

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Urgent Funding Needed as Earthquake Compounds Afghanistan's Humanitarian Crisis

KABUL, AFGHANISTAN – September 3, 2025 – A powerful 6.0 magnitude earthquake struck Kunar and Jalalabad on Sunday, August 31, 2025, killing over 1,400 people and injuring thousands more. The disaster has destroyed or damaged over 5,000 houses, and these numbers are expected to rise as search and rescue efforts continue. The earthquake has hit a country already facing a severe humanitarian crisis, with nearly half of its population—23 million people—dependent on aid.

"This disaster has struck a county already facing a severe humanitarian crisis. Urgent support is needed to scale up and meet existing and new needs caused by this earthquake," said a CARE spokesperson. "Entire villages have been destroyed. Roads are blocked, forcing our teams to walk for hours to reach survivors and assess their most urgent needs."

Families urgently need food, clean water, temporary shelter, blankets, medicine, and other essential household items. Access to medical care is critical, and poor sanitation poses a serious health risk. The repeated aftershocks have left communities traumatized, making psychosocial support vital for their recovery.

Women and Girls at Highest Risk

Decades of work in Afghanistan, including the Herat earthquake two years ago, have shown CARE that women and girls will face the biggest barriers to recovery and safety. Amidst the destruction, women and girls face specific risks and needs. They lack privacy and safe spaces, and restrictions on movement make it harder for them to get help. Women-headed households, widows, and women with disabilities are often the hardest hit.

"Women often face additional challenges in accessing food, shelter, and other services. Our response will focus on ensuring that women and girls are able to safely access aid and receive the assistance they need," the spokesperson added. Women aid workers are essential to this effort, as many women feel safer and more comfortable when aid is delivered by female staff. However, recent restrictions on their work and shrinking funding have made this support harder to deliver.

Call to Action: Global Community Must Stand with Afghans

The global community must stand with Afghans. The UN's humanitarian response plan for Afghanistan is less than one-third funded, and recent cuts in humanitarian aid have severely weakened the capacity of organizations to respond.

"We need the global community to stand with Afghans. We are calling on donors to urgently fast-track flexible funding to support life-saving efforts and address the emergency needs of the affected communities," the spokesperson concluded. "The earthquake is happening in the context of severe funding cuts that have reduced the overall response capacity, alongside a massive influx of returnees that is further overstressing the ability to respond."

About CARE in Afghanistan

CARE has been working in Afghanistan for decades, responding to major disasters and providing life-saving assistance. Our teams, along with local partners, are on the ground conducting rapid needs assessments and delivering aid, with a focus on the most vulnerable.