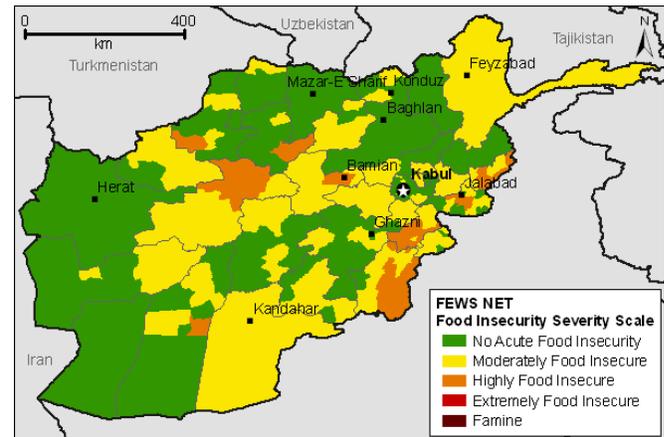


## AFGHANISTAN Food Security Outlook

October 2010 to March 2011

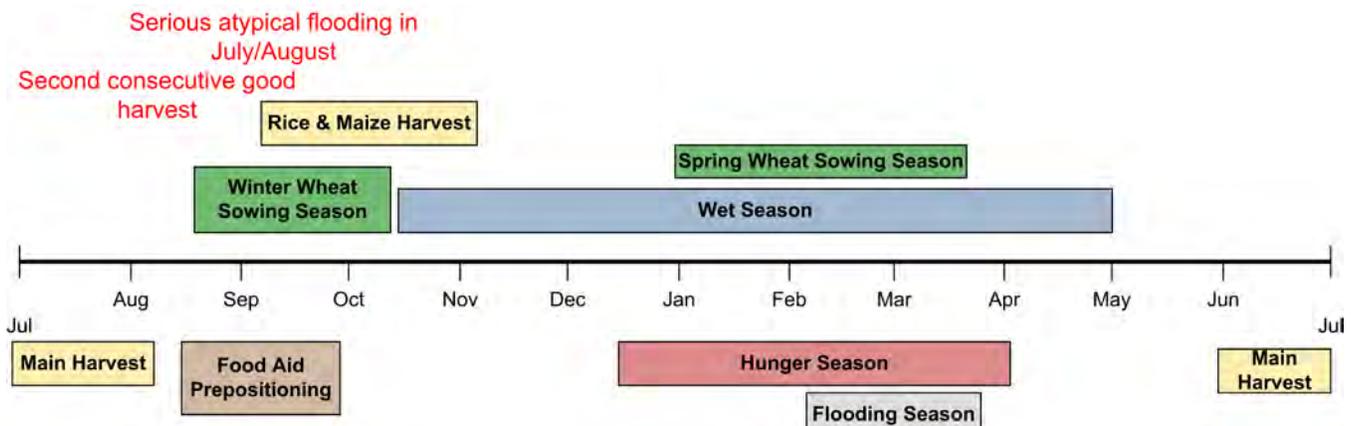
- Most of the households in cereal surplus areas in the north, northeast, northwest, and western Afghanistan are not expected to have acute food insecurity, except for Badakhshan provinces. This is a result of second consecutive year of good harvest, carry-over stock from last year, and the comparatively high price of wheat which are expected to increase profit margins for producers.
- Internally displaced households and repatriated Afghan refugees from Pakistan in cereal deficit areas in east, south, and central Afghanistan are expected to be moderately to highly food insecure. Their food security condition will worsen as Afghanistan's lean season starts in January. With higher food prices because of regional wheat production and market disruptions, the lean season is expected to be worse than last year. There are an estimated 40,000 conflict-driven IDPs from Nadali and Marja districts of Helmand province, Marrawara district of Kunar province, and Qaisar district of Faryab province. Total repatriated Afghan refugees from Pakistan are estimated around 100,000 people.
- Wheat market prices in September 2010 remain lower than the five-year average in all reference markets with the exception of Kabul and Kandahar where prices were slightly higher. Faizabad was 43 percent below the five-year average. Hirat prices are 31 percent below the five-year average. Nevertheless, market prices have steadily increased since June 2010 when the Pakistan and Russian banned wheat exports and demand for wheat from food deficit countries has focused on Kazakhstan.

**Figure 1: Current food security conditions, October 2010**



Source: FEWS NET  
For more information on FEWS NET's Food Insecurity Severity Scale, see [www.fews.net/FoodInsecurityScale](http://www.fews.net/FoodInsecurityScale)

### Seasonal calendar and critical events



Source: FEWS NET

**Current Food Security Conditions**

Field assessments in Kunar province found that unseasonal above-normal rainfall damaged irrigated wheat crops that were in its heading stage, thereby lowering harvest estimations in the region by 20 to 30 percent. The current rainfed wheat harvest estimates have not change as late season rainfall benefited the rainfed crops as well as pastures. Despite the unexpected loss of irrigated crops in Kunar province, new national level wheat production estimates in Afghanistan remain above-average. Official updated estimates will be released later this season. Nonetheless, the needs for imported wheat are likely to be greater than the initial estimate of 700,000 tons.

Wheat prices in Afghanistan continue to rise due to several disruptions in regional wheat production and markets. Devastating floods in August destroyed an estimated 10 percent of the Pakistan’s wheat production while demand for Kazakh wheat has increased because of a Russian and Pakistan wheat export ban.

Most of the households in the cereal surplus areas of north, northeast, northwest, and western Afghanistan are not expected to be acutely food insecurity, except for Badakhshan provinces. There is good availability of wheat from this year’s harvest along in addition to the carry-over wheat stock from last year. In addition wheat farmers are likely to increase their profit margins as wheat prices continue to increase.

Internally displaced households and repatriated Afghan refugees from Pakistan in cereal deficit areas in the eastern, southern, and central regions of Afghanistan are expected to be moderately to highly food insecure as food availability decrease. The ongoing conflict and rising wheat prices have restricted access to food and income for IDP households. There are an estimated 40,000 conflict-driven IDPs and 100,000 repatriated Afghan refugees from Nadali and Marja districts of Helmand province, Marrawara district of Kunar province, and Qaisar district of Faryab province.

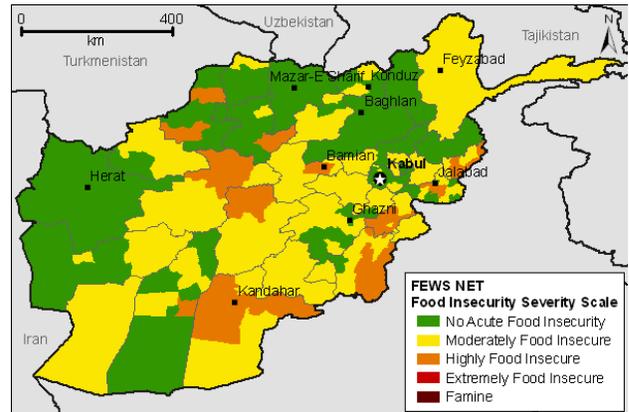
The food security conditions for pastoralists are improving as livestock prices have increased up 80 percent compared to the same period last year. Good pasture conditions and decrease in livestock imports from Pakistan contributed to the higher prices of livestock. As livestock prices continue to rise faster than wheat prices, the terms-of-trade favor pastoralists.

In August 2010, devastating floods hit provinces in the south, southeast and central parts of the country (Nangarhar, Kunar, Ghazni, Parwan, Wardak, Kapisa, Logor, Sar-i-Pul and Paktya, Paktika, Day Kundi and Khost provinces). Affected households have received food assistance, which is expected to last until December.

Wheat market prices in September 2010 remain lower than the five-year average in all reference markets with the exception of Kabul and Kandahar where prices were one percent higher. Faizabad was 43 percent below the five-year average. Hirat prices are 31 percent below the five-year average.

