



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

**Afghanistan**

# DIEM – Data in Emergencies Monitoring brief, round 9

Results and recommendations  
September 2024

## Key highlights

- > The ninth round of Data in Emergencies Monitoring (DIEM-Monitoring) was conducted during the post-harvest season across all 34 provinces of Afghanistan from 5 to 23 September 2024.
- > Food consumption indicators showed a notable improvement compared to the eighth round conducted in February 2024. The improvement was particularly remarkable for the prevalence of the most severe outcomes. This improvement spread across most provinces, but not all. The prevalence of moderate or severe recent food insecurity (RFI) was about the same as a year preceding the survey in Nuristan, Logar, Hilmand, Daykundi, Baghlan and Badakhshan. It deteriorated in Samangan, Nangarhar, Khost, Kandahar and Faryab.
- > Food security outcomes depended greatly on livelihood strategies and residence status. Households not engaged in agriculture and non-permanent residents (returnees and internally displaced persons [IDPs]) had a higher prevalence of severe RFI, low dietary diversity and asset depletion. Landless households living off daily labour and those with no income in the three months preceding the survey were particularly food insecure.
- > Economic shocks were predominant. The effect of deflation on income is potentially a concern for farm profitability and food security over the longer term. Almost two-thirds of households reported a decline in their main source of income compared to 12 months preceding the survey, particularly among non-agricultural and female-headed households (85 and 75 percent, respectively).
- > Households relying on only crop production faced an unfavourable marketing environment, but those relying on livestock benefited from the opposite situation. Markets were important determinants of production performances and food security outcomes. However, income was also affected by shocks, and a decrease in agricultural income was associated with pests, plant diseases and natural hazards.
- > Challenges marketing agricultural produce was a strong driver of food insecurity. Having to sell produce at lower-than-normal prices, which was quite frequent due to deflation, was also associated with a higher prevalence of food insecurity and, in particular, the most severe outcomes. Providing marketing support is recommended to help sustain livelihoods reliant on crop production.

- > Natural hazards continued to hit the country in the three months preceding the survey, most notably since March 2024. Floods affected some areas, while others received below-normal precipitation.
- > Poor harvest concentrated among smallholders who cultivated less than 1 ha of land. Compared to the eighth round, harvest expectations seem to have improved, except for vegetables.
- > There has been a general improving trend in the restocking of herds, cattle in particular. For all species, breeding conditions have improved and distress sales have declined, although they remain frequent among sheep producers. Commercial sales are slowly declining. Important drivers of herd decreases were livestock diseases and floods, particularly among sheep producers. The strongest association to a decrease in herd size was pasture conditions, also associated with distress sales.
- > It is recommended for targeted support to enhance both production capabilities and market access, ensuring food security and economic stability for farmers. This includes interventions and adaptive strategies aimed at strengthening resilience and promoting long-term stability in the rural areas of the country.

## Methodology

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) launched a household survey in Afghanistan through the Data in Emergencies Monitoring (DIEM-Monitoring) System to monitor agricultural livelihoods and food security. This ninth-round survey reached a random sample of 10 623 households across all 34 provinces of Afghanistan.

Data collection was carried out through face-to-face surveys from 5 to 23 September 2024. A two-stage cluster sampling method was applied. During the first stage, an equal number of clusters per province was selected using probability proportional to size. During the second stage, a fixed number of households per cluster was randomly selected and interviewed. Data were weighted by demographics and the sample is representative at provincial level.

In order to help put the results of this September 2024 survey in context, comparisons have been made throughout the brief to the results of the fifth round DIEM-Monitoring survey conducted in Afghanistan in August 2022, the seventh round conducted in October 2023 and the eighth round conducted in February 2024. Both the seventh and eighth rounds used the same methodology, sampling strategy and questionnaire.

Figure 1. Countries with an established DIEM-Monitoring System



Note: Refer to the disclaimer on the back cover for the names and boundaries used in this map. The final boundary between the Sudan and South Sudan has not yet been determined. Final status of the Abyei area is not yet determined. The dotted line represents, approximately, the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties.

Source of data: FAO. 2024. DIEM-Monitoring. In: *FAO Data in Emergencies Hub*. Rome. [Cited 1 December 2024]. <https://data-in-emergencies.fao.org>

Source of map: United Nations Geospatial. 2023. Map of the World. In: *United Nations*. [Cited 1 December 2024]. <https://www.un.org/geospatial/content/map-world-1>

### About DIEM-Monitoring

FAO established the DIEM-Monitoring System to collect, analyse and disseminate data on shocks and livelihoods in countries prone to multiple shocks. DIEM-Monitoring aims to inform decision making by providing regularly updated information on how different shocks are affecting the livelihoods and food security of agricultural populations.

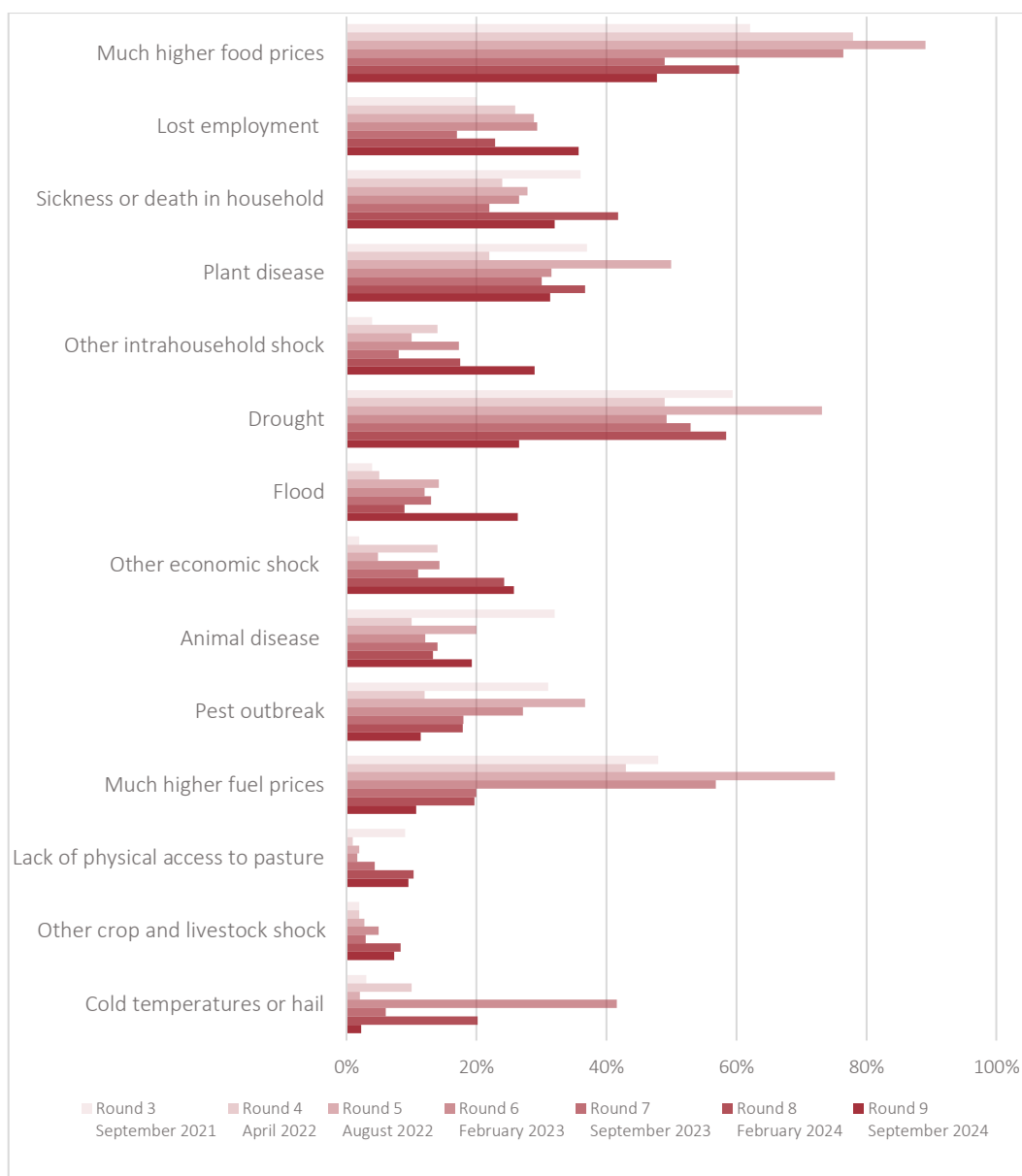
At the core of the DIEM-Monitoring System are country-level dashboards. Readers are encouraged to explore these dashboards to gain more insight into the context of Afghanistan and other countries.

Learn more at <https://data-in-emergencies.fao.org/pages/monitoring>

## Income and shocks

The prevalence of much higher food prices peaked at 89 percent in August 2022 and decreased to 48 percent in September 2024, likely to improve food security outcomes in the short term (Figure 2). Deflation typically reduces income and some groups remain vulnerable to high food prices, such as IDPs – 66 percent of whom reported higher food prices as a shock – and crop producers – 54 percent of whom reported decreased income as a shock, citing food inflation. Since August 2024, the trend of decreasing food prices reversed (World Bank, 2024). DIEM data indicated that the prevalence of much higher food prices was more prominent in areas where net food buyers were more frequent, such as Ghazni (94 percent), Kandahar (92 percent), Hilmand (89 percent), Laghman (87 percent), Uruzgan (76 percent), Balkh (75 percent), Nimroz and Maidan Wardak (73 percent each), Bamyan (72 percent), Farah (66 percent), Khost (56 percent), Zabul (54 percent), Takhar (53 percent) and Kabul (52 percent).

