

Foreign Secretary pledges to support over 2.7 million Afghans with life-saving aid

- UK pledges £97 million of emergency aid for vital humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan this winter.
- Funding will provide over 2.7 million people with food, health services, and water amid a worsening crisis.
- Humanitarian agencies also boosted by change in UK law this week making it easier for them to deliver aid in Afghanistan.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss has pledged £97 million of emergency UK aid to the Afghan people to provide life-saving food and emergency health support, as well as water and sanitation facilities.

This latest allocation of vital support means the UK has now delivered on its promise to double UK aid to Afghanistan, with £286 million committed this financial year. UK aid allocated since October will support over 60 hospitals, provide health services for over 300,000 people; ensure 4.47 million people get emergency food assistance through the World Food Programme; and provide 6.1 million people with emergency health, water, protection, shelter, food, and education support through the UN Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund.

The Prime Minister's Special Representative for Afghanistan Nigel Casey and government officials joined a meeting of US and European Special Representatives for Afghanistan in Oslo earlier this week to discuss economic and humanitarian issues, security and counter-terrorism, and human rights. UK officials made clear to the Taliban delegation our serious concerns about human rights – in particular the rights of women and girls and reports of reprisals against former members of the Afghan security forces.

The UK continues to work with international partners to ensure aid agencies can work unimpeded and that desperately needed aid reaches those most in need.

Earlier this week the UK government adopted into law a humanitarian exception from UN sanctions meaning aid agencies can operate without fear of undue legal repercussions. Previously, charities and humanitarian agencies trying to bring aid into Afghanistan faced legal difficulties as a result of UN sanctions against senior Taliban leaders.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

The UK continues to provide vital humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan. We have doubled UK aid this year to save lives, protect women and girls and support stability in the region.

The funds announced today will mean essential food, shelter and health supplies will reach those who are most in need.

Funds announced today will be used to provide food and healthcare, as well as assistance to survivors of gender-based violence. The support will also fund essential child protection services. Aid agencies will prioritise those most at risk, including households headed by women and people with disabilities.

The UK funding will be primarily channelled through the UN Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund ,World Food Programme (WFP), and United Nations Children's Fund. No funding will go directly to the Taliban.

The UK is playing a leading role in the international efforts to address the causes of the economic crisis in Afghanistan. This includes working with the World Bank, UN and US to find ways for humanitarian agencies to access currency; and supporting the World Bank to unlock existing funds within the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund to help the Afghan people.

ENDS