

CRISIS OVERVIEW

On 11 October 2023, a 6.3 magnitude earthquake struck 28km north of Herat city in Herat province, western Afghanistan, days after a 6.3 magnitude earthquake hit 40km west of Herat city on 7 October, at around 11:00 local time (Al Jazeera 11/10/2023; BBC 11/10/2023). Between 7 and 10 October, there were also at least nine aftershocks that hit Herat province, including shocks with a magnitude of 5.5, 6.3, and 5.9 within five hours of the initial earthquake on 7 October (Health Cluster 09/10/2023).

As at 10 October, the 7 October earthquake and aftershocks had affected roughly 12,100 people (OCHA 10/10/2023). Numbers of affected people from the second earthquake were unclear as at 11 October (BBC 11/10/2023). Estimates of casualties from both earthquakes vary across different sources and continue to evolve as rescue teams gain better access to affected communities (Al Jazeera 10/10/2023). As at 11 October, the second earthquake had killed at least one person and injured more than 120 (UN News 10/10/2023; Al Jazeera 11/10/2023; BBC 11/10/2023; PBS 11/10/2023). Some sources report a death toll of around 2,500 from the first earthquake, while others provided a decreased estimate of 1,000 killed as at 11 October, attributing the decreased estimate to double-counting and delayed access to affected communities (Reuters 11/10/2023; FirstPost 11/10/2023; The Guardian 09/10/2023; Al Jazeera 11/10/2023). As at 7 October, the earthquake had displaced an estimated 2,100 people (OCHA 7/10/2023).

The majority of casualties have been reported in Ghoryan, Gulran, Injil, Kohsan, Kushk, and Zindajan districts (Health Cluster 09/10/2023). Zindajan district, where all homes are estimated to have been destroyed, reported the highest number of casualties (1,294 deaths and 1,688 injuries) as at 10 October (OCHA 10/10/2023). Naieb Rafi, Mahal Wardakah, Kushk, Sia Aab, Kajkal and Nawabad villages, all in Zindajan district, experienced the most significant impacts from the first earthquake (WHO 10/10/2023).

At least 20 villages face large-scale destruction from the first earthquake. As at 9 October, humanitarian workers had not reached all areas, as communication barriers and destruction to roads and bridges hampered their access (The Guardian 09/10/2023; BBC 09/10/2023). Urgent humanitarian needs include shelter, NFIs, food, WASH, and protection support (OCHA 10/10/2023).

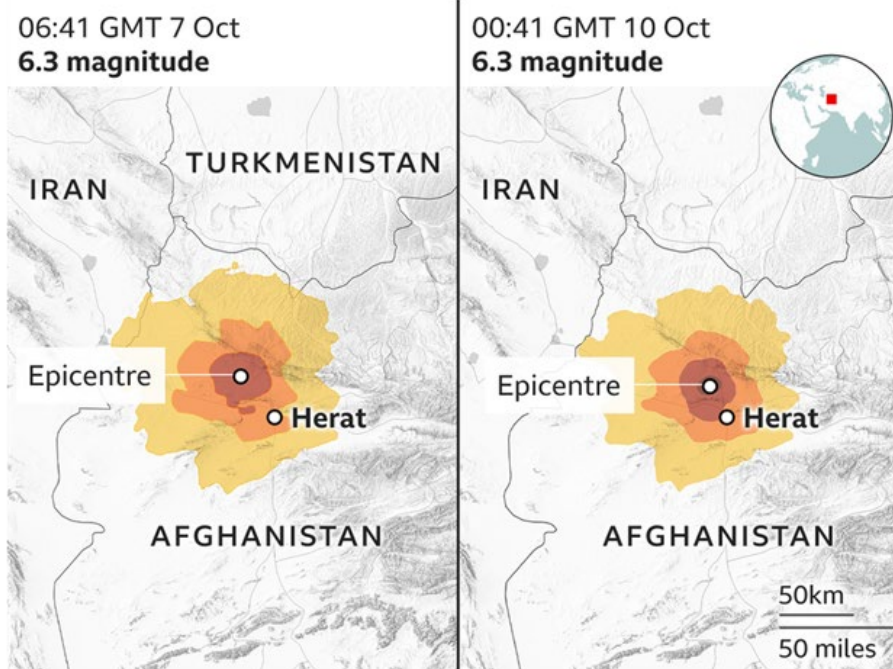
Earthquakes are frequent in Afghanistan and its surrounding regions because of the intricate and active interactions among the Arabian, Eurasian, and Indian plates. The northward movement of the Arabian plate relative to the Eurasian plate primarily influences the seismicity in the western and central regions of Afghanistan. In June 2022, a powerful earthquake struck Paktika, which was in a rugged, mountainous region of eastern Afghanistan, killing at least 1,000 people and injuring about 1,500 (IBC 07/10/2023; The Guardian 08/10/2023).