Figure 2. Main shocks (percentage of respondents)



Source: FAO. 2024. DIEM-Monitoring. In: *Data in Emergencies (DIEM Hub)*, Rome. [Cited 30 October 2024]. <https://data-in-emergencies-hq.fao.org/hub.arcgis.com/pages/monitoring-country-specific>

The country’s deflationary context is likely the reason behind the high frequency of economic shocks reported this round, but this context is also likely to increase households’ vulnerability to other shocks. Less money is circulating in the economy (World Bank, 2024), and loss of employment and working opportunities was reported more frequently. This shock surged from 17 percent in October 2023 to 36 percent in September 2024. Among different groups like female-headed households, non-agricultural households, returnees and IDPs, respondents cited losing working opportunities more frequently.

Economic shocks were associated with idiosyncratic shocks. The frequency of intrahousehold shocks increased from 4 percent in September 2021 to 29 percent in the current round. These shocks were more frequently reported by IDPs (61 percent) and non-agricultural households (38 percent). Female-headed households and returnees more frequently reported sickness of household members (42 and 40 percent, respectively).

Natural hazards continued to hit the country in the three months preceding the survey, but most notably since March 2024. In particular, floods affected some areas, while others received below-normal precipitation. Flooding was reported by 26 percent in the current round. Flooding was more frequently cited in Baghlan (91 percent), Samangan (85 percent), Badakhshan and Nangarhar (64 percent each), Daykundi and Ghor (42 percent each), Badghis (41 percent) and Nimroz (40 percent). Households reporting drought have decreased from 59 to 27 percent.

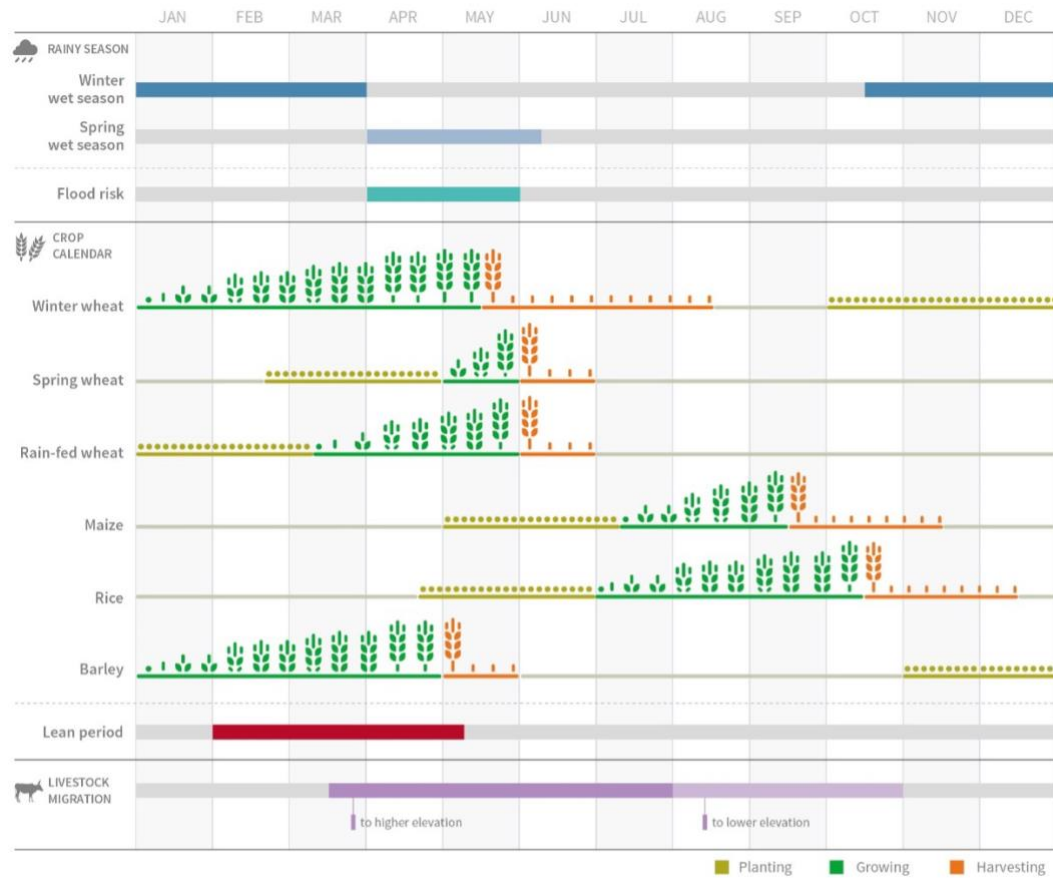
Plant diseases were frequently cited in Baghlan (71 percent), Hilmand (68 percent), Ghor and Daykundi (63 percent each), Bamyan (51 percent), Takhar (50 percent) and Laghman (49 percent).

The effect of deflation on income is potentially a concern for farm profitability and food security in the longer term. Sixty-nine percent of households reported a decline in their main source of income compared with 12 months preceding the survey, particularly among non-agricultural households and female-headed households (85 and 75 percent, respectively). However, income sources have improved since the eighth round, despite the majority reporting decreased income flows.

Households relying on only crop production faced an unfavourable marketing environment, but those relying on livestock benefited from the opposite situation. Markets were important determinants of production performances and food security outcomes. However, income was also affected by shocks, and a decrease in agricultural incomes was associated with pests, plant diseases and natural hazards.

## Crops

Figure 3. Afghanistan agricultural calendar

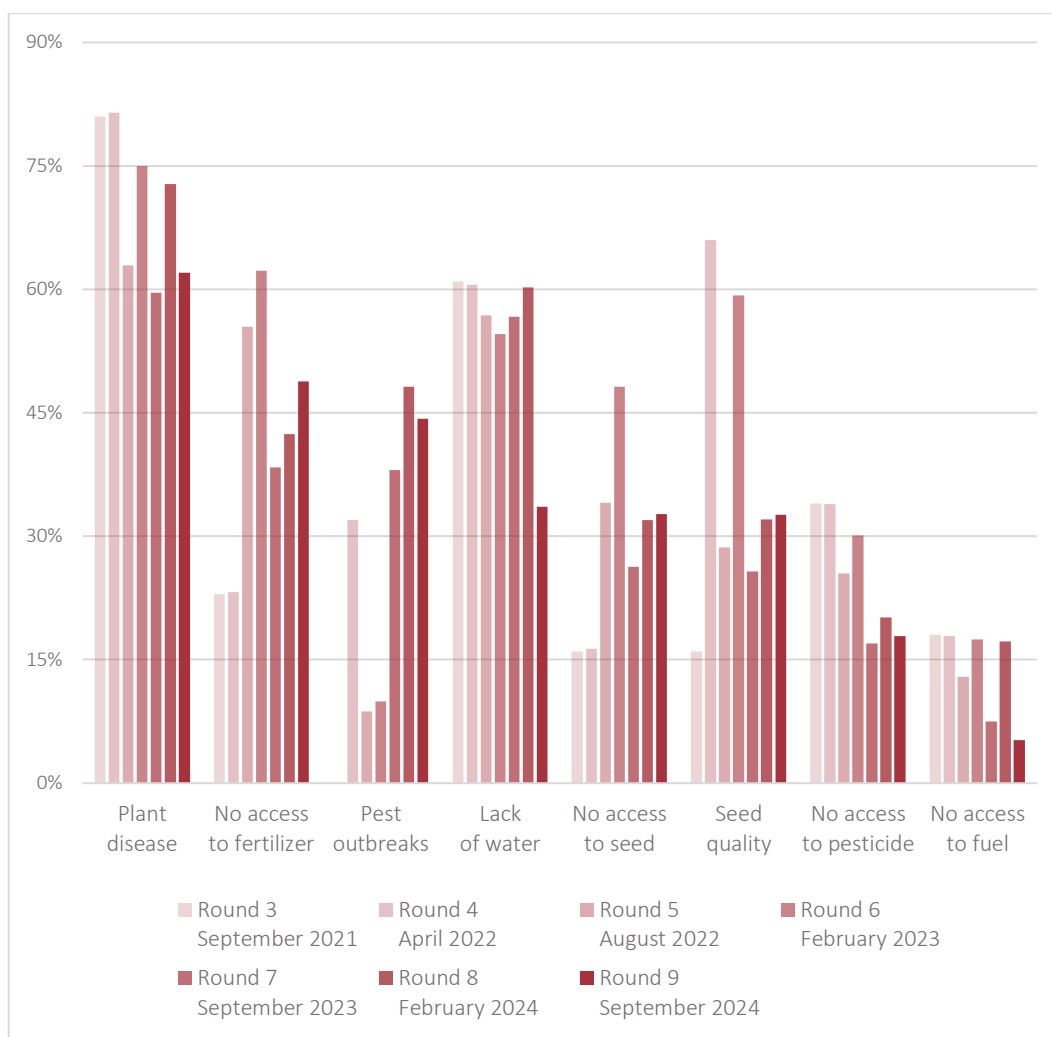


Source: FAO. 2024. GIEWS – Global Information and Early Warning System Country Briefs: Afghanistan. In: *FAO*, 28 May 2024. Rome. [Cited 30 October 2024]. <https://www.fao.org/giews/countrybrief/country.jsp?code=AFG>

Production challenges remained frequent with 75 percent of farmers reporting issues. These issues were widespread among farmers that cultivated 1–2 ha of land. During the current round, 62 percent of farmers reported plant diseases, a decrease from 73 percent in the eighth round but quite similar to the seventh round (60 percent) conducted at the same time in 2023 (Figure 4). Access to fertilizer and seed remained a concern. Difficulties accessing these inputs due to availability in markets and higher prices increased slightly when compared to the previous round, but the increase was much more notable when compared to the seventh round. The most cited reasons for reporting difficulties accessing seed were higher prices than usual, insufficient income to purchase seed and poor quality of seed. Reporting pest outbreaks as a crop production difficulty followed a similar trend. On a positive note, access to other inputs, such as pesticides and fuel, have improved, and the share of farmers reporting lack of water has decreased.



