

Humanitarian Situation Monitoring (HSM)

Round 11

December, 2025
Afghanistan

KEY MESSAGES

- At the end of 2025, **the majority (82%) of settlements in the country reportedly experienced drought**, marking a sharp increase compared with the same period in 2024 (42%). This was particularly heightened in the South and Central Highlands.
- During winter most settlements (60%) reportedly relied on markets as their main source for obtaining food, followed by indoor-stored food from the previous harvest (38%). The main challenges they faced were increases in food prices (89%) and transportation costs (52%). **A substantial share still experienced food losses due to lack of proper storage.** This was particularly noticeable in Uruzgan (73%) and Logar (72%).
- Despite the recent border closure with Pakistan and the low domestic production of food in 2025, only 1/3 (33%) of settlements in the country reportedly **experienced major and sudden price increases**, a similar figure to March of that year (35%). These were mostly reported in North (55%) and North-eastern regions (46%) but were reported in almost every district nationwide.
- Malnutrition remains a concern, with **key informants in 18% of settlements reporting widespread signs among children** (severe thinness, emaciation, swollen stomachs, or discoloured hair). Conditions appeared particularly dire in the Western region (in 33% of settlements).
- Female employment remained low, with **KIs in 34% of settlements having reported no women working.** Where women were working, the main sectors were agriculture and livestock, and tailoring or embroidery.

CONTEXT & RATIONALE

Afghanistan remains one of the world's largest humanitarian crises, driven by decades of conflict, economic fragility, and climate shocks - such as drought and floodings.

According to OCHA, Afghanistan will remain one of the world's largest humanitarian crises in 2026, with approximately 21.9 million people, nearly 45% of the country, in need of humanitarian assistance,

The Humanitarian Situation Monitoring (HSM) seeks to inform the prioritization and understanding of needs of communities across the country, by monitoring quarterly the evolution of vulnerabilities, coping strategies, gaps in basic services, and needs of assessed communities.

ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

The HSM Round 11 was conducted from **16 November to 8 December 2025**. A total of **12,214 key informants (KIs) were surveyed**.

HSM was conducted across 12,207 settlements within 3,239 Basic Service Units (BSUs), encompassing all 401 districts (administrative level II) across all 34 provinces of the country. **Figures presented throughout this report are to be interpreted as the percentage (%) of assessed settlements where key informants reported the indicator described.**

The HSM is a KI-based, district-level assessment with **indicative findings**. A more detailed description of the methodology is on page 8.

The HSM round 11 analysis table is available on the IMPACT resource centre.

The **most commonly reported priority needs for most people** in assessed settlements, as reported by the interviewed key informants (KIs)



Food
75%



Livelihood
61%



Cash
48%



Water
38%



Health
28%



Education
15%



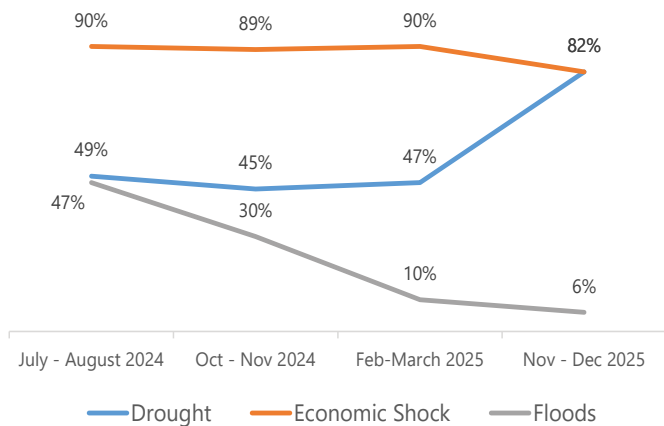
SHOCKS AND DISPLACEMENT

Key Findings

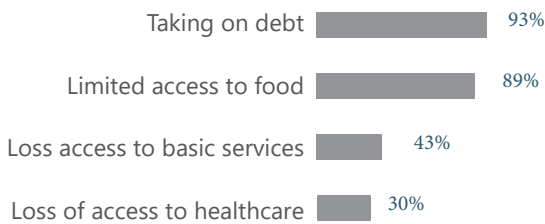
- At the end 2025, **the majority (82%) of settlements in the country reportedly experienced drought**, marking a sharp increase since 2024 during the same period (42%). This was particularly heightened in the South and Central Highlands.
- [Despite the recent border closure with Pakistan and the lower production of food in 2025](#), only 1/3 (33%) of settlements in the country reportedly experienced major and sudden price increases, similar figure than in March of that year (35%). These were mostly reported in North (55%) and North-eastern regions (46%) but experienced across districts in Afghanistan.
- Winter and snow accumulation were expected to cause movement challenges** in 1/3 (33%) of settlements in the country, mainly in Ghor (81%), Ghazni (60%), Nuristan (62%), Paktya (65%) and Panjshir (62%).
- Following the continuous flow of returnees from Pakistan and Iran into Afghanistan, [estimated at 1,087,039 in the last quarter of 2025](#), in Logar and Badakshan, KIs reported the large-scale arrival of these returnees impacted their communities. In only 7% of settlements, there were reportedly some tension and occasional conflicts among displaced groups and host communities.

Most KIs have consistently reported over 2024 and 2025 that their settlements experienced economic shocks (figure 1). This underlines the **economic fragility of the country**.

