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ecoi.net featured topic on Afghanistan: Security situation and socio-economic situation in Herat-City and Mazar-e Sharif

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Note: For general information on the security situation in Afghanistan please refer to the following link:

<https://www.ecoi.net/en/countries/afghanistan/featured-topics/general-security-situation-in-afghanistan-and-events-in-kabul/>

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Security situation and socio-economic situation in Herat-City and Mazar-e Sharif

An ACCORD query response on the security and socio-economic situation in Herat-City dated April 2020 can be found here (in German):

- ACCORD – Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation: Anfragebeantwortung zu Afghanistan: Lokale Sicherheits- und Versorgungslage der Stadt Herat: Sicherheitslage in den einzelnen Vierteln bzw. der Peripherie; Wohnregionen mit den meisten IDPs, RückkehrerInnen; Unterscheidungen hinsichtlich der Volksgruppenzugehörigkeit; sichere Erreichbarkeit der Innenstadt auf dem Landweg (insbesondere vom Flughafen bzw. den informellen Siedlungen außerhalb der Stadt aus); Besonderheiten aufgrund der Corona-Pandemie [a-11210-1], 23 April 2020
<https://www.ecoi.net/en/document/2030080.html>

An ACCORD query response on the security and socio-economic situation in Mazar-e Sharif dated April 2020 can be found here (in German):

- ACCORD – Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation: Anfragebeantwortung zu Afghanistan: Lokale Sicherheits- und Versorgungslage der Stadt Mazar-e Sharif und Umgebung: Sicherheitslage in den einzelnen Vierteln bzw. der Peripherie; Wohnregionen mit den meisten Binnenvertriebenen, RückkehrerInnen; Unterscheidungen hinsichtlich der Volksgruppenzugehörigkeit; sichere Erreichbarkeit der Innenstadt auf dem Landweg (insbesondere vom Flughafen bzw. den informellen Siedlungen außerhalb der Stadt aus); Besonderheiten aufgrund der Corona-Pandemie [a-11210-2 (11211)], 30 April 2020
<https://www.ecoi.net/en/document/2030099.html>

1. Timeline of incidents in Herat district since January 2018

2020

"On 3 October 2020 an influential Arbaki member was killed in the city of Herat by Taliban [reported by Voice of Jihadij]." [ACLED coded fatalities as 0] ([ACLED, 14 October 2020](#))

"On 13 September 2020, unidentified gunmen shot dead a traffic police officer in PD7 of Herat city." ([ACLED, 14 October 2020](#))

"On 28 August 2020, 4 civilians were wounded when a bomb exploded inside an ice cream shop in PD5 of Herat city. It's unclear who planted the bomb." ([ACLED, 14 October 2020](#))

"On 26 August 2020, 1 NDS member was killed while he was trying to defuse a bomb in PD13 of Herat city. It's unclear who planted the bomb." ([ACLED, 14 October 2020](#))

"On 25 August 2020, 1 soldier was shot and killed by unknown gunmen in PD12 of Herat city." ([ACLED, 14 October 2020](#))

"On 24 August 2020, 1 woman was killed and 4 civilians were wounded by a hand grenade which was thrown in their house in Herat city. It's unclear who threw it." ([ACLED, 14 October 2020](#))

"On 21 August 2020, 1 policeman was killed by unknown gunmen in the Gange village of PD7, Herat city." ([ACLED, 14 October 2020](#))

"On 11 August 2020, 5 Shiite civilians were killed and wounded by an IS-planted IED in Herat city." [ACLED coded fatalities as 2, "due to the unclear nature of the casualties"] ([ACLED, 14 October 2020](#))

"On 8 August 2020, 1 policeman was shot and killed by unknown gunmen in the Nasim Abad village of PD11, Herat city." ([ACLED, 14 October 2020](#))

"Around 5 August 2020 (as reported), unidentified armed men threw hand grenades at civilians in Herat district, injuring 15 people." ([ACLED, 14 October 2020](#))

"On 3 August 2020, an unidentified gunman shot and killed an Afghan police officer in the PD2 of Herat city, Hirat, Herat." ([ACLED, 14 October 2020](#))

