

## KEY DISPLACEMENT FIGURES

 **2.9M**

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

 **681,332**

Estimated total conflict induced IDPs within Afghanistan since 1 January 2021<sup>1</sup>



 **72,377**

Refugees and asylum-seekers in Afghanistan as of 2 November 2021

 **2.2M**

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

 **57,980**

Reported newly arrived Afghans in need of international protection to neighbouring countries since 1 January 2021<sup>2</sup>

## HIGHLIGHTS

- During the reporting period, the operational context in Afghanistan has remained relatively stable. Despite several security incidents caused by a non-state actor in the country, UNHCR has been able to proceed with its humanitarian activities and protection programmes in nearly all provinces of Afghanistan.
- Since the middle of October, the Protection Sector in Afghanistan, led by UNHCR, was able to resume some of its protection activities as access negotiations continued with the de facto authorities, particularly around the issue of female staff participation. Further discussions, the acting Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation directed de facto authorities to allow the return of female workers to work and to resume with humanitarian activities, in line with Islamic law. UNHCR will continue to monitor the situation and advocate to ensure the full and unhindered participation of women and girls in humanitarian work.
- There are now some 681,332 conflict induced internally displaced persons (IDPs) in 33 out of the 34 provinces in Afghanistan, of which 80% percent are women and children. Of this number, UNHCR estimates that some 165,000 IDPs have returned to their homes since September as the security situation has stabilised. 36% of this number have returned to Southern and 35% North Eastern regions.
- In the reporting period, UNHCR has supported over 1,600 IDPs to return home, largely from IDP settlements in Kabul, to the central Highlands province of Afghanistan. The returning IDPs were provided with cash for transportation ahead of their departure and each individual and family will receive additional support in their location of return. UNHCR has now supported nearly 6,300 IDPs to return home since September. UNHCR, together with other humanitarian partners, has also been conducting rapid assessments of IDPs, particularly in Kabul, to better understand the numbers and profiles of those who may wish to return to put a comprehensive plan in place to support their intentions.



IDP families being supported to return by UNHCR in Paghman district, Afghanistan. © UNHCR/Babar Baloch

- UNHCR has also now commenced with its winterisation cash assistance, reaching more than 12,500 individuals, including in the Western, Southern and Eastern regions of Afghanistan. This assistance is separate from UNHCR's other emergency assistance and is specifically designed to support vulnerable families and individuals through the harsh winter season. UNHCR is undertaking ongoing efforts to support nearly 500,000 people with winterization assistance before the end of the year.
- As part of this winterization work, UNHCR is bringing in three airlifts from the United Arab Emirates to Kabul in the coming week, with the first already arriving. The airlifts are planned to carry shelter kits for more than 3,000 families, which are urgently required ahead of the winter season. Each winterization kit contains flooring, partitions, and other items to improve tent insulation against the cold. The kits also provide heat resistant protection to enable the installation of a stove.



Arrival of first UNHCR airlift from Dubai to Kabul airport of winterization shelter assistance. © UNHCR, Kabul/Babar Baloch

- During the reporting period, UNHCR has provided emergency assistance to some 67,000 internally displaced persons and persons in need bringing the total of those assisted to more than 500,000 persons this year. Since the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, UNHCR has assisted some 307,000 persons in need. This includes with the provision of the following assistance:

#### Emergency Assistance provided in 2021 (as of 31 October)

 **83,600 | 530,500\***  
persons supported

 **25 | 34**  
provinces reached



**30,600 | 251,200**  
persons benefited from core relief items



**10,500 | 34,900**  
persons benefited from cash assistance for Protection needs



**7,800 | 13,800**  
persons benefited from solar panels distribution



**8,300 | 12,700**  
persons benefited from cash for shelter/rent



**12,500 | 12,500**  
persons benefited from cash for winterization



**1,700 | 6,300**  
persons benefited from cash for Reintegration (CARE)

**Legend:** **XXX** assistance provided from 16 to 31 October 2021 | **XXX** assistance provided in 2021

\*The total persons supported may include multiple counting of beneficiaries receiving assistance through more than one activity during the reporting period.

- While UNHCR continues to provide emergency humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan, the Agency also continues efforts through its area-based Priority Areas of Return and Reintegration (PARR), which aim to improve access to essential services, help to stabilise the population, and mitigate further displacement. UNHCR is scaling up its PARRs programming from 36 to 50 locations (districts) in areas of high return and displacement to support IDP return and reintegration.
- Projects focus largely in the areas of health, education, livelihoods, and community infrastructure. For education, 38 projects are currently ongoing, including the construction of schools, which will benefit nearly 65,000 students and will be completed by the end of 2021. The construction of nine health clinics is also ongoing, which will eventually benefit more than 300,000 people and are planned to be completed before the end of the year.

## REGIONAL

- Chaman-Spin Boldak land border-crossing point between Pakistan and Afghanistan continued to remain closed during the reporting period, though was open for a couple of hours on two occasions. At the time of writing, the Pakistan authorities announced that, after discussions between border authorities of Pakistan and Afghanistan, that the Chaman-Spin Boldak crossing would be open moving forward and the two sides would ensure facilitative movement of people and trade and transit vehicles. The situation will be monitored in the coming period.
- At Torkham land border – the other main crossing point between Afghanistan and Pakistan – restrictions were eased during the reporting period for the first time since September to allow for Afghans with Pakistani visas to also cross (previously only those with invitation letters from the Pakistani authorities had officially been able to cross). In addition, stranded Pakistanis and third country nationals as well as Afghans with critical medical condition were allowed to continue to cross into Pakistan. Based on initial observations, a significant uptick in the number of people queuing with Pakistani visas to cross the border at Torkham has been observed, though precise numbers are not available.
- UNHCR continues to receive reports of movements of largely undocumented Afghans resorting to irregular land border crossing points. In Iran, official borders between Afghanistan and Iran remain largely closed, except for those with Afghan passports and valid visas for Iran. At the same time, local media citing the Iranian authorities continue to estimate upwards of 5,000 newly arriving individuals per day into Iran.
- In Iran, over 4,000 undocumented Afghans were reportedly deported from Iran to Afghanistan on October 26 through two official border crossings. Similar deportation figures have been observed and reported on October 30. Through the analysis of available data and information, UNHCR has observed a 190% increase in deportation rate from Iran in August 2021 compared to the same period in August 2020.
- UNHCR has now recorded 57,980 newly arriving Afghans who may be in need of international protection to neighbouring countries since the start of the year, comprised of 49% children and 25% adult women in Iran and Pakistan. In Tajikistan, Afghan new arrivals are composed of 43% women and 40% children. The overall number of Afghans in need of international protection are thought to be higher. The majority of those interviewed report leaving Afghanistan for security-related reasons.
- UNHCR continues to call on countries to keep their borders open to those seeking safety, as well as draw to attention UNHCR's non-return advisory for Afghanistan, calling for a bar on forced returns of Afghan nationals in the current circumstances.