% of settlements where KIs reported shocks affecting their communities (2024-2025)



Most common impacts of shocks for the majority of household, as % of KIs in assessed settlements.



In **33%** of assessed settlements, KIs reported **Movement challenges during the winter**. Accessing markets and healthcenters are the main challenges faced by most communities during these months.

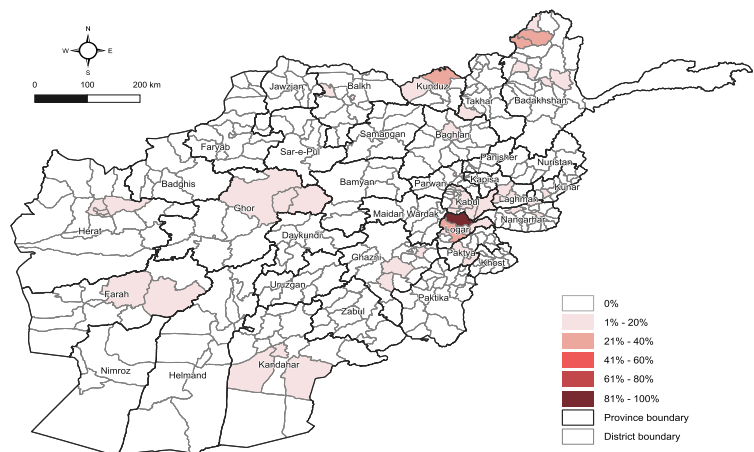


In **53%** of settlements, KIs reported there is presence of cross-border returnees, mainly in the North and North-east and capital regions. In **47%** the majority reportedly arrived within the last 6 months.



In **38%** of settlements, KIs reported presence of IDPs. Less than 5% reported the majority arrived within the previous 6 months.

% of settlements where KIs reported reported the arrival of a large number of displaced people (as a shock)



The main reported reasons for displaced people to move to their current settlements are:



LIVELIHOODS

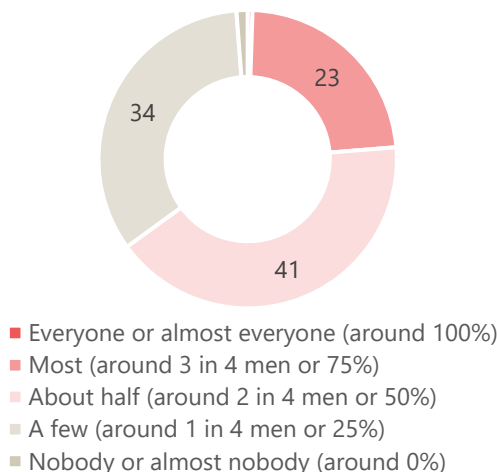
Key Findings

- In 82% of settlements, communities reportedly experienced drought. Correspondingly, **in 80% yield reductions were reported**, and **in 62% a decline in livestock numbers**.
- For other employment sectors, **KIs in 98% of settlements reported a decline in availability of work**. Casual labour opportunities, the most common source of livelihoods, [decline in winter](#) due to adverse weather conditions. In 65% of settlements, KIs reported that half or more of men were not working, suggesting high rates of unemployment.
- Given agricultural losses and declining labour opportunities, **KIs in 54% of settlements reported incomes decreased "a lot"**. In 22%, KIs reported very/extremely serious problems due to lack of incomes, money, or resources.
- Female employment remained low, with **KIs in 34% of settlements having reported no women working**. Where women were working, the main sectors were agriculture and livestock, and tailoring or embroidery.

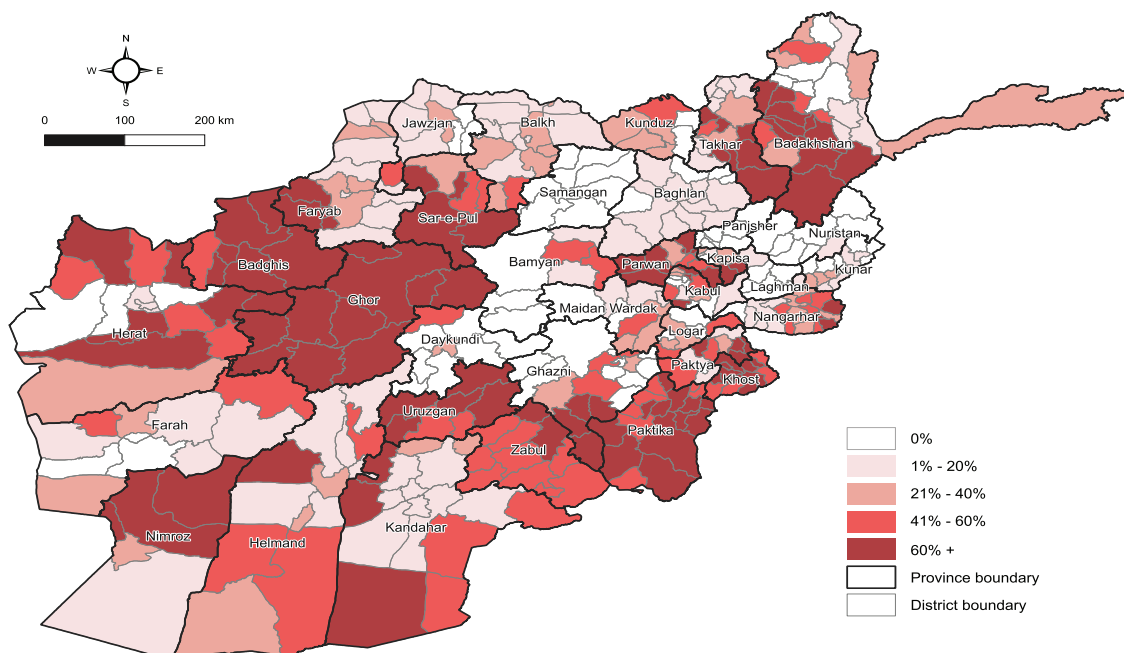
Most common sources of income for the majority of households, as % of KIs in assessed settlements



