

# SEEDS AFGHANISTAN

*Research Institute Food Security Afghanistan*



## ANNUAL REPORT 2025

---

*Advancing Food Security Through Independent Research*

---

Jaarverslag 2025 · Seeds Afghanistan ·

[www.seedsafghanistan.org](http://www.seedsafghanistan.org)

## Organisational Profile

|                |                                                                        |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Organisation   | Seeds Afghanistan                                                      |
| Legal Form     | Stichting (Foundation) – Independent Non-Profit                        |
| Focus Area     | Food Security Research – Afghanistan                                   |
| Reporting Year | 1 January 2025 – 31 December 2025                                      |
| Base Country   | Netherlands (operational) / Afghanistan (field)                        |
| Website        | <a href="http://www.seedsafghanistan.org">www.seedsafghanistan.org</a> |



## 1. Foreword

In 2025, Afghanistan continued to face severe challenges related to food security. In the period September–October 2025, an estimated 13.8 million individuals — representing 28% of the population — experienced food insecurity at Phase 3 (crisis) or worse, with conditions expected to deteriorate further during the winter season.

In this context, the importance of independent, high-quality research remained undiminished. Seeds Afghanistan worked throughout the year to generate reliable evidence to support informed policy and programmatic decisions. We are deeply grateful to our staff, our partners, and our donors for their continued trust and support.



## 2. About Seeds Afghanistan

Seeds Afghanistan is an independent, non-profit research institute focused on food security in Afghanistan. Our mission is to contribute to improved food security through evidence-based research and knowledge sharing. The organisation operates on a non-profit basis and serves the public interest.

### Mission

To generate and disseminate independent, high-quality research that connects local Afghan realities with global knowledge institutions, placing local stakeholders at the centre of every phase of research and development.

### Core Values

- Independence and scientific integrity
  - Grassroots engagement and local ownership
  - Transparency and accountability
  - Equity – with particular attention to women and youth
  - Practical applicability of research findings
- Making findings and materials freely available

### 3. Context and Relevance

Food insecurity in Afghanistan is driven by a combination of political and economic instability, climate-related shocks, and severely limited access to markets and essential services. Female-led households are disproportionately at risk given increasing restrictions on women's economic participation. Food security interventions in Afghanistan often don't get rolled out further or scaled up for lack of scientific evidence.

Seeds Afghanistan addresses this gap by producing independent, high-quality research that connects local realities with leading research institutions, committed to a grassroots approach that places local stakeholders in the lead at every stage of research and development.

**13.8M**

People in food crisis (Phase 3+)

**28%**

Share of population affected

**3**

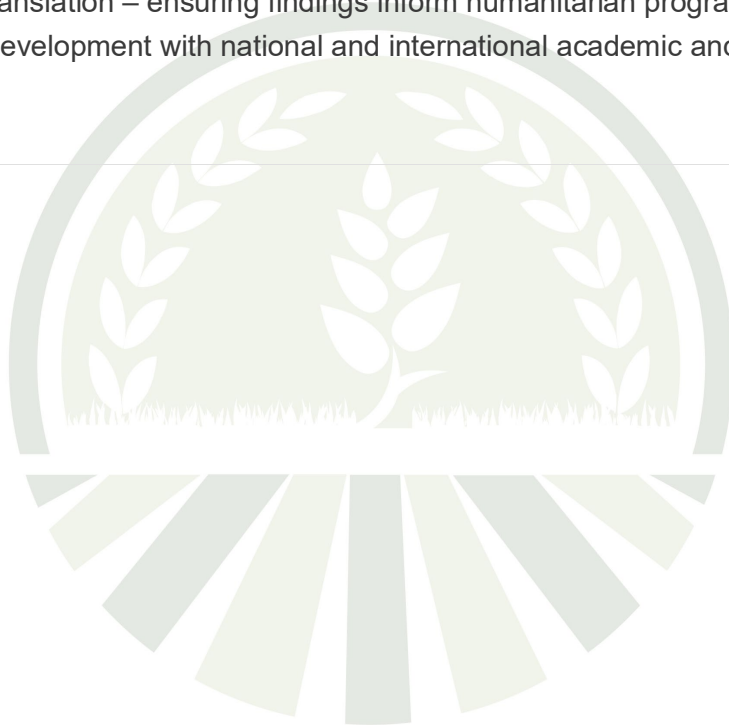
Active research projects in 2025

## 4. Strategy and Long-Term Objectives

Seeds Afghanistan's strategy focuses on three mutually reinforcing pillars: generating high-quality empirical research, strengthening local research capacity, and ensuring the practical applicability of findings. Our long-term objective is to support the development of sustainable and equitable food systems in Afghanistan.