Chronically food insecure areas in the central and northeastern highland areas will start the lean season in January. This year’s lean season is expected to be worse than 2009 when there was a record high wheat harvest, but better than 2008

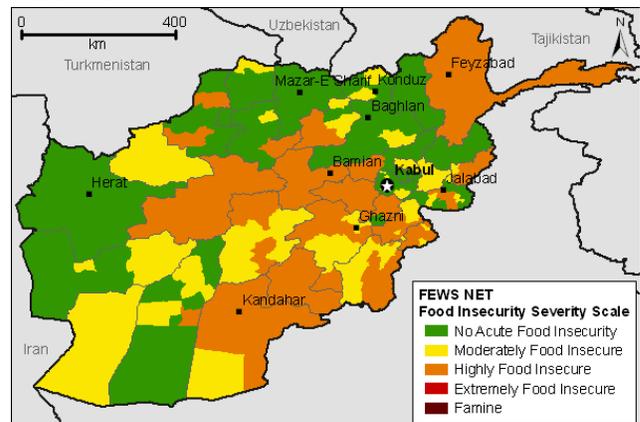
**Figure 2: Most likely food security scenario, October – December, 2010**



Source: FEWS NET

For more information on FEWS NET’s Food Insecurity Severity Scale, see [www.fews.net/FoodInsecurityScale](http://www.fews.net/FoodInsecurityScale)

**Figure 3: Most likely food security scenario January to March 2011**



Source: FEWS NET

For more information on FEWS NET’s Food Insecurity Severity Scale, see [www.fews.net/FoodInsecurityScale](http://www.fews.net/FoodInsecurityScale)

where market price were exceptionally high and crop production was below normal. The most likely food security scenario for the next six months is expected to be relatively good for the agricultural production areas in northern, northeastern, and western Afghanistan. However, poor households in cereal deficit areas of Afghanistan that are suffering concurrent acute shocks such as flooding, decrease in income from remittance, and displacement are likely to be moderately food insecure. A sub-group of repatriated households from Pakistan and conflict driven IDPs are likely to be highly food insecure.

#### **Most likely Scenario, October to March 2011**

The most likely scenario for the period of October 2010 to March 2011 is premised on the following assumptions:

- Afghanistan actual irrigated wheat harvest is 15-20 percent lower than what was forecasted in May 2010.
- Future military operation and security situation will not lead to excessive displacement and market disruptions.
- Kazakhstan wheat supplies will meet demand throughout the outlook period.
- The upcoming winter will not be excessively cold or snowy.

#### **Eastern Agriculture & Labor Based (5) and Agro-Pastoral & Forest Livelihood Zone (AF02) located in Kunar and Nangarhar Province**

The livelihood zones in Kunar and Nangarhar province are mainly reliant on local agriculture and labor demand in Pakistan for their livelihoods. The 2010 cropping season produced well-below normal harvests as 6,000 hectares of rainfed wheat in Marrawara and Surkano districts of Kunar were a complete failure because of poor rainfall early in the season. In addition, the previously optimistic wheat harvest outlook in Kunar actually resulted in a 20 to 30 percent crop yield reduction. This is attributable to the unseasonably large rainfall that led to flooding at a time when crops are vulnerable to excessive moisture. Production from secondary crops such as maize and rice are expected to be normal.

Recent floods in Pakistan destroyed standing wheat crops followed by trade bans with Afghanistan drove up wheat prices in the region by 11 percent. Subsequently, labor demand in Pakistan has dropped as well.

Current food security conditions in rainfed dominant agriculture districts (Marrawara and Surkano) are highly food insecure as these districts lost its main wheat crop this year and ongoing conflict has disrupted normal livelihood activities and resulted 230 households displaced. Flood affected households are currently moderately food insecure as they received food assistance, which is expected to run out in November.

In November, households typically sow winter wheat crops and gather wood and other forest products. However this year these two livelihood activities are likely to be restricted. Even though seed availability is comparable to last year, a normal year, irrigation channels and intakes in Surkano district of Kunar province are damaged from August floods. In addition, Afghan policies preventing deforestation will reduce households' ability to gather firewood from the forest for selling purposes. Simultaneously, ongoing conflict is causing displacement and restricting the flow of aid to the region.

