

- The maternal mortality rate is estimated as 620 per 100,000 live births, the infant mortality rate 47.5 per 1,000 live births and the under-five mortality rate 60.3 per 1,000 live births;
- Around 10% of population (mainly living in rural areas and internally displaced persons' (IDPs') camps) have no access to health services within 2 hours and 43% must travel more than half an hour;
- Prior to the suspension of development assistance, access to the Basic Package of Health Services was accessible to only around 50% of population;
- Shortages of female medical staff has always been an issue, especially in rural areas. Barriers to female employment are complex and have only become more difficult after 15 August;
- Prolonged conflict and insecurity have resulted in exceptionally high levels of mental health disorders registered, including depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder, self-harm and suicide. Children are also affected, which can be seen in the prevalence of emotional problems at 39%, conduct disorders at 41%, attention deficit hyperactive disorder at 15% and problems with peers at 52%. 11.5% of children are impaired in their daily lives because of a mental health problem;
- The COVID-19 pandemic, with around 155,000 registered cases, is affecting routine health services, in addition to the suffering from the direct health effects of the virus. Indirect effects include increased malnutrition, loss of livelihoods, reduced access to regular healthcare and social tension, which particularly affect the most vulnerable groups.. In February 2021, the first vaccines were rolled out under the COVAX facility and donations from India. Although more donations followed from COVAX and other countries, the vaccination rate has lagged significantly. The country was severely hit by a wave of the Delta variant infections in the summer of 2021;
- Measles and cholera are spreading and tuberculosis is widespread. Afghanistan is also one of the last two countries in the world where polio is still endemic and on the rise since 2018. The year 2020 and the first half of 2021 were very challenging for Afghanistan's polio eradication programme due to COVID-19, restrictions imposed by anti-government entities and attacks on polio vaccination teams. While the new *de facto* authorities at central level have approved of female health professionals going to work and vaccination campaigns being carried out at mosques, house-to-house vaccinations are not permitted and female staff are increasingly facing challenges in doing their work, subject to regional differences. This can have an impact on service provision to female beneficiaries.

Malnutrition (acute and chronic) is a serious development and humanitarian challenge. At least 26 out of 34 provinces are above the emergency threshold for acute malnutrition. Despite rising poverty, Afghanistan had been on course to reach the international stunting target for 2025 and has also achieved progress on wasting. However, Afghanistan continues to have one of the highest rates of child stunting in the world, with substantial variation across provinces: 5 provinces have stunting rates ranging from 47% to over 70%. Deficiencies in micronutrients, including iodine, Vitamin A, Vitamin D and iron, are widespread. Only 15.5% of Afghan children aged 6-23 months receive a minimally adequate diet.