

KEY DISPLACEMENT FIGURES

2.9M

Estimated internally displaced persons (IDPs) by conflict within Afghanistan as of 31 December 2020

592,531

Estimated total conflict induced IDPs within Afghanistan since 1 January 2021¹



72,065

Refugees and asylum-seekers in Afghanistan as of 1 September 2021

TIMELINE IN KEY EVENTS



2.2M

Refugees and asylum-seekers from Afghanistan in neighboring countries as of 31 December 2020

22,100

Reported newly arrived Afghan refugees in neighboring countries since 1 January 2021²

HIGHLIGHTS

- The security situation across the country has remained relatively stable during the reporting period. UNHCR and its partners have **largely been able to continue with operations in nearly all of Afghanistan's provinces**, undertaking ongoing activities and programmes in some two thirds of all districts.
- Female humanitarian colleagues, however, have only been permitted to work in specific sectors in some provinces**, largely in the areas of health and education. Female humanitarians are reportedly not currently permitted to work in several of Afghanistan's provinces. **UNHCR continues to urge that women be able to work safely and unhindered** across the humanitarian response and in all locations.
- In the **first week of September alone, UNHCR reached almost 9,000 persons with non-food items and some 8,000 people with hygiene kits**, including in the provinces of Herat, Farah, Balkh, Jawzan, and Kabul. Distributions will continue in the coming period, which will be critically important **ahead of the harsh winter season**.
- Since the start of the year, UNHCR has provided **life-saving support to some 332,000 newly internally displaced persons (IDPs)** across the country, with some **115,000 assisted from the start of August to 7 September**.
- In the reporting period, UNHCR, with the support of the Pakistani authorities, was able to **bring a number of trucks into Afghanistan across the Pakistani border** (see below). The trucks carried emergency shelter and other relief materials. UNHCR is working on **other deliveries of assistance by land routes, including of essential relief items**, such as blankets, shelter assistance, and cooking equipment.
- UNHCR has continued with its protection monitoring in nearly all provinces** to identify and respond to the most pressing protection needs on the ground, particularly of IDPs, as well as providing referrals to other services and assistance. In the reporting period, this included **the monitoring of thousands of IDPs in Nangarhar province**, which has helped to understand their needs and will inform humanitarian responses.
- In addition to emergency assistance, UNHCR also continues its regular programmes in Afghanistan**. Key investments are being made in areas such as health and education, including to support the sustainable reintegration of IDPs who previously returned to their areas of origin or may do so in the future. **Construction is ongoing to establish 19 schools, youth learning centres and a women's cafe, as well as nine health clinics, with mental health and psychosocial services.**



© UNHCR/ Shahnawaz Kaka. Internally displaced Afghans in Zabul province collect core relief items including hygiene kits, food items and water and sanitation items in August 2021.

- UNHCR's protection hotline and mailbox have had a significantly increased number of protection-related requests, receiving a total of 21,530 calls and queries between 1 August and 7 September 2021, an average of nearly 600 queries per day. The number of inquiries received in August (17,400) represents a 4,500% increase on July (371). UNHCR processes each query and either responds directly or provides referrals to appropriate services and/or critical assistance.
- In just one example, UNHCR, working together with UNICEF and ICRC, has been able to intervene and reunite families where children had become separated from their parents amidst the evacuations. Many other queries relate to family reunification and orphaned children.
- As well as urgent queries from within Afghanistan, UNHCR has received an increasing number of queries from Afghans currently living in other countries who are concerned about their potential deportation to Afghanistan. In the past week, UNHCR has seen an increase in protection-related queries from profiles including female students in universities, those working in the arts, and LGBTI persons.
- Separate to this, UNHCR also recently launched the [Afghanistan HELP website](#) in mid-August. The site (which is available in Dari and Pashtu) has been visited more than 80,000 times by people seeking answers to critical questions on activities, assistance and referrals. Nearly 27,000 of these visits have been from within Afghanistan.
- The interagency [Flash Appeal](#) in response to the current situation inside Afghanistan will be officially launched at a high-level meeting on Afghanistan, convened by UN Secretary General António Guterres on 13 September. Under the Appeal, UNHCR leads the Protection Cluster and co-leads the Emergency Shelter and Non-Food Items Cluster, which aim to reach 1.5 million and 900,000 people respectively by the end of the year. Activities under these sectors will be scaled up.



© UNHCR

REGIONAL

- During the reporting period, most land border-crossing points have been closed with Afghanistan and its neighboring countries, except in limited instances for those with passports, valid visas, or valid travel documents. UNHCR continues to call on countries to keep their borders open to those seeking safety. In the past week, UNHCR has brought to the attention again of the relevant authorities the non-return advisory for Afghanistan, which calls for a bar on forced returns of Afghan nationals in the current circumstances.
- UNHCR border monitors continue to observe the attempted movement of Afghans each day towards the Pakistani border posts, particularly to the Chaman-Spin Boldak crossing point, some of whom are currently not being able to cross due to restrictions and to lack of valid documentation. These movements, at present, have not been above normal levels of movements of Afghans to the border with Pakistan.
- UNHCR has also received reports of increased movement of undocumented Afghans through irregular land border crossing points, including into Iran. UNHCR is enhancing information collection through key informants, as far as possible, to obtain information on the profiles and needs of these individuals.
- In recent months, UNHCR has been recording the reported number of new arrivals to neighboring countries that approach UNHCR or its partners or collected through other reliable sources, which now stands at some 22,100 Afghans. Most of those interviewed report leaving Afghanistan for security-related reasons. The overall number of Afghans with international refugee protection needs outside the country is likely to be much higher.
- An increasing number of Afghans have been approaching UNHCR offices in Iran, Pakistan, and India, composed of both registered refugees seeking solutions, in situ Afghans living in the host countries as well as largely undocumented Afghans newly arriving since January seeking basic assistance, shelter and protection. UNHCR and partners have been enhancing information provision with Afghan communities in host countries, including on access to asylum procedures.
- UNHCR's activities in neighboring countries support ongoing efforts with host Governments who have for decades generously hosted and provided protection to Afghan refugees, including in supporting preparedness and response efforts for new or potential new arrivals, including in prepositioning essential items, as previously reported.