"On 31 July 2020, at least 14 civilians were wounded by an explosion in the Tank-e-Mawlawi area of Herat city. It's unclear who planted the bomb." ([ACLED, 14 October 2020](#))

"On 29 July 2020, 3 civilians, Shiite Muslims, were killed and 5 were wounded when an IS-planted bomb attached to their minibus exploded in the Mehal-e-Haji Abbas village, PD12 of Herat city." ([ACLED, 14 October 2020](#))

"On 17 July 2020, Taliban fighters attacked Afghan police PD6 headquarters of Herat city, Herat, leaving 1 fighter, 2 policemen, and 3 civilians dead, and 4 others injured." ([ACLED, 14 October 2020](#))

"Around 16 July 2020 (as reported), 1 Taliban militant was killed by ANDSF forces in Herat city." ([ACLED, 14 October 2020](#))

"On 20 June 2020, 3 security guards were killed, 3 other guards and 1 civilian were wounded when a roadside bomb targeted Herat's province Customs chief outside Herat city." ([ACLED, 14 October 2020](#))

"On 2 May 2020, 1 policeman was killed and 1 was wounded when they were shot by unknown gunmen in PD [police district] 12 of Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 May 2020](#))

"On 30 April 2020, a judge of a provincial court was killed by unknown gunman in PD12 of Herat city. The gunman was arrested later." ([ACLED, 26 May 2020](#))

"Security measures: On 25 March 2020, a lockdown took effect in Farah, Herat, and Nimruz provinces to limit the spread of the coronavirus. These provinces are close to Iran." ([ACLED, 26 May 2020](#))

"On 18 March 2020, Taliban militants ambushed and killed 1 police officer, in Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 May 2020](#))

"On 15 March 2020, Taliban militants ambushed and killed 1 Afghan military special forces commander, in the Shidai area of PD8, Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 May 2020](#))

"On 1 March 2020, a Taliban fighter killed his mother, a female police officer (off-duty), in PD11 of Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 May 2020](#))

"On 10 February 2020, 1 policeman was killed by Taliban militants on a motorbike in PD 2 of Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 May 2020](#))

"On 7 February 2020, 1 police commando commander was mistakenly killed by Afghan soldiers when he didn't stop his vehicle at a check point in the Nawabad area of Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 May 2020](#))

"On 9 January 2020, 1 soldier (Taliban reported an NDS [National Directorate of Security] employee) was killed following an ambush by Taliban militants in the Abdullah Abad area of Herat city." ([ACLED, 14 January 2020](#))

2019

"On 27 December 2019, 2 soldiers including a commander were killed following an attack by Taliban militants in the 'Bal Pishto' area in the limits of Herat city." ([ACLED, 14 January 2020](#))

"On 15 December 2019, 3 policemen and 2 unidentified gunmen were killed in an armed clash, and 1 policeman and 4 civilians were wounded, in the PD [Police District] 10 of Herat city. No group claimed responsibility for the attack." ([ACLED, 14 January 2020](#))

"On 14 December 2019, unknown gunmen shot and killed 1 employee of Afghanistan's Electoral Complaints Commission, in Herat city." ([ACLED, 14 January 2020](#))

"On 13 December 2019, 3 policemen were killed following attacks by Taliban militants on a check point in the PD12 Maslak area of Herat city." ([ACLED, 14 January 2020](#))

"On 08 December 2019, Taliban militants ambushed and killed 1 NDS agent, in Shaydai of Hirat district, Herat." ([ACLED, 14 January 2020](#))

"As reported on 21 November 2019, over the past 24 hours, 3 Taliban and/or IS militants were killed and 1 was wounded when Afghan military forces repulsed their attacks in Ghoryan district and the limits of Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 November 2019](#)) ii

"On 01 November 2019, 1 Afghan security personnel was killed following an ambush by Taliban militants in the Ganj area of Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 November 2019](#))

"On 30 October 2019, 1 policeman was killed and 2 civilians were wounded following an attack by unknown militants in the Moshk Waniha village, 7 PD of Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 November 2019](#))

