

Afghanistan Flooding

Situation Report No. 2 (13 May 2024)

(Information in the report is based on available data as of reporting period)



Floods devastate health facilities, posing challenges for accessing healthcare in affected areas, taken on 13 May 2024. © WHO

Key messages:

- Today, May 13, additional WHO supplies arrived in Burka district. These supplies are crucial for supporting the provision of first-line health care services in one of the most affected areas of Burka.
- The de facto Minister of Public Health visited Baghlan province on Sunday, 12 May to assess the response operation in the affected province. He commended the outstanding achievements and support provided by the WHO team.
- On Sunday, 12 May, WHO delivered additional medical kits, medicines, and supplies, including 3 cholera kits to three district hospitals in Baghlan.
- WHO distributed information, education, and communication (IEC) materials in affected areas to raise awareness among the population about potential outbreaks of waterborne diseases and how to mitigate them.
- WHO teams deployed to flood-affected areas visited Burka Comprehensive Health Centre on Sunday to assess its current capacity in trauma and hospital care.
- As of today, Health Cluster partners deployed a total of 30 Mobile Health and Nutrition Teams (MHNTs) to flood-affected areas in Baghlan province. Partners who supported the deployment of MHTs include JACK, ORCD, MMRCA, AKHS, AKF, provincial public health directorates and private sector.

Situation update:

The recent heavy rainfall in Baghlan province, northern Afghanistan, has resulted in a devastating emergency, destroying nearly 9000 houses across several villages. This has tragically caused over 180 deaths, 242 injuries, and left dozens unaccounted for. Thousands of individuals have been displaced, urgently requiring food, shelter, and immediate health services.

The floods on Friday swept through villages, destroying homes, livestock, and crucial farmlands essential to the rural population. The economic impact is significant, with many losing their livelihoods, including their livestock. Homes in affected communities are filled with mud, suffering significant structural damage, and belongings washed away.

These flooding calamities have deeply affected rural areas, compounding the impact of previous floods last month, which resulted in approximately a hundred fatalities.

Aid agencies are encountering challenges in reaching affected populations due to severe damage to transportation infrastructure, including roads and bridges. Consequently, communities are isolated, unable to move between villages due to rivers still flowing.

The situation remains critical, with an urgent need for humanitarian assistance to provide essential services and support to the affected populations.

Epidemiological Update:

Recent data indicates an increase in cases of waterborne illnesses, notably diarrhea and skin infections, in regions affected by the floods. Health authorities are actively monitoring the situation and implementing preventive measures to curb the spread of these diseases. Furthermore, initiatives are in place to provide access to safe water, distribute hygiene kits, and offer medical treatment to alleviate the public health impact.

WHO response:

- Today, 13 May, additional WHO supplies have arrived in Burka district. These supplies are crucial for supporting the provision of first-line health care services in one of the most affected areas of Burka. These supplies will bolster the capacity of health facilities and health workers to respond effectively to the health needs of the population in this area.
- Based on the last needs assessment findings on 12 May, WHO delivered an additional shipment of medical supplies to Baghlan-e-Jadid District Hospital, Burka Comprehensive Health Centre (CHC), and Nahreen District Hospital.
- On Sunday, 12 May, WHO delivered additional medical kits, medicines, and supplies, including 3 cholera kits funded by BHA, to three district hospitals in Baghlan
- WHO emergency response team, deployed to Baghlan, held a meeting with the Minister of Public Health in the De facto Government, along with Health Cluster partners, the national Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) delegation, stakeholders, national NGOs, and hospital management teams. The meeting focused on response operations and post-crisis arrangements.
- WHO Emergency teams deployed to flood-affected areas visited Burka CHC on Sunday to assess its current capacity in trauma and hospital care, identify gaps and needs, ensure the provision of emergency health care services, establish a mass casualty management plan, and identify areas for improvement.
- WHO emergency team deployed to Baghlan-e-Jadid conducted an assessment of the trauma unit at the Directorate of Health to determine the post-flood traumatic health care needs.
- The Surveillance Support Teams (SSTs) reached target communities in the most severely affected areas to provide essential surveillance support.
- Systematic data collection is underway for the post-disaster phase in affected areas such as Burka, Baghlan-e-Jaded, Guzargah-e-Noor, Nahreen districts, and Pul-e-Khumri city, aiming to identify any newly emerging needs, gaps, and challenges.



