



Afghanistan Food Security Monitoring Bulletin (AFSMB)

WARNING



Jointly Prepared by:

- the Vulnerability Analysis Unit of MRRD
- the Central Statistics Office (CSO)
- the Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) Unit of WFP Afghanistan

Issued: May, 2008

Overview

The information gathered relates to the following indicators:

- Food Consumption Scores
- Caloric Intake
- Food Expenditure
- Food Sources
- Cereal Availability/Balances
- Rainfall and Snowfall
- Market Prices
- Asset Ownership
- Coping Strategies

Highlights

- This food security monitoring exercise was conducted using information from interviews of 3,264 households in 34 provinces, in addition to various secondary sources.
- A limited set of vulnerability indicators were selected to provide an update on the food security situation and the food price increase impact in vulnerable areas.
- Below-average levels and poorly dispersed **rain and snow** during the 2007-08 crop season, **high food prices**, and very poor **cereal supplies** have contributed to increased risk of food insecurity and malnutrition, including amongst sedentary farmers, nomads, casual laborers and civil servants, especially teachers, who have little or no direct access to food. The situation is expected to worsen as the 2007/2008 marketing year progresses.
- Current FSMS data suggests that:
- 35% of Afghan households do not meet their minimum daily kilocalorie intake. This is 5% higher than the findings in the 2005 NRVA.
- 46% of households were classified as having a very poor dietary diversity and very poor food consumption.
- a greater proportion of household expenditure is spent on food items. The proportion of expenditure on food is highest in the north (85%).
- Country-wide, cereal production in 2008 is expected to be poorer than in 2007. MAIL crop estimates are still awaited.
- Reduction of food quality and quantities, purchasing on credit and reduced discretionary expenditure were the main coping strategies across the country.
- Afghan food markets are greatly affected by a ban imposed by the Pakistani Government on wheat and wheat flour exports, as well as a similar ban by the Government of Kazakhstan and a wheat export tax by the Iran Government.
- Prices of food – most remarkably wheat flour and wheat have increased by 160% in the main cities of Afghanistan over the past year. As an indication; since January 2008 the wheat price has risen to a countrywide average of 60%.

North:	Faryab, Jawzjan, Sari-Pul, Balkh, and Samangan
Central:	Kabul, Parwan, Panjsher, Kapisa, Logar and Wardak
South:	Paktya, Paktika, Khost, and Ghazni
South-West:	Kandahar, Daikunde, Zabul, Hilmand, Urozgan and Nimroz
West- Central:	Ghor, and Bamyan
West:	Hirat, Farah, and Bagdhis
East:	Nangarhar, Laghman, Kunar, and Nuristan
Northeast:	Baglan, Kunduz, Takhar, and Badakshan

Background/Overview:

The Food Security Monitoring System (FSMS), part of the Early Warning/Monitoring System, has been developed and conducted in partnership with the Vulnerability Analysis Unit (VAU) of the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), and with support from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) and WFP Headquarters.

The primary source of information for the current FSMS Bulletin is the National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (NRVA) 2007/2008.

Methodology:

For the current Bulletin we have used the NRVA 2007/08 which has been formed by the household questionnaire. The household questionnaire consists of the following 20 sections; the first 15 responded by the male head of household or male respondent, and the last five by the female members of the household:

1. Household Roster
2. Housing and Utilities
3. Livestock
4. Agriculture
5. Assets and Credit
6. Education
7. Disability
8. Sources of Household Income
9. Labor and Migration of HH Members
10. Cash/Food for work
11. Migration out of HH and Remittances
12. Household Expenditures
13. Household Shocks and Coping Strategies
14. Final Male Section- Demobilization, Literacy
15. Food Consumption in last 7 Days
16. Iodized Salt, Avian Flu, HH Expenditures
17. Number of Children Born and Marriage Information (for married women 49 years or less)
18. Recent Births (for women with children born after August 2005)
19. Immunizations (for children under 5 years)
20. Women's Activities

Sampling:

In the NRVA 2007/08, 2,600 Primary Sampling Units (PSUs) in rural and urban areas have been used, with eight families in each selected. The sample thereafter is divided into 12 months.

Overall Findings:

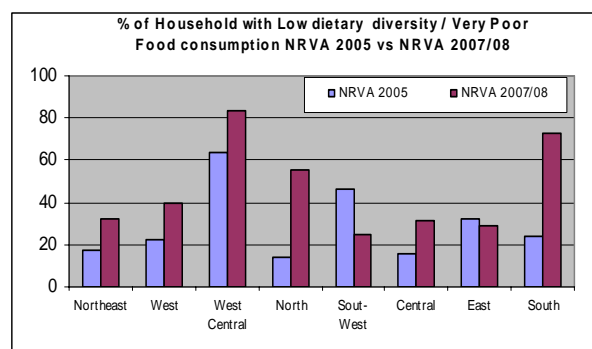
Changes in the food security situation in Afghanistan (FSMS findings compared to 2005 NRVA findings) are described as follows (also see map 7 and table 1).

Category	Province
1	Significantly Improved
2	Slightly Improved
3	No Changes Badakhshan, Badghis, Bamyan, Daikindi, Farah, Faryab, Ghor, Hilmand, Hirat, Jawzjan, Kandahar, Kunduz, Laghman, Nimroz, Paktika, Parwan, Samangan, Sar-I-Pol, Takhar And Zabul
4	Slightly Deteriorated Baghlan, Balkh, Ghazni, Kabul, Kapisa, Kunarha, Logar, Nangarhar, Nuristan, Paktya, Panjsher, Uruzgan And Wardak
5	Significantly Deteriorated Khost
6	No Data available

Food consumption¹ -

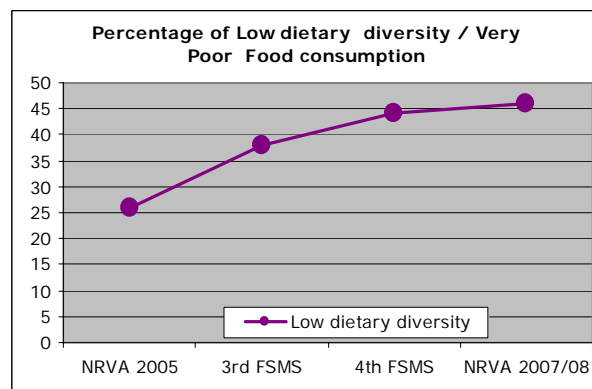
Overall, 46% of the sampled households are characterized by low dietary diversity and very poor food consumption.

The highest percentage of households with poor



food consumption are found in the west central, south and north of the country (significantly deteriorated 25% to 45% of HHs) compared to the 2005 NRVA. In the northeast, central and west, it is slightly deteriorated (10% to 20% of HHs), whereas in the east and southwest it is slightly improved (see map 1 and table 2).