"On 30 October 2019, 1 'Arbaki' was killed following an ambush by Taliban militants in the Babaji area of Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 November 2019](#))

"On 29 October 2019, 1 retired soldier was killed by unknown gunmen in the Kahdestan village of Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 November 2019](#))

"On 29 October 2019, Taliban militants ambushed and killed an Afghan military commander, in Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 November 2019](#))

"On 28 October 2019, 1 civilian was killed and 6 were wounded when a suicide bomber blew himself up close to the Imam Hadi mosque in the Darb-e-Khosh area of Herat city. Total fatality count included the bomber." ([ACLED, 26 November 2019](#))

"On October 17 2019, 2 policemen were killed following an attack by unknown attackers on a motorbike in PD7 of Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 November 2019](#))

"On 27 August 2019, Taliban militants ambushed and killed 3 policemen, and injured 1, in Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 September 2019](#))

"On 26 August 2019 at 9am, Taliban fighters ambushed and killed a regime officer in the Abdullah Abad area of Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 September 2019](#))

"On 8 August 2019, two gunmen on a motorcycle shot and killed a police officer and injured another in Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 September 2019](#))

"On 7 August 2019, a magnetic bomb placed in a car by unidentified militants exploded in Herat city. 8 civilians (2 children, 2 women, 4 men) were injured." ([ACLED, 26 September 2019](#))

"On 05 August 2019, an IED planted on a motorcycle by IS killed 4-5 Shiite civilians and injured 20-29 in Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 September 2019](#))

"On 23 June 2019, Taliban militants ambushed and killed 1 NDS agent, in Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 September 2019](#))

"On 20 05 2019, Taliban militants ambushed and killed an Afghan soldier, in Herat city." ([ACLED, 28 May 2019](#))

"On 16-May-2019, 1 Afghan soldier was killed by Taliban militants in the Shedaie area of Herat city." ([ACLED, 28 May 2019](#))

"As reported on 11-May-2019, 4 Taliban militants were killed, 2 were wounded, and 6 mines were defused by Afghan Police Forces on the Herat-Kandahar highway in Herat province." [...] "On 12-April-2019, 4 Taliban militants were killed, 2 were wounded, and 6 mines were defused by Afghan Military Forces in Herat province." ([ACLED, 22 June 2019](#))

"On 19-April-2019, 3 National Directorate of Security officers were killed and 2 were wounded by explosions conducted by unidentified armed militants in Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 April 2019](#))

"On 31-March-2019, 2 Afghan soldiers were killed and 1 Taliban militant was wounded in clashes in the PD4 area of Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 April 2019](#))

"On 28-March-2019, 1 Afghan soldier was killed by Taliban militants in Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 April 2019](#))

"On 19-March-2019, 1 civilian was killed and 6 were wounded by an IED blast conducted by unidentified armed militants in the 9th Police district of Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 April 2019](#))

"On 19-March-2019, 2 Afghan soldiers were killed, 1 pickup was destroyed, and 1 pistol and 1 rifle were seized after a bomb blast conducted by Taliban militants in Herat province." ([ACLED, 22 June 2019](#))

"As reported on 12-March-2019, 1 soldier was killed by a sniper in the Sheidaie area of Herat city, Hirat district, Herat." ([ACLED, 26 April 2019](#))

"On 10-March-2019, 5 people were wounded by a magnetic bomb in Herat city, Hirat district, Herat. No group claimed responsibility." ([ACLED, 26 April 2019](#))

"On 09-March-2019, a tribal elder was shot and killed by 2 unknown gunmen on a motorcycle in Herat city, Hirat district, Herat." ([ACLED, 26 April 2019](#))

"As reported on 04-March-2019, 1 unidentified armed militant was killed by Afghan Police in the 5th Police district in Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 April 2019](#))

"On 23-February-2019, 1 Afghan Policeman was killed by unidentified armed militants in Herat city. 1 of the attackers was later captured." ([ACLED, 26 April 2019](#))

"On 23-February-2019, 1 Afghan soldier was killed and 1 was wounded by Taliban militants in Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 April 2019](#))

