

AFGHANISTAN

Risk update: December 2022






Risk update
30 December 2022

This is an update of the [Afghanistan risk overview](#) published in September 2022.

Methodology: ACAPS uses a risk-monitoring framework daily. Every three months, ACAPS analysts and technical experts review the development of indicators and update the risk outlook.

Change in probability of risk materialising:

 decreasing  risk stays the same  increasing

Risk 1

A drastic decrease in purchasing power

Imports and exports remain stable, with no increases in domestic prices since September. While sanctions remain, efforts to mitigate the effect on the general population continue. Prices have continued to rise, and the seasonal decline in casual labour has started to reduce purchasing power for many, causing more people to adopt negative coping mechanisms. While a drastic decrease in purchasing power has not yet occurred, the risk remains high and is expected to materialise (at least temporarily) over winter in areas subject to high snowfall, where road closures will cause a further increase in domestic prices.

Risk 2

Ineffective emergency response to sudden-onset disasters

The Taliban national response capacity is not expected to decrease further, but recent attacks on foreign businesses in Kabul have caused international humanitarian organisations to increase security measures, which reduces emergency response capacity. An attack on a humanitarian organisation would reduce response capacity further. The recent ban on women working in NGOs has led to several international organisations suspending operations. If this ban remains in place, effective emergency response will be extremely challenging.

Risk 3

Failure of government bureaucracy

The replacement of key technical staff in the government seems to have slowed, with most recent Taliban appointees shadowing rather than replacing existing staff. The government and its administration have proven more resilient than anticipated. Existing constraints remain, and while the Taliban understand the need for technical capacities in many areas, policymaking is increasingly driven by their interpretation of Shari'a law. The probability of a complete collapse has reduced as the Taliban are prioritising many areas of governance, including security, paying government officials, and revenue collection. The priority remains on security, justice, and policing public morality – as the hardliners strengthen their position within the movement – rather than service delivery.

Risk 4 (materialised)

Increased Taliban interference in humanitarian programming or attempts to divert aid

This risk has materialised with the Taliban's decision on 24 December to ban women from working for NGOs, which severely restricts the delivery of humanitarian assistance across the country. Prior to this, Taliban authorities had been introducing regulations to increase oversight of humanitarian organisations' operations and ensure financial compliance, increasing the bureaucratic burden on NGOs. Until the latest announcement, coordination with Taliban authorities had been viewed positively, although with significant regional variations. Even if a compromise on the employment of women at NGOs is reached, enabling organisations to resume operations, the disruption to aid provision will have been significant.

Risk 5

International or regional conflict causes displacement and reduced access to humanitarian services

While internal conflict has continued and border conflict increased, the probability of a regional or international conflict has reduced slightly as the Taliban have re-engaged with the international community in Doha. Tensions with the international community remain and are likely to intensify as the Taliban enforce increasingly restrictive measures, such as the recent decision to ban women from attending university. Domestic protests and harsh Taliban reactions can be expected to increase, further fuelling tensions with the international community, but will likely not result in violent international conflict. That said, increased Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan activities may create tension with Pakistan.

Risk 6

A severe loss of livestock during winter

Lumpy skin disease in cattle, which emerged in May 2022, has spread to around 30 provinces. As at December, 125,000 cattle have been vaccinated against the disease, and FAO plans to vaccinate 3,975,000 more by July. Untreated, this disease can result in low milk yield, reducing farmers' income.