Figure 4. Crop production difficulties (percentage of crop producers)



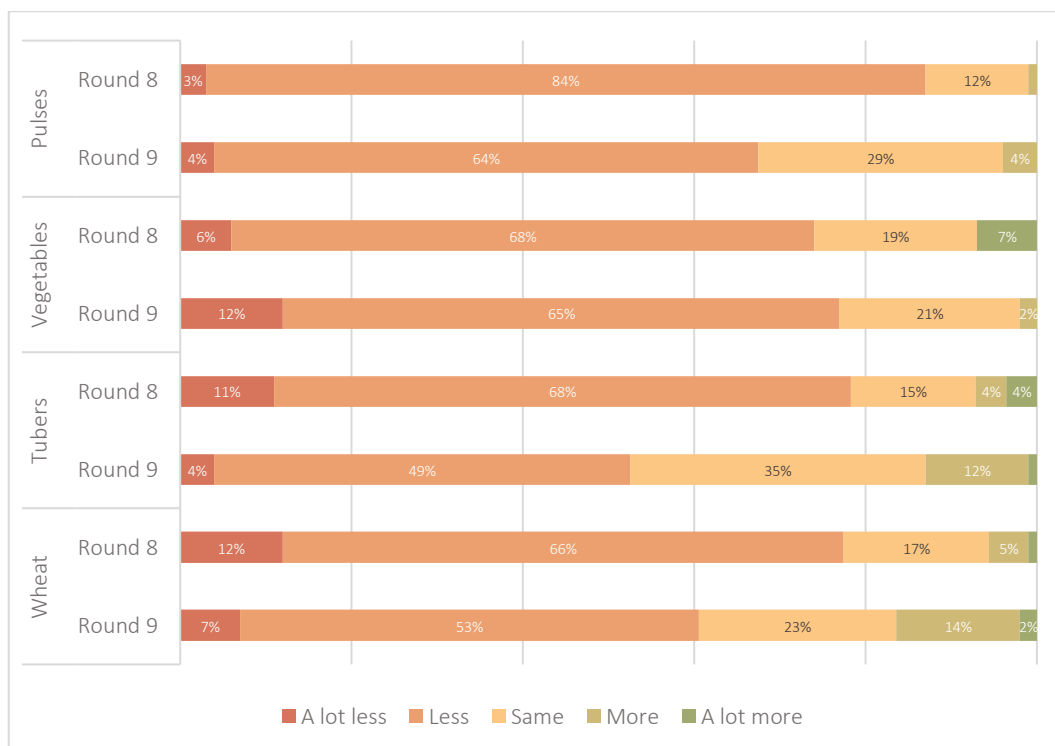
Source: FAO. 2024. DIEM-Monitoring. In: *Data in Emergencies (DIEM Hub)*. Rome. [Cited 30 October 2024]. <https://data-in-emergencies-hq.fao.org/country-specific>

Plant diseases were prevalent in Laghman, Zabul, Bamyan, Daykundi, Kapisa, Kandahar, Baghlan and Hilmand. Plant diseases affected fruit, potatoes and other tubers (67 percent each), other cereals (66 percent), vegetables (63 percent), wheat (62 percent), cash crops (57 percent) and pulses (40 percent). Pest outbreaks were common in potatoes and other tubers (60 percent), and wheat (45 percent), particularly in Bamyan, Ghor, Paktika, Nimroz, Nuristan, Daykundi, Laghman and Badakhshan provinces. Difficulty accessing fertilizer was more common among producers of cash crops (88 percent), other cereals (64 percent), vegetables (51 percent) and wheat (48 percent), particularly in Laghman, Ghazni, Samangan, Farah, Kabul, Balkh, Nangarhar, Badghis, Khost, Kapisa, Kunar and Kunduz. Similarly, difficulties obtaining sufficient seed were reported more frequently for cash crops (74 percent), other cereals (43 percent), potatoes and other tubers (37 percent), and wheat (31 percent), concentrated in Ghazni, Laghman, Hilmand, Kapisa, Kunar, Nuristan, Paktika, Kandahar, Nangarhar, Kabul, Farah, Bamyan and Takhar. Not enough irrigation or rainfall water affected cash crops (76 percent), fruit (56 percent), other cereals (59 percent), potatoes and other tubers (49 percent), vegetables (36 percent) and wheat (31 percent), especially in Takhar, Nimroz, Samangan, Faryab, Jawzjan, Ghazni, Sar-e-Pul, Kandahar and Bamyan.

The area planted for main crops has improved for the second consecutive round, with only 31 percent of farmers reporting a decline compared to 83 percent in August 2022. A significant proportion of crop producers, such as wheat, vegetable, potato and other tubers, maintained the same area over the period. However, reductions in the area planted were more commonly observed among smallholders who cultivated <1 ha of land, and producers of other cereals, cash crops and pulses. The cited reason for planting less was affordability of inputs – reported by 68 percent of farmers that decreased the area planted for the main crop. Farmers who planted less of their main crop were more likely to diversify their cropping pattern, suggesting that planting less of the main crop does not necessarily imply disengagement or retrenchment. Producers relying on groundwater and natural surface water were more likely to decrease the area under cultivation, as were those who sourced seeds from local markets. Wheat producers in Hilmand, Kunar, Laghman, Uruzgan, Kabul, Faryab, Farah, Ghazni, Nangarhar, Paktika, Parwan, Kunduz, Nimroz, Logar, Nuristan and Paktya provinces reported a higher proportion of cultivating less area compared to normal years.

Harvest output was below normal for 61 percent of farmers in the current round (Figure 5), a significant improvement from the alarming 96 percent in the fifth round conducted in August 2022. The data indicated that poor harvests were primarily reported by smallholders cultivating less than 1 ha of land. Compared to the previous round, overall expectations for harvest output have improved with the notable exception of vegetables, where outcomes remain less optimistic.

Figure 5. Harvest output compared to a normal year (percentage of crop producers)



Source: FAO. 2024. DIEM-Monitoring. In: *Data in Emergencies (DIEM Hub)*. Rome. [Cited 30 October 2024]. <https://data-in-emergencies-hqfao.hub.arcgis.com/pages/monitoring-country-specific>

The most significant declines in harvest were observed in Laghman, Uruzgan, Hilmand, Kunduz, Kunar, Herat, Ghazni, Kandahar, Nimroz, Nangarhar and Paktika provinces. Ten percent of farmers reported a loss of stocked harvest due to pests, rotting and mold.

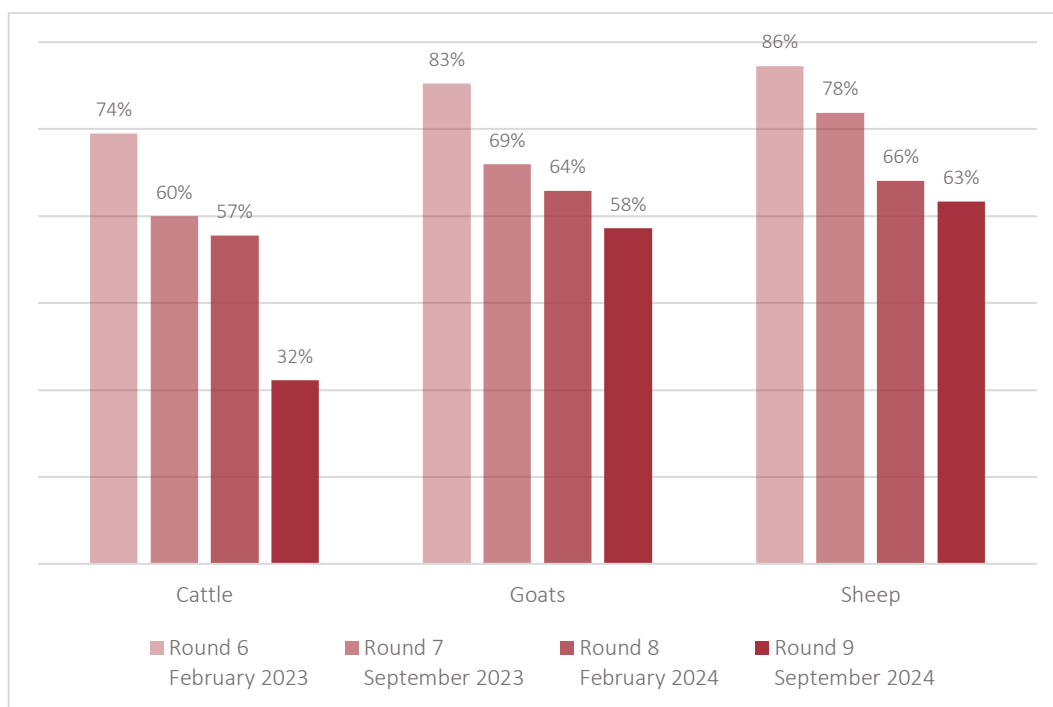
A strong association exists between below-normal harvests and various agricultural and climate shocks, specifically pest outbreaks, plant diseases, drought and floods. The flood events between April and June 2024 coincided with the growing stage of crops, leading to the decline in below-normal harvest. This severely damaged crops, resulting in lower quantities and quality of production which will continue to exacerbate food availability among rural households, particularly in the winter season.

