

Price Monitoring and Analysis Country Brief

Afghanistan

October 2009

Key Messages

- **Wheat prices are down from the peaks of May 2008 but are levelling off well above the historical average.**
- **The long military conflict resulted in displacement of more than 3 million people who suffer from severe food insecurity.**
- **Food insecurity remains widespread despite increased production and it is likely to worsen during the winter season.**
- **The government and the WFP implemented food and cash transfer programmes, but food assistance is still insufficient for many people.**

Background

The total population of Afghanistan was 28.39 million in 2008 and the annual growth rate was 2%. Most of the population lives in rural areas, however the contribution of agriculture to the GDP is below 40%.

Economic Indicators	View Data
Total Population - 2009 (CIA)	28396000
Population growth rate - 2009 (CIA)	2%
GDP per capita, \$ PPP - 2008 (CIA)	700
Population below 1\$ PPP per day	n.a.
Rural population - 2006 (WB)	77%
Agriculture, value added (% of GDP) - 2007 (WB)	37%

Food Consumption	
Undernourished Population	n.a.
Cereal share in total dietary energy consumption	n.a.
Meat share in total dietary energy consumption	n.a.

Health Indicators	
Pop. with sustainable access to improved sanitation - 2006 (WHO)	30%
Life expectancy at birth (years) both sexes - 2006 (WHO)	42
Pop. with access to improved drinking water sources - 2006 (WHO)	22%
Prevalence of HIV among adults aged >= 15 years - 2005 (WHO)	0%

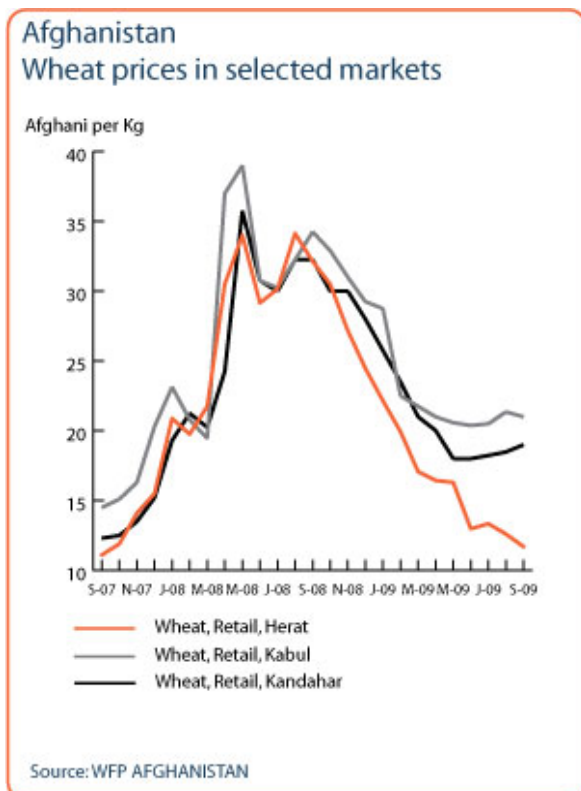
Prices

Cereals: In response to the bumper harvest, prices of wheat have come down. The wheat retail price in Kabul has come down from a peak of AFN 39/kg in May 2008 to AFN 21/kg in September 2009. However, current prices in general remain much higher than their levels during the pre-crisis period of 2007. Prices began to inch upwards after hitting the post-harvest low in June-July.

Livestock: Prices remain slightly higher compared to the longer term average. Prices for this quarter have increased by 4% compared to the first quarter of the same year, and 2% compared to the same quarter last year. The terms of trade have not been favourable for livestock producers.

Conflicts and Refugees

The war between the Taliban and the Government, involving US and NATO forces, over national power and the orientation of the political system, continues. Humanitarian needs have risen due to conflict-generated displacement. Refugees living outside the country exceed 3 million people.



Source: [GIEWS Country Briefs](#)

Refugees and IDPs	2006	2007	2008
Total in the country	527710	535632	515659
Total outside the country	2749915	3609746	3371919

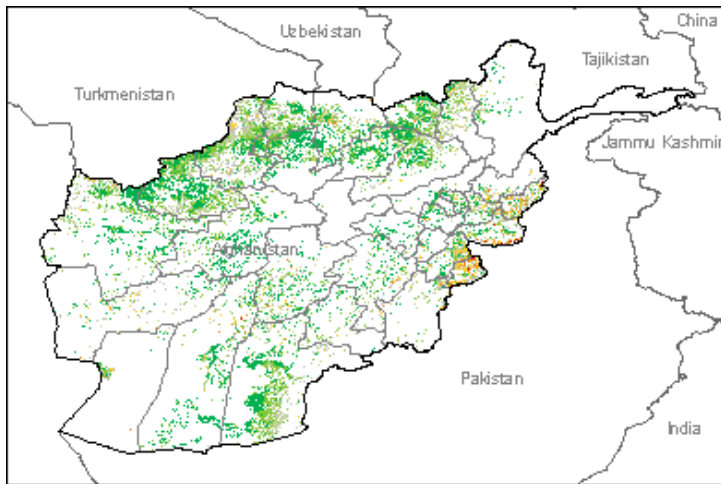
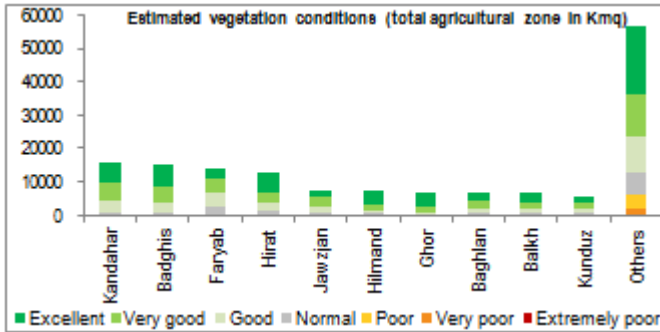
Source: [UNHCR Statistical Online Population Database](#), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Data extracted on 22/10/2009.