Proportion of men not working or earning an income, as % of KIs in settlements



% of settlements where KIs reported women are NOT participating in income generating activities




FOOD SECURITY

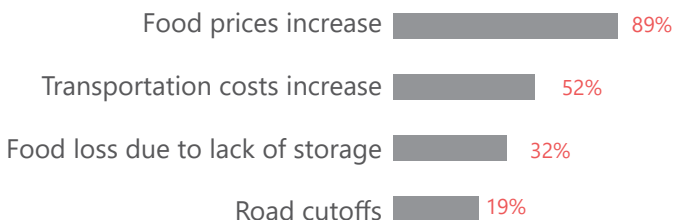
Key Findings


- **Food remained the top priority need for communities** in the majority (75%) of the assessed settlements, followed by livelihood and income generating programs (61%).
- **Despite reduced domestic food production** and **border closures**, **the share of settlements where most or almost all people were reported to have very insufficient food fell** from 27% in March to 18% by the end of 2025. Conditions remained notably difficult in Laghman (68%), Baghlan (60%), and Sar-e-Pul (54%). **In Laghman, this coincided with a reported perception of severe hunger among the population.**
- With the reduction in domestic food production, during winter most communities (60%) expected to rely on markets as their main source for obtaining food, followed by indoor-stored food from the previous harvest (38%), similar to the end of 2024. The main challenges they face are increases in food prices (89%) and transportation costs (52%). **A substantial share experienced food losses due to lack of proper storage.** This is particularly noticeable in Uruzgan (73%) and Logar (72%).
- To cope with limited access to food, **in 18% of assessed settlements most or almost all people had to use negative coping strategies.** This was particularly heightened in Laghman (80%) and Jawzjan (58%). In these two, notably, sending children to work was a more frequent practice than in others.


 In **61%** of settlements across the country, communities **relied on markets** to obtaining their food, in 37% they relied on indoor-stored food from the previous harvest.

 In **42%** of settlements, KIs reported that there was a **big increase in food prices**; in 42% they reported a **small increase**. This was noticeable in Badghis (**89%**), Ghazni (**85%**), and in Logar (**82%**).

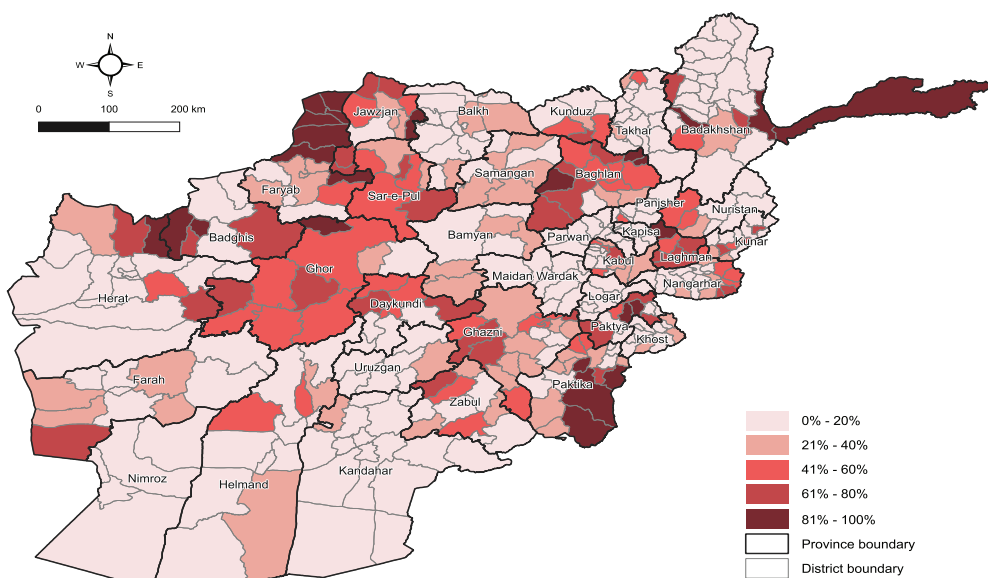
% of settlements by most common challenges for communities to access food during winter:



 In **6%** of settlements, most households reportedly spend more than 2 hours to access the nearest food market, particularly in Bamyān (20%) and Badghis (19%).

 In 30% of settlements across the country, there is reportedly **not enough diversity of food**, in 26% food supply is not stable, in 15% not enough food is available in the area.