"On 16-February-2019, 1 civilian who was head of religious and hajj affairs was killed by unidentified armed militants in Herat province." ([ACLED, 22 June 2019](#))

"On 30-January-2019, 2 Afghan soldiers were killed and 1 was wounded by a mine blast conducted by Taliban militants in the Spina Ada area of Herat city." ([ACLED, 26 April 2019](#))

"On 13-January-2019, it was reported that 1 Taliban militant, 3 Afghan Policemen, and 2 civilians were killed in an attack in the Pul-e-Rangina area of PD6, Herat city. Afghan Special Forces defused a carbomb during the clashes." ([ACLED, 26 April 2019](#))

"On 12-January-2019, 1 Taliban militant, 3 police officers, 2 civilians were killed after Taliban militants stormed into a police station in the Pul-e-Rangina area of police district 6, Herat city. 3 police officers were wounded in the clashes." ([ACLED, 22 June 2019](#))

"On 04-January-2019, 1 Afghan soldier was killed and 1 rifle was seized by Taliban militants in the Kandahar Terminal area of Herat city." ([ACLED, 22 June 2019](#))

2018

"On 16-November-2018, 1 unidentified armed militant was killed and 2 were arrested by Afghan Police in the Pashtun Pul area of Herat city. The militants were attempting to attack Afghan security forces." ([ACLED, 26 April 2019](#))

„In the run-up to the election campaign period, from August 2018 onwards, Herat city witnessed a series of small-scale improvised electronic device (IED) attacks. On 9 August, explosives planted in a motorbike went off opposite a vehicle carrying a former Afghan Local Police (ALP) commander, Haji Amir Shindandi, in the Old Corps Road in Police District (PD) 1, killing at least four people and injuring

12 others including the ex-commander. On 5 September, there were two consecutive explosions in Chawk-e Gulha area in downtown Herat, injuring at least six people, including two traffic police officers. In late August, earlier in the same place (ie Chawk-e Gulha), an explosion killed at least two people. On 4 October, a blast targeted a parked police vehicle in Darb-e Khush area in the city centre, injuring about ten people, among them a child.” ([Kazemi, 15 October 2018](#))ⁱⁱⁱ

“Unidentified gunmen shot and killed a religious scholar in Herat City on the night of June 22.” ([ACLEDD, 26 April 2019](#))

“A suicide attack near a Shi’ite mosque in the Western Afghan city of Herat killed at least one person and wounded eight others, police and health officials said on Sunday. Militant group Islamic State claimed responsibility for the attack, which followed another blast that was claimed by the group in Kabul last week and killed about 30 people near a Shi’ite shrine as the city celebrated Nawruz, the Persian new year.” ([Reuters, 25 March 2018](#))^{iv}.

2. Timeline of incidents in Mazar-e Sharif district since January 2018

2020

“On 5 October 2020, Balkh governor's former driver was killed by unknown attackers in PD 4 area of Mazar-e Sharif City, Balkh.” ([ACLEDD, 14 October 2020](#))

“On 22 September 2020, unidentified gunmen abducted the head of the moneychangers union in Mazar-e Sharif city, Mazar-e Sharif, Balkh. Resulting in dozens of moneychangers closing their shops in protest for the lack of security.” ([ACLEDD, 14 October 2020](#))

“On 19 September 2020, 1 civilian, a woman, was killed and 5 civilians were wounded by a bomb in PD1 of Mazar-e Sharif city, Balkh. It's unclear who planted the bomb. Target was Afghan Military Forces.” ([ACLEDD, 14 October 2020](#))

“On 30 August 2020, 1 policeman was shot and killed by unknown gunmen in PD9 of Mazar-e Sharif city, Balkh.” ([ACLEDD, 14 October 2020](#))

“On 20 August 2020, unidentified armed men attacked Afghan Public Protection Forces in the Rig area connecting Mazar-e Sharif to Hairatan highway of Balkh province, killing 1 officer and injuring 1 Uzbek citizen.” ([ACLEDD, 14 October 2020](#))

