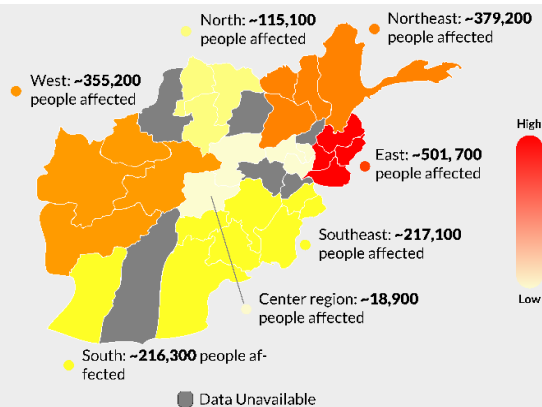


Overview

The U.S. government ordered a 90-day halt to all new foreign aid in January 2025, citing the need to realign U.S. foreign assistance with American national interests. The U.S. government emphasized that foreign aid should directly reflect and serve U.S. strategic objectives. As a result of the order, Afghanistan lost approximately \$1.8 billion in assistance, leading to the termination of nearly all U.S.-funded humanitarian and development programs across the country. Only two small education initiatives were permitted to continue. The U.S. State Department further justified the decision by alleging that some of the aid had indirectly “benefited terrorist groups”. The abrupt and sweeping cutoff has raised alarm among international organizations and humanitarian actors, who warn of severe and potentially irreversible consequences for millions of Afghans reliant on foreign support.

Health Sector

- In 2025, 14.3 million, nearly 34% of the population, need health assistance, a crisis already exacerbated by insufficient infrastructure, insufficient funding, and a shortage of healthcare professionals.
- The suspension of funding led to the closure in 2025. The health cluster appeal remains critically underfunded, with only 4% of the required 279 million USD as of March, leaving basic and life-saving health interventions severely constrained.
- Since the suspension, 422 health facilities have closed, impacting 3.08 million people across Afghanistan.
- The number of people requiring health assistance rose from 12.1 million in 2024 to 14.3 million, while functional facilities declined from about 2,300 to fewer than 1,900, indicating an 18% increase in demand alongside a 17% reduction in service sites.
- Acute child malnutrition rose from an estimated 2.9 million to 3.5 million, a 21% rise.
- Reproductive healthcare is also of concern, with pregnancy complications and unsafe abortions responsible for 64% of deaths among 15–19-year-old girls and 70% of deaths among 20–24-year-old women.



Key Figures



422 Clinics Closed



12.6 Million People facing crisis-level food.



9 million Afghans lost access to health and protection service



21 million Afghans faced WASH service disruption.



22.9 million Afghans in Need



1.8 billion Funding cut for Afghanistan

Food Security and Agriculture

- The funding cuts are occurring at a time when 14.8 million Afghans (35% of the population) are facing food insecurity. The number of people in IPC Phase 3 and above rose from 9.8 million in 2024 to 12.6 million by March-April 2025, a 28.6% increase. The number of those in IPC Phase 4 emergency conditions are projected to be 3.1 million in the first quarter of 2025.
- At the same time, United Nations Food Program aid recipients fell dramatically from 9 million to 1 million, an 89% reduction that highlights a severe contraction in assistance capacity, even as needs escalate.
- Agricultural support programs lost 32 million USD in critical funding, disrupting spring planting for more than 500,000 farming households and undermining local food production capacity. This disruption threatens both immediate food availability and longer-term livelihoods in rural communities.

Education

- Education programs were not previously classified as life-saving, which led to the suspension of all initiatives related to school infrastructure, community-based schooling, accelerated learning, and similar services.
- Community-Based Education (CBE) has historically served as a lifeline for out-of-school Afghan children, especially in rural areas. The funding cuts also affected these programs. For instance, in February 2025, one of the international organizations suspended its CBE programs, leaving approximately 300,000 children without access to schooling.
- The Education Cluster appealed for 93.3 million USD in February 2025 to support 831,000 children in emergency education programs. At the same time, 105,550 newly returned children from Iran and Pakistan required immediate access to education. However, funding constraints have prevented these urgent needs from being adequately addressed.
- The crisis in girls' education continues to escalate. Since 2021, the Taliban has enforced a ban on education for girls beyond Grade 6, and this restriction remained in place throughout the first half of 2025. In addition, 208 scholarships for Afghan women studying STEM fields through the American University of Afghanistan (AUAF), either online or in Qatar, were terminated as part of the U.S. aid cuts.
- The Secretary-General of an international organization referred to the U.S. aid cuts as “the biggest threat to the education of women and girls in decades.”