Map 1. Epicentres of the earthquakes, as at 11 October

Areas in Afghanistan affected by earthquakes

Scale of shaking experienced:

Very strong Strong Moderate



Source: BBC 11/10/2023

Anticipated scope and scale

- Many aftershocks have occurred since the initial earthquake, including a magnitude 5.1 earthquake on Monday, 10 October (ECHO 11/10/2023; OCHA 10/10/2023). Incoming aftershocks risk more damage and casualties and further disrupt response efforts.
- The reported number of casualties is likely to increase in the coming days as search-and-rescue operations continue. Reports indicate that many victims are still trapped under damaged buildings three days after the devastating earthquake, but the rescue efforts have been slow and lack equipment (The Guardian 09/10/2023; Health Cluster 09/10/2023; BBC 10/10/2023).
- There is a high risk of respiratory diseases and waterborne disease outbreaks, as people affected by the earthquake are staying in tents with poor access to hygiene facilities (Health Cluster 09/10/2023). Should displacement continue over the coming weeks, people in temporary shelters will also be facing the imminent cold season (WB accessed 09/10/2023; AP 10/10/2023).

Humanitarian access constraints

- Since assuming power in Afghanistan, the Interim Taliban Authority (ITA) has continued some of the strict regulations on NGO operations adopted by the previous Republic Government, and implemented additional restrictions (ACAPS 31/7/2023). These policies include complex processes for coordinating aid delivery with government organisations and requiring signed memoranda of understanding (MOUs), delaying aid delivery (UNSC 08/03/2023). In August 2023, Herat reported the second-highest number of access incidents for the month across Afghanistan, was among the five provinces that reported interference in humanitarian activities, including in the choice of beneficiaries, hiring, and programming (OCHA 31/8/2023). Since the earthquake, the ITA has issued calls for assistance from both national and international aid organisations, suggesting that it may relax previous bureaucratic and political access barriers (AP 10/10/2023). The ITA has previously preferred to work with Afghan humanitarian organisations, and potentially with Muslim country NGOs (ACAPS 31/7/2023).
- The ITA has also imposed bans on the employment of Afghan women by national NGOs, INGOs, and the UN, causing some national NGOs to partially or fully cease operations. While some NGOs have since obtained exemptions that allow women to work in certain sectors, or negotiated with local authorities to retain female staff, the ban has limited the number of female aid workers (ACAPS 31/7/2023; UN Women 10/10/2023 and 14/8/2023; BBC 24/12/2022; UN 04/04/2023).