### Strategic Pillars

- High-quality empirical research employing quantitative and qualitative methodologies
- Local capacity strengthening through training, mentoring, and collaborative project design
- Knowledge translation – ensuring findings inform humanitarian programming and policy
- Partnership development with national and international academic and operational actors



## 5. Activities and Research in 2025

In 2025, Seeds Afghanistan conducted multiple research projects on food security, employing both quantitative and qualitative methodologies across multiple regions in Afghanistan. All activities directly supported the organisation's public-benefit objectives.

### PROJECT 1 | Urban Farming for Improved Household Nutrition (Mazar-i-Sharif)

This project explores the potential of urban farming to improve household nutrition in and around the city of Mazar-i-Sharif. The initiative focuses on supporting families with limited space to grow nutrient-rich food using adapted, low-input farming methods, building on the Foundations for Farming methodology, tailored for urban environments through containers, raised beds, vertical growing structures, and efficient water use.

The project also considers small-scale livestock — including chickens — as part of an integrated household food system, contributing both protein and organic fertiliser. By combining crop diversity, composting, and water management, the project strengthens household self-reliance and reduces vulnerability to food price fluctuations. The initiative is designed as a scalable pilot, with particular attention to the involvement of women and youth.

### PROJECT 2 | Seeds of Knowledge – Youth, Food Security and Interdisciplinary Research

Seeds of Knowledge is a research project developed in collaboration with a Dutch university programme for master's students in interdisciplinary social sciences. The project examines how Seeds Afghanistan's interdisciplinary and youth-focused approach contributes to long-term food security and agricultural innovation in Afghanistan.

The research focuses on indirect engagement with youth aged 16–20 — a demographic considered more receptive to new ideas and practices. Using theoretical frameworks including Participatory Action Research, Empowerment Theory, and Resilience Theory, the project aims to generate transferable insights for policymakers, NGOs, and academic institutions.

### PROJECT 3 | Nutrient-Focused Agricultural Planning Tool

This project proposes the development of a simple, one-year agricultural planning tool to support Afghan farming households in improving nutrition through better land use. The tool uses basic

inputs — household size, land availability, region, and planting seasons — to generate practical plans outlining crop selection, planting schedules, intercropping options, and potential space for cash crops.

The focus is on improving access to key nutrients, including vitamins and protein, while maintaining cultural acceptability and feasibility. The project is currently at concept stage and emphasises full consultation with farmers and advisors prior to any technical development.



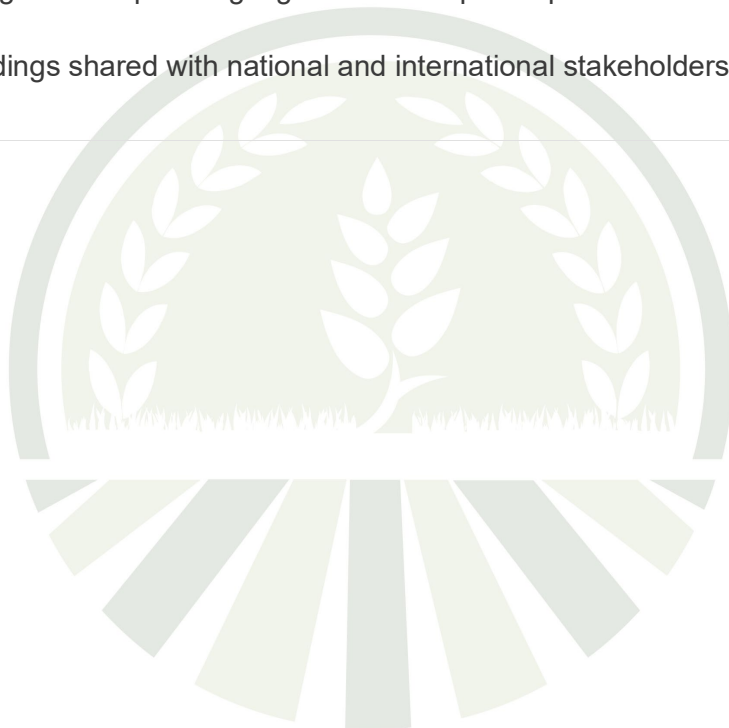


## 6. Results and Impact

The research conducted in 2025 provided substantive insights into the key drivers of food insecurity and household vulnerability across multiple Afghan regions. Findings were used by humanitarian and development actors to inform programme design and policy discussions.

