



OCHA Press conference 30 March 2022 - Humanitarian Donors Urged to Step up Again for Afghanistan

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Story

Humanitarian Donors Urged to Step up Again for Afghanistan

Ahead of a "High-level Pledging Event on Supporting the Humanitarian Response in Afghanistan 2022" (31 March), Martin Griffiths, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, alongside with donor countries urged today at a press conference that Afghanistan is trapped in a humanitarian crisis with 23 million people facing acute food insecurity. Action is required now to stop the situation from getting worse.

The UN-coordinated relief operation – the largest but not the only one in Afghanistan – asks for \$4.4 billion, three times the amount requested in 2021. Humanitarian agencies have scaled up assistance and are ready to expand, stressing the central role of women in delivering aid.

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), last year, international donors showed remarkable generosity for Afghans in need. With US\$1.8 billion disbursed, aid groups were able to reach 20 million people with life-saving food, clean water, healthcare, protection, shelter, education and winter supplies as Afghanistan went through profound turmoil and international isolation.

At tomorrow's "High-level Pledging Event on Supporting the Humanitarian Response in Afghanistan 2022", hosted by the United Nations, the United Kingdom, Germany and Qatar, pledges of support are urgently

needed to ramp up deliveries. Fund-raising has so far secured only 13 per cent of the requirements of the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan.

Years of conflict have caused prolonged suffering in Afghanistan. Now the country faces economic collapse and its worst drought in 30 years, creating unprecedented levels of need. Aid organizations warn that while emergency response is necessary, it is not enough to meet the totality of needs in Afghanistan. The economy, basic institutions of the state and essential service delivery must be preserved to stave off worsening food insecurity and a breakdown in the social fabric.

More than 24 million people – or 60 per cent of the population - need humanitarian assistance to survive. Needs are 30 per cent higher than last year and acute hunger is a daily reality for half the population. Basic health, education and other services are severely strained, livelihoods have been crushed and households are spending 80 per cent of their meagre income on food.

UN humanitarian chief Martin Griffiths said: “We have the power to stop the downward humanitarian spiral in Afghanistan and it is our moral duty to use this power by pledging generous, flexible and unconditional funding today. That is how humanitarians can scale up operations now and save lives.”

In the first eight weeks of 2022, humanitarian partners reached 12.7 million people with life-saving assistance, prioritizing women, girls and minority groups. Deliveries have included nutritious food for hundreds of thousands of malnourished children, pregnant and breastfeeding women; nutritious meals for school-children; getting seeds and tools into the hands of farmers; training unemployed workers in basic skills; supporting protection for vulnerable groups; ensuring clean water supply in communities; and supporting trauma treatment and reproductive healthcare.

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