% of settlements where KIs reported most or almost all people had very insufficient food



EMERGENCY SHELTER AND NON-FOOD ITEMS (ES/NFIs)

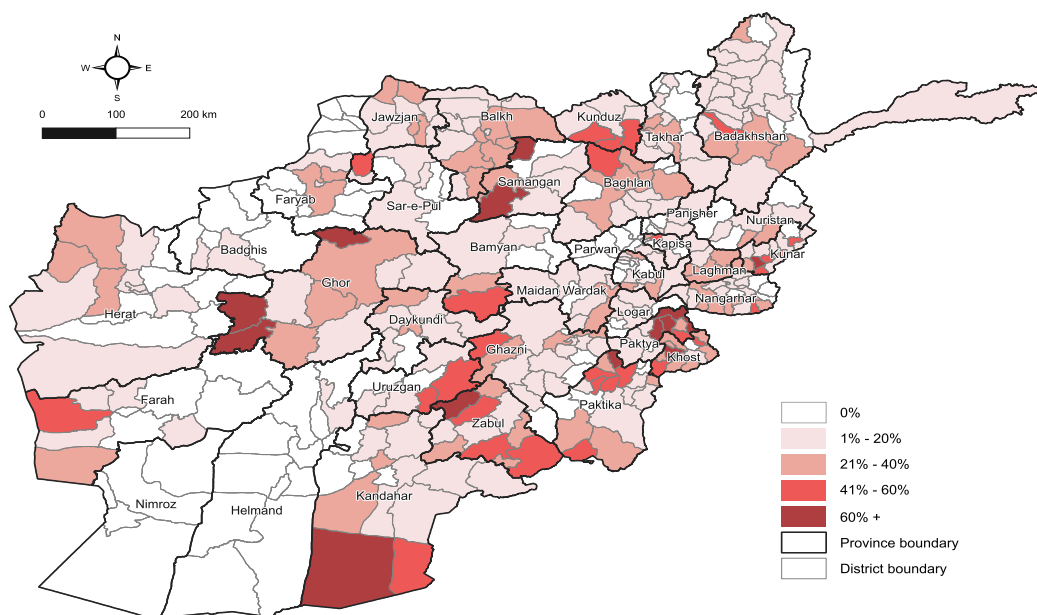
Key Findings

- In 24% of settlements, KIs reported a **serious or very serious problem due to lack of adequate shelter**, especially in the North (35%). While economic constraints remained the main barrier (91%), other barriers varied geographically. For example, lack of skills to build or repair shelters was particularly high in Nimroz (100%), Paktya (54%), and Uruzgan (51%).
- Severe or very severe building damage was reportedly present in 15% of settlements, mainly in Paktya and Zabul. [In the aftermath of the earthquake in Kunar and Nangarhar](#), some affected districts showed high levels of severe damage, reaching 29% in Alingar and 62% in Chawkai. In the latter, in 31% of settlements, most people were reportedly living in those damaged shelters.
- In almost none (1%) of assessed settlements did KIs reported people living in collective centres. **Nuristan is the exception: in a substantial share of settlements (24%), some people were reportedly living in such centres**, mainly in public buildings and warehouses.
- [Consistent with the reported increase in housing demand and prices in Afghanistan](#), there was a **rise in the number of settlements where the most common tenancy arrangements are renting** (from 20% in March to 28% in December) and hosting for free (from 19% to 24%). Squatting, while reported at low levels overall (5%), was still present in provinces such as Paktya (16%) and Kandahar (15%).
- The majority of people in **40%** of the assessed settlements reportedly used **animal dung or waste** as the most common **source of heating and cooking**. [This presents a health risk for communities](#), particularly in provinces where this was prevalent: Faryab (95%), Sar-e-Pul (85%) and Badghis (80%).

% of settlements where most people cannot adequately do some of the following everyday activities related to their shelter:

1	Do not have access to sufficient water	40%
2	Perform personal hygiene and keep clean	36%
3	Sleep (for example, not enough space, lack of beds, mattresses, mats, blankets, bednets, etc.)	27%
4	Store food or water (lack of containers, water storage, space)	27%

% of settlements where KIs reported severe and very severe damage of buildings in their settlements (many buildings are unusable).

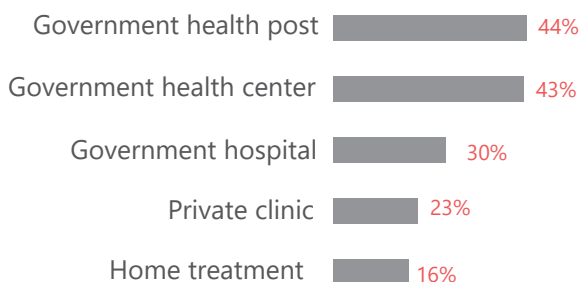


HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Key Findings

- Malnutrition remained a concern, with **key informants in 18% of settlements reporting widespread signs among children** (severe thinness, emaciation, swollen stomachs, or discoloured hair). Conditions appeared particularly dire in the western region (33%).
- [After the closure of some 485 health facilities in Afghanistan following the suspension of U.S. funding in January 2025](#), access to healthcare remained constrained in **17% of settlements nationwide, especially in Sar-e-Pul (47%), Ghor (42%), and Baghlan (42%)**.
- Barriers to access adequate healthcare** were primarily supply- and cost-related, with KIs in **73% of settlements citing a lack of medicines or equipment** and **55% citing unaffordability**. Medicines or equipment were particularly lacking in the South-eastern (67%) and South (54%) regions.
- In **36%** of the assessed settlements, KIs reported that **there are not enough doctors** available to respond to the needs of patients. In **35%**, they reported that **there are not enough midwives**. In **14%**, **maternity care was reportedly provided at home**.