Health partners deploy Mobile Health Teams with WHO medicine kits to aid flood-affected Baghlan province, May 13, 2024. © WHO

Health Cluster response:

- Health Cluster partners, including AADA, AFGA, AKF, AKHS, ARCS, Emergency NGO, ICRC, IMC, IOM, JACK, MMRCA, MoPH, MSF, ORCD, Save the Children, UNFPA, UNICEF, and WHO, supported flood-affected communities in Baghlan, Takhar, and Badakhshan provinces. They deployed 30 Mobile Health and Nutrition Teams (MHNTs), provided medical kits and supplies, deployed ambulances for first aid and referrals, and assessed affected areas.
- In Baghlan, partners deployed 27 MHNTs in Burka, Baghlan Markazi, and Guzargai Noor districts to deliver emergency healthcare. In Badakhshan, IOM deployed one MHNT in Teshken district, with UNFPA having MHTs on standby. In Takhar, UNFPA and AADA deployed two MHNTs in Farkhar and Eshkamish districts to support emergency health needs.
- HE partners also coordinated:
 - » The Regional Health Cluster coordination team for the northeast is ensuring an effective response for flood-affected populations. The coordinator has been in Baghlan since May 12th, overseeing the health response, conducting joint needs assessments, and addressing gaps.
 - » To facilitate this, the coordinator has participated in various coordination meetings, including the ICCG/OCT and EPR. An ad-hoc meeting on May 12th, 2024, with partners and MoPH delegates, streamlined response efforts.
 - » The team also collaborated with the WASH Cluster and UNICEF for essential WASH services, including hygiene kit distribution. Another ad-hoc meeting in Baghlan ensured health needs were met.



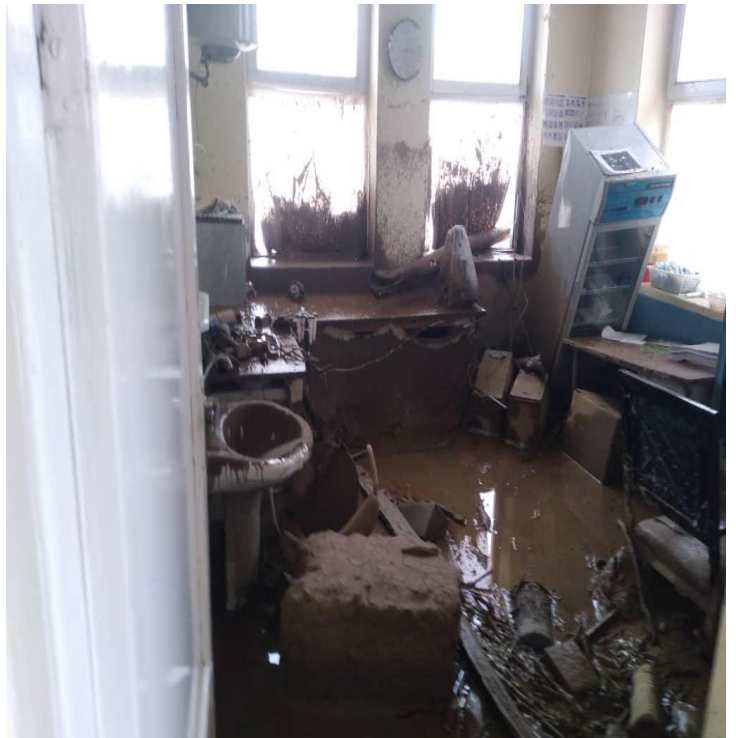
Health Cluster Coordination meeting. © RHCC for the northeastern region



