

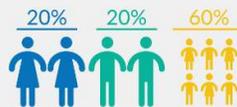
KEY DISPLACEMENT FIGURES

 **3.4M**

Estimated internally displaced persons (IDPs) by conflict within Afghanistan as of 1 December 2021¹

 **682,031**

Estimated total conflict induced IDPs within Afghanistan since 1 January 2021²


 **72,481**

Refugees and asylum-seekers in Afghanistan as of 8 December 2021

 **2.2M**

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

 **112,520**

Reported newly arrived Afghans in need of international protection to neighbouring countries since 1 January 2021³

HIGHLIGHTS

- The economic and humanitarian situation in Afghanistan has continued to deteriorate in the reporting period. UNHCR has warned that there could be increasing numbers of refugees should these conditions persist, while the World Food Programme (WFP) has said that nearly 23 million people face acute hunger as temperatures remain largely below zero degrees.
- In view of the humanitarian situation, particularly for displaced persons, UNHCR has delivered this month, with support from the State of Qatar, several emergency airlifts of essential aid. The relief items will help displaced and vulnerable families prepare themselves for the harsh winter weather. The airlifts consist of 91 tons of materials, including some 44,000 thermal blankets and more than 5,000 solar lamps.
- In addition, UNHCR has also been continuing to truck additional essentials humanitarian assistance and supplies from Termez in Uzbekistan into Afghanistan, with the support of the Uzbek authorities. The trucks were carrying thousands of kitchen sets and tarpaulins, which will be distributed to displaced persons and other persons in need in Afghanistan in the coming period.
- During the reporting period, UNHCR in total has provided essential assistance to nearly 188,000 internally displaced persons and persons in need bringing the total number of people assisted this year to some 916,000. Since the start of August, UNHCR has assisted some 700,000 persons in need. The assistance includes the provision of the following services and items:

Emergency Assistance

provided in 2021 (as of 15 December)



196,100 | 916,000*
persons supported



28 | 34
provinces reached



24,700 | 295,600
persons benefited from core relief items



53,400 | 181,400
persons benefited from cash for winterization



52,100 | 81,600
persons benefited from cash for rent, shelter/shelter repair



15,300 | 67,200
persons benefited from cash assistance for Protection needs



27,400 | 37,800
persons benefited from cash for Reintegration (CARE)



- | 15,100
persons benefited from solar panels distribution

Legend: XXX assistance provided from 1 to 15 December 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.

- As part of UNHCR's assistance and efforts to find solutions, UNHCR continues to support the voluntary return of IDPs to their places of origin. In the reporting period, 14,000 IDP returnees to Kandahar and Helmand provinces received cash assistance to meet their immediate needs and support their sustainable reintegration. Since the start of the year, some 682,031 persons have been newly internally displaced. Of this number, an estimated 169,602 internally displaced persons (IDPs) have returned to their previous place of residence since September as the security situation has stabilized.

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¹ This figure comprises the 2020 year-end figure of 2.9M (Source: UNHCR), the total estimated conflict induced IDPs within Afghanistan since 1 January (Source: OCHA), excluding the estimation of IDPs which have returned to their places of origin (Source: UNHCR).

² Source OCHA, <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/afghanistan/idps>

³ The number of new arrivals includes those who approached UNHCR and Partners in Tajikistan (5,690) and Iran (26,240), those collected largely through key informant interviews in Pakistan (63,810), new arrivals reported by the Government of Uzbekistan (13,020), as well as the Afghans who were kept by the Iranian authorities at border locations (3,750) since 1 January 2021, although only 707 individuals of the latter group remain in the country. The vast majority of those interviewed report leaving Afghanistan for security-related reasons. The overall number of Afghans with international refugee protection needs is likely to be much higher. The increase on the overall figure does not necessarily reflect the displacement of that same period, but rather the date of assessment.

- In the reporting period, UNHCR in Afghanistan has increased its collaboration with UN agencies to improve the situation for displaced people. UNHCR signed an agreement with UN Women to protect and uphold the rights of women and girls amongst displaced people and to advance their civic social and economic empowerment, as well as agreed a joint programme with UNDP to improve access to services and livelihoods and support the reintegration of displaced people in Herat province.
- In recent weeks, the UN has continued to report that some restrictions on freedom of movement for women – including female staff workers and clients. In addition, a lack of clarity regarding the safe participation of female staff in the full spectrum of humanitarian response – particularly during assessments – has caused delays to some operational activities.



REGIONAL

- Since the start of the year, UNHCR has recorded some 112,000 newly arriving Afghans who may be in need of international protection to neighbouring countries. 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. Basic needs cited by those newly arriving Afghans interviewed in Iran and Pakistan include access to shelter, livelihoods, food and documentation, with a large majority of those undocumented Afghans in Iran also citing concerns regarding detention and forced return.
- Afghanistan's land borders with Pakistan and Iran, however, remain only open to those with the required passports and visas, though a small number of medical cases are permitted to exceptionally enter Pakistan without documents. The land borders of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan are closed entirely to Afghans.
- Access to Iran's territory remains limited for Afghans. The arrests and deportations of undocumented Afghans apprehended while trying to enter Iran continue. Since July 2021, Iranian authorities stated that there has been a 53% increase in the number of arrests of Afghan new arrivals. Afghan passport and visa holders can enter Iran through Islam Qala, but the Nimroz crossing point is limited to those conducting business. 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 Pakistan, border authorities require Afghans to have a valid passport and a visa to cross, with no specific measures to allow admission of new arrivals claiming asylum. UNHCR has raised this issue with the relevant Government entities. At Chaman, one of the main border crossing point between Afghanistan and Pakistan, there are inconsistent practices to enter Pakistan, but at Torkham, entry is limited to those with valid passports and visas.

- Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have closed their borders with Afghanistan. An estimated 1,200 Afghan families have attempted to enter Tajikistan by land, with all but 35 families denied entry. 23 Afghan individuals have been deported from Tajikistan in three incidents on 11, 20 and 22 November.
- According to Government of Uzbekistan sources, some 13,020 Afghan citizens arrived in the country since January 2021. The majority arrived before August 15 with valid visas issued by the Uzbek consulate. This group is currently unwilling and unable to return and UNHCR considers that they may be in need of international protection.
- 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. Deportations of Afghans have increased from Pakistan and Iran since August. In December so far, UNHCR has observed an average daily deportation rate of 1,500 Afghans from Iran (2,600 in November and 3,500 in October) and about 1,800 have been deported from Pakistan in September and October.

