Beneficiaries busy with a livelihood activitiy supported by UNHCR in Afghanistan. © WADAN/ Zubair Atal

UNHCR AFGHANISTAN

LIVELIHOODS Fact Sheet August 2024

Year 2024 Achievements

Beneficiaries reached: 5,191 of whom 84% are women

MSME development: 1,691 individuals (750 men, 941 women)

Job Placement:
- Teacher Training program: 143 individuals (women)
- Visually Impaired Women Empowerment program: 80 individuals (women)

TVET:
Midwifery training: 118 individuals (all 118 women)
Other: 3,299 individuals (112 men & 3,187 women)
Internet Users: 12,080 individuals (women)

Cash-for-Work:
700 individuals (626 men, 74 women)

Year 2023 Key Figures

Beneficiaries reached: 48,847 of whom 67% are women

MSME development: 235 individuals (120 men, 115 women)

MSME asset support: 3,169 individuals (967 men, 2,202 women)

MSME livelihood cash grants (CBI): 1,624 (503 men, 1,121 women)

Cash for work: 8,828 (8,328 men and 500 women) benefited from cash for work

Value Chain Development: 12,130 Two carpet weaving and processing centres established in Mazar targeting 12,000 (5,380 men and 6,620 women) beneficiaries; 130 individuals (93 men and 37 women) provided with greenhouse agricultural production facility and other support to enable production.

90 women
Benefited from Empowerment of Visually Impaired Women through income generating activities

Livelihoods approach

The livelihood approach in Afghanistan is designed to enhance self-reliance, socio-economic inclusion, and sustainable integration of forcibly displaced, returnees and their host communities in the Priority Areas of Return and Reintegration (PARR). This multifaceted approach prioritizes the empowerment of individuals, households, groups and micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), by bolstering their capabilities as well as resource and asset base. It encompasses facilitating insertion of the target groups in identified value chains (value-chain development) using market-based approaches and enhancing capabilities through technical, vocational and education training (TVET) and other employability enhancement schemes. It also includes promoting access to formal and self-employment opportunities, development of micro-small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and enhancing access to financial and non-financial assets.

The livelihood approach also aims to promote the inclusion of the targeted populations in interventions of partners, harnessing their expertise and resources, and undertaking joint advocacy to create a more enabling environment for inclusion and reintegration Efforts to establish partnerships focus on a diverse range of stakeholders, including UN agencies, NGOs, and private sector, among others, in line with the New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants, the Global Compact on Refugees, and the attendant Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) and UNHCR's Global Strategy for Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion 2023 – 2027.

Scope of inteventions

Promoting the development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs): MSMEs play an important role in catalysing economic activity and thus creating income generation and employment opportunities. The operation focuses on supporting the establishment and growth of MSMEs run by the targeted populations especially women and youth, who are currently the worst hit by the economic situation. The operation provides training and capacity building, start-up and expansion grants and assets, among other activities.

Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET): Technical, vocational and life skills are critical for not only securing formal employment but also to the promotion of self- employment, thus providing a firm foundation for longer-term income generation and self-reliance. The provision of TVET is thus geared towards enhancing employability and upskilling of the targeted populations for formal and self-employment, with due attention to skills demand in the jobs market and growth sectors.