“Detonation: On 20 August 2020, an unidentified armed suicide bomber was killed after his explosives detonated in Mazar-e Sharif district, Balkh. It is unclear if the bomb detonated by mistake or intentionally. No further information.” ([ACLEDD, 14 October 2020](#))

“On 1 July 2020, at least 1 civilian and 1 policeman were killed, 5 civilians and 4-5 ANDSF members were wounded by 2 IEDs in PD3 of Mazar-e Sharif city, Balkh. The policeman died the next morning.” ([ACLEDD, 14 October 2020](#))

“Around 28 June 2020, 3 civilians, employees of a construction company, were killed by unknown gunmen in Mazar-e Sharif city, Balkh.” ([ACLEDD, 14 October 2020](#))

“On 23 May 2020, the house of a pro-government militia commander was struck by an IED in Mazar-e Sharif district, Balkh. Casualties unknown.” [ACLEDD coded fatalities as 0] ([ACLEDD, 14 October 2020](#))

“On 16 March 2020, a bomb suspected to be planted by Taliban militants killed 1 policeman and wounded 1-2 policemen and 3 civilians, in PD8 of Mazar-e Sharif city, Balkh.” ([ACLEDD, 26 May 2020](#))

“On 14 January 2020, a bomb planted by an unidentified armed group killed 2 children, in PD9 of Mazar-e Sharif city, Balkh. 7 civilians and the governor's bodyguard were wounded by a subsequent explosion when they arrived to the scene.” ([ACLEDD, 26 May 2020](#))

“On 4 January 2020, 1 civilian was killed and 2-3 were wounded by an explosion in the PD10 in the limits of Mazar-e Sharif city, Balkh. It's unclear who planted the bomb.” ([ACLEDD, 14 January 2020](#))

2019

“On 17 December 2019, a bomb planted by an unidentified armed group injured 11 civilians, 6 policemen, and 1 soldier in Mazar-e Sharif district, Balkh.” ([ACLEDD, 14 January 2020](#))

“On 14 December 2019, Afghan police forces clashed with gunmen loyal to Nizamuddin Qaisari, a key figure of Junbish-i-Milli Islami, while they attempted to arrest the militia commander in the center of Mazar-i-Sharif. 10 militants were killed and 45 were arrested, but Qaisari escaped arrest.” ([ACLEDD, 14 January 2020](#))

"On 13 October 2019, unknown gunmen shot and killed a religious scholar, in PD4 of Mazar-e Sharif city, Balkh." ([ACLED, 26 November 2019](#))

"As reported on September 30 2019, a 9 years old girl was beheaded by unidentified men in Mazar-e Sharif city, Balkh." ([ACLED, 26 November 2019](#))

"On 10 September 2019, an IED planted by Taliban killed 7 NDS agents, in Mazar-e Sharif district, Balkh." ([ACLED, 26 September 2019](#))

"On 10 September 2019, a bomb planted by an unidentified armed group injured 2 civilians in Mazar-e Sharif city, Balkh." ([ACLED, 26 September 2019](#))

"On 9 August 2019, a Taliban-planted landmine blew up a military tank in Mazar-e Sharif city, Balkh. 5 soldiers were killed." ([ACLED, 26 September 2019](#))

"On July 08 2019, 1 'Arbaki' commander was killed following an attack by Taliban militants in Mazar-e Sharif district, Balkh." ([ACLED, 25 July 2019](#))

"On 07-May-2019, 3 unidentified armed militants were killed, and 5 civilians were wounded, in clashes between two armed groups in Mazar-e Sharif city, Balkh province." ([ACLED, 28 May 2019](#))

"On 30-April-2019, 1 Afghan Policeman was killed and 2 others were wounded by a bomb explosion conducted by unidentified armed militants in Mazar-e Sharif city, Balkh province." ([ACLED, 28 May 2019](#))

"On 30 04 2019, a landmine planted by Taliban destroyed a police vehicle, killing 2 policemen and injuring 1, in Mazar-e Sharif district, Balkh." ([ACLED, 28 May 2019](#))