Farmers with surplus production continued to face significant challenges selling their crops with 48 percent citing difficulties at the markets. The most commonly reported issue was lower selling prices (62 percent), exacerbated by deflation which was particularly pronounced among farmers cultivating more than 2 ha of land, and those producing fruit, vegetables and other cereal producers. In addition, almost half of the farmers (48 percent) reported high transportation costs as a barrier, significantly associated with higher fuel prices and frequently reported among potato and other tubers producers. Furthermore, 38 percent of farmers, particularly those growing pulses, reported a lack of demand from their usual traders or buyers. The combination of low crop prices, high transportation costs, and limited market demand created substantial barriers to farmers’ financial stability. These challenges not only hindered their ability to sustain or expand production but also had a direct impact on household income, with 74 percent of farmers experiencing marketing difficulties reporting a decline in their primary source of earnings.

## Livestock

There was a general improving trend in the restocking of herds, in particular cattle (Figure 6).

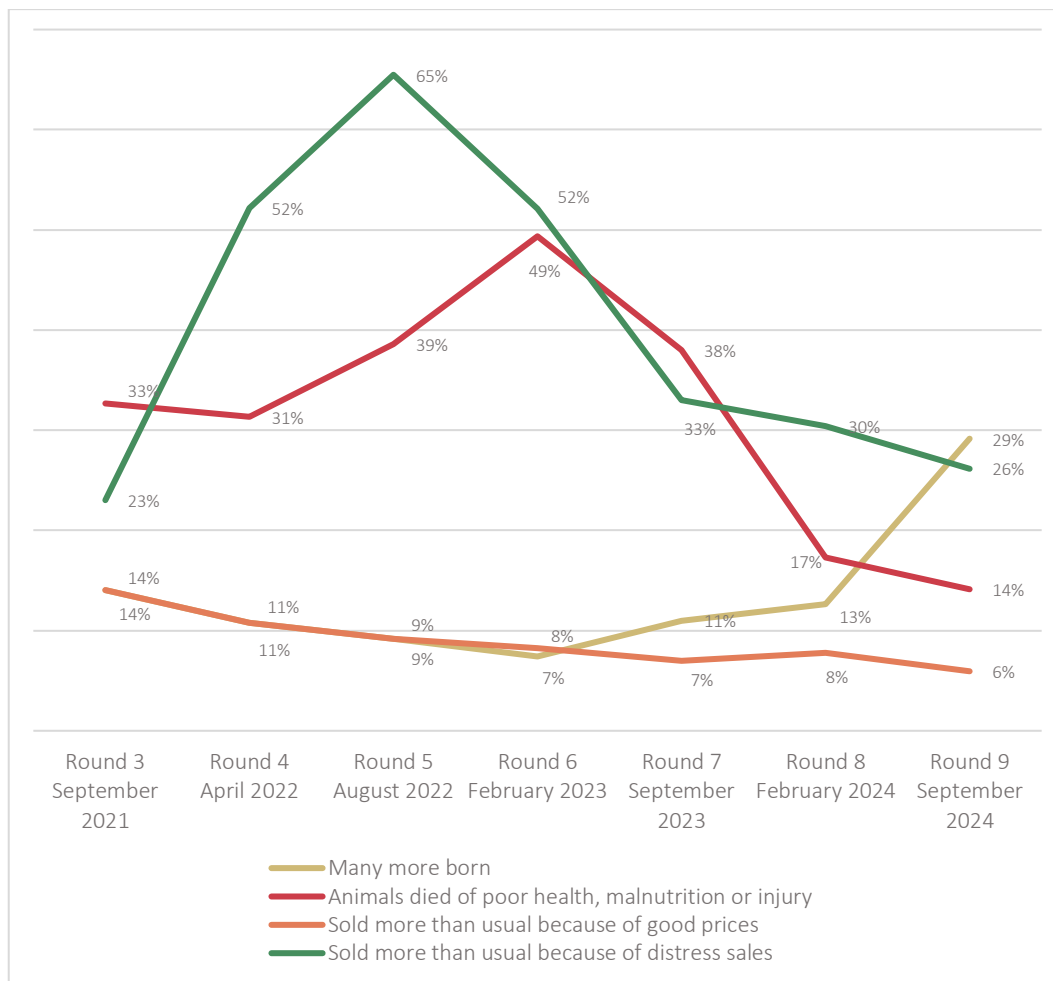
Figure 6. Livestock producers reporting a decrease in herd size over the 12 months preceding the survey (percentage of livestock producers)



Source: FAO. 2024. DIEM-Monitoring. In: *Data in Emergencies (DIEM Hub)*. Rome. [Cited 30 October 2024]. <https://data-in-emergencies-hqfao.hub.arcgis.com/pages/monitoring-country-specific>

In general (for all species), breeding conditions have improved (particularly for cattle [32 percent]) and distress sales have declined although they are still frequent among sheep producers (40 percent) (Figure 7). However, commercial sales have slowly declined but were frequent for goat producers (10 percent).

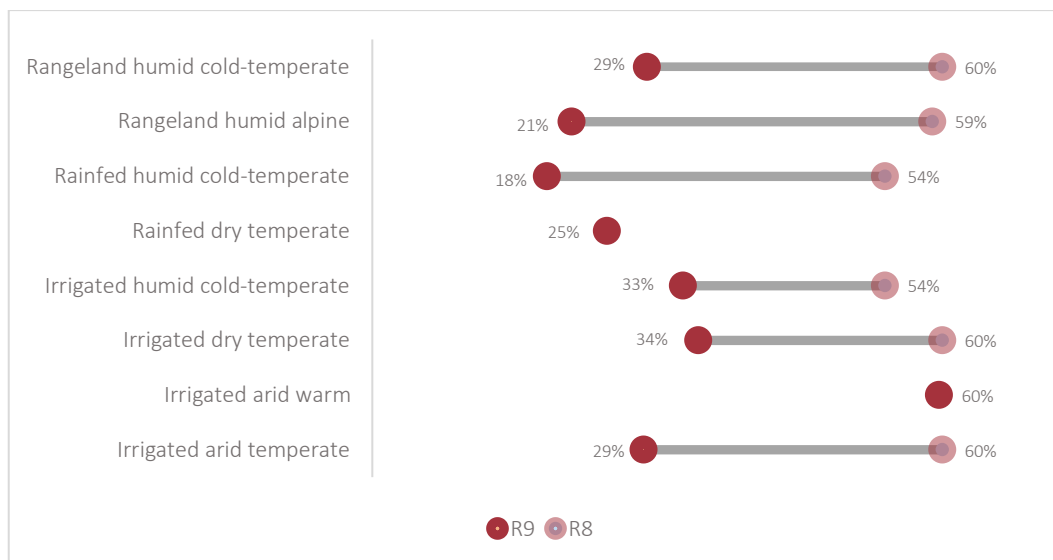
Figure 7. Livestock producers reporting breeding conditions, commercial and distress sales as reasons for herd size variation (percentage of livestock producers)



Source: FAO. 2024. DIEM-Monitoring. In: *Data in Emergencies (DIEM Hub)*. Rome. [Cited 30 October 2024]. <https://data-in-emergencies-hqfao.hub.arcgis.com/pages/monitoring-country-specific>

The share of producers with less animals than 12 months preceding the survey was still very high for goats in Zabul (76 percent), goats in Nimroz (90 percent), cattle in Langhman (78 percent), cattle in Jawzjan (74 percent), sheep in Hirat (94 percent), sheep in Faryab (95 percent) and sheep in Badghis (69 percent). In the main cattle-rearing zones (humid-cold rangeland, humid alpine rangeland, irrigated humid cold-temperate, irrigated dry and irrigated arid), the improvement was remarkable and significant for both male- and female-headed households (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Cattle producers reducing their herd size by agroecological zone (percentage of livestock producers with cattle as main animal)



