

In 2025, the U.S. government terminated its assistance to the people of Afghanistan, including more than [\\$765 million in humanitarian aid](#). With these cuts, at least, [445 health facilities](#) were forced to close in 2025, impacting nearly 4 million people, with another 150 facilities shuttered [since January 2026](#). More than 80,000 pregnant and breastfeeding women and children have also lost access to critical nutrition services. Five years after the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan, total humanitarian funding for Afghanistan has fallen to the [lowest level since 2019](#) while the number of people in need has [more than tripled](#).

Despite these challenges, international and local organizations continue to deliver lifesaving assistance to the people of Afghanistan. Last year, the humanitarian sector reached more than [17.1 million people](#) with at least one form of assistance when it was needed most.

For example, in 2026, U.S.-based international nonprofits have:

- Provided improved access to safe water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services for [282,613 people](#).
- Delivered [food, winter kits, and integrated protection services](#) to 1,415 households, including those affected by a 6.0-magnitude earthquake which struck eastern Afghanistan in late August 2025.
- Provided health services for more than [6,000 people affected by renewed conflict](#) on the Afghanistan–Pakistan border.

Current Situation

Today, the humanitarian situation is dire: 45% of the population is in need of assistance after years of conflict and food security crises, compounded by large-scale returns of an estimated [2.9 million Afghans from Pakistan and Iran](#). Local communities' own capacity to cope has been stretched to a breaking point, and nearly [22 million](#) people require assistance to survive and prepare for the harsh winter ahead. At the same time, a lack of funding has led to significant cuts to emergency food and nutrition programs, and the ongoing exclusion of Afghanistan from U.S. funding makes it one of this year's [most underfunded emergencies](#) with less than 30% of needs met.

According to the UN, Afghanistan is currently experiencing the [sharpest surge in malnutrition ever recorded](#), with 4.9 million mothers and children estimated to be suffering from acute malnutrition.

In addition to funding shortfalls, humanitarian actors also face an extremely difficult operating environment in Afghanistan. Increased enforcement of Taliban directives restricting women and girls' participation in education, employment, and public life has increased protection risks and hindered response efforts. The security situation on the border with Pakistan also remains in flux with a significant escalation in fighting in February 2026 that [displaced more than 100,000 people and interrupted access to an estimated 17,000 families](#) targeted for critical food assistance.

Recommendations for the U.S. Government

- The U.S. government should immediately resume humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan to address life-threatening food, nutrition, WASH, and protection needs.
- The U.S. government should commit to oppose any further policy or legislative changes that would limit nonprofits' ability to operate in Afghanistan. Even without U.S. funding, U.S.-based nonprofits and their international and local partners have continued to provide lifesaving assistance with rigorous safeguards to prevent fraud or diversion, helping to prevent the worst humanitarian outcomes and mitigating further political instability, violence, and forced displacement in the region.