The graph below shows a change of 20% in the

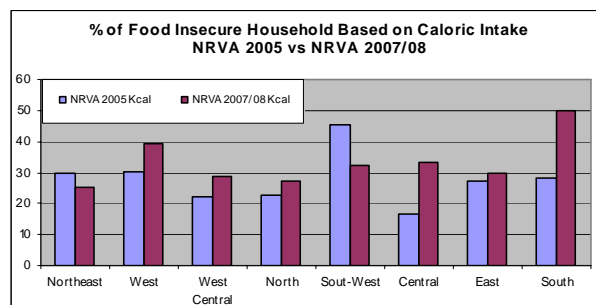


¹ The household food consumption classification followed a set of criteria based on the consumption of food items belonging to the main seven food groups: cereals; legumes and oilseeds; tubers and roots; vegetables and fruits; animal products; oils and fats; and milk and milk products.

dietary diversity and food consumption of households. The main reason behind these changes is believed to be the higher food prices.

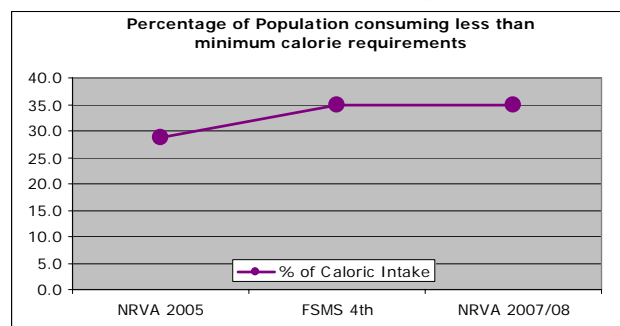
People consuming less than minimum calorie requirements –

The NRVA data indicates that on average 35% of households eat below their daily requirement. This is a 5 % increase from the NRVA 2005.



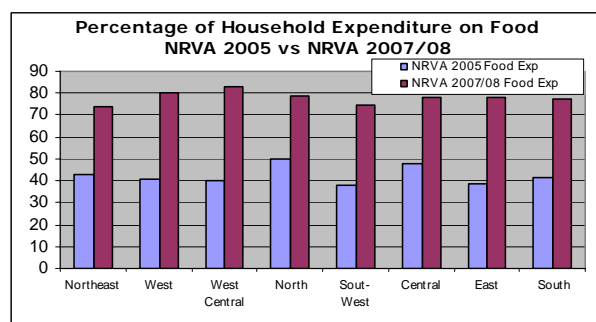
Household food security has significantly deteriorated in the southern and central parts of the country. In the west, west central and north, it has slightly deteriorated. Some improvements have been noted in the southwest and northeast. No changes have been observed in the northern and eastern parts of the country (see map 2).

The graph below shows a changing trend of 5 % in the kilo caloric intakes of households (NRVA 2005 vs. NRVA 2008 month 4 data).

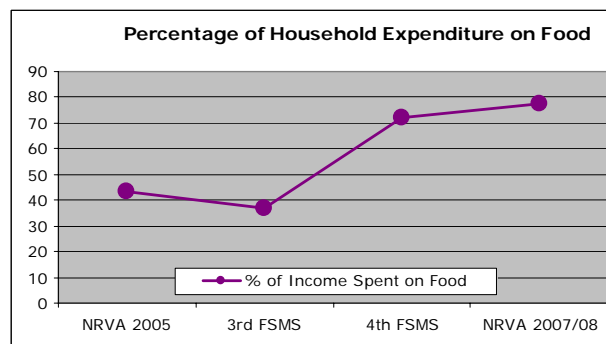


Food Expenditure –

Overall, a large proportion of household expenditure is on food items. The proportion of expenditure is highest (85%) in the north, however the proportion of expenditure on food is equally high in other parts of the country (from 75% to 80%) (see map 3).



The graph below shows the difference of food expenditures between NRVA 2005 and NRVA 2007/08. The expenditures on food have greatly increased compared to the 3rd FSMS, which was conducted in August 2006, particularly after increasing of the food price.



Cereal Availability/Balance -

Cereal is the most important staple in the Afghan diet. Even in a very good agricultural year, like 2003, most Afghan farmers are not self-sufficient in their staple cereal crops and the country is dependent on food aid, as well as cereal imports from Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Iran.

During 2007-2008, after an exceptional good harvest in 2007, most (around 50%) of the farmers were well below self-sufficiency in cereals, few (around 20%) were at, or near, self-sufficiency, and one third of the farmers – mainly those located in the north and west of the country - had a surplus.

The marketable wheat surplus was concentrated in only a small fraction of the surplus farms. In Afghanistan the top farmers cannot produce more than 10 tonnes. Even if the degree of self-sufficiency can improve with higher productivity and rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure, most farmers cannot be self-sufficient with their existing resources. However, the 2007 improvement in farm self sufficiency would probably have reversed with possible poor crop in 2008.²

Based on the cereal production table, 2003 and 2005 showed very good harvests, mainly due to favorable weather conditions. In 2004 and 2006 production dipped considerably due to reduced rainfall in much of the country. Wheat production in 2007 was 33% higher than 2006. Due to reduced early spring rainfall and less winter snow in most of the country, cereals production in 2008 is expected to be lower than the previous year.

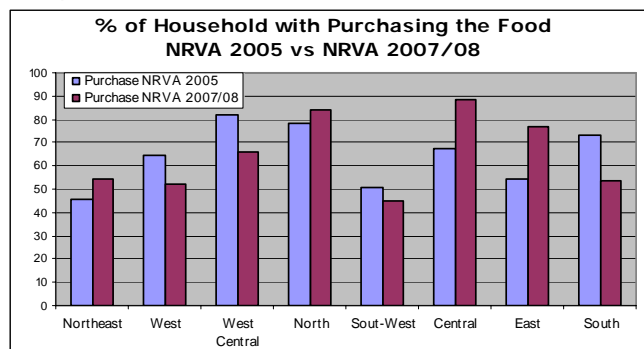
² Sources: interview with Key informants

Cereal production in Afghanistan - (2003-2008) ('000 tonnes)

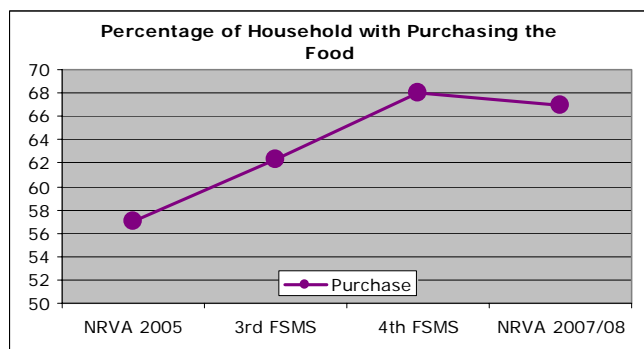
Crop	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Irrigated wheat	3,017	1,867	2,728	2,604	2,878	x
Rainfed wheat	1,345	426	1,538	759	1,606	x
Total wheat	4,362	2,293	4,266	3,363	4,484	x
Milled Rice	291	310	325	361	370	x
Maize	310	234	315	359	360	x
Barley	410	220	337	364	370	x
Total cereals	5,373	3,057	5,243	4,447	5,584	x

Food Sources -

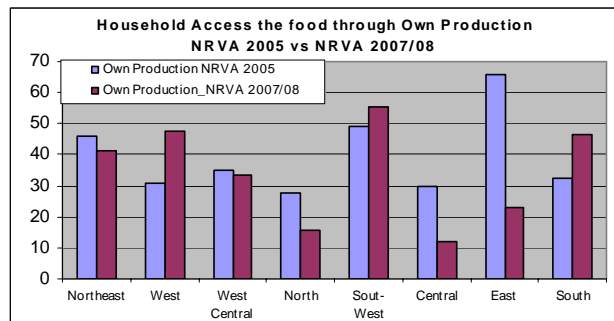
1. **Purchase** - The graph below indicates a slight increase in purchases of food items in the central, northeast, north and east of the country, whilst in the remainder of the country there has been a slight decrease in purchased food. (see map 4).