% of settlements by reported main type of health centers that most people had access to:



In 18% of settlements, KIs reported having observed widespread **increased signs of malnutrition among children**.

In 74% of settlements, KIs reported people **are aware of nutrition services** nearby their settlements.

% of settlements by reported main concerns regarding nutrition services

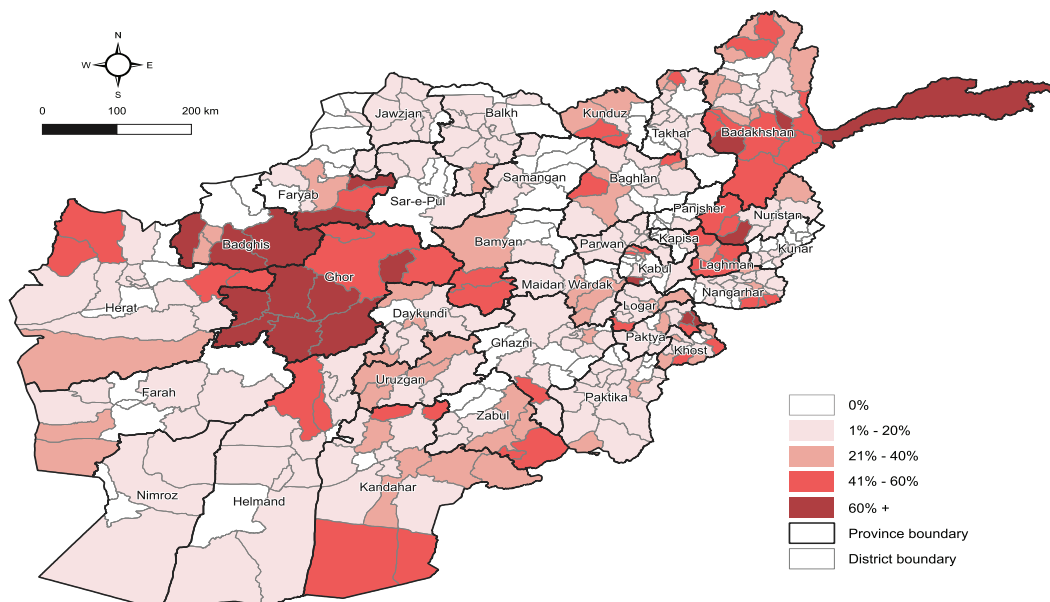


In 37% of settlements, KIs reported **lack of medical staff** in the health facilities.

In 14% of settlements, KIs reported the **healthcare facilities are structurally damaged**.

In 17% of settlements, KIs reported **damaged roads or no transport** to access health services.


% of settlements where KIs reported widespread increased signs of malnutrition among children



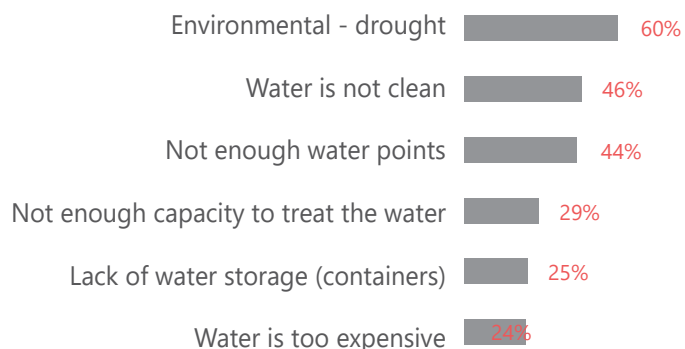
WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE (WASH)

Key Findings

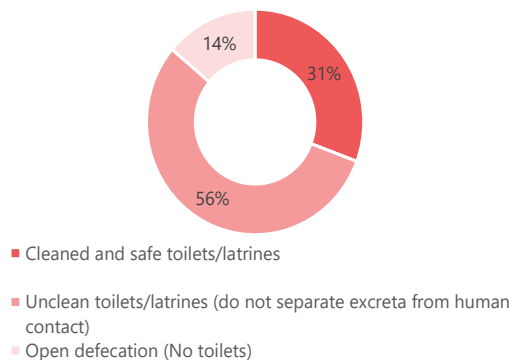
- In 23% of settlements across the country, **water was sometimes or often insufficient for the majority** of households. This was substantially higher in Laghman (57%) and Samangan (45%).
- In 46% of settlements, **water sources were reportedly damaged**, similar proportion to the previous HSM rounds, indicating a persistent and unresolved problem across the country.
- Public water sources were reportedly often **unsafe and inaccessible for women and girls** in 17% of settlements nationwide, particularly in the Southern region (42%).
- In 21% of the assessed settlements, KIs reported that **few households in their settlements have access to functioning sanitation facility (latrine/toilet)**. This was heightened in Nuristan (66%), Helmand (64%), and Samangan (52%).
- **Access to soap was limited** for the majority of people in 14% of settlements in the country, particularly in the Western region (31%). In some provinces (I.e. Ghor), this was correlated with poor sanitation.