Disaster Type (last year)	Date	Location	Alert
Flood	2009-05-11	Faryab	1/3
Flood	2009-04-06	Farah	1/3
Earthquake	2009-10-30	Nangarhar	2/3

Source: [Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System](#) - 3 = 1000 or more people killed or 800000 or more people displaced. 2 = 100 or more people killed or 80000 or more displaced.

Drought and Natural Disasters

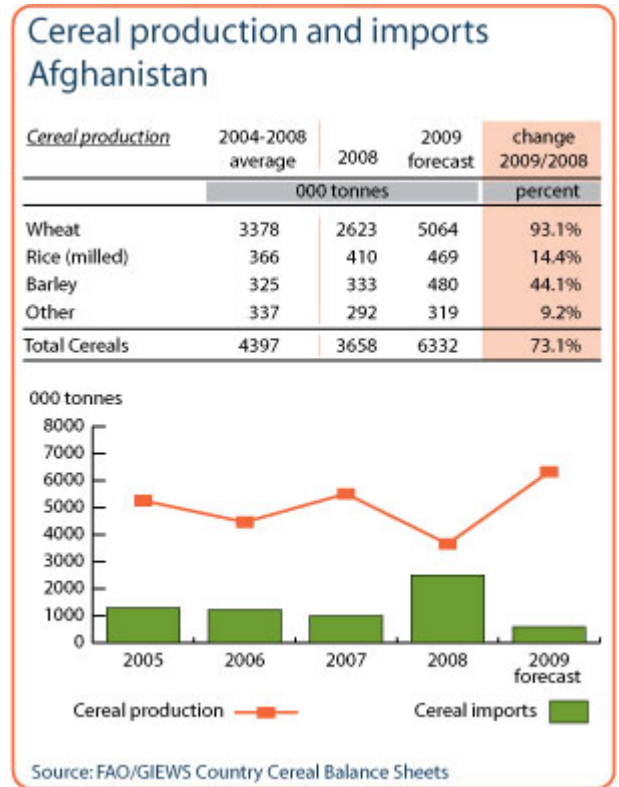
Shown below is the estimated vegetation condition of Sept. 2009 with respect to the average of the last 10 years. The vegetation condition is calculated on the agricultural zone defined according to the GLOBCOVER land cover database. Vegetation conditions are favorable in the country.



Source: JRC MARS – FoodSec

Food Balance Sheet

The Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) has estimated the 2009 wheat harvest to be 5.064 million tonnes, which represents a 93% increase over the output of 2008. Total cereal output for 2009, estimated at a record level of 6.33 million tonnes is about 73% above the depressed harvest in 2008.



Source: GIEWS Country Briefs

Food Security Situation

With the onset of winter, food security conditions will deteriorate. WFP planned to feed 8.8 million people in 2009. However, there are several acute food insecurity situations where people received insufficient food assistance. GIEWS highlights the widespread lack of food access in the short term and FEWSNET also agrees that in the long term there will be moderate food insecurity.

CURRENT EMERGENCY ASSESMENT

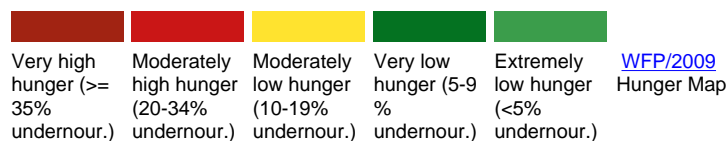


FAO/GIEWS CPFS 2009

The bumper main wheat harvest in 2009, decrease in cereal prices, and good food aid coverage are encouraging signs for the current food security situation in Afghanistan. ...[more](#)

FEWSNET

SCALE OF HUNGER



WFP/2009 Hunger Map



IFPRI/2009 GHI

Governance Policies

The government implemented targeted agricultural input distribution and irrigation programmes which resulted in abundant production. Moreover it introduced measures aimed at market infrastructure development and adopted food and cash transfer interventions.

Consumer and market oriented measures	Market infrastructure development
Producer oriented measures	Irrigation; Support to inputs for animal production/fisheries
Trade policy measures	n.a.
Safety net (increased or introduced)	Food/cash transfer; Targeted input distribution

Market and trade policy measures adopted (as of 1 December 2008)

Current events to watch (Click to see the full report)

- [AFGHANISTAN: "The most dangerous place to be born"](#)
- [AFGHANISTAN: Fighting H1N1 with one lab and no vaccine](#)
- [AFGHANISTAN: New report highlights people's thirst for peace](#)
- [AFGHANISTAN: Schools to reopen for exams after H1N1 shutdown](#)
- [AFGHANISTAN: Toilet tribulations](#)

For more information, contact: Information-for-action@fao.org
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