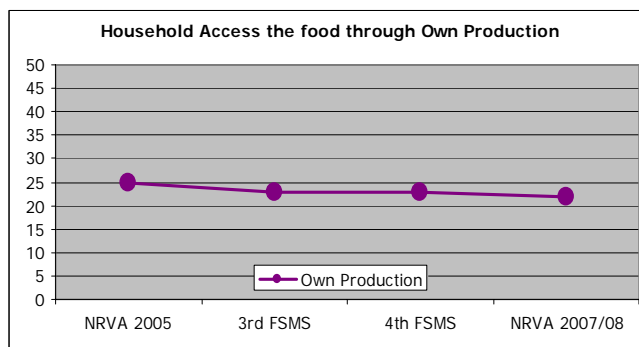
The trend data from the NRVA 2005 compared to NRVA 2007/2008 shows a 10% increase in household purchases. Purchases of food is similar to the 4th round of the FSMS, which was conducted in March and April 2007, the lean season.



Own production – There was a decline in the access of food through own production in the east, north and central part of the country. A slight increase occurred in own production as the main source of food in the south, south west and west. The west central and north east remained unchanged.



The chart below shows almost no difference in the food access of the household through own production, which compare the findings of the



NRVA 2005 vs. NRVA 2007/2008.

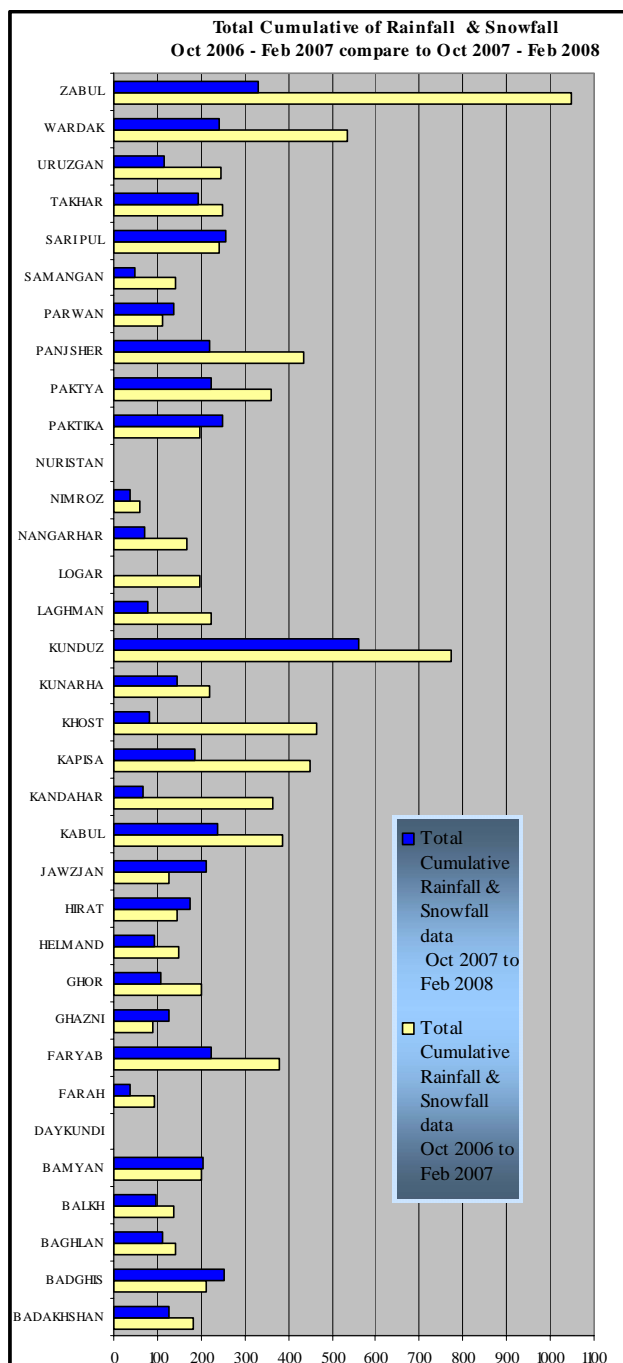
Rainfall and Snowfall –

The root causes of food production problems in Afghanistan are the low snowfall and rainfall, during the winter and spring. This past spring rainfall was mostly late, lower than normal and poorly dispersed.

Rainfall in the month of March was poorer than the year before. However, it increased slightly in April – though it remains below the cumulative of the long term average.

Overall, the cumulative rainfall and snowfall data from October 2006 to March 2007 was significantly lower than October 2007 to March 2008 in Faryab, Ghor, Kabul, Kandahar, Kapisa, Khost, Kundoz, Laghman, Logar, Nangarhar, Pakyia, Panjsheer, Wardak and Zabul provinces. Whilst the cumulative rainfall recorded at the same time was slightly higher in Badghis, Hirat, Jawzjan and Paktika provinces. In the rest of the country it remained unchanged.

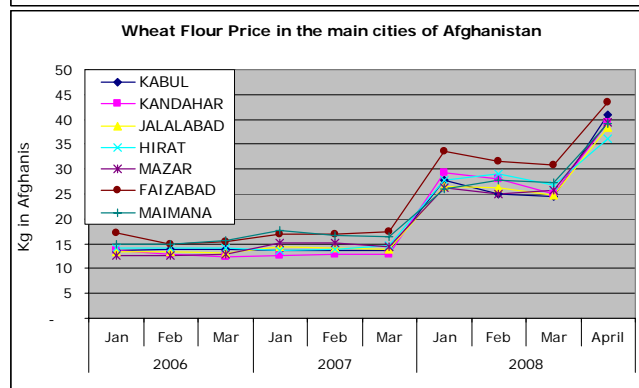
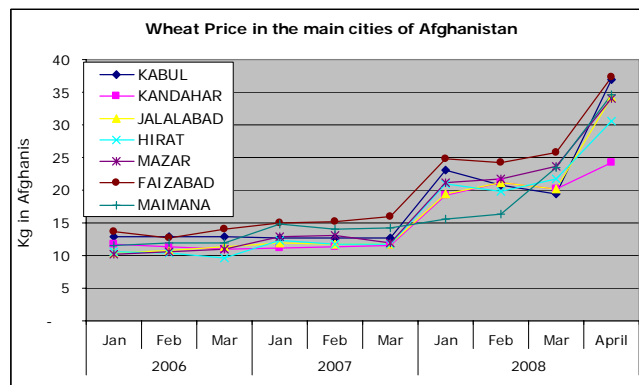
The country's irrigation water depends to a large extent on the melting of snows that feed the river systems and irrigation schemes and which also provide necessary soil moisture in the rain-fed areas. The disastrous weather situation, especially a lack of snow, in the mentioned provinces could result in a significant decline in the irrigated wheat yield. (see map 5)



Market Prices –

The cereal markets in Afghanistan are free enterprise and over half of the flour marketed in Afghanistan is typically imported from Pakistan. Currently the Afghan food markets are affected

by a strict ban imposed by the Pakistani government on wheat and wheat flour exports. Pakistan is also affected by increasing global food prices. As a result the prices of food - namely wheat flour and wheat - have increased by over 160% in the main cities of Afghanistan over the past year. The below charts highlight the wheat and wheat flour prices in the main cities in 2006, 2007 and 2008.