"On 29-April-2019, 7 Taliban militants were killed and 6 militants and 5 Afghan soldiers were wounded in clashes in the Sharsharak area near the Mazar-e Sharif-Jowzjan highway in Mazar-e Sharif district, Balkh province." ([ACLED, 28 May 2019](#))

"On 27-March-2019, 2 Afghan Policemen were killed and 1 was wounded by Taliban militants in Mazar-e Sharif district, Balkh province. 1 Kalashnikov and 1 100 round rifle were seized by the militants." ([ACLED, 26 April 2019](#))

"On 16-March-2019, 1 "Arbaki" was killed by Taliban militants in Mazar-e Sharif city, Balkh province." ([ACLED, 26 April 2019](#))

"Gunfire has broken out in the northern Afghan city of Mazar-e Sharif between police loyal to a powerful former provincial governor and Interior Ministry forces sent to support a new police chief who was appointed by President Ashraf Ghani. The March 14 gunbattle was sparked by the dispute between Ghani and Balkh Province's former governor, Atta Mohammad Noor, an ethnic Tajik former warlord whose militia fighters now form most of the provincial police force. Hospital officials in Mazar-e Sharif told RFE/RL that at least 13 people were hospitalized with gunshot wounds sustained during the March 14 fighting -- including eight police officers and five civilians." ([RFE/RL, 14 March 2019](#))v

2018

"10 October 2018 [...] Taliban gunmen attacked a top judicial official, Justice Director Syed Mohammad Jafar Misbah, and his 2 bodyguards in Mazar-e Sharif city, Balkh province. The official was only slightly harmed while his bodyguards were critically wounded." ([ACLED, 26 April 2019](#))

"Unidentified gunmen have shot dead an imam (prayer leader) in the capital of northern Balkh province, an official said on Saturday." ([PAN, 1 September 2018](#))vi

"Two people including a prisoner were killed and seven others inmates have been abducted after unidentified gunmen attacked police convoy in Mazar-i-Sharif, the capital of northern Balkh province, an official said on Friday." ([PAN, 25 May 2018](#)). According to ACLED only one person was killed in this incident ([ACLED, 26 April 2019](#)).

3. Socio-economic situation in Herat-City and Mazar-e Sharif

The following information focuses on the Afghan population in general and not specifically on the most vulnerable groups, such as internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees, whose situation may differ significantly. (See e.g. [ACCORD, 7 December 2018](#))

3.1 Food Supply

FEWS NET^{vii} provides food security maps for Afghanistan on its website dating back to July 2009 ([FEWS NET, no date \(a\)](#)). Below is the map of the forecast for the period October 2020 to January 2021. According to the map, in the period October 2020 to January 2021 Herat reaches the second level, phase 2 (“stressed”), of the classification system used by FEWS NET (see below for explanation). Mazar-e-Sharif also reaches phase 2 of the classification system (FEWS NET, September 2020).

In phase 1 of the 5-level scale, also called “minimal”, households are able to meet essential food and non-food needs without engaging in atypical and unsustainable strategies to access food and income. In phase 2, also called “stressed”, households have minimally adequate food consumption but are unable to afford some essential non-food expenditures without engaging in stress-coping strategies. Phase 3, also known as “crisis”, households either have food consumption gaps which are reflected by high or above-usual acute malnutrition; or are marginally able to meet minimum food needs but only by depleting essential livelihood assets or through crisis-coping strategies. In Phase 4, “emergency”, households either have large food consumption gaps resulting in very high acute malnutrition; or are able to mitigate those gaps only by employing emergency livelihood strategies and asset liquidation. Phase 5 of the scale indicates “famine”: an extreme lack of food or other basic needs even though coping strategies are being employed; starvation, death, destitution and levels of extremely critical acute malnutrition are observable. ([FEWS NET, no date \(b\)](#))

October 2020 – January 2021:

IPC v3.0 Acute Food Insecurity Phase

1: Minimal 2: Stressed 3: Crisis 4: Emergency 5: Famine

([FEWS NET, September 2020](#))