 In 13% of settlements, KIs reported there is a **very serious problem because people do not have enough water that is safe for drinking**

% of assessed settlements where KIs reported main problems with water:

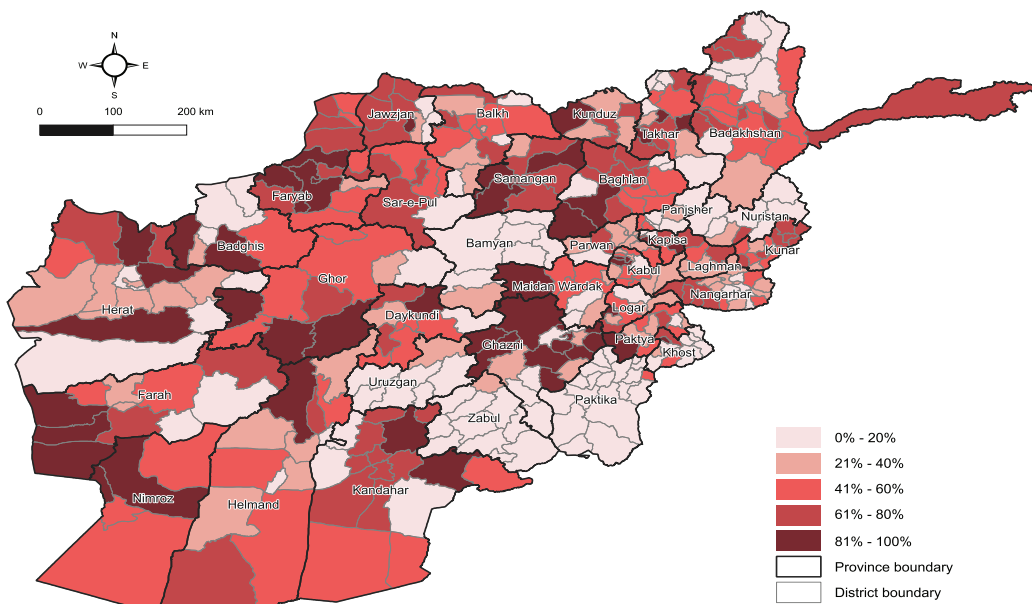


% of assessed settlements by reported main latrine/toilet most people use



 In 14% of settlements, KIs reported most people **do not have access to soap**. In provinces such as Ghor, this overlaps with a lack of sanitation facilities.

% of settlements where water KIs reported water sources are structurally damaged

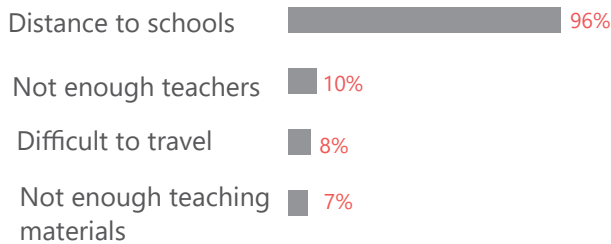


EDUCATION

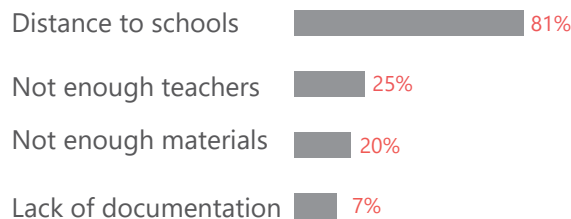
Key Findings

- No changes were observed in reported school attendance rates. In 4% of settlements, key informants indicated that **few or no boys were currently attending school**, and in 12% of settlements, **few or no girls (up to grade 6) were attending**. The highest reported non-attendance rates for both girls and boys were reported in Farah (27%), Nimroz (24%), Zabul (24%), and Kandahar (18%).
- The majority of children were reportedly enrolled in government/public schools (in 90% of assessed settlements), followed by madrasa/religious schools (58%) and community-based education (CBE) classes (15%). CBE classes remain active in provinces such as Jawzjan (50%), Kunar (49%), and Nuristan (42%).
- Education activities were reportedly disrupted in the six months prior to data collection in 50% of settlements, mainly due to a lack of education materials (43%), teacher absence (27%), and natural hazards (9%). Natural hazards were more frequently reported as a cause of disruption in Nuristan (43%), Ghor (36%), and Sar-e-Pul (32%).
- Access to water and sanitation at schools was reportedly limited** in at least 36% of settlements in the country. Lack of sanitation is particularly concerning in the Southern region (affecting 58% of settlements), whereas lack of water is especially concerning in the Eastern region (50%).

Most reported barriers preventing BOYS from going to schools:

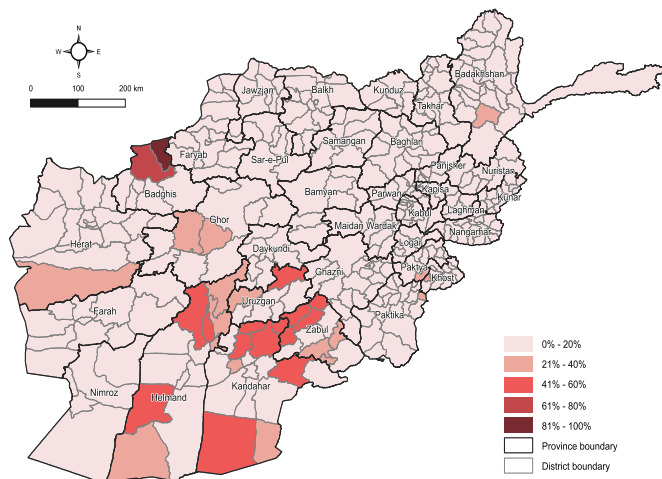


Most reported barriers preventing Girls from going to schools:

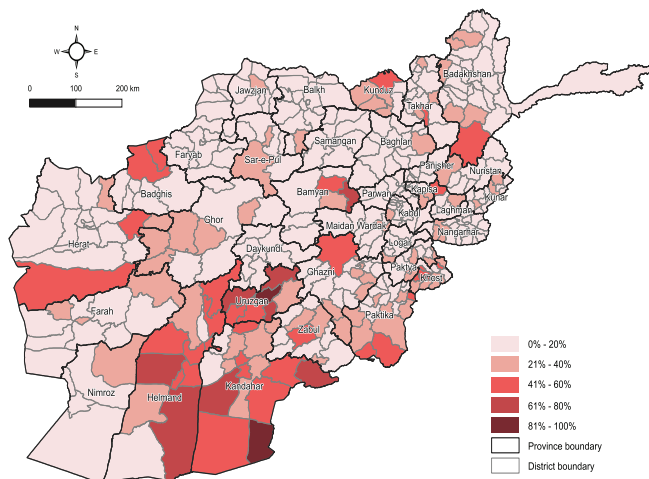


In 34% of settlements, KIs reported that schools do not have access to potable water; in 36% they do not have functional sanitation facilities.

% of assessed settlements with no or few boys reported-ly attending school, by district.



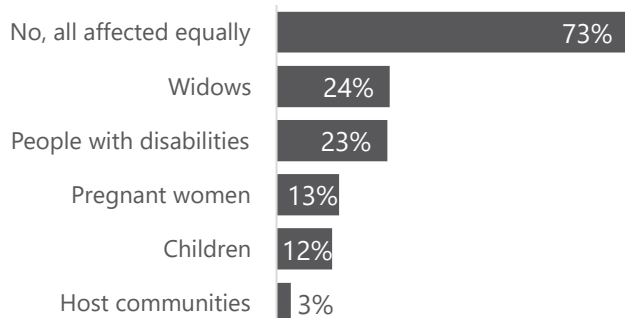
% of assessed settlements with no or few or girls reportedly attending school, by district.



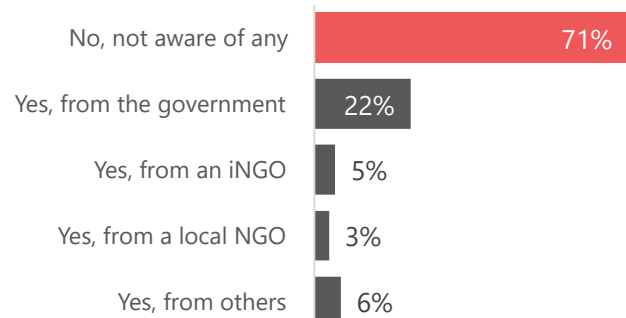
Key Findings

- **Widows and persons with disabilities were most often reported to have experienced greater difficulties in meeting basic needs.** Rates of disability are [very high](#), yet only in 29% of settlements were KIs aware of any support services, and these populations are often [unable to access](#) aid, health, and rehabilitation services.
- Discriminatory access to services and livelihoods for women and girls persists. **In 12% of settlements, KIs reported that no girls attended primary school** (59% in Zabul and 53% in Farah), while **in 34%, no women worked** (83% in Badghis), and **in 8%, none of the women had civil documentation** (51% in Zabul).
- The primary barrier to education access for boys was the distance to the nearest facility; however, KIs in 4% of settlements reported that child labour was a main barrier (67% in Uruzgan). **Child work is a common response to economic need, reported in 50% of assessed communities as a strategy to cope with poor access to food.**
- **Afghanistan is the [second](#) most landmine contaminated country, yet awareness of risks remains [low](#).** Correspondingly, among communities that received risk education, 41% of KIs reported awareness of explosive hazards near the settlement, compared to only 4% of those that received no risk education.

Groups struggling most to meet basic needs, as % of KIs in assessed communities



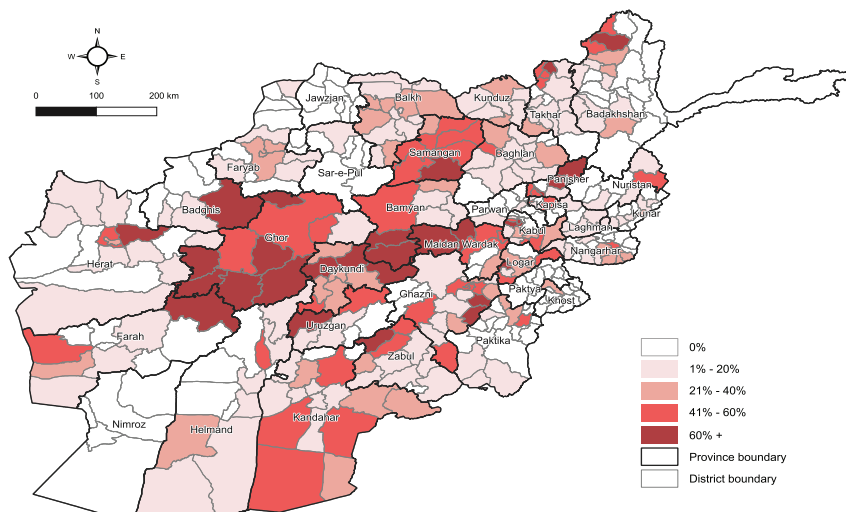
Awareness of availability of services for people with disabilities, as % of KIs in assessed communities



Awareness of explosive hazards (e.g. mines, unexploded ordnances) within 5km of the community among those that did and did not receive mine risk education, as % of KIs in assessed communities

	Aware of explosive hazards	Not aware of explosive hazards	All
Received risk education (8%)	41%	59%	100%
Did not receive risk education (92%)	4%	96%	100%
All	7%	93%	100%

% of assessed settlements with no or few boys reportedly attending school, by district.