In April 2008, market prices for wheat ranged from a low – US\$ 490/tonne in Kandahar in the South, to the high – US\$ 750/tonne in Faizabad (due to market shortages in the northeast). In comparison to prices in April 2007, there was an overall increase in prices, most notably in Jalalabad (200%), Mazari-Sharif (196%), Kabul (184%), Hirat (165%), Maimana (137%), Faizabad (134%) and Kandahar (104%).

Area	Markets	Retail Wheat Prices April 2008 (US\$/MT)	Percent change from April 2007 -% = % decrease +% = % increase
South, East & Centre	Kandahar	490	+104%
	Jalalabad	690	+200%
	Kabul	740	+184%
	Gerdez	NA	NA
	Nilli	570	NA
West & North	Hirat	610	+165%
	Ghor	500	NA
	Maimana	690	+137%
	Mazar-I-Sharif	680	+196%
	Faizabad	750	+134%

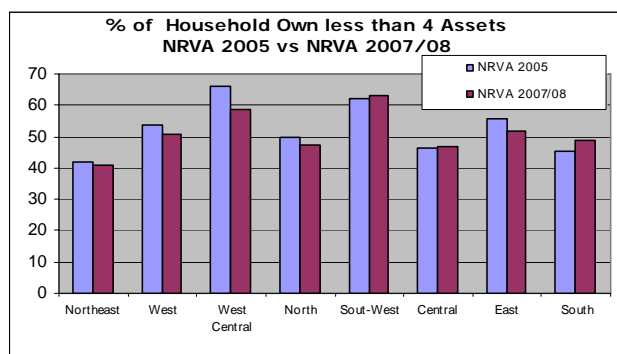
NA=Data Not Available Source: Weekly Market price in the main cities World Food Program (VAM)

Household assets -

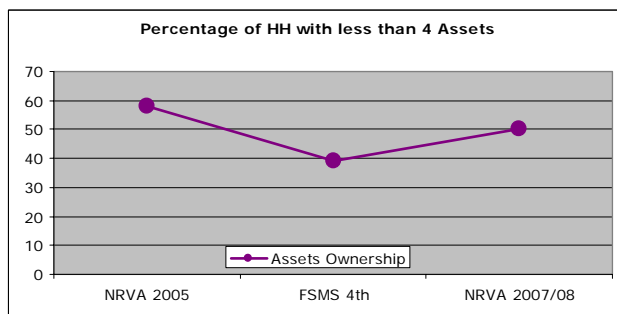
Based on NRVA 2007/2008 findings, households were grouped into four categories accordingly to the number of assets that the households owned: 1 to 2 assets, 3 to 4 assets, 5 to 6 assets and more than 6 assets.

Typical households tend to have less than four assets from the list consisting of mattresses, radios, bicycles, livestock, etc.

The survey discovered that most (60%) of households reported to have less than 4 assets in the west central and southwest parts of the country. In the remaining parts of the country only 40 to 50% of households have less than 4 assets.



The graphs below show a parallel with asset ownerships in the country in comparison to the



2005 NRVA findings. (see map 6)

reduced their dietary quality to decrease spending and save money. Data from the central region showed a reduction in quality and quantity of food, expenditure and purchase on credit by 35%. In the central highlands and in the west, a smaller number - 20% of households - reported a decrease in expenditures. The northern region experienced a reduction in the quality of food as a coping mechanism to deal with shocks by 15% of the households.

Coping strategy -

The harsh winter, increased prices of food and non-food items, and reduced income opportunities, were the overriding factors faced by the large majority of households. Reduction of food quality, reduction of food quantities, purchasing on credit and reduced expenditure were the main and most common coping strategies employed across the country.

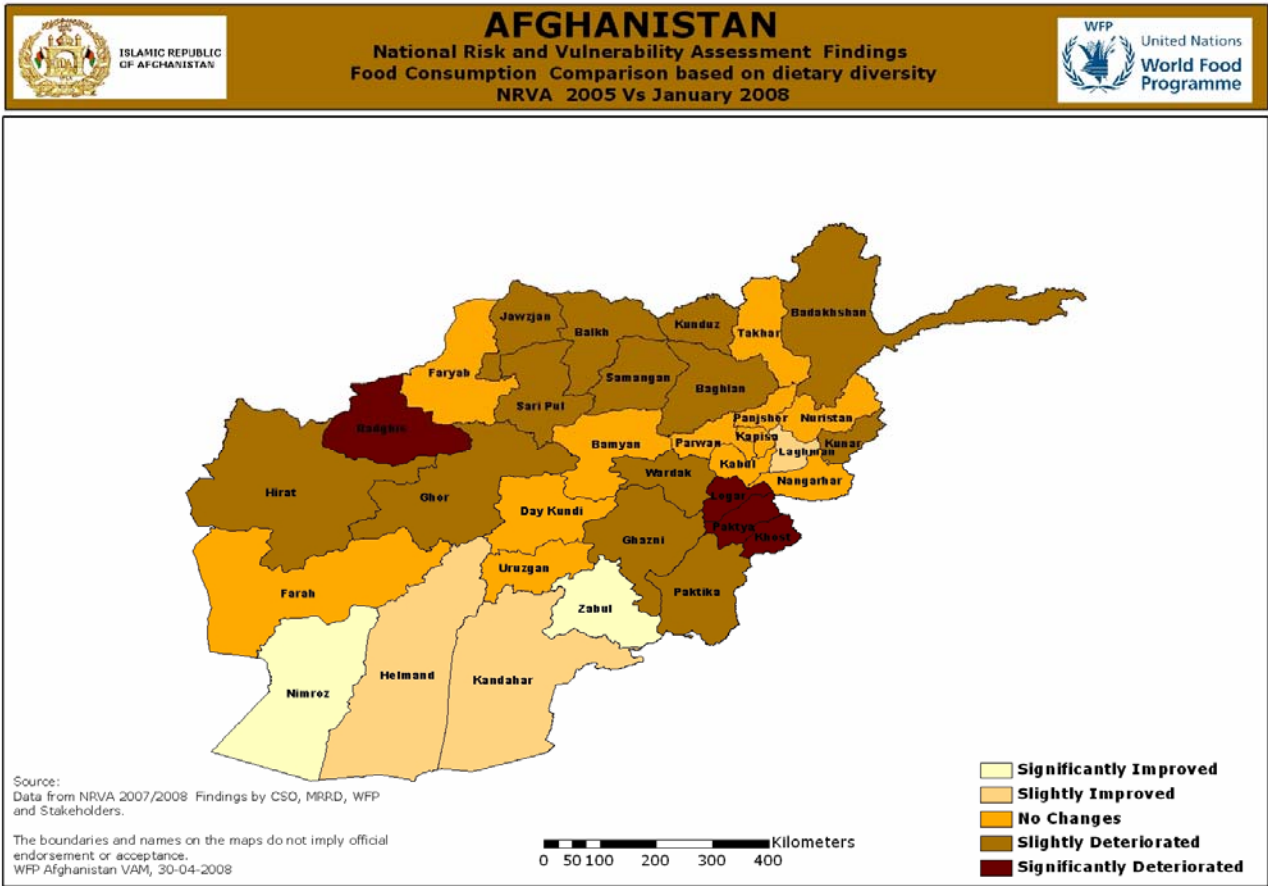
Data for the northeast reveals that 36% of the people used coping strategies of loans from friends or purchasing of food on credit, whereas 30% of the households in the southern region