- Additional ITA restrictions on women's rights, including rights to education and freedom of movement, have impeded the access of Afghan women and girls to humanitarian assistance (USIP 19/09/2023). Decrees that women may only appear in public according to a specified dress code and with a male guardian may be difficult to observe in earthquake-affected communities, potentially preventing women from freely seeking assistance and evacuating from unsafe areas.
- Since 1999, members of the Taliban have been subject to sanctions, primarily travel bans and asset freezes. Despite a December 2021 humanitarian exception to UN sanctions on entities associated with the ITA, EU and US sanctions continue to impede humanitarian aid delivery (UNSC 17/12/2021; CFR accessed 10/10/2023). The US has also placed restrictions on Afghanistan's Central Bank, preventing basic transactions for the population. This has resulted in a liquidity crisis, impeding transactions by humanitarian organisations (BBC 18/04/2023; CFR accessed 10/10/2023; HRW accessed 09/10/2023).
- The earthquakes have destroyed critical infrastructure, including bridges, and blocked roads, posing access challenges for rescue teams. Communication networks are also down, making it difficult for humanitarian workers to coordinate. As at 10 October, responders could use several kilometres of unpaved road to access affected villages close to the first earthquake epicentre, but are required to return to Herat city for the night due to a lack of accommodation in these villages (WHO 10/10/2023). The second earthquake, on 11 October, triggered a landslide that destroyed the main highway connecting Herat with Torghundi, close to the border with Turkmenistan (Al Jazeera 11/10/2023). The other main roads in Herat province are an asphalted ring road connecting Herat to Farah and Kandahar provinces, and a road connecting to Islam Qala near the border with Iran. All of these are in good condition, but most other roads are in poor condition. Many supply routes in Herat also become inaccessible during winter because of snow, rain, and mud.

CRISIS IMPACT

The significant needs resulting from the earthquake have aggravated the pre-existing humanitarian needs in Herat province. There is limited baseline information on the provincial population, as the last census conducted in Afghanistan was in 1979. This makes it difficult to have a holistic understanding of the pre-earthquake context. The remote villages most affected by the earthquake have previously absorbed conflict- and drought-displaced communities, posing an additional barrier to estimating how many people have been affected (BBC 09/10/2023).

INDICATORS	NATIONAL	HERAT PROVINCE
Population	40 million (WB accessed 11/10/2023)	3.5 million (OCHA 23/01/2023)
Population under 18 years old	21,087,410 (UNICEF accessed 11/10/2023)	1,084,000 (Knoema accessed 10/10/2023)
Number of pre-earthquake IDPs	6.6 million as at December 2022 (IDMC accessed 10/10/2023)	989,696 as at April 2022 (IOM 04/08/2022)
Number of pre-earthquake refugees	52,000 (OCHA 23/01/2023)	400 (OCHA 23/01/2023)
Number of people below the poverty line	34 million (IBC accessed 11/10/2023)	320,000 (WB 22/05/2019)
Food-insecure people facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse	Around 17.2 million (40% of the population) as at April 2023 (IPC 15/5/2023)	Around 891,756 (45% of the population) as at April 2023 (IPC 15/5/2023)
Multidimensional poverty index	0.272 as at October 2022 (OPHI 10/2022)	0.309 as at October 2022 (OPHI 10/2022)
Projected people in need in 2023	28.3 million as at January 2023 (OCHA 23/01/2023)	2.16 million as at January 2023 (OCHA 23/01/2023)

Shelter

Villages in the affected region mostly comprise mud structures, making them particularly susceptible to damage from the earthquake (BBC 09/10/2023). As at 11 October, the second earthquake had reportedly flattened all 700 homes in Chahak village, in Injil district, which was unaffected by the first earthquake (Al Jazeera 11/10/2023; Reuters 11/10/2023). The second earthquake had also partially or completely destroyed around 200 houses in Kushk district, as at 11 October, which was also impacted by the earthquake on 7 October (Reuters 11/10/2023). As at 9 October, the first earthquake had destroyed over 1,900 houses in 20 villages and displaced 1,400 people across the provinces of Badghis, Farah, and Herat (Reuters 10/10/2023; TNH 09/10/2023). People have complained about the lack of assistance and shelter, with some

spending nights sleeping in the rubble of demolished villages or in tents and open spaces, where they face cold temperatures and strong winds (TOLOnews 09/10/2023; BBC 11/10/2023). Other affected people are sheltering in a hotel and two schools (The Guardian 08/10/2023 and 09/10/2023). As at 10 October, at least 380 people, including 244 children, from Zindajan district were housed in temporary shelters in the Gazarga transit centre, Herat city. The Heart Health Institute, part of Herat Regional Hospital, hosted 217 people who were discharged from hospital but had lost or could not access their homes (WHO 10/10/2023). There is a need for adequate lighting in temporary shelters to minimise protection risks.