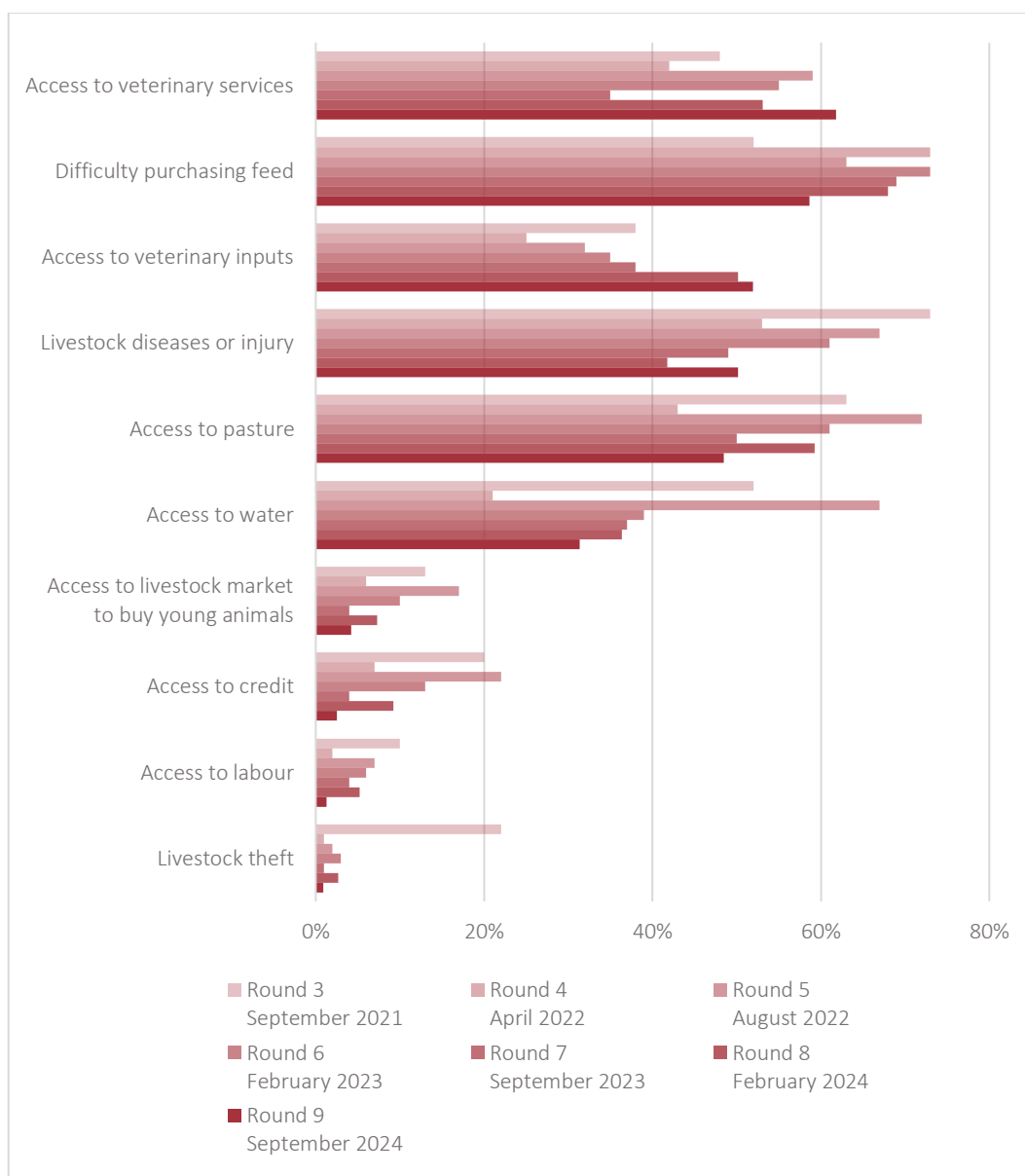
Source: FAO. 2024. DIEM-Monitoring. In: *Data in Emergencies (DIEM Hub)*, Rome. [Cited 30 October 2024]. <https://data-in-emergencies-hqfao.hub.arcgis.com/pages/monitoring-country-specific>

The proportion of sheep producers decreasing herd size has improved in the humid and in the irrigated cold temperate rangeland zones (49 percent decrease from 84 percent in the eighth round for each zone). Nevertheless, some areas showed an increase, particularly in the irrigated humid cold-temperate (from 50 percent in the eighth round to 73 percent in the current round) and in the irrigated dry temperate zone (from 57 to 64 percent).

Important reported drivers of herd decreases were livestock diseases and floods, particularly among sheep producers. The strongest association to a decrease in herd size was with the conditions of pasture, which was also associated with distress sales (although not for goat producers). Among cattle, goat and sheep producers reporting normal or good conditions, the share decreasing their herd size was 23, 44 and 54 percent, respectively. Among those reporting poor pasture conditions, the proportions were 41, 48 and 75 percent, respectively.

There was an improving trend for the most common production difficulties (such as access to feed, pasture and water) but access to veterinary services and inputs deteriorated, except for cattle producers who had the opposite trend (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Livestock production difficulties (percentage of livestock producers)

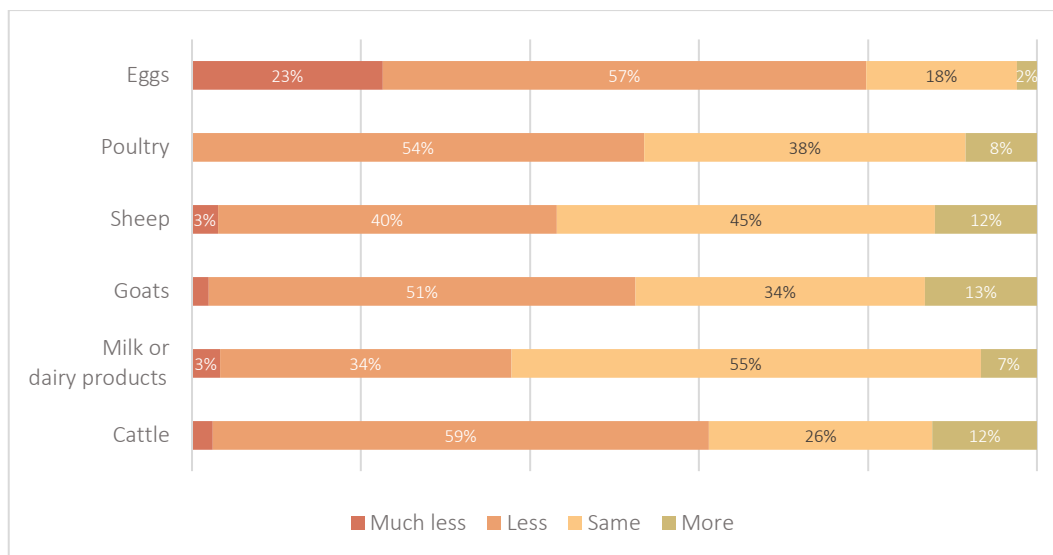


Source: FAO. 2024. DIEM-Monitoring. In: *Data in Emergencies (DIEM Hub)*, Rome. [Cited 30 October 2024]. <https://data-in-emergencies-hqfao.hub.arcgis.com/pages/monitoring-country-specific>

Difficulties accessing veterinary services and inputs were more frequent among small producers, and cattle and goat producers. In addition, the condition of pastures and the diversification of herds had an influence on the pattern of difficulties cited. With poor pastures, producers were more likely to report production difficulties, in particular access to feed, pasture and water. Livestock production in Afghanistan typically involves raising different species at the same time, but access to veterinary services and inputs becomes more difficult as the herd becomes more diversified.

The marketing of livestock products improved. Although the share of producers citing a lower-than-normal price was high (consistent with deflation), it was still lower than crops and represented an improving trend (Figure 10).

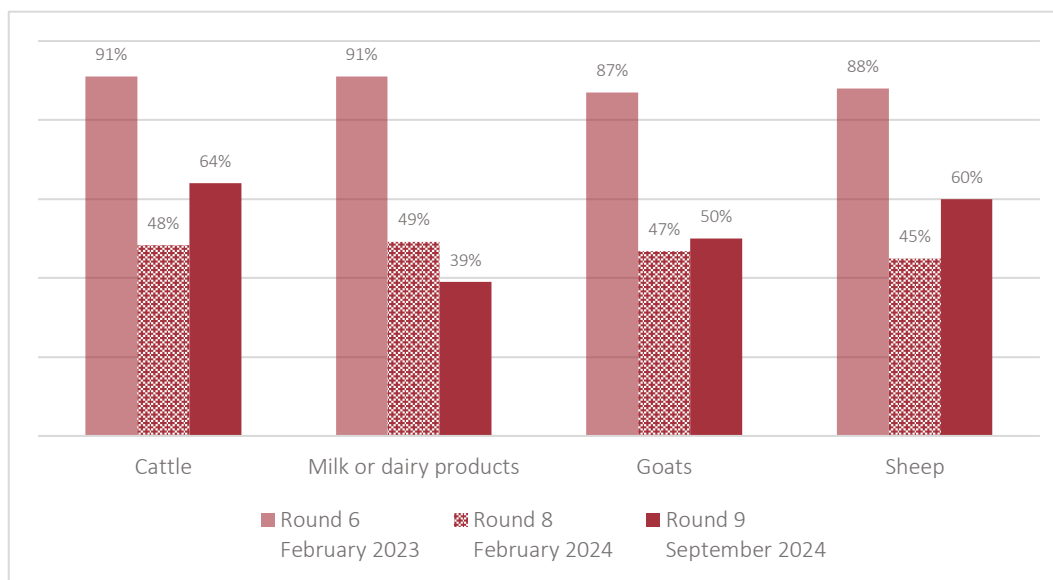
Figure 10. Price comparison of livestock products (percentage of livestock producers)



Source: FAO. 2024. DIEM-Monitoring. In: *Data in Emergencies (DIEM Hub)*, Rome. [Cited 30 October 2024]. <https://data-in-emergencies-hqfao.hub.arcgis.com/pages/monitoring-country-specific>

The proportion of producers reporting marketing difficulties decreased, especially for cattle and sheep (but not for dairy products) (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Livestock producers reporting marketing difficulties by product (percentage of livestock producers)



Source: FAO. 2024. DIEM-Monitoring. In: *Data in Emergencies (DIEM Hub)*, Rome. [Cited 30 October 2024]. <https://data-in-emergencies-hqfao.hub.arcgis.com/pages/monitoring-country-specific>

