



UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND

Earthquake in Northern Afghanistan

FLASH UPDATE

04 NOVEMBER 2025

Highlights

At 00:59 local time on 3 November 2025, a 6.3-magnitude earthquake struck northern Afghanistan, near the border of Balkh and Samangan provinces, at a depth of 28 kilometres. Initial assessments indicate that over 185 houses were destroyed – including more than 145 in Khulm District, Samangan – with additional reports of damage still being verified.

Preliminary figures show that at least 25 people have been killed and 961 injured, though numbers are expected to rise as access improves and assessments continue. Early reports confirm damage to several UNFPA-supported Family Health Houses in Hazrat-e-Sultan and Dara Souf districts.

In Balkh Province, the worst-affected areas include Charkent, Chemtal, Keshendeh, Marmul, Mazar-e-Sharif, and Sholgara, where many homes sustained heavy or total damage. In Samangan Province, the districts of Feroz Nakhchir, Hazrat-e-Sultan, and Khulm were hardest hit, with widespread structural destruction reported.

UNFPA teams are on the ground, providing life-saving sexual and reproductive health services and psychosocial support to affected women, girls, and persons with disabilities in both provinces. Eight supported facilities and four Mobile Health Teams are delivering emergency care, while Reproductive Health Kits and dignity kits have been distributed to meet urgent needs.

Situation Overview

According to the Provincial Disaster Management Committee (PDMC), the districts of Feroz Nakhchir, Khulm, and Hazrat-e-Sultan are among the most severely affected by the earthquake. Several roads, including the Balkh–Samangan highway, remain blocked, causing delays to assessment and response operations. Local authorities and humanitarian partners are closely monitoring the situation to ensure timely access and delivery of assistance as soon as routes are cleared.

Humanitarian partners are working with the de facto authorities to conduct multisectoral rapid needs assessments and to deploy emergency health, shelter, and protection services in the hardest-hit districts of Samangan and Balkh provinces. Initial assessments indicate that some UNFPA-supported Family Health Houses in Hazrat-e-Sultan and Dara Souf districts have sustained damage.

The Samangan Governor's Office has convened a coordination meeting with relevant agencies, including UNFPA partners, to align efforts across sectors. In Balkh Province, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) is leading the overall response. A joint assessment team – including the UNFPA Emergency Response Team composed of coordination, reproductive health, and protection officers – is currently assessing needs in Khulm District.

UNFPA teams remain on standby to provide urgent assistance through eight supported static facilities in the affected areas, comprising six Family Health Houses, two Mother and Child Health Centers, and four Mobile Health Teams. The number of casualties is expected to rise as access improves and assessment teams reach more communities in the coming days.

UNFPA Response

The UNFPA Emergency Response Team (ERT), as part of the Joint Assessment Team led by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), conducted the first field assessment on 3 November in Khulm District, Samangan Province. Initial findings indicated that 145 households in Samangan and 40 in Balkh Province were affected by the earthquake. The ERT continues to support inter-agency rapid assessments to develop a comprehensive understanding of the evolving needs of women, girls, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups.

On the same day, UNFPA delivered 17 Inter-Agency Reproductive Health (IARH) kits to Samangan Provincial Hospital and Khulm District Hospital, enhancing their capacity to provide life-saving maternal and reproductive health services for up to 816 women of reproductive age. These supplies ensure the continuity of essential maternal and newborn care, support emergency obstetric services, and address the urgent health needs of women and girls affected by the earthquake.

Two UNFPA-supported Mobile Health Teams have been mobilized in Feroz Nakhchir and Hazrat-e-Sultan districts to deliver emergency healthcare, including maternal and reproductive health services and psychosocial support. In addition, an ambulance staffed with a midwife, medical doctor, and pharmacist has been deployed to Samangan Province, remaining on standby for immediate dispatch to affected areas.

The ERT will also facilitate the distribution of dignity kits to meet the hygiene and protection needs of women and girls, alongside complementary relief items such as blankets and tarpaulin sheets to help affected families cope with harsh living conditions. To promote inclusive response efforts, UNFPA will distribute its guidance note on disability inclusion to humanitarian partners, ensuring that the needs of persons with disabilities are integrated into emergency interventions from the outset.

Psychosocial support services: UNFPA has deployed four Psychosocial Support (PSS) teams – two in Samangan and two in Balkh – to support women and girls affected by the earthquake and to strengthen access to essential, life-saving services. Each team includes a female counselor, a male counselor, a female community mobilizer, and a guard. The counselors and mobilizers have been trained in Psychological First Aid (PFA) and psychosocial support, enabling them to provide immediate emotional care and referrals to specialized services. These teams have been mobilized from existing Maternal and Child Health Clinics, Psychosocial Counseling Centres, and Basic Health Centres in both provinces. In addition, dignity kits have been prepositioned to ensure that women and girls – including those with disabilities – have access to essential hygiene and protection supplies.

As of 4 November 2025, assessments remain ongoing, with two locations – Feroz Nakhchir and Khulm districts of Samangan Province – designated for the deployment of Psychosocial Support (PSS) teams. The teams have begun providing essential services, including Psychological First Aid and psychosocial support to 15 women and girls, awareness-raising sessions reaching 82 participants, and the distribution of 20 dignity kits to women and girls in need.



Awareness raising session by social mobilizer (Photo by IMC/Afghanistan)



Distribution of Dignity Kit to earthquake affected women (Photo by IMC/Afghanistan)

Accountability to Affected People: UNFPA will deploy community engagement focal points through implementing partners to consult with affected communities. Help desks will be set up at UNFPA service points to provide information and collect feedback. The Awaaz interagency hotline will also be promoted to ensure multiple channels for community feedback. UNFPA, as the lead of the Accountability to Affected People (AAP) Working Group, is coordinating closely with humanitarian partners to align activities across the response to ensure efforts remain inclusive, accountable, and responsive to the needs of the affected population.

Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment: UNFPA will work collectively with partners under the inter-agency Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Sexual Harassment (PSEAH) framework to uphold the highest standards of accountability and protection during the earthquake response. On 5 November 2025, UNFPA convened an ad-hoc meeting of the PSEA Network, during which members agreed on the first steps to strengthen coordinated prevention and response efforts. These include the distribution and roll-out of the Code of Conduct to all staff and partners engaged in the response, the implementation of the PSEA minimum standards checklist, and the distribution of awareness messages to affected communities to ensure they understand their rights, available services, and reporting channels. UNFPA, as the lead of the PSEA Network, will continue joint monitoring and follow-up to ensure adherence to the Code of Conduct and effective community engagement on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.

For more information

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