Health

There are 87 health facilities in Herat province providing care to earthquake victims. These include two district hospitals, 21 basic health centres (BHCs), 13 comprehensive health centres (CHCs), and nine sub-health centres (SHCs). As at 10 October, the first earthquake had damaged five facilities. Of these, Karnil BHC in Zindajan district was destroyed, although temporary tents outside the ruined site continue to offer health services. Jibarayel CHC (Injil district), Togchi CHC (Guzara district), Gav Dar SHC (Ghyran district), and Shhekiban CHC (Zindajan district) sustained partial damage, including cracks in the walls, and are vulnerable to further damage from aftershocks (WHO 10/10/2023). The operating theatre in Sakina Yakobi Maternity Hospital in Herat also suffered damage, impeding access to vital reproductive health and obstetric care. Damage to health facilities means that most injured people are being taken to Herat Regional Hospital in Herat city, which is serving as the main referral point for earthquake victims (Health Cluster 09/10/2023). As at 10 October, the hospital had admitted 557 patients and hospitalized 153 (MSF 10/10/2023). The number of patients is overwhelming the hospital, which has reached its limited capacity of 600 beds, and many people are being treated outside (The Guardian 08/10/2023). As at 10 October, women responders and health workers reported insufficient supplies of soap, underwear, and menstrual hygiene products in the hospital (UN Women 10/10/2023). The hospital morgue is also at capacity (The Guardian 09/10/2023). Around 100 patients have been referred to five private hospitals for further treatment (OCHA 10/10/2023).

There is a high risk of disease outbreaks, such as measles, acute respiratory infections, tetanus, and acute watery diarrhoea, because of poor conditions and overcrowding in temporary shelters (Health Cluster 08/10/2023). Even before the earthquake, Afghanistan's healthcare system had already been heavily depleted after the ITA came to power. This followed the withdrawal of significant amounts of foreign assistance, upon which the healthcare systems had been very reliant. The earthquake has further stretched an already overburdened healthcare system (Reuters 10/10/2023).

Health workers have reported that aftershocks caused distress among patients, indicating significant levels of trauma (UN Women 10/10/2023).

WASH

Inadequate hygiene has been observed in temporary shelters, including tents, where patients are staying in Herat city after being discharged from the hospital with earthquake-related injuries. According to a 9 October IRC assessment, 63% of the KII participants reported that the latrines in their earthquake-affected communities are not safe for women and girls to use (UN Women 10/10/2023). People displaced by the earthquake also require urgent access to clean water (Health Cluster 09/10/2023). 44% of respondents to the 9 October IRC assessment reported that they lost access to water points following the earthquake (UN Women 10/10/2023).

There is no information available on earthquake damage to water points and wells, but rubble and the destruction of entire villages likely render many of these inaccessible. Before the earthquake, water scarcity was already a chronic problem in Herat province, which reported significant water stress in May 2023 (UNICEF 05/07/2023). Drought has aggravated this problem in recent years. In a study conducted between July 2021 and January 2022, a lack of available water points, or long wait times at water points, was commonly cited as barriers to accessing clean water (REACH 06/05/2022). In August 2023, residents of Herat city complained that tap water was only available for three hours per day, and people were required to line up to collect water daily at 3:00. The water supply director of Herat city reported that groundwater level had dropped by 40%, affecting the city's water supply (Alive-in 07/08/2023; Pahjwok 11/08/2023). Water scarcity has also created tensions and disputes over water among people (Alive-in 07/08/2023).

The coming winter will likely increase water access barriers, as wells in the province habitually freeze, requiring people to wait hours for the sun to thaw them (Alive-in 07/08/2023).

Food insecurity

Earthquake-affected people in Zindajan district had not received adequate food assistance as at 10 October (AmuTV 10/10/2023). Prior to the earthquake, as at April 2023, 45% of the population of Herat was facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse food insecurity, with 10% facing Emergency (IPC Phase 4) levels (IPC 15/05/2023).