Provision of primary health care services to the flood affected people in Baghlan province. © ORCD/UNFPA

Needs:

- There is a need for additional medical support for the MHNTs in terms of supplies and capacity to deliver quality services. WHO field team is collecting information to determine the required support.
- It is recommended to include at least one female health worker or female psychosocial counsellor in each team, as reports indicate that the affected population is predominantly women and children.
- Baghlan Provincial Public Health Directorate (PPHD) has requested tents specifically for MHNTs to enhance their operational capacity.
- Burka and Nahreen districts face significant accessibility challenges due to the destruction of the main road, requiring air force involvement for transportation. Alternative transportation is crucial to reach these areas and deliver essential supplies.
- To ensure the continuity of healthcare services in the areas where health facilities are damaged, an alternate approach involving the deployment of Mobile Health and Nutrition Teams (MHNTs) has been considered.
- Conducting a multisectoral needs assessment is essential for a comprehensive and efficient response to the crisis, ensuring a more effective and streamlined approach.
- Rehabilitation or reconstruction of damaged health facilities is necessary to ensure the continuity of healthcare services. Prioritizing these efforts will enable healthcare services to resume effectively, providing access to care for affected individuals.



Health facility submerged in floodwater. © WHO

- The current ambulances in affected areas cannot reach remote and inaccessible areas within districts. Enhancing the referral system, including upgrading ambulance capabilities, is crucial to saving the lives of vulnerable individuals by ensuring timely access to healthcare services.

Serving and nonfunctional health facilities:

Health facilities delivering healthcare services for the injuries due to flood:

- Baghlan Jadid DH
- Pul e Khumri PH
- Burka CHC
- Guzar Gahi Noor CHC
- Nahreen DH

Damaged or Partially Damaged Health Facilities:

- Mandara Health Facility
- Lata Band Basic Health Center
- Malekar Health Sub-Center
- Pachigam Comprehensive Health Center (bridge destroyed, operational but accessibility issues)

Baghlan province:

- Gharo CHC partially destroyed in Gozar gahi Noor district.
- Fोलol BHC destroyed in Burka district.
- Shikh Jalal BHC was partially destroyed in Baghlan Jadid district.

Takhar province:

- Mandara BHC completely destroyed, which is located in the Chal district.
- Shor Ab SHC and Lata band BHC partially destroyed, which are located in Taleqan city.
- 3- Mashtan BHC is partially destroyed, which is located in Farkhar district.

As of today, the floods damaged a total of 7 health facilities (4 Basic Health Centers [BHCs], 1 Comprehensive Health Center [CHC], and 2 Health Sub Centers [HSCs]) across Baghlan (3 HFs), Takhar (3 HFs), and Badakshan (1 HF) provinces.

Two health facilities, located in Burka district of Baghlan and Chal district of Takhar, have been fully destroyed.

The assessment of health facilities is ongoing, and more reports on fully or partially damaged facilities are expected.

Challenges:

- **Accessibility:** The towns of Burka and Nahreen pose significant accessibility challenges following the destruction of the main road. This has necessitated the involvement of the air force for transportation, highlighting the critical need for alternative transportation methods to reach these areas and deliver essential supplies and aid.
- **Collaboration Among Partners:** Enhancing collaboration among partners is crucial to ensure a more coordinated and effective response to the crisis. This includes improving information sharing, coordinating activities, and leveraging each partner's strengths to maximize the impact of the response efforts. Strengthening collaboration can lead to better resource allocation, reduced duplication of efforts, and ultimately, more efficient assistance to those affected by the flood crisis.
- WHO and Health Cluster partners are challenged with reaching the affected populations due to severe damages to transportation infrastructure, including roads and bridges. Consequently, communities are isolated and unable to move between villages due to flowing rivers.



Damaged infrastructure in flood-affected communities. © WHO

Funding gap:

WHO's funding requirements for the flood response operations are estimated at 7.3 million USD.

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