### Key Outcomes

- Evidence base strengthened for urban agriculture as a household nutrition strategy
- Interdisciplinary youth-research framework developed and piloted with Dutch academic partners
- Phase 1 of a gricultural planning algorithm concept completed for nutritional self-sufficiency
- Research findings shared with national and international stakeholders

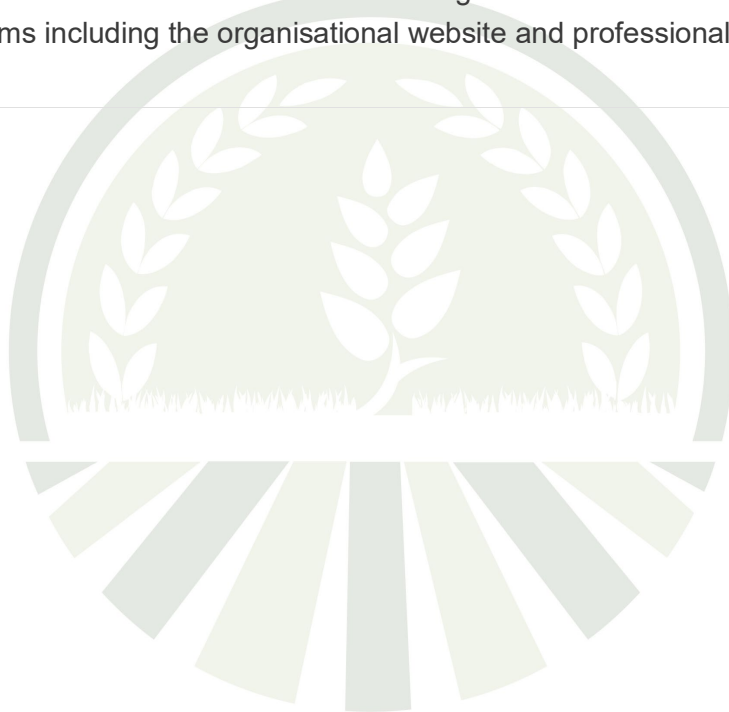


## 7. Knowledge Sharing and Communication

Seeds Afghanistan disseminated its findings through research reports, policy briefs, presentations at national and international forums, and digital communication channels. Knowledge sharing is a core component of our public-benefit mission and ensures transparency, accessibility, and practical use of research outputs.

### Dissemination Channels

- Peer-reviewed research reports and working papers
- Policy briefs targeted at humanitarian and development practitioners
- Conference presentations and academic exchanges
- Digital platforms including the organisational website and professional networks

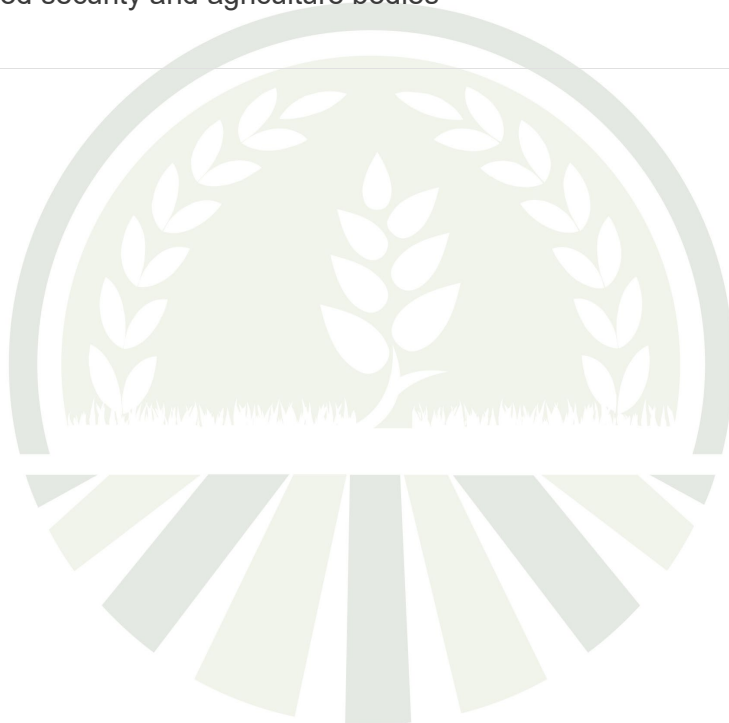


## 8. Collaboration and Networks

The organisation collaborated actively with local researchers, international NGOs, and multilateral institutions throughout 2025. These partnerships enhanced the quality, relevance, and reach of our research.