Table 1 Overall finding:

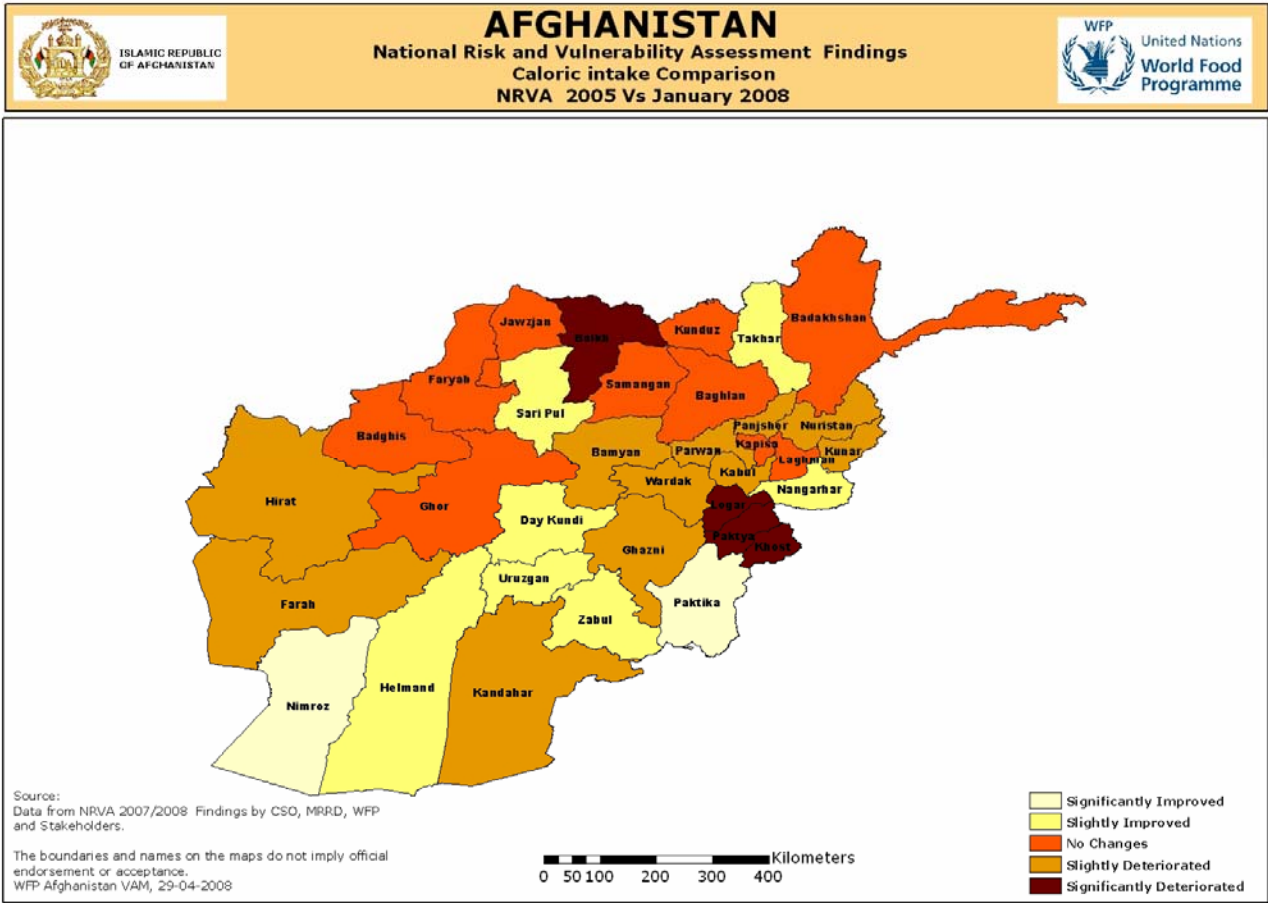
Province	Food Consumption	Purchase	Own Production	Expenditure	Caloric intake	Assets	Rainfall & Snowfall compression in % Oct 2006 to Feb 2007 vs. Oct 2007 to Feb 2008	Overall ranking
BADAKHSHAN	4	4	3	4	3	2	4	3
BADGHIS	5	4	2	4	3	2	2	3
BAGHLAN	4	4	3	4	3	4	4	4
BALKH	4	3	4	4	5	2	4	4
BAMYAN	3	2	4	5	4	2	3	3
DAIKINDI	3	1	5	5	2	2	3	3
FARAH	3	1	5	4	4	2	5	3
FARYAB	3	3	3	4	3	4	4	3
GHAZNI	4	4	5	3	4	4	2	4
GHOR	4	3	3	4	3	2	4	3
HILMAND	2	1	5	5	2	2	4	3
HIRAT	4	2	4	5	4	2	2	3
JAWZJAN	4	3	3	4	3	4	2	3
KABUL	3	4	3	4	4	3	4	4
KANDAHAR	2	3	4	4	4	2	5	3
KAPISA	3	5	1	5	3	4	5	4
KHOST	5	4	4	5	5	4	5	5
KUNARHA	4	5	1	5	4	5	4	4
KUNDUZ	4	2	4	4	3	3	4	3
LAGHMAN	2	3	3	4	3	2	5	3
LOGAR	5	2	5	5	5	2	5	4
NANGARHAR	3	4	4	5	2	2	5	4
NIMROZ	1	2	5	5	1	2	4	3
NURISTAN	3	4	5	4	4	5	3	4
PAKTIKA	4	1	5	4	1	2	2	3
PAKTYA	5	1	4	4	5	2	4	4
PANJSHER	3	5	3	3	4	4	4	4
PARWAN	3	4	4	4	4	2	2	3
SAMANGAN	4	4	2	4	3	2	5	3
SAR-I-POL	4	5	1	4	2	5	3	3
TAKHAR	3	4	2	4	2	3	4	3
URUZGAN	3	4	5	4	2	2	5	4
WARDAK	4	4	4	4	4	2	5	4
ZABUL	1	4	5	4	2	2	5	3