Insertion of the targeted populations in identified value-chains: UNHCR implements a market-based livelihoods approach focusing on economic activities and income-generating opportunities that are driven by market demand and dynamics. This approach aims to empower forcibly displaced-owned enterprises, individuals, and communities by facilitating their insertion in selected value chains, supporting capacity development, and connecting them to viable market opportunities, thus enabling them to produce goods and provide services that meet market needs.
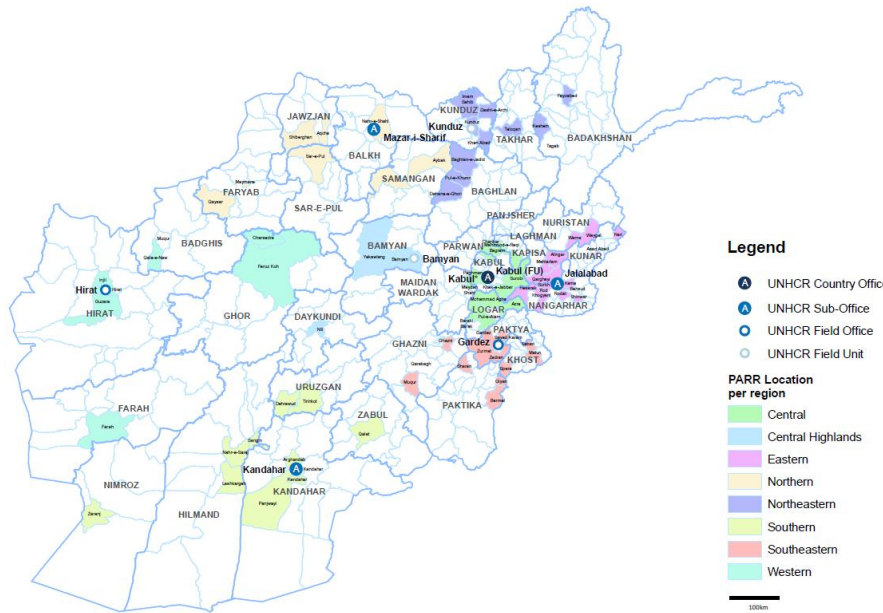
Promoting access to finance: Access to finance, either through inclusion in the formal financial services sector or interventions such as savings and lending groups, is an important component of the livelihood approach. The approach recognizes that access to finance contributes to household production and consumption, thus improving the livelihood and income generation opportunities for the forcibly displaced, returnees and host communities, reducing dependency, and restoring their dignity.

Provision Temporary Employment: To support access to income to meet immediate needs, for the unemployed, the operation provides temporary employment through cash for work. In addition to providing an income, cash for work enables the targeted forcibly displaced to contribute to community investments, including infrastructure development.

Relevance and Effectiveness: To ensure continued relevance and effectiveness of livelihood support and the delivery mechanisms, UNHCR conducts regular follow ups and monitoring visits with individuals that receive livelihoods support as well as with community leaders, including through participatory focused group discussions on all aspects of delivery and perceived benefits, challenges, and opportunities for improvement. To ascertain progress towards outcomes, the operation works with partners to track changes in income, access to employment and access to the formal financial services, the key outcome indicators. UNHCR also works towards fostering longer-term sustainability of the impact of the support by undertaking follow ups beyond activity implementation and, where possible, referring the beneficiaries to other stakeholders for additional support, in line with its partnership and inclusion agenda.

Where are we supporting?

UNHCR is delivering livehoods support in 33 out of 34 provinces of Afghanistan, with assistance provided in Priority Areas for Return and Reintegration.

Author: UNHCR IMU Kabul Afghanistan Feedback: afgkaimu@unhcr.org

Priority Areas for Return and Reintegration:

UNHCR has identified 80 Priority Areas of Return and Reintegration (PARRs) across Afghanistan. In these areas with high density of returns, UNHCR is employing a 'whole-of-community' approach, investing in local infrastructure to improve access to essential services, as well as supporting self-reliance and empowerment initiatives, especially for women and girls. One key component of this approach is the provision of livelihoods support to returnees, IDPs, refugees and host communities. UNHCR is supporting resilient livelihoods creation, aiding returnee families in overcoming barriers to reintegration and host communities in securing resilient livelihoods.

Working with partners

UNHCR partners with agencies such as the UNDP, UNODC, UNWOMEN, FAO, ILO, and UN-HABITAT. These partnerships are directed towards broadening opportunities, cultivating new markets, and bolstering employment prospects for forcibly displaced populations. Further, establishing stronger ties with the private sector remains central to implementation of market based livelihood interventions, allowing UNHCR to harness their comparative advantages and tap into their resources to create market and employment avenues for those in need. UNHCR has a partnership with the Afghan Women of Commerce and Industry (AWCCI). This partnership aligns with the broader goal of promoting economic self-reliance among women in Afghanistan, contributing to their empowerment and increasing their participation in economic activities.

Contact

Maybin Nsupila
Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion Officer
nsupila@unhcr.org

Saorlaith Ni Bhroin
Senior External Relations Officer
nibhroin@unhcr.org

Celine Schmitt
Strategic Partnerships Adviser
schmittc@unhcr.org

Josephine Karlsson
Reporting Officer
karlssok@unhcr.org

Women beneficiaries are receiving shoe making course as part of a UNHCR vocational skills training project in Asadabad, Kunar Province. The trainer is also a former UNHCR project beneficiary. The training paves the way for the women to generate income and become selfreliant. © WADAN/ Zubair Atal