

The USAID FEWS NET Weather Hazards Impacts Assessment for Afghanistan December 30, 2009 - January 5, 2010

Temperatures have remained seasonable across most of Afghanistan during the last few weeks, which is likely to continue into the coming week. At the beginning of the season, however, temperatures plunged to below freezing temperatures in the valleys and lowland areas of Afghanistan. This has allowed for unseasonable amounts of snow to build up across the highland areas of Afghanistan. For the coming week, minimum temperatures will likely fall below -35C in the northeast mountains and below -15C in the central highlands. Meanwhile, temperatures in the lowland areas will likely stay above freezing during the week. The exception will be the area around Kabul and Jalalabad, which will slip below freezing one or two nights during the coming week.

Although precipitation is usually relatively light during October and November, precipitation amounts were higher than the long-term average. Typically, rain and snow amounts increase during November, and by December precipitation occurs weekly. November and early December saw unusually high snow totals. The last three weeks have been unusually dry across Afghanistan, although this is not yet a cause for concern as the snowpack across the region is still normal, to above normal.

This week's precipitation will be due to a weak low-pressure system that will move across the region. The low-pressure system will have very little moisture with it, and may provide a dusting of snow to some of the higher elevations, with a light drizzle in the low-lands.