Two important drivers were associated with low prices: the condition of pastures (which were associated with distress sales, keeping prices low); and higher food prices being reported as a shock, also likely related to distress sales. This was most frequently reported for cattle (83 percent of those affected sold at a lower price, compared to 49 percent among non-affected), sheep (68 compared to 32 percent) and poultry (66 compared to 34 percent), but not for milk or other dairy products, eggs and goats. A high share of cattle producers reported lower prices in rainfed humid cold-temperate and irrigated humid

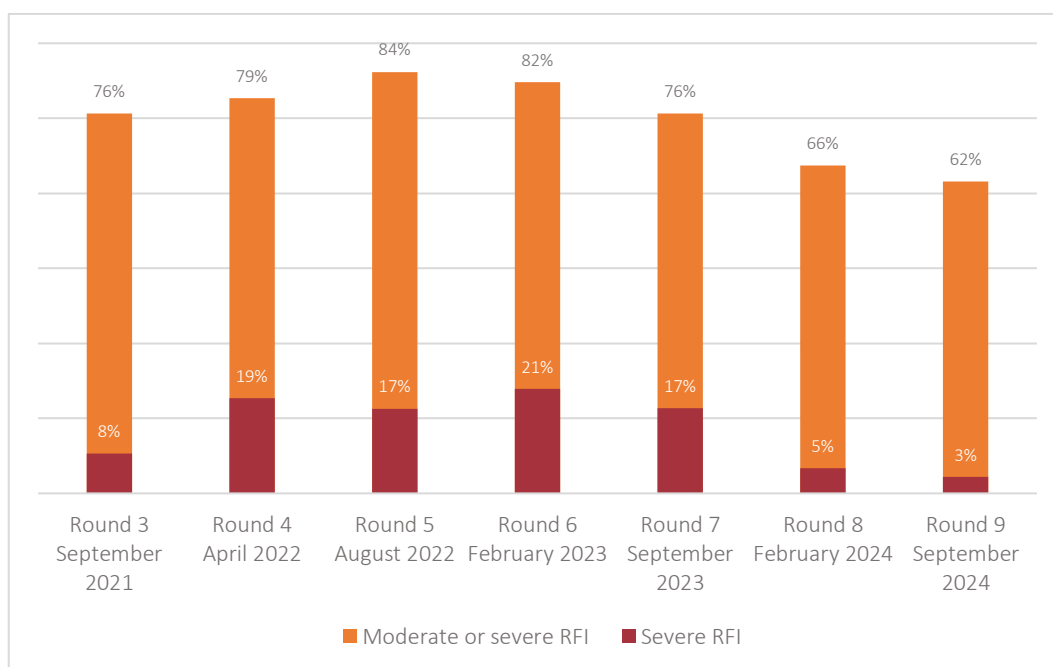
cold-temperate zones, sheep in the rangeland humid alpine zone and goats in the irrigated humid cold-temperate zone.

Among marketing difficulties, low selling price was on the rise (very high for goats, poultry and eggs) as were payment delays (particularly for dairy and eggs, likely due to consumers making purchases on credit) and oversupply (market flooded with products, particularly for dairy). Other frequent issues of the past (high marketing and transportation costs, damages and losses, and lack of demand) decreased for all products, except transportation costs for dairy and lack of demand for eggs (likely due to oversupply).

## Food security

Food consumption indicators showed notable improvement compared to the eighth round and, in general, since August 2022. The improvement was particularly remarkable for the prevalence of the most severe outcomes. The prevalence of moderate or severe RFI, estimated with the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)<sup>1</sup> dropped from 66 to 62 percent, while severe RFI decreased to 3 percent (Figure 12). The share of households with a high reduced Coping Strategy Index (rCSI) decreased by 15 percent (Figure 13). This improvement was detected by other food security indicators including indicators of dietary diversity (Figures 14 and 15).

Figure 12. FIES across rounds (percentage of households)

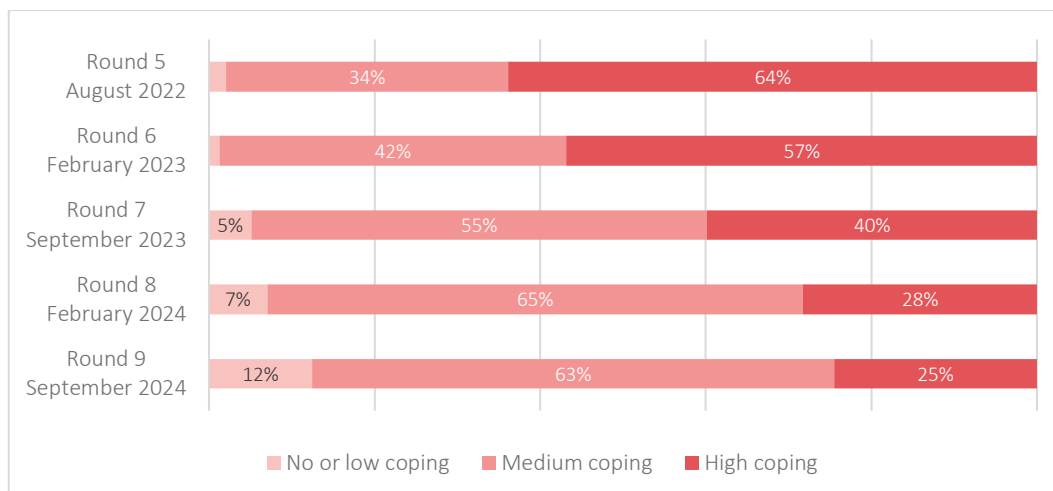


Source: FAO. 2024. DIEM-Monitoring. In: *Data in Emergencies (DIEM Hub)*. Rome. [Cited 30 October 2024]. <https://data-in-emergencies-hqfao.hub.arcgis.com/pages/monitoring-country-specific>

<sup>1</sup> FIES results are subject to change until the country scale is established for more consistent comparability across rounds.

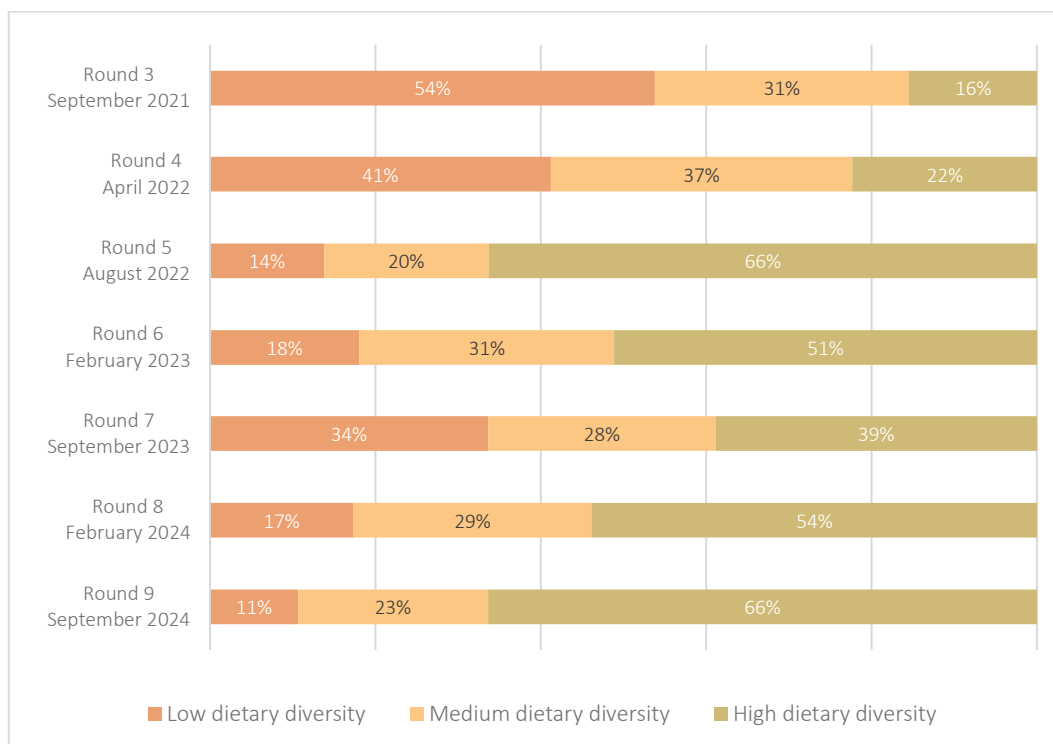


Figure 13. Reduced coping strategy index (rCSI) across rounds (percentage of households)



