## 1.1 Afghanistan Humanitarian Background

- Disasters, Conflicts and Migration
- Seasonal Effects on Logistics Capacities
- Meteorological Conditions
  - Western & South Western Region:
  - Eastern Region:
  - Northern Region:
  - Central/Central Highland:
- Capacity and Contacts for In-Country Emergency Response
  - Government
  - Humanitarian Community
- UN agencies in Afghanistan/UN Country Team

### Disasters, Conflicts and Migration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Occurs</th>
<th>Comments / Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Natural Disasters</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drought</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>There have been several seasons of drought in Afghanistan in recent decades. According to an analysis of climate and drought records by Asia Development Bank, localized droughts have a periodicity of three to five years. Droughts covering large areas recur every 9-11 years. South and central areas are more affected. Dry season is July to September. <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drought_in_Afghanistan">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drought_in_Afghanistan</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earthquakes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Afghanistan is situated on a major plate boundary. The location of the country is on the boundary where two tectonic plates, the Iranian Plate and the Eurasian Plate, meet. List of events: <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_earthquakes_in_Afghanistan">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_earthquakes_in_Afghanistan</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Epidemics          | Yes    | • 21 June 2005 - Cholera in Afghanistan
  • 29 August 2003 - Diphtheria in Afghanistan
  • 21 January 2003 - Pertussis in Afghanistan - Update
  • 8 January 2003 - Pertussis in Afghanistan
  • 17 July 2002 - Acute watery diarrhoeal syndrome in Afghanistan
  • 22 May 2002 - Leishmaniasis in Afghanistan
  • 26 July 2001 - Acute haemorrhagic fever syndrome in Afghanistan
  • 12 September 2000 - Cholera in Afghanistan
  • 2000 - Acute haemorrhagic fever syndrome
  • 11 July 2000 - Acute haemorrhagic fever syndrome in Afghanistan
  • 19 June 2000 - Acute haemorrhagic fever syndrome in Afghanistan
| Extreme Temperatures | Yes    | Recurrent. Several documented events. Cold waves and extreme winter conditions affects thousands people.                                                                                                                  |
| Floods             | Yes    | 74 documented events since 1900. Flash Flood and General flood. Most probable between February and May. Northern, Western and North Eastern regions are prone to severe flooding resulting in erosion, destruction of infrastructure and agricultural land. |
| Insect Infestation | Yes    | Locusts                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Mudslides          | Yes    | Recurrent                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Volcanic Eruptions | No     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
Wildfires | No
--- | ---
High Winds | Yes | Sandstorms
Other Comments | Afghanistan is prone to earthquakes, floods, droughts, landslides, and avalanches. Over three decades of conflict, coupled with environmental degradation, and insufficient investment in disaster risk reduction strategies, have contributed to increasing vulnerability of the Afghan people to cope with the sudden shock of natural disasters. On average, such disasters affect 200,000 people every year.
Source: [http://asdc.immap.org/dashboard/?page=naturaldisaster](http://asdc.immap.org/dashboard/?page=naturaldisaster)
Other Information Sources:
https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/afghanistan/natural-disasters-0

Man-Made Issues

**Internally Displaced Persons** | Yes | Cumulative figures of people displaced by conflict over the past 15 years amount to approximately 1.1 million people. Because of widespread and increased conflict, figures for 2015 suggest that the number of people who fled their homes to escape armed violence and seek refuge had increased by 64% compared to the same period in 2014; this amounts to almost 200,000 people in one year. The reporting and verification of the total numbers displaced is constrained due to the ability of humanitarian actors to access insecure and contested areas.
IOM Humanitarian compendium, 2016 -
https://humanitariancompendium.iom.int/sites/default/files/humanitarian_compendium/files/1.%20Complete%20HC%202016%20reduced.pdf

