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Returns assisted by UNHCR Afghanistan

In Afghanistan, UNHCR continued to biometrically process and provide cash assistance to PoR card holders and their nuclear family members, UNHCR slip holders, asylum seeker certificate holders and other Protection referrals. Since 15 September 2023, some 102,900 individuals returning from Pakistan have been provided with cash assistance in Kabul, Kandahar and Jalalabad encashment centres, including over 64,000 PoR cardholders. Out of the assisted, some 2.5% are individuals with disabilities and over 3,000 PoR card holders, UNHCR slip holders and Asylum certificate holders were deported.

At least one in four households assisted are headed by women. 33% of them intend to return to five provincial capitals (Kabul, Jalalabad, Kandahar, Lashkargah and Mazar-e-Sharif).

Top 5 provinces of intended destination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Intended %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nangarhar</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kabul</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kandahar</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kunduz</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laghman</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Intended districts of destination

Documentation status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documentation Status</th>
<th>PoR card holders</th>
<th>Non-PoR card holders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary Repatriation with VRF*</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POR Card Holders without VRF</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR Slip Form Holders</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asylum Seeker Certificate</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection Referrals (Undocumented or ACC)</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Top 10 occupation of the head of households

- Housewife: 19%
- Refuse Workers and Other Elementary Workers: 13%
- Cleaners and Helpers: 8%
- Personal Services Workers: 8%
- Sales Workers: 8%
- Labourers in Mining, Construction, Manufacturing and Transport: 7%
- Personal Care Workers: 5%
- Street and Related Sales and Services Workers: 4%
- Drivers and Mobile Plant Operators: 4%
- Agricultural, Forestry and Fishery Labourers: 3%

Legend:
- 0
- 1 - 100
- 101 - 750
- 751 - 2,000
- 2,001 - 6,000
- 6,001 - 13,400

* Voluntary Repatriation Form.
Border Protection Monitoring

UNHCR and its partner Wadan in Afghanistan have scaled up protection activities at the border. Daily presence consists of Border Protection monitoring through interviews with returnees including deportees in order to identify protection concerns and risks, as well as their intended areas of return in Afghanistan. Five help desks have been set up to boost protection screening interviews, identification and referral of individuals to be assisted by UNHCR.

Since 12 November, the most reported problems experienced prior to the cross-border movement have consistently been harassment, waiting long hours at checkpoints and detention.

### Top problems experienced in Pakistan prior to the cross-border movement - comparison per year (2023 vs 2024)

- **Harrassment**: 65% (2023) vs 53% (2024)
- **Long wait at checkpoints**: 59% (2023) vs 56% (2024)
- **Detention**: 58% (2023) vs 56% (2024)
- **Bribes paid at police checkpoints**: 20% (2023) vs 19% (2024)
- **Extortion**: 19% (2023) vs 19% (2024)

### Problems experienced at the Pakistan border point

- **Waiting long hours at the border**: 57%
- **Harassment**: 43%
- **Detention**: 36%
- **Extortion of money**: 4%
- **Physical abuse**: 5%
- **Confiscation of documents**: 4%
- **Family separation**: 4%
- **Not being allowed to cross with property or live-stock**: 4%
- **Security incident**: 1%
- **Interrogations**: 0.6%

Published 23 July 2024
Needs upon arrival in final destination

Percentage of interviews | Multiple choice questions may add up to over 100%

- Housing/Accommodation: 85%
- Financial support: 81%
- Food: 74%
- Core Relief items: 62%
- Education: 54%
- Health: 53%
- Water: 38%
- Access to connectivity: 31%
- Mental health and psychosocial support: 29%
- Sanitation: 21%
- No need: 1%

Protection services required in final destination

Percentage of interviews | Multiple choice questions may add up to over 100%

- Documentation/Legal assistance: 65%
- Protection services for children: 44%
- Protection services for girls and women: 35%
- Information on services and assistance: 26%
- Protection services for vulnerable individuals: 20%
- Other specialized support: 15%
- Support with family reunification: 13%
- No need: 1%

Protection Analysis - using natural language processing

In addition to the border monitoring interviews, returnees who are enrolled and provided with cash assistance are asked to elaborate on topics that they would like to highlight to UNHCR. The descriptive experiences and perceptions shared were analysed with Artificial Intelligence using natural language processing for semantic similarities and patterns.

The analysis done with a word count of over 37,134, found 12 detailed clusters shown below. These 12 clusters can be broadly categorized into experiences leaving Pakistan, specific vulnerabilities in the household and requests for support to meet needs in Afghanistan. Amongst the 12 clusters, shelter and food needs, bribes paid, need for services other than protection, and harassment by authorities were the top four most highlighted, compared to shelter and food needs, need for services other than protection, bribes paid and experiences of being arrested in late June.

The top highlighted clusters vary with documentation status. For UNHCR Slip holders specifically, paying bribes was the most highlighted cluster followed by shelter and food needs and experiences of being arrested. For those without documentation, in need of support other than Protection services was the most frequently mentioned followed by bribes and female heads of households at risk. The protection risks faced by single women was also the most frequently mentioned by women heads of household regardless of documentation type.

- Experience leaving Pakistan
- Household vulnerabilities
- Support needs