

# **Food Security and Nutrition for Afghanistan: The London Compact**

12-13 November 2025

The London Compact brings together key stakeholders to collectively address the severe food security and nutrition crisis that Afghanistan continues to face. In 2025, 17.4 million people face acute food insecurity and there is still no clear route out of two decades of hunger. Malnutrition is rising sharply, especially among pregnant and breastfeeding women and young children – 4.9 million of whom are expected to require treatment or supplementation for wasting in 2026.

The complex protracted crisis is exacerbated by recurrent shocks including conflict, Afghan returns from neighbouring countries, repeated earthquakes, droughts, floods and other climate pressures which are further weakening harvests and livelihood opportunities, straining coping strategies, and pushing more families into hunger and destitution. Factors including the unaffordability of nutritious foods, sub-optimal women and child diets and care practices – often influenced by gender norms – combined with high morbidity, low immunization coverage, poor water, sanitation and hygiene conditions and limited access to health and nutrition services, all compound the food security and nutrition situation, particularly for women, girls and boys.

Afghanistan faces a protection crisis, and early marriage and pregnancies as well as gender-based violence affect not only the wellbeing of young mothers but also lead to poor birth and nutrition outcomes for mothers and infants, perpetuating a vicious intergenerational cycle. Severe restrictions on women and girls are limiting their access to livelihoods, markets and essential services including healthcare and education – with direct adverse impacts on maternal and child health, nutrition, food security and wellbeing. The operational environment makes it extremely challenging for partners to address drivers of need and to ensure the safe and principled delivery of assistance.

The UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office convened a series of dialogues among partners and donors between June and October 2025, culminating in a conference in November 2025 to identify the most impactful food security and nutrition assistance priorities for Afghanistan. This comes at a critical time for the response in Afghanistan and globally, as funding levels are declining, the response architecture is evolving, and needs remain high.

This document captures key lessons from the dialogue series. It outlines a bold new set of strategic recommendations for Donors, International Financial Institutions, UN agencies and NGOs to strengthen food security and nutrition interventions in Afghanistan. This is a collective effort, and supporting agencies will not individually deliver all components. These commitments for Afghanistan are non-binding, but send a strong signal of support for strengthening food security and nutrition, building on several global initiatives, including the recent N4G Global Compact for Nutrition Integration, and the Joint UN Initiative for the Prevention of Wasting.

## The Principles

Recognising the persistent food security and nutrition crisis in Afghanistan outlined above, and the resulting alarming trajectory of deteriorating food security and nutrition outcomes, especially for Afghan women, girls and boys, we commit to these overarching principles:

- **We will protect and prioritise food security and nutrition** in our funding and coordination decisions, ensuring these areas remain a central strategic focus in Afghanistan. We note the importance of predictable, multi-year financing and will collectively invest across humanitarian and basic human needs responses to tackle both the causes and impacts of severe food insecurity and malnutrition.
- **We will use an integrated, multi-sectoral, evidence-based approach** to deliver impact. Coordination of the integrated response will draw on rigorous data and analysis and cover nutrition, food, health, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), climate adaptation, agriculture, and livelihoods – prioritising cash where appropriate.
- **We will listen to, and deliver a principled response for, the most vulnerable**, particularly populations in IPC3+ locations including children under two years, adolescent girls, and pregnant and breastfeeding women. Recognising the protection crisis in Afghanistan, we will continue to advocate for improved outcomes and the indispensable participation of women, adolescent girls and young girls in all aspects of food security and nutrition interventions in Afghanistan.
- **We will support Afghan and local leadership on food security and nutrition** by stimulating local production, natural resource management and markets and helping local stakeholders, including local NGOs and communities to take the lead at all stages of the project cycle – making strategy planning more inclusive, offering training and flexible funding, and making sure national strategies connect with local efforts. We will ensure that community voices – especially those of women and children – shape programming.