Livelihoods

A January 2022 needs assessment found that agriculture and livestock rearing were the most common forms of income in Herat city, with 61% and 66% of respondents respectively reporting these sources of income. That said, drought has affected Herat province in recent years, limiting harvests and decreasing livestock ownership. This has led to a decline in

employment for unskilled workers (HPG/ODI 11/2022). There are already reports of damage to livestock from the earthquake (Le Monde 9/10/2023). Long-term displacement may also endanger the livelihoods of women who normally earn income from home-based activities such as weaving (UN Women 10/10/2023). The extent of agricultural land damage is unclear.

Protection

Most of the people injured by the earthquake are women and children, who were at home when it struck (MSF 10/10/2023). The ITA has evacuated women and children from affected areas to Herat city, with most male family members left behind. This has separated women and children from community safety nets, increasing their vulnerability to protection risks (OCHA 10/10/2023).

Critical infrastructure

Villages in the region mostly comprise mud structures, which are particularly susceptible to earthquake damage (BBC 9/10/2023).

Herat International Airport is located approximately 50km from the epicentre of the earthquake (IMMAP 09/10/2023; Logistics Cluster accessed 10/10/2023). There have been no reports of damage to the airport, which received a plane carrying aid from Türkiye on 9 October (DI 10/10/2023).

A new industrial park for the manufacture and packaging of agricultural goods opened in July 2022 in Zindajan district, near a cement factory (TOLONews 10/06/2022). There is no available information on whether the earthquake damaged the industrial park or the cement factory.

The main dam in Herat, Salma Dam, does not appear to have sustained any damage and is not located close to the epicentre of the earthquake (The Conversation 13/08/2021).

GROUPS WITH HEIGHTENED VULNERABILITY TO RISKS FOLLOWING THE EARTHQUAKE

Women

The recent ITA ban on female NGO and UN staff has led to a lack of female aid workers available to interview and engage with women in Afghanistan. This ban, along with women's rights restrictions (e.g. restrictions on movement and associating with people outside their household), has already led to the underrepresentation of women's needs in humanitarian needs assessments (GiHA WG 22/12/2022). There is a risk that the underrepresentation of women may lead to a lack of information on women's needs after the earthquake. Restrictions on women's rights and freedom of movement may also prevent earthquake-affected women from accessing humanitarian information and services. This risk is particularly high for women who have lost or been separated from male family members, who would otherwise serve as a woman's guardian outside the home (UN Women 10/10/2023).

While the 2021 Taliban takeover led to a cessation of active conflict in Herat, subsequent restrictions on women's rights have created protection risks for women and girls. A January 2022 assessment recorded an increase in reports of unsafe public areas for women and girls, particularly in rural areas of Herat (REACH 06/05/2022). As at August 2023, Herat reported high levels of female suicide and attempted suicide, with around 90% of mental health admissions at the provincial hospital attributed to women experiencing acute mental health crises triggered by the ITA restrictions (The Guardian 28/08/2023).

Children

The earthquake has resulted in severe psychosocial distress for children, some of whom have been separated from their families. As at 10 October, 33 unaccompanied minors had been identified. The earthquake also destroyed seven schools (six in Zindajan and one in Gulran) (OCHA 10/10/2023). There is a need for temporary education materials to prevent disruptions to children's learning and wellbeing.

People with disabilities

There are no official and up-to-date figures, but Afghanistan has historically had one of the highest prevalences of people with disabilities. In 2005, a government survey reported a 2.7% prevalence of severe disabilities and 4.7% of less severe disabilities. The survey found

that the highest prevalences of people with disabilities were in Herat and Kabul provinces (SIDA 09/2014). A 2020 study by the Asia Foundation, which used the Washington Group set of questions, captured more hidden disabilities and estimated that 80% of Afghan adults lived with some form of disability, ranging from mild to severe (The Asia Foundation 13/05/2020). Conflict-related injuries, trauma, and psychosocial distress from over 40 years of conflict are some of the most common causes of disability in Afghanistan (HRW 28/04/2020; OWP 19/01/2022; SIDA 09/2014).

