

# AFGHANISTAN EARTHQUAKE EMERGENCY RESPONSE

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*Progress Report: 9 November 2023*

### OVERVIEW OF DISASTER

Communities in Herat Province, Afghanistan were struck by a series of shallow, strong earthquakes (between 5.5 and 6.3 in magnitude) and aftershocks which have rocked the same area in Western Afghanistan starting on 7 October 2023, and continue through 15 October, when another 6.3 magnitude earthquake shook Herat province. In addition, on 12 October, a dust storm in Zindajan, Kohsan and Kushk/Rabate-Sangai districts in Herat destroyed several hundred tents. The epicentre of the first earthquake (6.3 in magnitude) was less than 25 miles (40.2km) from Herat city, where our Afghan office is located.

Following days of response to the initial magnitude 6.3 earthquake and aftershocks, as well as the magnitude 6.4 earthquake on 11 October, this latest earthquake has caused more damage, especially to unstable buildings within the city limits, and increased the number of casualties.

According to OCHA, around 1.6 million people have been directly affected by the earthquakes in western Afghanistan, leaving at least 114,000 in urgent need of humanitarian assistance. Many have lost their lives, and many more have been injured and displaced from their homes. Some villages have been wholly destroyed and many others badly damaged. The humanitarian community is asking for approximately \$93.6 million to address this. Additionally, the needs are severe, and risk getting overlooked in light of other recent tragic news. The earthquakes struck vulnerable communities with little resilience to cope with multiple successive shocks. Many of the communities nearest the epicenters of the earthquakes are already dealing with the consequences of decades of conflict, under-development, economic strife and unemployment. The earthquakes also struck right before Afghanistan's winter and the start of their lean season, when households' food resources are most exhausted and constrained.



Map showing where World Vision is responding, with plans of expansion

## **WORLD VISION'S RELIEF RESPONSE: IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS**

Despite being directly affected, World Vision stepped in to support affected people within hours of the earthquakes by working in the earthquake-affected areas of Western Afghanistan. Immediately after the Earthquake, the World Vision team started distributing NFI kits to the affected households in Zinda Jan the most affected district of Herat.

The first phase of the response, "Rapid Response Phase", was conducted during the first 14 days of the Response from 8 October 2023 to 21 October 2023. During this Rapid Response Phase, World Vision carried out rapid assessments to ensure that the immediate needs are assessed and reflected in our response interventions. Life-saving support was provided to those directly impacted by the earthquake.

### **Key activities implemented**

- 24,433 people received life-saving health and nutrition services, including mental health and psychosocial support
  - 2,201 individuals psychosocial counselling and mental health treatment;
  - 9,012 affected individuals received out-patient department services;
  - 592 affected pregnant women received maternal services;
  - 558 Malnourished children admitted and are receiving treatment;
  - 6 infant deliveries supported, etc.
- 5 child-friendly spaces established
- 5 child protection help desk established
- Started water, sanitation, and hygiene activities
  - 12,950 individuals received hygiene kits to care for their basic needs
  - 6 movable latrines fabricated
  - 10 water networks have been prioritised for rehabilitation/building to provide clean and safe water for affected communities
- 2,044 individuals received Non-Food Items kits which included blankets, clothing, utensils etc.
- 2,681 individuals received multi-purpose-cash assistance to support them and their families food security, health, shelter/rent and basic utilities etc.



PHOTOS



## **MOVING FORWARD**

Thank you for your generosity and love for children and their families in their time of greatest need. On behalf of the children and families affected by the Afghanistan earthquakes who may never have a chance to thank you personally, we would like to extend our appreciation for your gift of hope and help in this emergency.

As humanitarian needs are immense and the impact on children, including safeguarding risks, is enormous, World Vision will continue to respond to the needs in Western Afghanistan to save lives and protect children. Key needs that persist include:

- An already dire situation further compounded by the earthquakes: Prior to the earthquakes, 29.2 million Afghans were already in great humanitarian need, with 15 million in urgent need of food aid after facing decades of conflict as well as worsening climate impacts such as drought. These earthquakes exacerbated the protracted human crisis in Afghanistan, causing further human suffering and strife, especially in sectors such as health, protection, shelter, food security, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH). World Vision is focused on providing health & nutrition services (including mental health), shelter, water-sanitation facilities, and protection (e.g. psychosocial support) as these remain priority needs. Other key interventions that World Vision will continue carrying out also include multi-purpose cash distribution as this remains one of the most effective modalities for delivering aid since the underlying vulnerabilities of the population mean that households have variable and urgent needs.
- Community Winter-Preparedness: As the earthquakes struck right before Afghanistan's winter season, winterisation interventions will be critical and a key priority in order to ensure that vulnerable children and families will be prepared for the winter and kept safe and warm during the upcoming months.

Moving forward, we will:

- **Phase 2 – Intermediate (Oct 2023 to early Dec 2023)** – Continue to deliver basic services (Health & Nutrition, child protection, mental health and psychosocial support, and winterisation interventions etc.), focusing on a speedy recovery and winter preparedness for the affected communities in coordination with the other actors.
- **Phase 3 – Recovery (Dec 2023 to Apr 2024)** – *Transition to* longer-term rehabilitation and livelihoods regeneration and gradually phasing out response interventions to be integrated into the longer-term ongoing programming.

Thank you for saving lives. To make a difference to children affected by other disasters, please support The Survival Fund. Visit <https://www.worldvision.org.sg/the-survival-fund> to learn more.