## The Commitments

### 1. Data and Evidence for improving food security and nutrition outcomes

Acknowledging the reduced resources available for food security and nutrition responses and building resilience, and the fact that the latest nationwide datasets are outdated, we will prioritize and streamline integrated and strengthened data collection and analysis efforts – including the use of AI – to maintain an accurate overview of needs, facilitate principled targeting of assistance, and improve early warning for famine prevention, timely response and resilience-building. Notably, we will:

- Jointly identify the minimum food security and nutrition data and analysis requirements to inform principled and effective decision-making – streamlining any duplication and filling critical gaps – and collectively invest in the delivery of these. This includes strengthening the Community-Based National Nutrition Surveillance System and considering feasibility of a national nutrition survey;
- Effectively coordinate food security and nutrition data collection and analysis, notably through developing one joint strategic plan across humanitarian and basic human needs architectures. Key stakeholders include the Nutrition, Food Security and Agriculture, Health and WASH clusters, the IPC technical working group, the Health and the Resilient Agriculture Natural Resources and Livelihoods Strategic Thematic Working Groups, the AAWG and the UN Data Working Group; and
- Continue to strengthen and support a shared learning agenda – prioritising streamlined evidence generation that effectively captures the underlying drivers and outcomes of all our food security and nutrition interventions and captures the perspectives of the most vulnerable, including pregnant and breastfeeding women, adolescent girls, and boys and girls under five.

### 2. Emerging best practice – integrated and nexus approaches for improving food security and nutrition outcomes

Acknowledging the complexity and gravity of the food insecurity and nutrition situation, whilst continuing to prioritise immediate life-saving interventions, we commit to strengthening preventative and resilience-building approaches. Notably, we will:

- Protect life-saving interventions for the most vulnerable groups, including targeted emergency food assistance for populations facing IPC3+ conditions, and treatment for acute malnutrition.
- Develop an integrated multi-sectoral approach and framework to address food insecurity and malnutrition across food security, agriculture, health, WASH, education and social protection. The framework will be Afghan-led and developed in coordination with relevant clusters, working groups, and local stakeholders, and endorsed and supported by the HCT, UNCT, NGOs and donors.

- Strengthen investment in integrated approaches to prevent malnutrition and child food poverty. This includes developing local food systems and markets sensitive to young children's, adolescent girls' and pregnant and breastfeeding women's diets; targeted WASH interventions to support optimum complementary feeding and prevent disease; enhancing nutrition education and behaviour change communication; and expanding cash and shock-responsive social assistance packages for food security and nutrition outcomes.
- Enhance coordination across humanitarian and basic human needs responses. The clusters and strategic technical working groups will lead this through boundary-setting and geographic prioritisation, linking short-term emergency response with long-term food and health systems strengthening. This will include further discussion on the optimum balance of investment across humanitarian and basic human needs responses.

### **3. Climate, agriculture, livelihoods and resilience for improving food security and nutrition outcomes**

Afghanistan is facing escalating climate stress and environmental degradation – particularly drought, floods, water scarcity, soil exhaustion and land degradation – which are all key drivers impacting food security, food diversity, agricultural productivity, nutrition, health, and livelihoods. Recognising this trend, we commit to building back better and strengthening targeted responses to mitigate these risks and promote climate-resilient and nutrition-sensitive food systems and livelihoods. Notably, we will:

- Focus on restoring and transforming ecosystems, promoting climate-sensitive, nutrition-sensitive agricultural systems that contribute to food security, dietary diversity – particularly for women and children – and resilience to climatic and environmental stressors and shocks;
- Strengthen investment in proven approaches, including ecosystem-based water management, agricultural and food value chain development, nature-based disaster risk reduction, soil health regeneration, rangeland and livestock management, and climate-smart and nature-based agriculture;
- Promote and invest in nutrition-sensitive food value chains to improve the availability and affordability of nutritious foods, working in close partnership with agri-businesses and small- to medium-sized enterprises. This includes engaging with the private sector to pilot local production of complementary foods, supplementary foods, and ready-to-use therapeutic food;
- Take a multi-sectoral approach to water management that brings together water for agriculture and drinking water to prevent the vicious cycle of water-borne diseases and malnutrition; and

- Promote a “One Health” approach to gain a better understanding of the climate impact on health and nutrition outcomes and to ensure soil health, water quality, animal health, plant health, and the connexions between them, are better understood and integrated into interventions.

**Supported by:**

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