Pre-crisis, people with disabilities were some of the most vulnerable to neglect and stigmatisation (OWP 19/01/2022; HRW 28/04/2020). Post-earthquake, people with disabilities and those with chronic health issues may struggle with accessing services and assistance without the support of their caregivers or family members, particularly considering the challenging terrain. They may face secondary health impacts from living in inadequate temporary shelters, exposure to unfavourable weather conditions, and a lack of needed healthcare. The impact of the earthquake may also increase the number of people with disabilities across the affected areas because of trauma, injuries, delayed or lacking access to healthcare, and other unmet humanitarian needs.

IDPs

Herat province hosted the second-highest number of displaced people in Afghanistan between 2021–2022, receiving 250,000 IDPs over this period (IOM 03/07/2023). The province also received the highest number of IDPs in the ten years between 2012–2022, with over 500,000 arrivals (HPG/ODI 11/2022). Prior to the earthquake, IDPs in Herat struggled to access livelihood opportunities, as they did not own land or livestock and were in urgent need of humanitarian assistance. They also lacked the resources to adapt to the effects of extreme weather, for example, by modifying shelters or purchasing weather-appropriate NFIs (HPG/ODI 11/2022; DACAAR 24/10/2022). Given these conditions, IDP communities and shelters in the province may have been particularly vulnerable to the destructive impacts of the earthquake.

COMPOUNDING/AGGRAVATING FACTORS

Political and security situation

ITA's restrictive policies in Afghanistan will likely aggravate the effects of and complicate the response to the earthquake in Herat. Even before 2021, Herat city had always been a strategic location in the west, close to Iran. In August 2021, following the announcement of the withdrawal of US forces from Afghanistan, the Taliban succeeded in its efforts to take

over the Government. The Taliban attacked Herat city, opposing forces used the airport during clashes, and the Government deployed the Afghan special forces to help push back Taliban advances. The ITA takeover succeeded two decades of conflict with the US-led coalition and Afghan security forces. As at 11 October, no foreign country had formally recognised the Taliban government, referred to as the ITA (CFR accessed 11/11/2023 a; CFR accessed 11/11/2023 b; TWP 01/08/2021).

Since assuming power, the ITA has implemented a variety of laws, including women's rights restrictions, the reintroduction of public executions, and limitations on the operations of aid organisations and news outlets (CFR accessed 11/11/2023 a; CFR accessed 11/11/2023 b).

Because of the cessation of conflict, the general security situation in Afghanistan has improved since the ITA takeover. That said, the Islamic State – Khorasan Province (IS-KP), the Islamic State's faction in Central Asia, is active in Afghanistan and has recently perpetrated attacks in Herat (CFR accessed 11/11/2023 b; EUAA 16/09/2022; UNSC 03/09/2022; CSIS 2018). Since August 2021, IS-KP has been responsible for small-scale attacks against the ITA and their commanders, as well as civilian targets, including minority groups. As a counter, the ITA has taken significant action to weaken the IS-KP by eliminating its leaders through targeted operations (BBC 26/04/2023). Instability following the earthquake could facilitate an increased IS-KP presence.

Economy/inflation

Afghanistan has been experiencing an economic crisis since the ITA takeover in August 2021, weakening the ITA's efforts at disaster prevention and response. Prior to the takeover, the economy of Afghanistan already depended heavily on international aid, which covered around 75% of public expenditures as at 2019 (CFR accessed 11/11/2023 b). Following the takeover, foreign funds provided to the previous Government were frozen, and a large number of foreign donors ceased providing development aid, contributing to economic losses of up to 30% between August 2021 and January 2023 (CFR accessed 11/11/2023 b; BBC 09/10/2023).

As at June 2023, according to the World Bank, one in two Afghans were living in poverty (WB/Afghanistan Futures 03/10/2023). The weakened economy and sanctions on Afghanistan limit the local capacity to respond to the impact of the earthquake and to future shocks and environmental hazards.