**Refugees Present** | Yes, internal returnees | In the second half of 2016, there was a sudden surge in the number of Afghan refugees returning from Pakistan. Some 370,000 Afghan refugees returned from Pakistan, compared to some 55,000 in 2015, marking a ten-year high. The massive increase of returns from Pakistan was due to a combination of complex factors. UNHCR post-return monitoring showed that returnees face many reintegration challenges, including lack of land, shelter and livelihood opportunities.
http://reporting.unhcr.org/node/4505#_ga=2.18806911.775855182.1504096839-2044019406.1504096839

**Landmines / UXO Present** | Yes | Afghanistan is one of the most heavily mined countries in the world. Landmines pose an ever-present danger to civilians.
http://www.mineaction.org/programmes/afghanistan

**Conflicts** | Afghanistan has been in protracted conflict for almost four decades, which has seriously hampered poverty reduction and development, strained the fabric of society and depleted its coping mechanisms. Additionally, over the past five years, armed non-state actors have challenged the territorial control of the Government and expanded the geographical scope of the conflict beyond the southern and eastern regions of the country.
Since 2001, international aid efforts have considerably scaled up and so has international military intervention. Human development indicators show some improvement in absolute terms particularly over the last ten years. However, Afghanistan remains ranked in the bottom decile of countries in the global Human Development Index at 175 of 186.
Afghanistan is prone to recurrent natural disasters. Given this underlying fragility – at the economic, political and security levels – the country is not able to cope with the consequences of such disasters, which puts additional strain on humanitarian actors working on the ground.
http://www.unocha.org/afghanistan/about-ocha-afghanistan

Seasonal Effects on Logistics Capacities

**Seasonal Effects on Transport**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transport Type</th>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>Comments / Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In general, transportation is hindered due to heavy winters. In some areas the landslide and flooding slow down the transportation.

Secondary roads transportation is hampered due to rain, snow and floods. Heavy weight vehicles traffic associated with rain/snow, in mountain areas deteriorates the road condition. Due to mountainous topography of the country, the road network is poor with muddy, Low-lying areas are prone to blockage by landslides/avalanches and destruction by floods during the rainy periods.

Afghanistan has three short distance railroad lines in the north of the country. The first is between Mazar-i-Sharif and the border town of Hairatan in Balkh province, which then connects with the rail network of neighboring Uzbekistan. The second links Toraghundi in Herat province with Serhetabet in Turkmenistan. The third is between Aqina in Faryab province and neighbouring Turkmenistan.

The country currently lacks a passenger rail service. The three lines operates nonstop throughout the year with no seasonal hindrance.

Flights are taking place throughout the year, however during the harsh winter season some small domestic airports are blocked whilst the international airports reopens shortly. Another point to take note of is the huge congestion of passengers in international airports during Haj season.

The only city connected to a navigable waterway is the Northern city of Hairaton.

Meteorological Conditions

Afghanistan has four seasons. In the mountains and a few of the valleys bordering Pakistan, a fringe effect of the Indian monsoon, coming usually from the southeast, brings moist maritime tropical air in summer. Summers are hot and winters can be bitterly cold. Summer temperatures as high as 49° C (120° F) have been recorded in the northern valleys. Midwinter temperatures as low as -9° C (15° F) are common around the 2000-m level in the Hindu Kush. The climate in the highlands varies with elevation. The coolest temperatures usually occur on the heights of the mountains. Temperatures often range greatly within a single day. Variations in temperature during the day may range from freezing conditions at dawn to the upper 30° C (upper 90° F) at noon. Most of the precipitation falls between the months of October and April. The deserts receive less than 100 mm rain a year, whereas the mountains receive more than 1000 mm of precipitation, mostly as snow. Winds sweeping in from the west may bring large sandstorms or dust storms while the strong solar heating of the ground raises large local whirlwinds.

Western & South Western Region:

Winter is usually severe with of up to two meter high snow in mountainous areas resulting in inaccessible roads. Summer period are extremely hot reaching temperatures in excess of 50° Celsius causing water shortages. The weather and rain during springtime is moderate. During autumn, all roads are still accessible.