### Key Partnership Categories

- Local Afghan research partners and community organisations
- Dutch academic institutions and university research programmes
- International humanitarian and development NGOs
- Multilateral food security and agriculture bodies

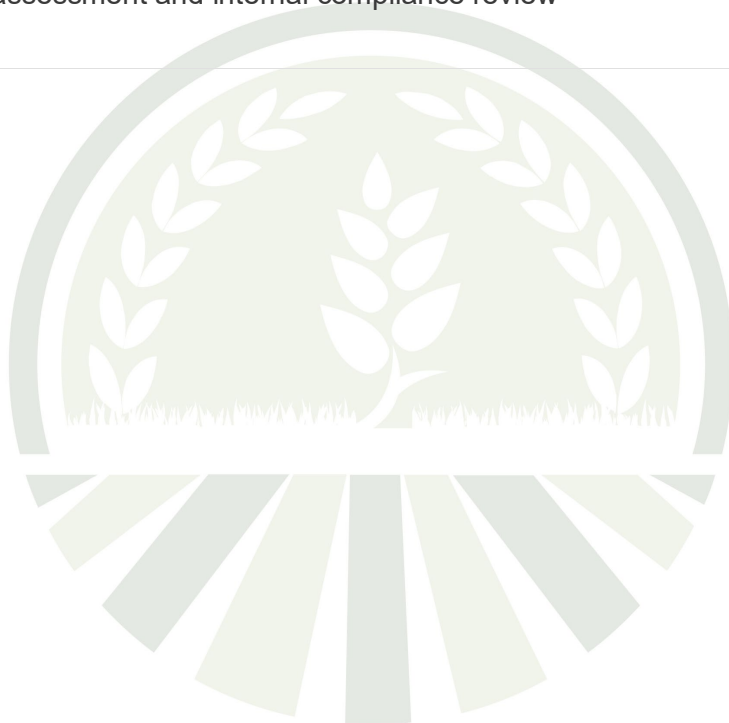


## 9. Organisation and Governance

Seeds Afghanistan is governed by an independent Board responsible for oversight of strategy, finances, and compliance. The organisation applies principles of good governance, integrity, and transparency, consistent with Dutch non-profit standards.

### Governance Principles

- Independent board with clearly defined oversight responsibilities
- Separation of strategic governance from operational management
- Annual financial reporting
- Regular risk assessment and internal compliance review



## 10. Staff and Capacity Development

Seeds Afghanistan engages a diverse team of local and international researchers.

During 2025 no staff was employed by Seeds Afghanistan. Two of the directors (Dr. Smit and Dr. De Cock) were involved with the Foundation on a voluntary basis. In November 2025 the need was identified to create a role for an Admin who could support the organisation. A start was made to look for a suitable candidate.

During 2025, time investments were made in training, methodological development, and organisational development. Building and empowering local Afghan research capacity remains a central organisational objective and a core expression of our grassroots philosophy.

### Capacity Development Priorities

- Research methodology training for local Afghan staff
- Cross-institutional exchange with Dutch academic programme partners
- Organisational learning and knowledge management systems
- Staff well-being and professional development support
- Seeking funding to support the core tasks of the organisation.

## 11. Financial Report

Seeds Afghanistan did not receive funding during 2025. All activities were carried out on a voluntary basis.

Several attempts were made to establish a bank account for the Foundation during 2025, but this has been very challenging. No bank was found to date that would support us with basic banking services. This is a challenge we hope to resolve in the coming year. Seeds Afghanistan as a non-profit foundation is only concerned with the facilitation of research. The organisation is designed to be lean and only fund basic costs for our intermediary work between indigenous research partners, implementation partners and academic institutions. Seeds Afghanistan's sole focus on research means it will not be involved with the implementation of projects (except to gather data) or the costs thereof.

### Financial Principles

- Full cost recovery model linked to project deliverables
- Strict expenditure alignment with organisational mission
- Transparent reporting to donors and regulatory authorities
- Reserve policy ensuring organisational continuity

## 12. Financial Statements

Seeds Afghanistan did not receive funding during 2025. All activities were carried out on a voluntary basis therefore this is not applicable.



---

### 13. Auditor's Statement

---

Seeds Afghanistan did not receive funding during 2025. All activities were executed on a voluntary basis therefore this is not applicable.

---





## 14. Outlook

In the coming year, Seeds Afghanistan will continue to prioritise high-quality, independent research on food security while adapting to a complex and evolving operational context. Strengthening strategic partnerships and enhancing the policy relevance of research outputs will remain central priorities.

### Strategic Priorities for 2026

- Expanding the urban agriculture pilot in Mazar-i-Sharif based on 2025 feasibility findings
- Advancing the algorithmic planning tool from concept stage to prototype development
- Deepening academic partnerships within the Seeds of Knowledge programme
- Strengthening engagement with international food security policy forums
- Pursuing diversified, sustainable funding to ensure operational continuity
- Securing funds for the operational costs of Seeds Afghanistan.
- Employing a part time admin role to increase capacity.