1 = Significantly Improved, 2 = Slightly Improved, 3 = No Changes, 4 = Slightly Deteriorated, 5 = Significantly Deteriorated, 6 = No Data

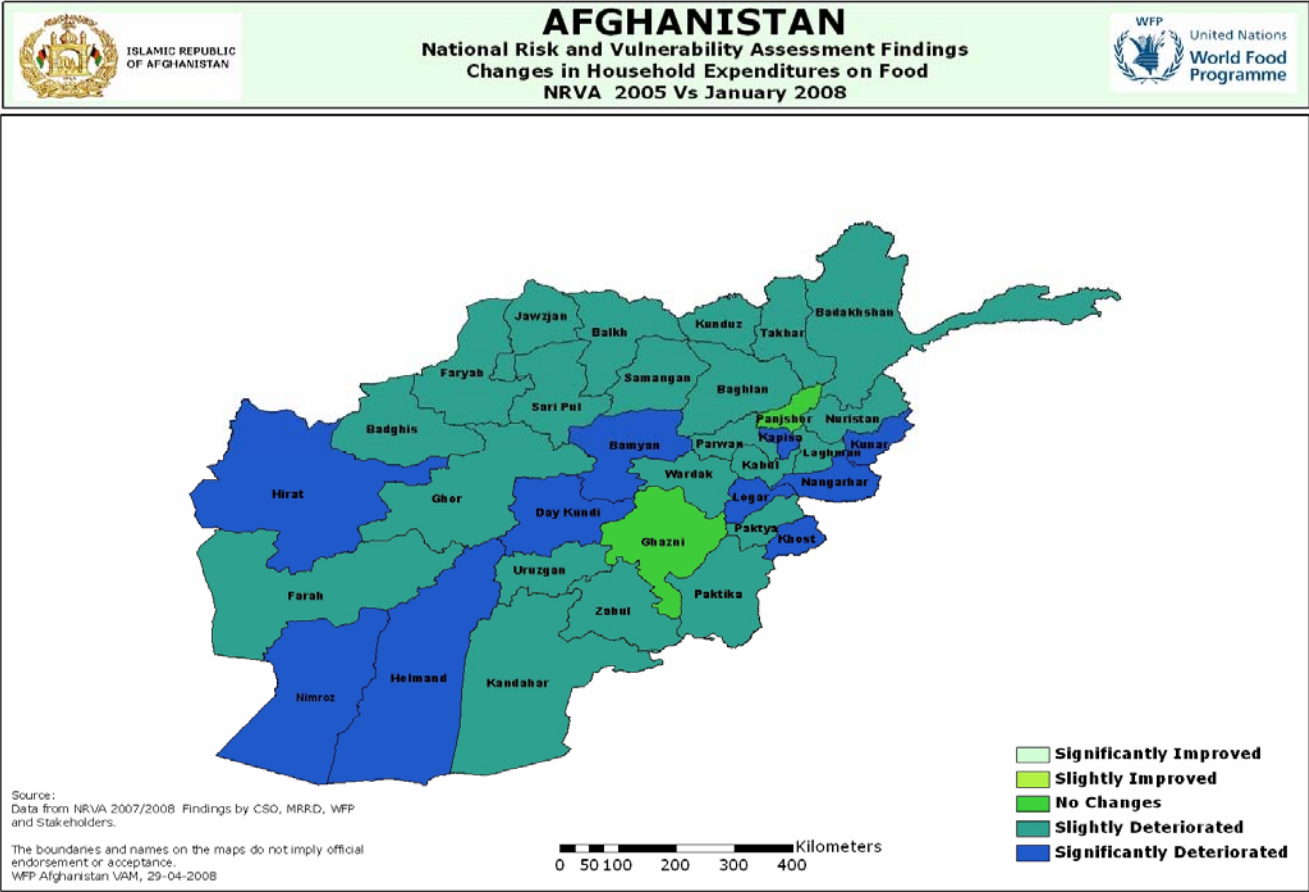
Map 1, Food Consumption Comparison based on dietary diversity



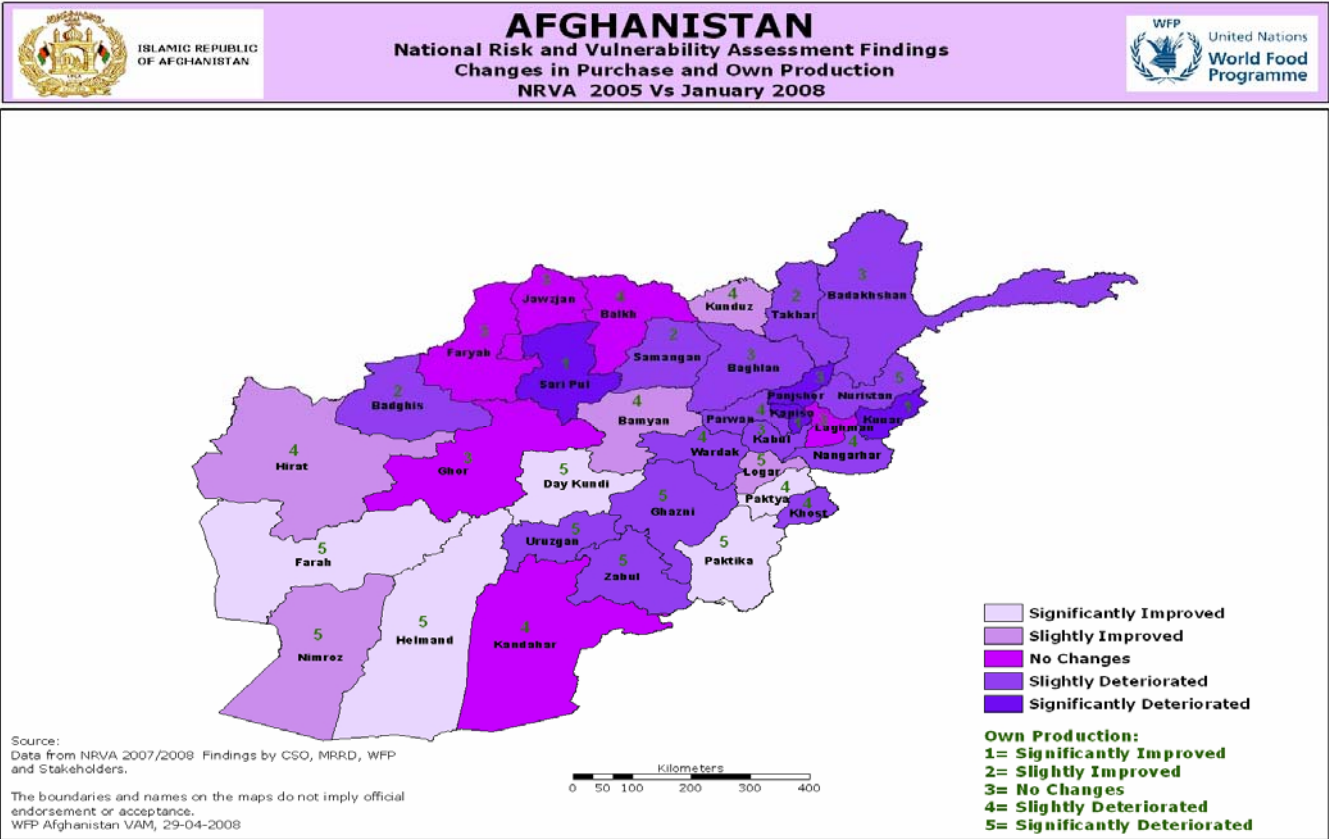
Map 2, Population consuming less than minimum calorie requirements