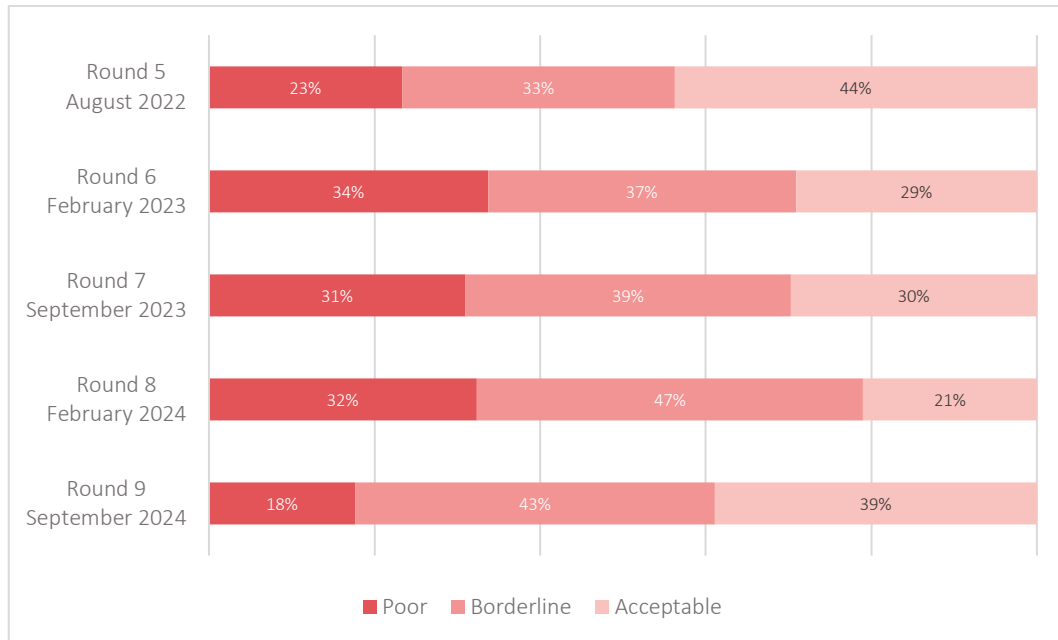
Source: FAO. 2024. DIEM-Monitoring. In: *Data in Emergencies (DIEM Hub)*. Rome. [Cited 30 October 2024]. <https://data-in-emergencies-hqfao.hub.arcgis.com/pages/monitoring-country-specific>

Figure 14. Household dietary diversity score (HDDS) across rounds (percentage of households)



Source: FAO. 2024. DIEM-Monitoring. In: *Data in Emergencies (DIEM Hub)*. Rome. [Cited 30 October 2024]. <https://data-in-emergencies-hqfao.hub.arcgis.com/pages/monitoring-country-specific>

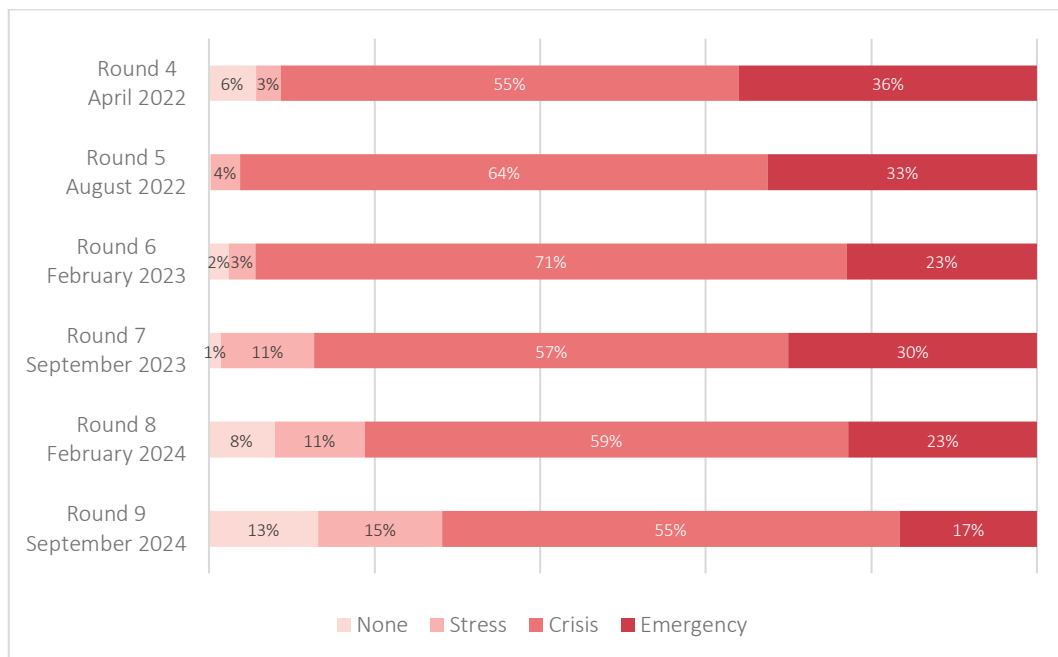
**Figure 15. Food consumption groups (derived from the food consumption score) across rounds (percentage of households)**



Source: FAO. 2024. DIEM-Monitoring. In: *Data in Emergencies (DIEM Hub)*. Rome. [Cited 30 October 2024]. <https://data-in-emergencies-hqfao.hub.arcgis.com/pages/monitoring-country-specific>

Coping strategies have shifted with a decrease in the prevalence of households adopting crisis or emergency strategies (Figure 16). During this round, the emergency category had nearly half the prevalence compared to September 2023.

**Figure 16. Livelihood coping strategy index (LCSI) across rounds (percentage of households)**



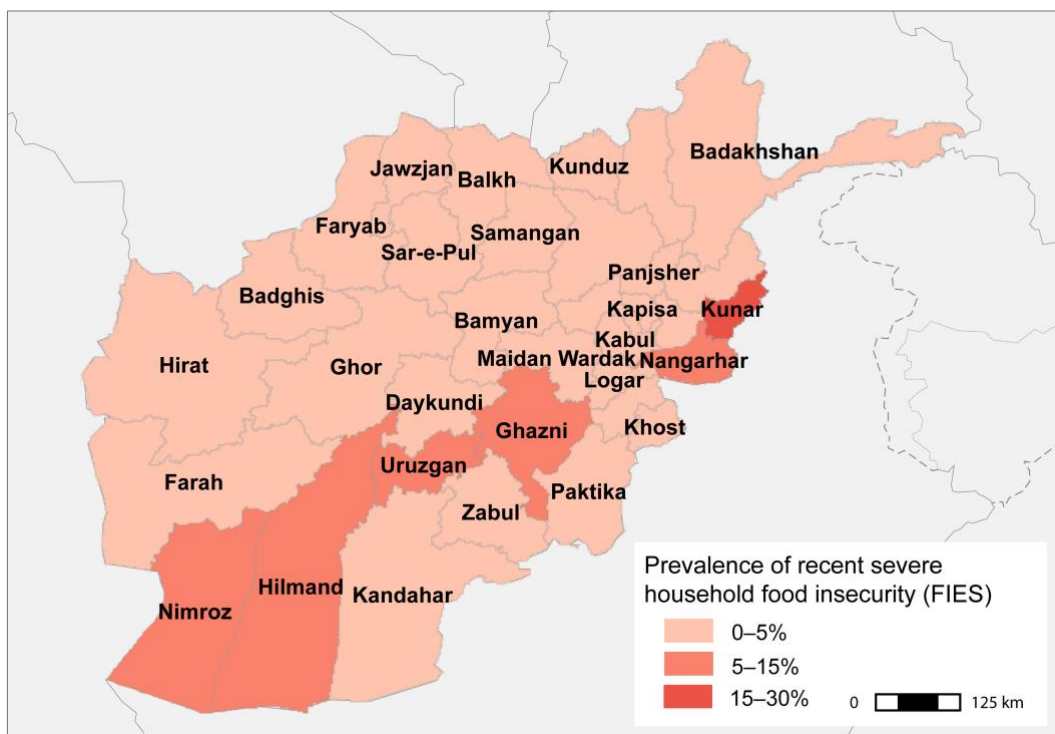
Source: FAO. 2024. DIEM-Monitoring. In: *Data in Emergencies (DIEM Hub)*. Rome. [Cited 30 October 2024]. <https://data-in-emergencies-hqfao.hub.arcgis.com/pages/monitoring-country-specific>

This improvement was consistent across most provinces, but not all. The prevalence of moderate or severe RFI was about the same as one year ago in Nuristan, Logar, Hilmand,

Daykundi, Baghlan and Badakhshan. The same prevalence deteriorated in Samangan, Nangarhar, Khost, Kandahar and Faryab.

Khost, Hilmand, Uruzgan, Nuristan, Samangan, Baghlan, Logar and Kabul provinces remained the areas where food insecurity indicators converged as the worst outcomes (Figure 17). There were, however, some differences. In Samangan, Baghlan, Logar, Kabul, Paktika, Nimroz and Ghor, the proxies for caloric intake (FIES and rCSI), as well as LCSi, indicated a high prevalence of food insecurity and decapitalization, although crisis and emergency coping strategies were employed in Kabul less than the national average. Proxies for dietary diversity showed an improvement.