During the outlook period, it is expected that the Pakistan wheat ban and conflict will continue and likely result in household restricted ability to access food. Ongoing conflict in the area will likely result in household displacement, loss of assets, and changes in livelihood strategies. Consequently, households are likely to become dependent on external aid. Households are likely to respond to the effects of the shock by lowering livelihood protection expenses like maintaining and repairing irrigation channels and rely more on external aid to meet their food needs. If wheat prices or the conflict worsen, then some households may seek livelihood options elsewhere. External actors such as WFP have 27,000 tones of mixed commodity allocated to eastern Afghanistan.

Due to the confluence of poor wheat harvest, ongoing conflict, and elevated wheat prices, poor households in the Eastern Agro-Pastoralist and Forest livelihood zone are likely to be highly food. The most affected people will be those who have less land and therefore have very little food stocks to carry them through the lean season.

The Eastern Agriculture and Labor Based livelihood zone, which already received assistance, is likely to be moderately food insecure as this zone is located in lower elevation where multiple crops are growing, land size is comparatively larger, and accessibility and targeting by aid organizations is easier. The most at risk households are those that were flood affected, but did not receive assistance.

**Agro-pastoralist and labor Livelihood Zones (AF32, AF12, and AF14) located within Bamyan, Day Kundi, Ghor and Wardak Provinces and Badakhshan province**

The Central Highland Agro-pastoral livelihood zone in Bamyan, Day Kundi, Ghor, and Wardak provinces and livelihood zones in Badakhshan are chronically food insecure because of poor climatic conditions, restrictions on the type/quantity of crops cultivated, and limited access to markets. These areas are most vulnerable during the winter when markets can remain inaccessible due to heavy snowfall for up to four months of the year due, at which time households are dependent on food stocks. Household wheat production is limited and typically makes up only four to five months of the year, depleting by December. Dietary diversity is chronically poor. Starting in October and November, male members of the household migrate to Iran in search for labor opportunities.

Sheep and goats serve as a major income and food source for most households in these zones. Due to a sufficient supply of fodder, good summer pastures, and limits on livestock imports from Pakistan this year, livestock conditions have been good and prices subsequently increased by 20 percent since July. Simultaneously wheat has only increased 14 percent thereby improving the terms of trade for households with more sheep and goats. Households in Bamyan province produce 40 percent of Afghan potatoes, and they are expected to have another good harvest this year, thereby improving income for most farmers in the area.

In July and August, devastating floods damaged 2,000 hectares of agriculture land, killed 4,000 livestock, and destroyed 1,700 houses in Bamyan, Day Kunadi and Wardak Provinces. In total, approximately 5,000 households were affected. According to government reports, the flood-affected households received immediate food assistance and non-food items, which is expected to last until March 2011.

In August, nearly 30,000 thousands refugees returned to central provinces from Pakistan. Without an established livelihood system, these households will likely face food and income deficits. Returnee households are expected to be highly food insecure despite returnee assistance packages that included cash and food.

As the winter begins and snow accumulates, households will likely be cut-off from the major markets, limiting food access in the area. In response, households will depend on relatives and any saved food stock or money. Whatever livestock remain will likely be sold. WFP has prepositions food aid for potential emergencies, and UNHCR provided repatriated households with a cash and food package.

Food assistance is planned in Badakhshan until January. Assuming that food assistance will not continue to Badakhshan after that point, households who will not receive food aid during this period are likely to become highly food insecure.

The 30,000 repatriated people are likely to be highly food insecure for the entire outlook period as these households have no sources of income and food and the environment that they returned to does not offer many working opportunity, particularly during the outlook period which coincides with winter or lean season

For the next three months, flood affected households are likely to be moderately food insecure as they received assistance and recently harvest wheat and potatoes. However the 5,000 flood affected households are likely to be highly food insecure from January to March if they don't receive additional assistance.

**Northern Irrigated and Rain-fed Mixed Farming Livelihood Zone (AF25) Qaisar District of Faryab Province.**

The Faryab province is mainly an irrigated and rainfed wheat growing area. Due to late summer rainfall this year, farmers experienced the second consecutive good harvest, particularly for rainfed wheat. The increase in wheat prices improved income for farmers in Faryab province. In addition, the late summer rainfall also helped pasture conditions and animal health which has resulted in a 50 percent increase in livestock prices.