METHODOLOGY AND COVERAGE

The Humanitarian Situation Monitoring (HSM) is a key informant-level assessment that covers 12,000 settlements across the country. Key informants (KIs) —including government officials, religious leaders, teachers, and healthcare practitioners— are surveyed to collect information regarding the humanitarian situation of communities in the settlements of interest. Based on previous studies, HSM surveys one key informant per settlement.

The sampling strategy aims to cover all Basic Service Units (3,229) in the country. A BSU is defined as a geographic unit where a number of households share public spaces, such as markets and roads, along with essential services, including healthcare clinics or schools. The obtained data is then aggregated at the district level to better inform humanitarian actors and other stakeholders.

Key informants are selected using a two-stage methodology. First, settlements are randomly

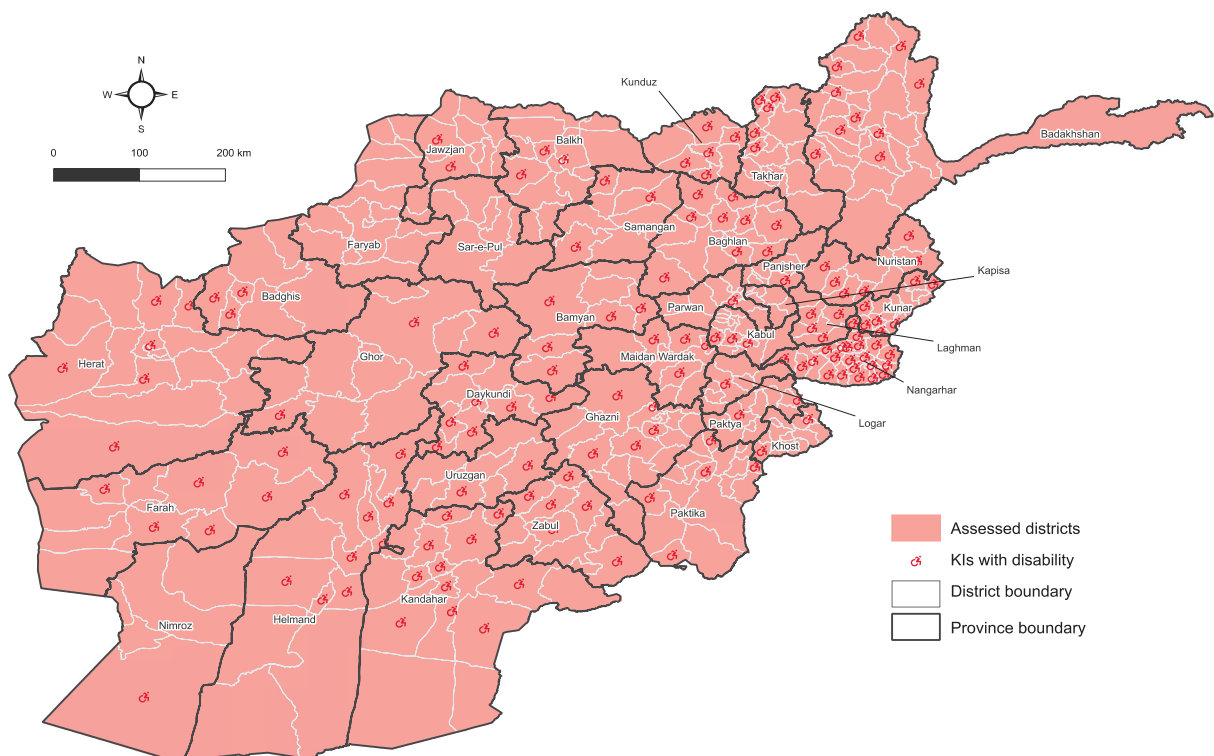
chosen using a population-weighted approach, giving larger settlements within each BSU a higher probability of selection while still including smaller ones. Second, trained enumerators visit selected settlements and identify relevant key informants through snowball sampling. Results are indicative and aim to cover a high proportion of the population.

The HSM Round 11 covers:

- All [401 districts](#) and BSUs in the country.
- One Key informant per settlements assessed.
- A minimum of three KIs per BSU.
- A minimum geographical coverage of 12% of settlements per district.
- 54% population covered (as per the total population of the settlements assessed).

For a comprehensive understanding, please refer to the [HSM terms of reference \(ToR\)](#). The data (including all interviews) and cleaning logs for HSM Round 11 are available upon request.

Coverage map: districts assessed and districts where Key informants with any disability were surveyed.



ABOUT REACH

REACH Initiative facilitates the development of information tools and products that enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery and development contexts. The methodologies used by REACH include primary data collection and in-depth analysis, and all activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. REACH is a joint initiative of IMPACT Initiatives, ACTED and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research - Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT).