

UK provides lifesaving support to the Afghan people following devastating earthquake



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The UK will provide £2.5 million for immediate life-saving support to people in Afghanistan affected by the devastating earthquake this week, Foreign Secretary Liz Truss announced today.

At least 1,000 people are reported to have been killed in the disaster in the southeast of the country on Wednesday 22 June and more than 1,400 others injured. These numbers are expected to increase as responders reach the hardest-hit areas.

A total of £2 million will go to the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) to provide shelter, medication, water, sanitation, and other basic needs. The IFRC already has staff and volunteers working on the ground to respond to the crisis and help address the urgent humanitarian needs – including in Khost and Paktika, the 2 provinces most heavily impacted.

A further £500,000 will go to the Norwegian Refugee Council, who are already working on the ground, to provide shelter and cash assistance to those affected.

This support will come from the UK's aid fund for Afghanistan, which is £286 million this financial year, one of the largest bilateral programmes. Last year the UK's funding supported emergency health services, water, protection, shelter, food, and education through the UN Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund and World Food Programme.

International partners, including the United Nations and World Food Programme, are coordinating the global response and

rapidly assessing the humanitarian needs. The UK is in direct contact with them to offer assistance and stands ready to consider any requests for aid or other help. UK aid was already delivering to the affected areas prior to the earthquake via the UN, NGOs and Red Cross.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said:

The recent earthquake is a tragedy for the people of Afghanistan. The scale of need was already severe before the earthquake struck, with more than half of the population requiring humanitarian assistance.

UK support will enable lifesaving supplies to be provided on the ground. Our aid budget for Afghanistan is one of the UK's largest bilateral programmes and we will continue to work urgently with our international partners to respond to the unfolding humanitarian crisis.

The UK co-hosted a high-level international pledging summit with the UN in March 2022, to provide more vital funds. This helped the response to the UN's appeal of nearly \$4.5 billion for Afghanistan, their largest appeal on record for a single country, reflecting the magnitude of the humanitarian challenge that was already facing the country before the earthquake. UK funding is channelled through UN partners and NGOs. No funding goes to or through the Taliban.

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