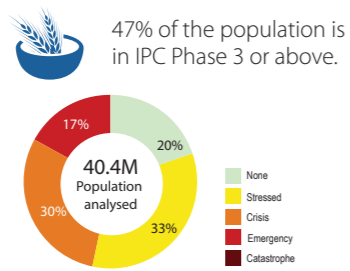


## Key Figures | Current Situation | September - October 2021



A record high of nearly 19 million Afghans are experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity, classified in Crisis or Emergency (IPC Phases 3 or 4) between September and October 2021.



Increased conflict between January and September 2021 drove over 664,000 people out of their homes, disrupting their livelihood systems. With about 3.5 million Afghans already in displacement camps around the country, this brings the figure of internally displaced to around 4.2 million people.

### Overview

Afghanistan's protracted food crisis has deepened and widened with a record high of nearly 19 million people experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity, classified in Crisis or Emergency (IPC Phases 3 or 4), between September and October 2021, due to a devastating combination of drought, conflict and economic collapse. Among these, about 6.8 million people, mainly located in the country's northern half, are experiencing critical levels of acute food insecurity, classified in Emergency (IPC Phase 4).

The food security situation is highly concerning by any measure. People are experiencing spiralling levels of acute food insecurity in both rural and urban Afghanistan and need urgent lifesaving support to prevent catastrophic levels of food insecurity, and livelihood assistance to help households recover.

Between November 2021 and March 2022 (the winter lean season), a further deterioration in food security is expected, with the number of people in IPC Phase 3 or above likely increasing to 22.8 million, a nearly 35% increase from the same season last year (16.9 million people). Out of 22.8 million people, 14 million will likely be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and 8.7 million in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). The number of areas in Emergency is expected to significantly increase in the projection analysis period from 21 to 32 analytical domains. It is likely that household food access between the end of winter and the following spring season will further deteriorate due to the continuing La Niña climatic episode bringing below-average winter precipitation for the second consecutive year, the impact of high food prices, sanctions on the *de facto* authorities, growing unemployment and possibly increased displacement.

Reduced income, lower international and domestic remittances and continuing obstacles to humanitarian assistance (many related to the financial crisis and limited physical access during the winter period) are expected to contribute to the deterioration of food security. The estimated 55% population in IPC Phase 3 or above in the November 2021 - March 2022 projection period (lean season) is the highest ever recorded in the country. This record magnitude is preceded only by a 47% population classification in IPC Phase 3 or above in the November 2018 - February 2019 lean season.