The World Food Programme (WFP)^{viii} regularly publishes a data set on food prices in Afghanistan via Humanitarian Response^{ix}. The data set includes the monthly retail prices of low quality rice, wheat and bread as well as the average daily wage of qualified and non-qualified, non-agricultural labour ([WFP, 24 May 2020](#)). The following graphs show the monthly trend of food prices from January 2018 to March 2020 and the ratio between the daily wage of the unqualified labour force and the quantities of basic food products that can be purchased in Herat City and Mazar-e Sharif:

(Based on [WFP, 14 October 2020](#))

(Based on [WFP, 14 October 2020](#))

(Based on [WFP, 14 October 2020](#))

(Based on [WFP, 14 October 2020](#))

“Widespread conflict and severe drought has forced over 150,000 people to flee villages in northwestern [Afghanistan](#) and seek shelter in the city of Herat. Their condition remains extremely fragile, as they face shortages of food and limited access to healthcare. Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) opened a winter clinic in Herat to provide much-needed assistance to these vulnerable people. [...] Living conditions are grossly inadequate and particularly poor when it comes to shelter, water and sanitation. Limited availability of food is another issue, with visible consequences on the health of children and on pregnant or lactating women, who need good quality nutrients to feed their babies.” ([MSF, 20 March 2019](#))^x

“As the summer heat in Afghanistan grows in intensity, conditions are becoming increasingly difficult for some 100,000 displaced people sheltering on the outskirts of the city of Herat. At the same time, humanitarian assistance is being reduced and water supplies are running out. The displaced people fled their villages in northwestern Afghanistan last year during a severe drought and increased fighting between armed opposition groups and Afghan security forces. One year on, the drought is over, but they are unable to return home due to continuing insecurity.” ([MSF, 23 July 2019](#))

“MoPH [ministry of public health] data shows that 8,145 people across all 34 provinces in Afghanistan have tested positive for COVID-19 [Corona Virus Disease 2019]. Some 930 people have recovered, and 187 people have died. 12 healthcare workers are among those who have died from COVID-19. [...] Cases are expected to increase rapidly over the weeks ahead as community

transmission escalates, creating grave implications for Afghanistan’s economy and people’s wellbeing. Kabul is the most affected part of the country, followed by Herat, Kandahar and Balkh. [...] Humanitarians remain concerned about the impact of extended lockdown measures on the most-vulnerable, particularly families who rely on casual daily labour and lack alternative income sources.” ([OCHA, 20 May 2020, p. 1](#))^{xi}

“The impact of COVID-19 and the subsequent lockdown had disastrous effects on the livelihoods of Afghan citizens. Due to the lockdown, many people lost jobs and income. Price inflation on basic goods such as oil and potatoes deepened the economic hardship felt by a significant proportion of Afghanistan’s population. According to Biruni Institute data, 6 million people lost their jobs due to the pandemic.” ([HelpAge International, September 2020, p. 2](#))^{xii}

“Urban areas in almost 34 provinces of the country have been impacted by reducing access to income and weakening purchasing power due to the COVID-19 lockdown measures. In particular, restrictions on movement have significantly reduced job opportunities in Kabul, Herat, and Nangarhar provinces. [...] Reduced access to labor opportunities and significantly increased food prices in urban areas are significantly restricting access to food and income in urban areas of the country. Worst-affected households are those dependent on small business/petty trade, remittances, non-agriculture wage labor, and low salary workers in Kabul, Herat, Jalal Abad, Mazar, Kandahar, and other main cities. Given significantly reduced purchasing power and lack of savings, most of these households are expected to be facing food consumption gaps and Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse outcomes.” ([FEWS, April 2020](#))

For further information on the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic within the cities of Herat and Mazar-e Sharif, see the two ACCORD query responses mentioned above, [ACCORD, 23 April](#); and [ACCORD, 20 April](#).

3.2 Health Care

“In a 2018 report the World Bank concluded that over 2004-2010 health care services showed major improvements in Afghanistan, while in the period of 2011-2016 improvements continued at a slower pace. The report added that the provinces with high performing health facilities in 2003-2010 were Baghlan, Faryab, Herat, Jawzjan, Khost, Kunar, Laghman, Logar, Nuristan and Paktika, whereas in the period of 2011-2016 health facilities were functioning best in Badakhshan, Balkh, Daykundi, Farah, Faryab, Helmand, Nangarhar, Paktiya, Saripul and Zabul with Faryab being the only high-performing province during both periods. [...]