In August 2010 Pashton Kut, Dalatabad, and Ghurmach districts of Faryab province were hit by a devastating flood in which approximately 2,700 households lost their homes and/or agricultural land. In addition, there have been increased instances

of violence in Faryab province since August. So far 7,284 people have already have been displaced and more people are likely to be displaced as the amount of violence is expected to increase.

For both of these groups, livelihood assets, such as livestock and food stocks, have been lost and in some cases households are displaced. The conflict is also restricting the delivery of assistance by aid organizations. External actors have provided food and non-food items to only 1000 conflict driven IDPs. This assistance is expected to last until December. Households are currently responding by living with relatives, however if the conditions persist and households do not receive assistance they are likely to revert to labor migration.

Winter wheat plantation is on-going, however the number of farmers who received improved seeds through IRD and FAO voucher in 2010 decreased by half compared to last year. Six remote and insecure districts of Faryab province which typically have difficult access to seeds are not benefiting from the current seed voucher project. However, some these farmers have improved seeds saved from last year's voucher schemes.

The 7,284 conflict-driven IDPs have no or limited livelihood options and sources of food. These households are dependent on external assistance for food. They are likely to be highly food insecure throughout the outlook period as long as assistance is not delivered.

#### **Southern Intensively irrigated and Cash Crop Livelihood Zzone (10) Marja, Nadali, Nawa, and Musa Qala Districts of Helmand Province**

The southern part of Helmed province is an intensively irrigated agricultural area. This year, the province experienced a second consecutively good wheat harvest, except in Marja district where farmers could not irrigated and weed in a timely manner because of ongoing conflict. Poppy crop diseases this year decreased production by an estimated 50 percent. Simultaneously, poppy prices increased to the point that poppy farmers could retain good income. The upcoming maize harvest is expected to be normal.

For most of Helmand there is currently no acute food insecurity. However, 35,000 conflict driven IDPs have been facing major disruptions in livelihood activities and loss of livelihood assets since early 2009, which has lead to strained income and food sources. More conflict in the area could result in more IDPs.

Once displaced, households are migrating to urban areas where they rely on kinship for their basic needs. What savings and assets they hold have been liquidated and used for the past year. Households are now adapting their livelihood strategies to urban settings, which resulted in scarcity of labor opportunities in Lashkarga city.

Humanitarian assistance from military and international organizations has been provided, however the IDPs see this assistance as insufficient as their coping strategies have been exhausted. It has been reported that much of the assistance and attention has begun to move to Kandahar where new operations are expected to begin.

Despite the assistance, the current IDPs in urban areas are likely to be highly food insecure throughout the outlook period, as these IDPs have exhausted most of their savings and coping strategies.

**Table I:** Less likely events over the next six months that could change the above scenarios.

Area	Event	Impact on food security outcomes
Eastern Agriculture & Labor Based zone (AF05) and Agro-Pastoral and Forest zone (AF02)	-Households receive food assistance and other support programs. -Wheat prices remain stable.	Through a combination of market access and external assistance, vulnerable households do not face major food deficits during the lean season.
Agro-pastoralist and labor zones 32, 12 and 14 located within Bamyan, Day Kundi, Ghor and Wardak Provinces	- Winter is excessively cold with large amounts of snowfall.	If exceptional cold winter prevailed food security and health conditions are likely to further deteriorate.
Northern Irrigated and Rainfed Mixed Farming livelihood zone (25) Qaisar District of Faryab Province	- Food assistance/other program are delivered to vulnerable areas.	All conflict driven IDPs will receive assistance, otherwise food security level remain highly food insecure.
Southern Intensively irrigated and cash crop zone (10) Marja, Nadali, Nawa and Musa Qala Districts of Helmand Province	- External Assistance remains adequate in Helmand.	IDP affected households in Helmand will become food secure if households continue to receive adequate external assistance.