Climate

Rainy season and winter temperatures

Herat experiences its lowest yearly temperatures from October–February, with average minimum temperatures dropping below zero from December–February. The province also sees higher average precipitation from December–April, with average peaks between February–March (WB accessed 09/10/2023). Seasonal forecasts consistently indicate that most of Afghanistan, including Herat, has a 50–70% chance of experiencing above-normal rainfall between October 2023 and January 2024 (ECMWF accessed 09/10/2023; WMO accessed 09/10/2023). As at 9 October, the weather was already cold and windy, especially during the night (TOLOnews 10/10/2023).

Given the large-scale destruction of homes in earthquake-affected areas, long-term displacement can be expected, with a need for longer-term shelter solutions for winter weather (OCHA 10/10/2023). Cold and rainy conditions will worsen the living conditions of those displaced for longer periods, creating a need for adequate shelters and cold-weather NFIs, as well as WASH facilities that can withstand increased rainfall. Heavy rainfall could also result in access constraints.

Drought

Afghanistan has experienced severe drought since 2020, particularly in the northern and western regions, including Herat. This has led to water scarcity, pressure on agriculture, food insecurity, and economic shrinkage, all of which make the country and province more vulnerable to the humanitarian impacts of additional disasters (Reuters 15/08/2023; AP 09/12/2021; OCHA 01/08/2023). Herat province, which is located on the border with Iran, already faces several years of drought that has crippled many agricultural communities (The Guardian 09/10/2023). Afghanistan has been facing its worst drought in 27 years since 2021; with 90% of livelihoods directly or indirectly depending on agriculture, extreme weather events and climatic changes have a critical impact. Above-average rainfall because of El Niño is expected to facilitate a gradual recovery from the three-year drought (FEWS NET 03/10/2023; UN 11/01/2022). Because of the drought and accompanying economic downturn, people have implemented negative coping mechanisms, such as eating less, selling household assets, and prioritising food over medicine and other needs. This has affected people's physical and mental health. These coping mechanisms also make people more vulnerable to respiratory diseases and the other effects of the earthquake.

RESPONSE CAPACITY

Pre-existing humanitarian assistance constraints in Afghanistan, the remote and difficult location of the crisis, little information on the needs, and global attention and funds shifting away to other crises have delayed the response to the earthquake (France 24 09/10/2023; Al Jazeera 08/10/2023).

Rescue workers lack the equipment necessary to remove people from rubble, and are forced to use everyday tools to dig (Al Jazeera 10/10/2023). On 9 October, there were reports of ITA rescue teams using bulldozers to remove rubble and locate survivors, but their actions unintentionally put possible survivors at risk (The Guardian 09/10/2023). Prior to the Taliban takeover, Afghanistan's emergency services already had a restricted capacity, with insufficient numbers of emergency helicopters and aircraft (BBC 22/06/2022).

As at the same day, only a limited number of countries had directly provided aid to the ITA to support earthquake relief efforts. China's Red Cross offered USD 200,000 in emergency aid, to be provided to the Afghan Red Crescent. China, Iran, and Pakistan pledged to provide food, medicine, shelter, funding, and NFIs (Reuters 10/10/2023; BBC 10/10/2023).

As at 8 October, UNICEF, IOM, WFP, UNCHR, and WHO had deployed teams to assist with the response (UN 08/10/2023). Humanitarian organisations are collaborating with the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority to conduct community-level multisectoral rapid needs assessments (OCHA 08/10/2023). OCHA has approved a USD 5 million emergency reserve from the UN's Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund, which would allow eligible partners to use their grants starting on 9 October (CBS 09/10/2023; Reuters 10/10/2023). The EU has approved EUR 3.5 million (USD 3.7 million) in emergency aid (ECHO 10/10/2023).

In December 2022, the ITA issued a ban on Afghan women from working for both national and international NGOs (BBC 24/12/2022). In April 2023, this ban was extended to female national employees of the UN (UN 27/04/2023).