According to UNOCHA, medical workers and health facilities are most affected by security incidents and direct violence amongst all aid workers and humanitarian infrastructure in Afghanistan. Health personnel are being harassed, detained, kidnapped and killed. Many people in Afghanistan lack access to health care due to the conflict, and trauma-care is regarded as one of the most critical gaps remaining in Afghanistan’s public health care. Medical facilities are increasingly a target of military attacks” ([EASO, April 2019, S. 45-46](#))^{xiii}

“The recent wave of returnees and the large number of internally displaced people (IDPs) is posing a further challenge on already stretched health care facilities and health care professionals in Afghanistan.” ([WHO, 20 June 2018](#))^{xiv}

“So far this year [report for the month of August 2019], 319 humanitarian incidents were recorded across the country resulting in 27 aid workers killed, 31 injured and 33 abducted. Nearly half of the recorded incidents were the result of direct and indirect violence against humanitarian personnel, assets or facilities. Additionally, 133 of the 319 incidents affecting aid workers in 2019 consisted of attacks on health facilities and personnel.” In Herat province 22 incidents impacting humanitarian access, health facilities and health workers have occurred, whereas in Balkh there were 24 such incidents. ([OCHA, 24. September 2019](#))

“Around 30 per cent of the population has limited access to basic health services within a two-hour travel radius. The fragile health system is further overburdened by mass casualty incidents and recurrent outbreaks of communicable diseases, as well as a high burden of non-communicable diseases and malnutrition. Community health facilities are overwhelmed due to the spread of COVID-19. Continuation of essential health services is necessary to reduce morbidity and mortality.” ([OCHA, 20 May 2020, p. 3](#))

4. Sources:

(all links accessed 15 October 2020, except if otherwise noted)

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i Voice of Jihad is the Website of the Taliban.

ii The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) of the University of Sussex collects data on reported conflict events in selected African and Asian countries. The Information on reported events is based on various sources like international and Afghan media, including media affiliated with the Afghan government or the Taliban.

iii S. Reza Kazemi is a researcher for the Afghanistan Analysts Network (AAN).

iv Reuters, a division of Thomson Reuters Corporation headquartered in Toronto, is an international news agency.

v Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) is a US government-funded broadcasting organisation that provides news, information, and analysis to countries in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East.

vi Pajhwok Afghan News (PAN) is an independent news agency headquartered in Kabul.

vii FEWS NET - Famine Early Warning System Network is a network of analysts operating in more than 35 countries and continuously publishing data and maps on current food security in Afghanistan. Since March 2011 it has been working with the updated version of an Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Version 2.0.

viii The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) is the leading humanitarian organisation in the fight against hunger worldwide.

ix Humanitarian Response is a specialized service platform of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA).

x Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) is an independent international humanitarian organisation working to deliver medical aid and offer assistance to people in need worldwide.

xi The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is responsible for mobilizing and coordinating humanitarian actors to ensure a coherent response to emergencies, advocating the rights of people in need, promoting preparedness and prevention as well as facilitating sustainable solutions.

xii HelpAge International is a global network of 154 organisations in 85 countries, which supports millions of older people to live safe, dignified and healthy lives.

xiii The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) is an agency of the European Union providing support to EU member states in asylum issues.

xiv The World Health Organization (WHO) is the United Nations coordinating body for international public health.

This featured topic was prepared after researching within time constraints. It is meant to offer an overview on an issue and is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status, asylum or other form of international protection. Chronologies are not intended to be exhaustive. Every quotation is referred to with a hyperlink to the respective document.

ecoi.net summary:



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Austrian Red Cross Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation (ACCORD)	Wiedner Hauptstraße 32, 1041 Wien T (Telefon) +43 1 589 00 583 F (Fax) +43 1 589 00 589 info@ecoi.net	Contact Imprint & Disclaimer F.A.Q. Data Protection Notice
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