Eastern Region:

Winter is usually severe with high snow in mountainous areas of Nuristan Province, resulting in inaccessible roads. Summer period is an extremely hot reaching temperature in excess of 50 Degree Celsius causing water shortages. The weather and rain during springtime is moderate. During autumn, all roads are still accessible.

Northern Region:

The climate is typical of an arid or semiarid savannah, with cold winters and dry summers. The climate of the Turkistan plains, which extend northward from the Northern Foothills, represents a transition between mountain and savannah climates. Aridity increases and temperatures rise with descending altitudes, becoming the highest along the lower Amu Darya and in the western parts of the plains. Every year the snowfall in Faryab, Sar I Pul and Samangan becomes hardly accessible whilst some remote districts of Faryab and Sar I Pul provinces become inaccessible.

Central/Central Highland:

Central Highland is a cold and winter hit area with a long winter period. It has four seasons, which is dry in fall and very cold winter with heavy rains at the beginning of spring. The temperature gets hot during the summer time.

Capacity and Contacts for In-Country Emergency Response

Government

While Afghanistan has been affected by natural hazards for centuries, the wars and civil conflicts that have plagued the country for more than 30 years, combined with increased environmental degradation and mismanagement, have heightened its vulnerability to damage produced by natural hazards.
Afghanistan remains rooted in the bottom decile of the global human development index. Large gaps remain in the provision of basic public services, demanding a humanitarian response across a range of sectors. Poor governance, non-functional public facilities and chronic shortage of qualified staff leave many Afghans without primary health services, basic education, water & sanitation and adequate housing. However, the government of Afghanistan has put in place institutional mechanisms for disaster management that involve relevant stakeholders from various sectors for an effective and coordinated response.

The Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA) is the principal institution at the national level with the mandate to coordinate and manage all aspects related to disaster management and humanitarian affairs including mine action.

The National Disaster Management Commission (NDMC), under the leadership of the president has been established. Currently, the Commission which is an inter-ministerial board is chaired by the Chief Executive of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. ANDMA serves as secretariat and executive arm of the NDMC.

http://www.andma.gov.af/

http://dmac.gov.af/about/andma/

Humanitarian Community

“The efficiency, reach and relevance of coordination mechanisms at national and sub-national levels have been strengthened over the last recent years. The humanitarian community undertook a strategic review of operational coordination to examine and improve the humanitarian response structure. The coordination mechanism continues based on the consultative review and continued coordination between relevant government and non-government stakeholders.

“The number of operational humanitarian partners has increased in 2015 to around 160 national and international NGOs, reporting humanitarian response activities in addition to the United Nations agencies, IOM, and the Red Crescent and Red Cross Societies. There are a total of 249 humanitarian partners when considering further organisations who have indicated the capacity to respond if the need arises. The identification and inclusion of humanitarian partners in coordination efforts has been strengthened through reciprocal “Who does What Where” monitoring processes of the clusters and OCHA regional offices”.


https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/afghanistan/3w

Useful links:

https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/afghanistan/3w

https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/afghanistan/preparedness


http://www.acbar.org/ - Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief and Development

UN agencies in Afghanistan/UN Country Team

- UNDP (United Nations Development Program)
- OCHA (UN Office Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs)
- UN-HABITAT (United Nations Centre for Human Settlements)
- UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme)
- UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)
- UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund for Afghanistan)
- UNHCR (United Nations High Commission for Refugees)
- OHCHR (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights)
- UNICEF (United Nations Children’s Fund)
- UNIDO (United Nations Industrial Development Organization)
- UN WOMEN (United Nations Development Fund for Women)
- UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime)
- UNOPS (UN Office for Project Services)
- UNMAS (United Nations Mine Action Service)
- WHO (World Health Organization)
- WFP (World Food Programme)
- ILO (International Labour Organization)
- IOM (International Organization for Migration)
- FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization)
- MACCA (Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan)
- UNAMA (United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan)

For more information on humanitarian agency contact details, please see the following link:
4.2.2 Afghanistan Humanitarian Agency Contact List