Nutrition

- In 2025, specific cuts include 100 million USD in funding for maternal health and gender-based violence services provided through a UN agency, and 560 million USD for the United Nations Food Program, which had been supporting two million people and providing nutritional assistance to 650,000 malnourished children and women.
- 3.5 million children under five-years-old in Afghanistan are acutely malnourished, including 1.4 million suffering from severe wasting—an extreme, life-threatening form of undernutrition. Meanwhile, undernutrition also affects 4 out of 10 Afghan women, compounding risks during pregnancy and childbirth and worsening infant health outcomes.
- Among children, 2.1 million are living in “child food poverty,” consuming diets limited to four or fewer food groups, often consisting of nothing more than bread and tea.

Protection

- A UN agency reported that over nine million individuals lost access to protection and health services after the freeze. Nearly 600 mobile health teams, family health houses, and psychosocial counselling centers, many of which also addressed gender-based violence and protection concerns, were forced to suspend operations due to funding shortages. The UN agency warned that without U.S. funding, there could be 1,200 additional maternal deaths between 2025–2028 and 109,000 more unintended pregnancies. These centers have been instrumental in delivering essential protection support to communities, especially women and girls facing threats of violence or abuse.
- An international NGO has reported that recent aid cuts have forced them to suspend critical programs that provide health care, vaccination, malnutrition treatment, clean water, and protection services. As a result, over 700,000 will lose access to essential humanitarian services. This included the shutdown of safe spaces, family and community support networks, and outreach services. A key component of this programming was the integration of psychosocial support within community education, which benefited approximately 300,000 children. With the halt of these programs in February 2025, many children were left without a protective learning environment or access to emotional and psychological support.

WASH

- The U.S. Funding cuts come a time when around 21 million Afghans, almost half the population, needed WASH support.
- UNICEF reported that 27% of rural households lacked improved water sources, and 36% lacked improved sanitation, making them highly vulnerable to waterborne diseases and malnutrition.
- OCHA detailed that 44 water infrastructure projects, 30 latrine facilities, 29 water networks, and 22 well constructions were halted in April 2025 due to funding disruption.
- Additionally, about 30,800 individuals missed out on hygiene-promotion initiatives, and about 4,400 households remained unreached with WASH non-food items, due to project terminations.

Voices and Views

- Afghan communities, from remote villages to crowded cities, have voiced that the U.S. aid freeze has “brought basic health services to a standstill.” Dr. Zobair Saljuqi, a physician at Herat Regional Hospital, warned, “If these health facilities do not receive the needed financial aid, they cannot continue functioning even for a month.” Farmer Muhammad Ali commented, “We could not take the sick anywhere for treatment because we could not afford to pay the car fare.” In Kabul, residents report that soaring food prices—“a sack of flour jumped from AFN 1,400 to 1,800”—and halted support payments have pushed families to the brink, while women teachers and students voice despair: “I felt kind of depressed... I didn’t want to do anything,” and aid workers plead, “Please... do not stop these activities,” underscoring the urgent need for the aid’s swift restoration.
- The IEA Deputy Economy Minister, Abdul Latif Nazari, said that “50 national and international aid organizations” suspended activities. Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi noted the reduction in aid “has an impact” but hoped the consequences “would not be very negative or permanent.” Taliban spokesperson Abdul Rahman Habib added that 31 organizations had been affected and encouraged the international community to resume life-saving aid and support long-term job creation.
- The international actors voiced the funding cut affects dozens of millions of people. UN Secretary-General António Guterres urged Washington to reverse the decision to avoid depriving over nine million Afghans of vital health and protection services. Members of the European Parliament condemned the move as “catastrophic” for women and children in Afghanistan and called for immediate EU solidarity. Moreover, an international NGO indicated that the 90-day suspension would have disastrous, immediate consequences for Afghan health workers, teachers, and other vulnerable populations.

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