### Key Drivers

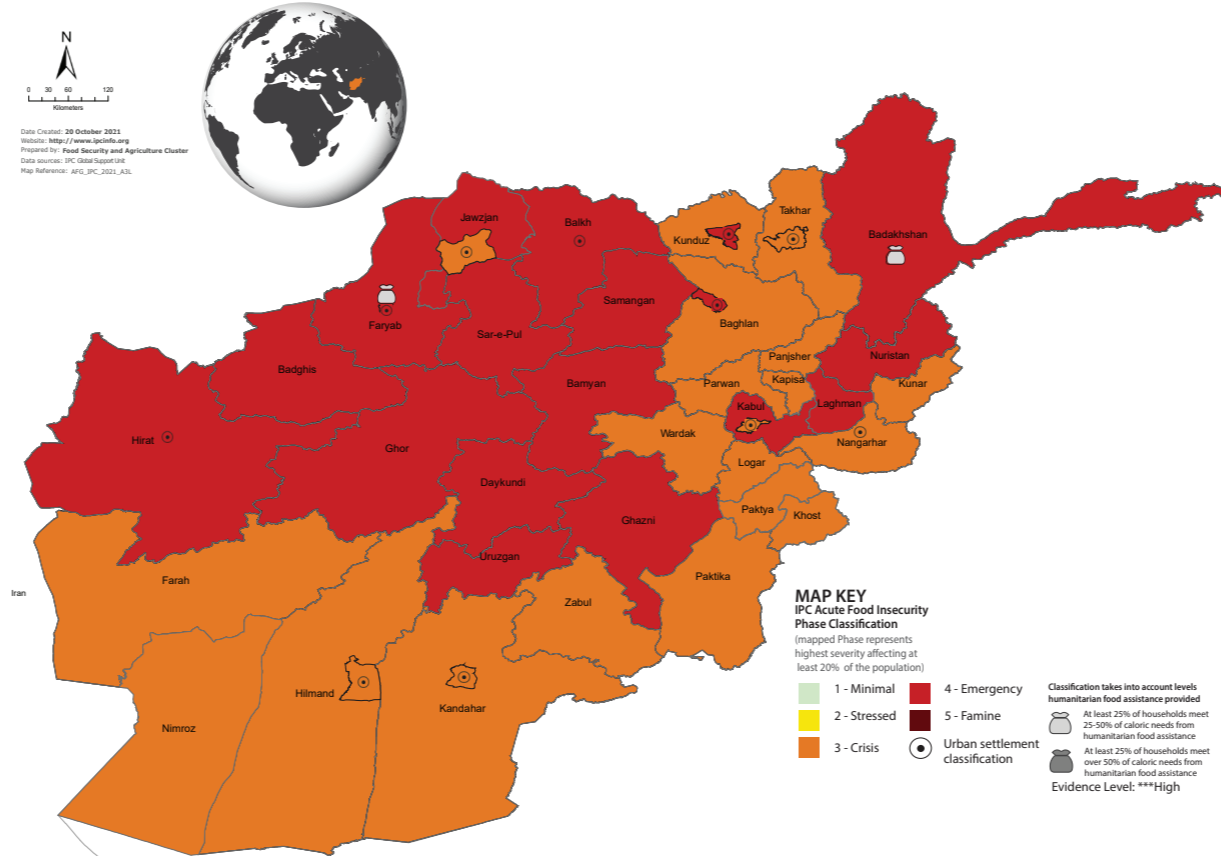
**Drought:** Twenty-five out of 34 provinces were affected by a severe drought. Below-average cumulative precipitation during the wet season (October 2020 - May 2021) resulted in reduced snowfall, reducing water for cultivation.

**Conflict:** Increased conflict between January and September 2021 drove over 664,000 people out of their homes, disrupting their livelihood systems. This adds to about 3.5 million Afghans already in displacement.

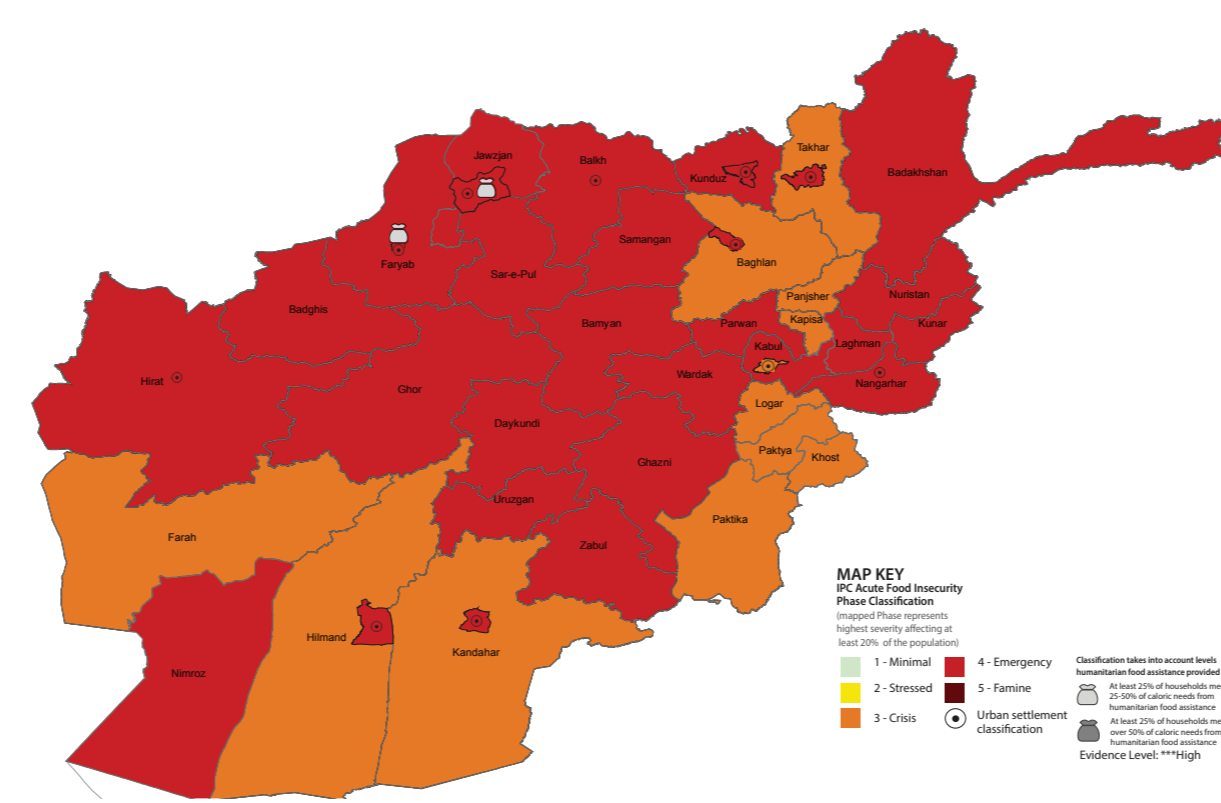
**Economic Decline:** In the wake of Afghanistan's political transition and the consequent freezing of US\$ 9.5 billion in national assets, the economy plummeted. The banking system suffered severe disruption, and the national currency lost 12.5 percent of value, leading to high unemployment and food prices.

Publication date: 25 October 2021 | \*This IPC Analysis data is based on population estimates by UNFPA/Flowminder/World Pop | \*\* Displacement estimates are from the internal displacement monitoring centre (IDMC) and UNOCHA. | Feedback: IPC@FAO.org | Disclaimer: The information shown on this map does not imply official recognition or endorsement of any physical and political boundaries.

## CURRENT: Acute Food Insecurity | September - October 2021



## PROJECTION: Acute Food Insecurity | November 2021 - March 2022



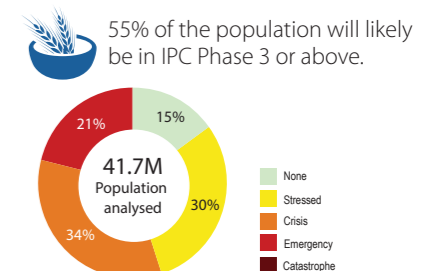
### IPC Analysis Partners



## PROJECTION: Acute Food Insecurity | November 2021 - March 2022



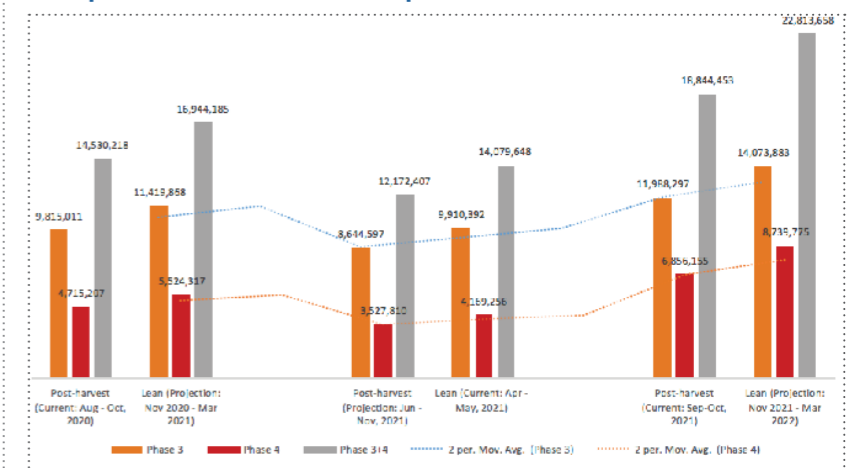
Between November 2021 and March 2022 (the winter lean season), a further deterioration in food security is expected, with the number of people in IPC Phase 3 or above likely increasing to 22.8 million, a nearly 35% increase from the same season last year (16.9 million).



### Comparison with the 2020 IPC Analysis

Compared to the previous IPC analysis, there is a significant deterioration in the number of people experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity classified in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or above. However, it is worth noting that the previous IPC results, indicating 10.9 million people in the current period and 9.4 million people in the projection period being in IPC Phases 3 and 4, were based on the National Statistics and Information Authority (NSIA) population estimates (34 million). At the request of the humanitarian community in Afghanistan, this IPC report is based on Flowminder population estimates, which also are used for the annual Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), summing up to 41.7 million people in Afghanistan. Results from the present analysis show a 30% increase of people in IPC Phase 3 or above in the current period (September - October 2021) compared with the same time last year, and a 35% increase in the projection period (November 2021 - March 2022) compared to the 2020-2021 winter period. The prevalence of people in IPC Phase 4 facing Emergency levels of food insecurity rose by 55% (from 11% to 17%) in the current period from September to October 2021, compared to the same time last year and in the projection period by 57% (from 14% to 22%) compared to the same time last year.

### Comparison of Flowminder Population Estimates, 2020-2021/22



### Recommended Actions



#### Humanitarian Assistance

Urgent scale-up of lifesaving food assistance is imperative for the populations classified in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and Emergency (IPC Phase 4) to prevent them from sliding into higher levels of food insecurity, including Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) for the most food insecure.



#### Livelihood Support

Scale-up of livelihood assistance for the winter wheat season, the spring season crops and vulnerable herding households is essential to prevent further deterioration of household food production capacity in rural areas.



#### Focus on Women and Children

Supporting women and children in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and Emergency (IPC Phase 4) is a priority intervention. Programs targeting pregnant and lactating women and children under five should be a top priority.

## Afghanistan Crisis Background and Time Series 2019 - 2022

Afghanistan has suffered some of the deadliest conflicts and recurrent natural disasters for over four decades, resulting in a protracted food crisis affecting millions of people. Food insecurity and hunger persist. Due to a combination of frequent shocks, including conflict, insecurity, population displacement, the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as natural disasters such as droughts, floods, crop pest invasions and earthquakes, millions of people do not have the resources to obtain enough nutritious food to lead healthy lives consistently.

### Conflict and Population Displacement

The country has endured over 40 years of conflict, and armed fighting continues to rage, exposing civilians, particularly women and children, to deadly daily risks, population displacement, and disease outbreaks, constraining the country's unstable economy. The conflict also drives population displacement and disease outbreaks and places constraints on the country's already precarious economy. Internal displacement and migration have become familiar survival strategies for many Afghans. Millions of Afghan individuals, families and communities have migrated within and outside the country. Rural communities mainly migrated to nearby urban or semi-urban settlements, where security is relatively better. The land is still affordable or available free of the rental cost for temporary accommodation. While these settlements may provide a haven from conflict with non-state actors, internal communal conflict on land use, lack of basic services like electricity, water, access to latrines, education, and poor shelter conditions are key issues. Increased conflict between January and September 2021 drove over 664,000 people out of their homes, disrupting their livelihood systems. Most of the displacement was from provincial urban centres, regional capitals and Kabul. This is in addition to about 3.5 million Afghans who were already living in displacement camps across the country. Due to the severity of the conflict and its sudden nature, most of these vulnerable IDPs' livelihood assets are looted or sold at low prices.

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### Natural Disasters

Afghanistan is prone to several natural disasters, including earthquakes, flooding, drought, landslides and avalanches. Earthquakes are relatively frequent, more frequent in the north and northeast, often triggering landslides. Floods are common in the spring when snow begins to melt, and rainfall is heavy in the south and southeast. Located in areas of high seismic activity, and given the rugged and mountainous nature of the country and the location of villages, towns and cities, there is a high propensity for widespread death and destruction

whenever an earthquake, landslide, mudslide, avalanche or flood occurs. Since 2000, there have been nine major earthquakes. Recent disasters estimate that at least 6,000 families (over 42,000 individuals) across 21 provinces have been affected by avalanches, flooding, landslides, and heavy snowfall since February 2014.

### Economic Decline

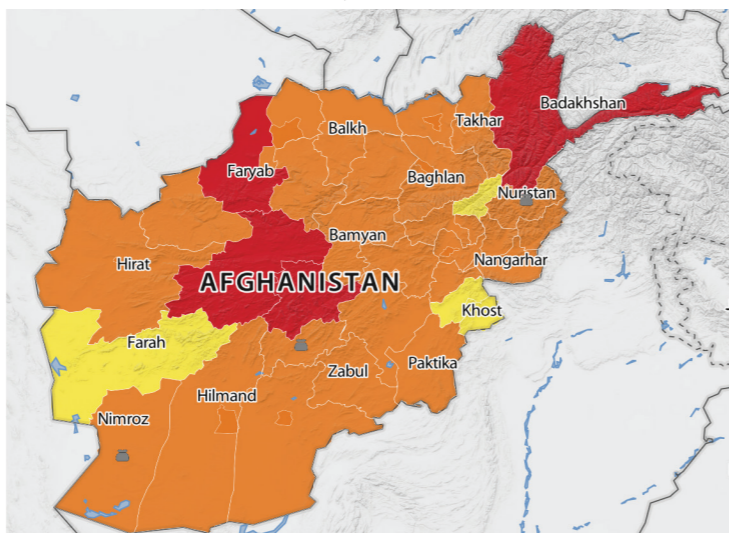
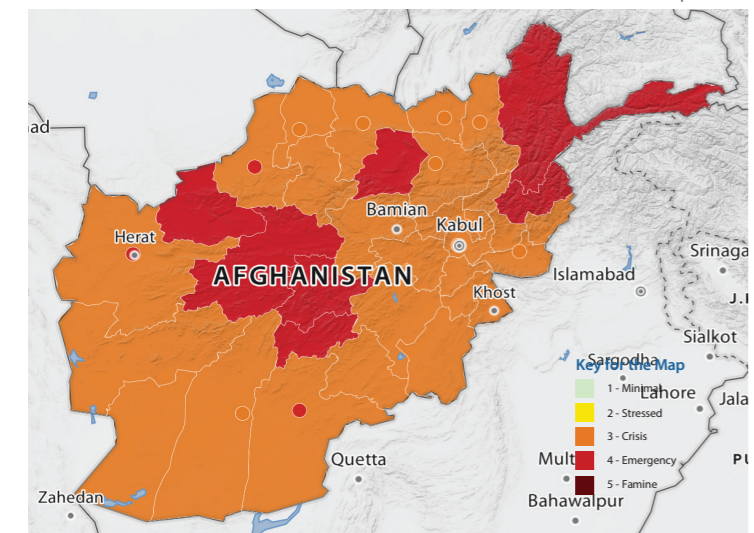
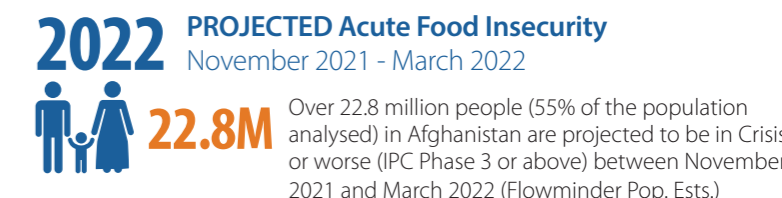
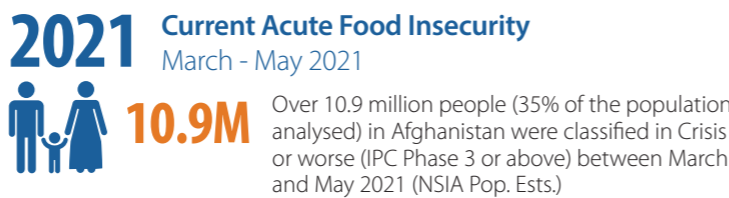
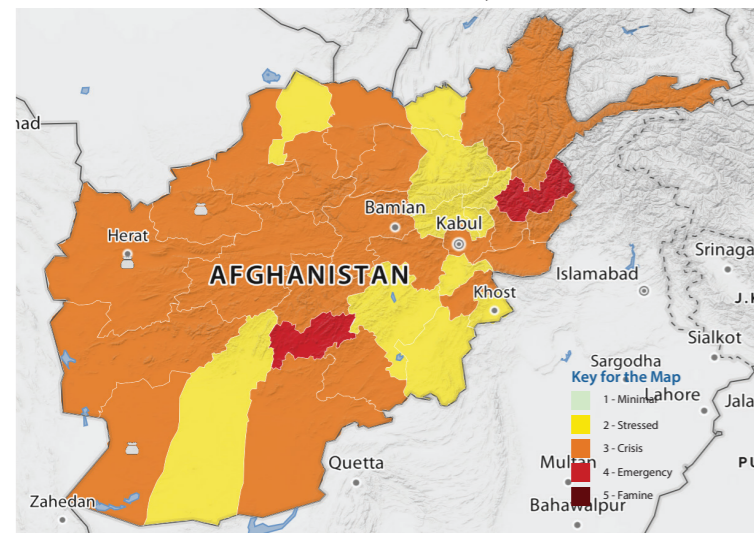
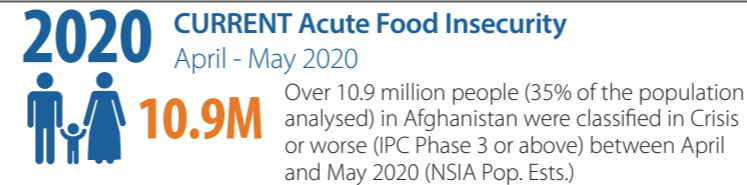
Afghanistan faces daunting economic challenges as gross domestic product has fallen substantially since the 1980s due to disruption of trade and transport and loss of labour and capital. The country's economic growth remains impeded by the conflict, insecurity and unstable political situation. Insecurity has also suppressed business freedom and investment freedom with Afghanistan ranked 33rd among 40 countries in the Asia-Pacific region<sup>1</sup>. After years of slow recovery, the economy was dealt a significant blow by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has had a far-reaching impact on the country's ailing economy and food security. The COVID-19 pandemic has set back Afghanistan's economic growth by several years. It exposed structural and resource gaps in responding to unforeseen events such as pandemics. Following the political transition in August 2021, international development assistance, longer-term development projects

and institutional support have been suspended. The freeze of foreign assets is driving a liquidity crisis, resulting in the devaluation of the Afghani currency, compounding the economic shock. While measures may be implemented to prevent a total collapse of the economy, this may not go far beyond maintaining the basic functioning of the financial sector. Even with these mitigation measures in place, the economy is expected to further contract in the projection period, leading to further increases in acute food insecurity.

### Acute Food Insecurity

Comparing IPC analyses for the last five years indicates a deepening and widening food crisis, with the number of Afghans classified in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse increasing. This September 2021 analysis, with nearly half of Afghanistan's population experiencing high levels of food insecurity and the highest number of food insecure people ever recorded since the first IPC analysis in 2013, makes it the world's second-largest food crisis, in absolute terms. The complexity of the crisis in Afghanistan has reached a peak in the period covered by this analysis. The combined impact of multiple hazards pushed the crisis to unprecedented levels, with people's ability to access food constrained like never observed before.

## AFGHANISTAN: IPC Population Classification Time Series 2019 - 2022



[1] Afghanistan's economic freedom 2021 Index <https://www.heritage.org/index/country/afghanistan>