Kabul, Samangan Provincial hospital in Samangan, and Balkh Regional Hospital in Mazar-e-Sharif

- 490 Inter-Agency Reproductive Health Kits (IARH) in 15 districts, provincial and regional hospitals in 13 provinces (Badakhshan, Balkh, Bamyan, Daikundi, Ghazni, Ghor, Kabul, Logar, Nangarhar, Paktya, Parwan, Samangan, and Wardak)
- 128 WHO Trauma and Emergency Surgery Kits (TESK) in eight provinces (Herat, Kandahar, Paktya, Balkh, Nangarhar, Badakhshan, Kunduz, and Bamyan)
- 29 cholera kits to five provinces, including Herat, Paktya, Nangarhar and Badakhshan.

Field Visits

WHO country and regional technical teams conducted field visits to Kabul, Nangarhar Laghman, Badakhshan Takhar, Kunduz and Baghlan, Khost, Paktya, and Herat in January 2023. These missions provided technical support and oversight on WHO programme implementation, primarily PHC service provision and hospital care. Also, a mission to Torkham ground-crossing was conducted, including an assessment of the infrastructure of the existing health facility and health needs.

In addition, a WHO Afghanistan senior management team held an operational review meeting with the regional office and the headquarters in Dubai to review the progress of the implementation of the 2022 WHO response plan, discuss the current humanitarian situation and make recommendations on WHO response plan for 2023.



WHO maintains a global logistics hub in Dubai, UAE that has the capacity to rapidly deploy life-saving medicines and medical supplies to countries facing emergencies. The hub caters to the needs in Afghanistan and in January, WHO Afghanistan senior management team visited the hub to strengthen coordination in supplies deployment.

Funding Needs

WHO's health emergency response in Afghanistan has been made possible through the generous contributions of donors and partners. In 2023, WHO has required US\$300 million for health interventions and \$201 million has been received, with a funding gap of \$99 million.



⁶ The definition is the area/village located beyond one-hour walking distance or more than 5 km from the nearest public health facility and currently not served by any public health facility (taking into account geographic, environmental, and socio-economic factor)

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