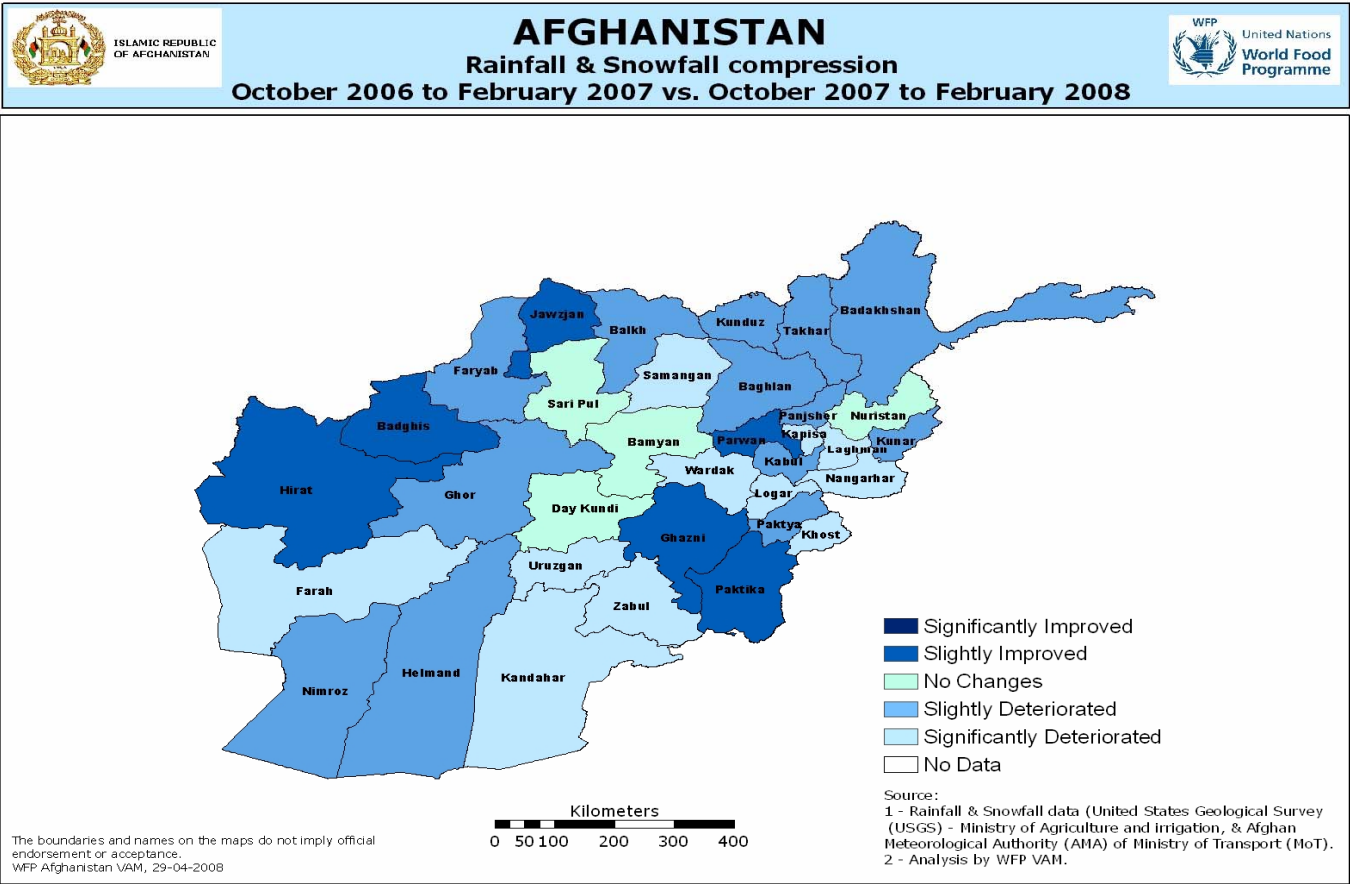
Map 3 Food Expenditure



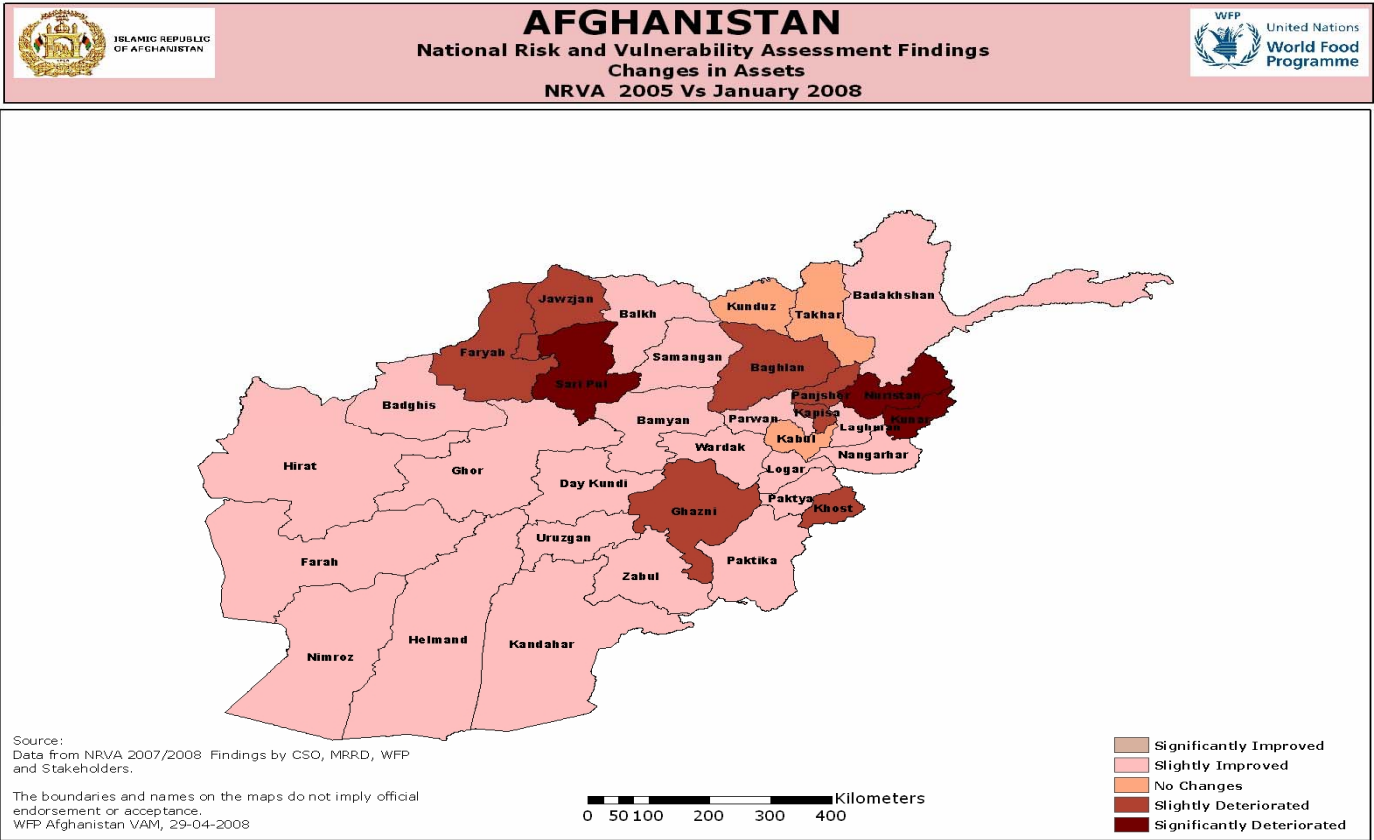
Map 4, Sources of Food



Map 5, Rainfall and Snowfall



Map 6, Assets



Map 7, Overall Finding NRVA 2005 VS. FSMS 3rd, 4th and January 2008

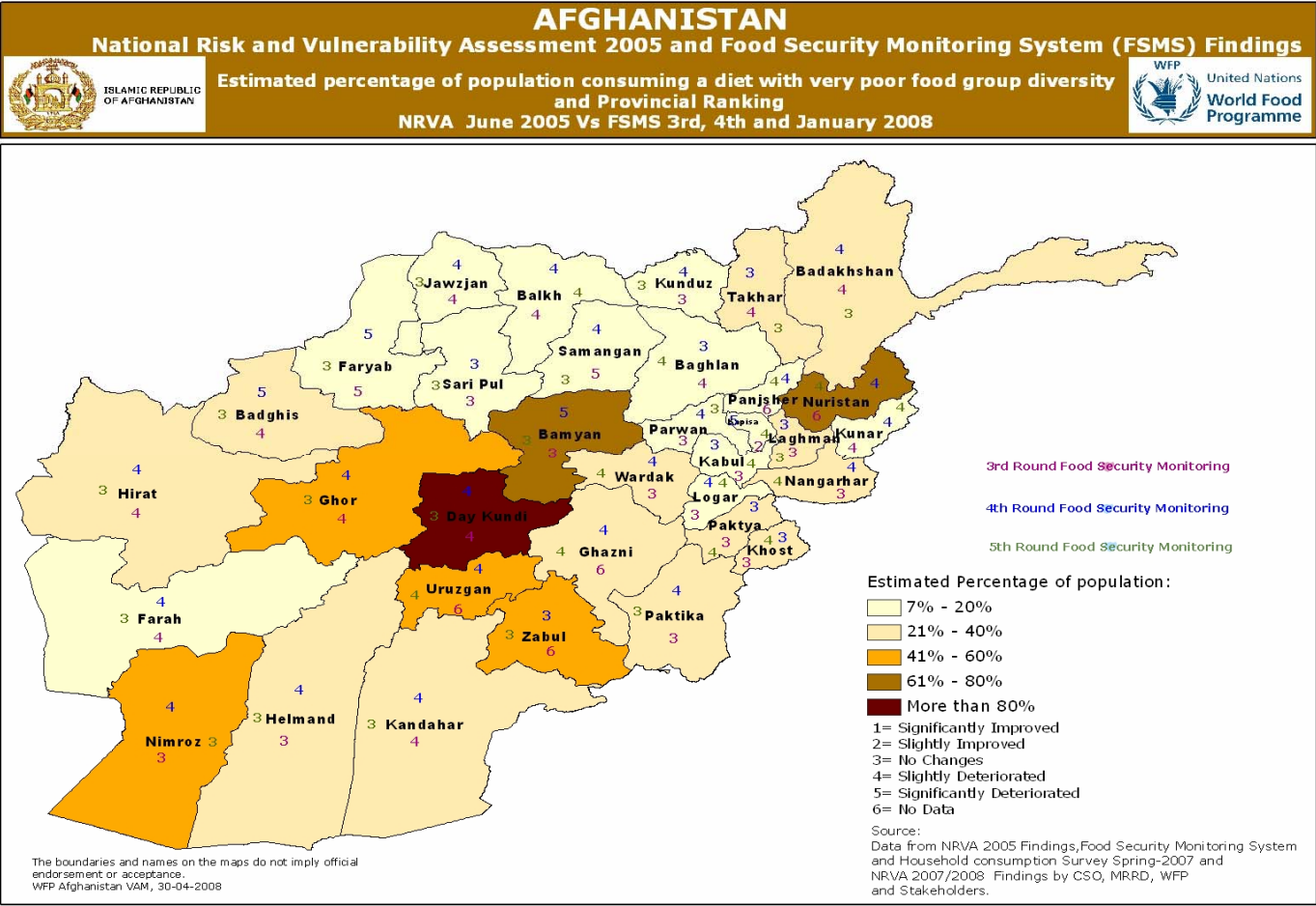


Table 2 Food consumption in province level

Province	Low dietary diversity / Very Poor Food consumption	Low dietary diversity / Poor Food consumption	Better dietary diversity / Slightly Better Food consumption	Better dietary diversity /Better Food consumption
Badakhshan	47	21	29	3
Badghis	78	20	0	2
Baghlan	39	30	10	20
Balkh	63	28	6	4
Bamyan	73	25	2	0
Daykundi	55	41	1	3
Farah	29	17	15	40
Faryab	38	31	16	15
Ghazni	68	10	20	2
Ghor	94	6	0	0
Helmand	13	15	31	40
Herat	42	31	5	22
Jawzjan	59	31	0	10
Kabul	17	26	18	38
Kandahar	13	25	12	51
Kapisa	13	17	50	21
Khost	81	5	14	0
Kunarha	24	15	59	3
Kunduz	37	39	15	9
Laghman	19	19	46	17
Logar	77	11	9	3
Nangarhar	21	31	38	9
Nimroz	22	23	21	34
Nooristan	52	40	5	3
Paktika	56	30	14	0
Paktya	88	8	4	0
Panjsher	25	13	41	21
Parwan	11	48	19	22
Samangan	77	23	0	0
Sar-I- Pul	61	36	2	2
Takhar	16	19	10	56
Urozgan	50	46	4	0
Wardak	67	6	23	4
Zabul	35	29	38	2
	46	24	17	13