Figure 17. Map of severe RFI prevalence (percentage of households)



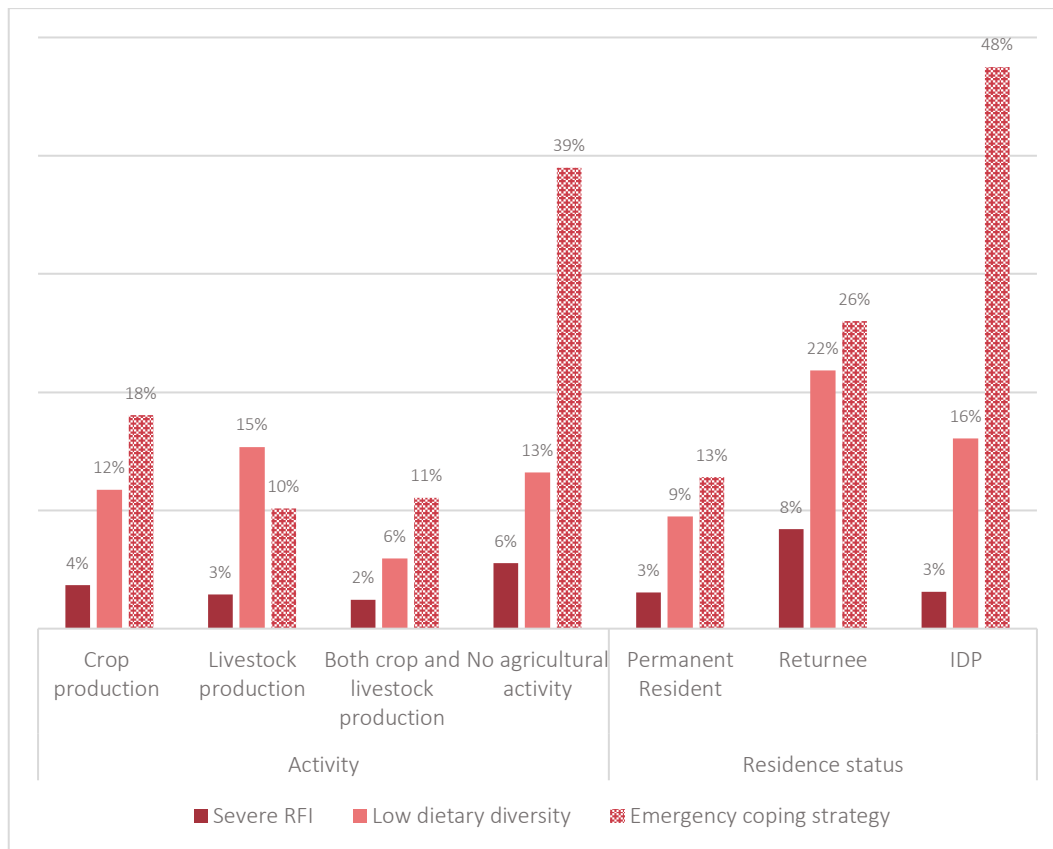
Note: Refer to the disclaimer on the back cover for the names and boundaries used in this map. The dotted line represents, approximately, the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties. Source: FAO. 2024. DIEM-Monitoring. In: *Data in Emergencies (DIEM Hub)*. Rome. [Cited 30 October 2024]. <https://data-in-emergencies-hq.fao.org/is/pages/monitoring-country-specific>

In general, the areas with the highest prevalence of emergency coping strategies did not always coincide with those that had the most severe outcomes of food consumption – severe RFI, rCSI of 18 or more, poor food consumption and low dietary diversity. The most severe categories of these indicators converged in indicating the irrigated dry temperate zone (with severe RFI of 4 percent and emergency 23 percent), and the provinces of Ghazni, Hilmand, Kunar, Uruzgan, Khost and Nagarhar as the areas of highest prevalence. The irrigated arid warm zone had a prevalence of severe RFI of 8 percent, along with Uruzgan province (9 percent), Hilmand (11 percent) and Kunar (18 percent).

Food security outcomes depended greatly on activity and residency status. Households not engaged in agriculture and non-permanent residents showed a higher prevalence of severe RFI, low dietary diversity and asset depletion (Figure 18). A particular difficulty faced by IDPs and

returnees was low engagement in agriculture. Sixty-eight percent of the former and 59 percent of the latter were engaged in non-agricultural activities, while only 2 percent of permanent residents were.

Figure 18. Food security indicators by activity and residence status (percentage of households)



Source: FAO. 2024. DIEM-Monitoring. In: *Data in Emergencies (DIEM Hub)*, Rome. [Cited 30 October 2024]. <https://data-in-emergencies-hqfao.hub.arcgis.com/pages/monitoring-country-specific>

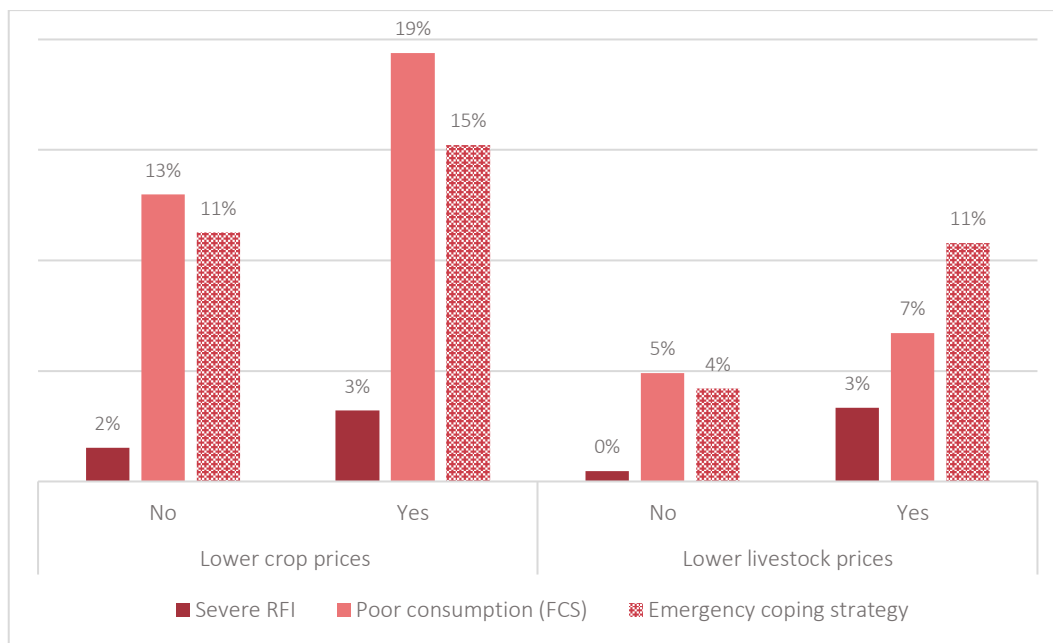
Household characteristics had an impact on food security, in particular the gender of the head of household on dietary diversity and decapitalization. Female-headed households more frequently had a low (i.e. less than 3) HDDS (15 compared to 10 percent of male-headed), poor consumption (22 compared to 17 percent) and emergency coping strategies (25 compared to 15 percent).

Some specific profiles were facing a high prevalence of food insecurity. First, landless households living off daily labour had a severe RFI of 6 percent, and a moderate or severe RFI of 60 percent (although this was 85 percent at the same time in 2023). Secondly, those with no income in the three months preceding the survey had a severe RFI of 12 percent, and moderate or severe RFI of 93 percent (up from 89 percent during the same period in 2023).

For farmers, production performance had an impact on severe RFI. The prevalence of severe RFI was 4 percent among farmers who produced less and among livestock producers with smaller herds, but only 1 percent among other producers. Floods had some impact, too, especially if the flooding occurred in the first half of May and was so severe that households had to evacuate. A strong driver of food insecurity this round was marketing.

Having to sell produce at lower-than-normal prices (quite frequent given the current deflation) was also associated with higher prevalence of food insecurity and, in particular, the most severe outcomes (Figure 19).

Figure 19. Food security indicators and sale prices (percentage of households)



Source: FAO. 2024. DIEM-Monitoring. In: *Data in Emergencies (DIEM Hub)*, Rome. [Cited 30 October 2024]. <https://data-in-emergencies-hq.fao.org/pages/monitoring-country-specific>

## Needs

Almost all households reported a pressing need for support in the coming months. The most critical needs included cash (80 percent), food assistance (76 percent) and inputs for crop production, such as seed and fertilizer, which 64 percent of households identified as essential. Infrastructure improvements, particularly irrigation, were highlighted by 43 percent of respondents emphasizing the ongoing challenges in agricultural productivity.

Livestock-related assistance also emerged as vital, with 42 percent seeking livestock feed and 32 percent requiring veterinary services. Notably, the request for training and technical knowledge (28 percent) suggests that households recognized the importance of enhancing their skills for sustainable agricultural practices. Provinces like Badakhshan and Badghis exhibited some of the highest needs.

## Recommendations

Despite recent improvements, there is still a need for comprehensive support, targeted interventions, and adaptive strategies to enhance resilience and stability in the surveyed communities, particularly among vulnerable groups. This requires both short-, medium- and long-term actions aimed at fostering sustained stability and addressing underlying vulnerabilities.

### Short-term recommendations (1–6 months)

- > Prioritize emergency food assistance for the most vulnerable groups, such as female-headed households, landless labourers, returnees and IDPs, especially during the upcoming winter period.
- > Address the affordability of farming inputs through external support, in particular for small producers. Include interventions to distribute and provide essential farming inputs (seed and fertilizer, veterinary services and livestock feed).
- > Diversify cropping patterns and herds which are associated with better outcomes. By producing a variety of goods, farmers can mitigate the risk of relying heavily on a single commodity that has a price more susceptible to inflation or deflation.
- > Provide targeted support for pest and disease management (e.g. integrated pest management) to prepare for upcoming seasons. Market support is recommended for crop producers, in particular.

### Medium- and long-term recommendations (6–24 months)

- > Expand low-cost and sustainable irrigation systems to mitigate water access challenges, especially for regions reliant on groundwater. Solutions should be tailored to the local context.
- > Prioritize vulnerable groups and targeted interventions to address the specific needs of IDPs, returnees, female-headed households and rural communities, focusing on food security and livelihood diversification. Develop reintegration programmes concentrating on land access and income generation.
- > Strengthen and implement strategies to build community resilience, including community-based disaster preparedness, early warning systems, flood resistant infrastructure and sustainable land use practices.

- > Enhance data collection and analysis, promote the use of evidence to inform decision making and develop multi-sectoral programmes with other UN agencies.

## References

**World Bank.** 2024. *Afghanistan economic monitor, October 2024*. Washington, D.C.  
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