

This monthly protection update for Afghanistan provides a comprehensive overview of UNHCR's different protection programs, aiming to prevent, mitigate and respond to protection risks faced by vulnerable populations in the context of the current humanitarian crisis and in the absence of durable solutions. The data and insights presented are derived from an extensive protection analysis, collected through a variety of robust tools and systems. The activities include protection monitoring, household assessments, voluntary repatriation, returns monitoring, specialized support for persons with specific needs, community engagement, complaints and feedback systems, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), child protection, women protection, and civil documentation. This update aims to highlight key achievements, ongoing challenges, and the critical needs of the affected communities, ensuring a transparent and effective protection response.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS



578,988
 Number of people reached through protection services
 (95,024 in September)



293,335
 Number of women and girls reached
 (45,301 in September)



48,338
 Number of UNHCR assisted returns
 (3,552 in September)

PROTECTION MONITORING

UNHCR relies on a broad variety of protection monitoring activities to collect evidence-based information on the protection needs and risks of forcibly displaced, returnee and host communities across Afghanistan. These activities include border monitoring, returnee monitoring, community-based protection monitoring and rapid household assessments. The data collected informs strategic priorities, operational decision-making and advocacy at field, national and global levels shaping the humanitarian and basic human needs response.



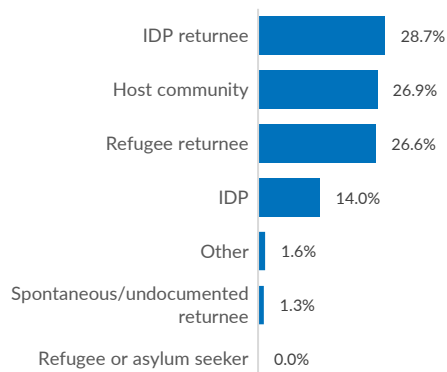
37,999 Rapid household assessments conducted
 (5,263 in September)

7,616 Household protection monitoring assessments conducted
 (1,039 in September)

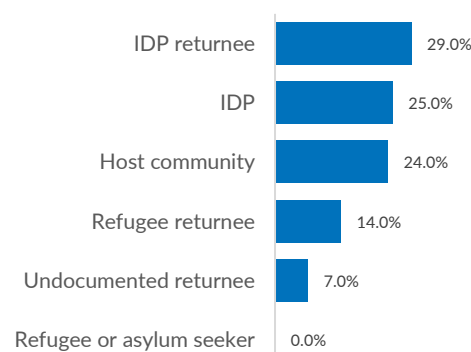
64,335 Border monitoring Afghans returning
 (7,902 in September)

45,104 Border monitoring Afghans leaving the country
 (6,175 in September)

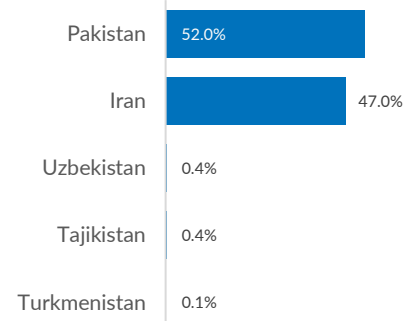
Rapid household assessments conducted by the population status



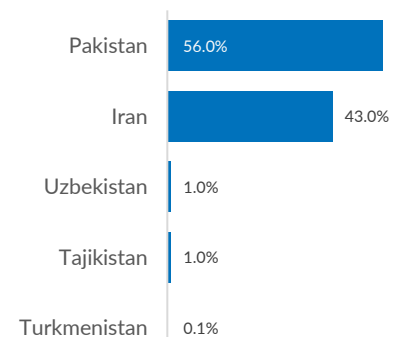
Household assessments conducted by the population status



Border Monitoring (Afghans returning)



Border Monitoring (Afghans leaving the country)



DOCUMENTATION

UNHCR partners with local legal experts in the Gardez, Herat, Kabul, Kandahar, Kunduz and Jalalabad provinces to reinforce access to legal assistance for refugees, refugee returnees, asylum-seekers, IDPs, returnees and host community members. One of the key objectives is to facilitate access to civil documentation as a tool to claim rights and access services. The support provided includes legal awareness sessions focusing on civil documentation, tailored legal counseling, legal representation and legal aid to cover administrative fees.

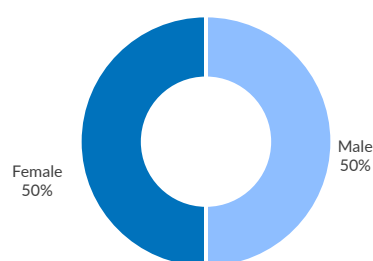


4,177 legal identity documents issued (102 in September)

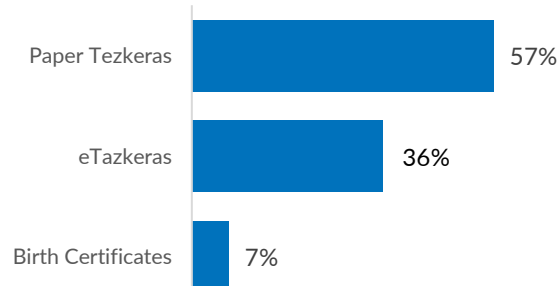


13,316 received legal counselling and legal aid on documentation (5,539 in September)

Beneficiaries of legal assistance by gender



Identity documents issued



MHPSS

UNHCR's Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) in Afghanistan programme is designed to address MHPSS needs practicing a multilayered approach, including social considerations in basic services, strengthening of community and family support, focused non-specialized psychosocial support and referrals to specialized mental health services. The aim is to protect and promote psychosocial wellbeing and to prevent and treat mental health problems. The activities include one-on-one individual counselling, group and family-based psychosocial support and awareness-raising about MHPSS, addressing the stigma attached to seeking such support.



43,933 benefited from MHPSS services (8,756 in September)

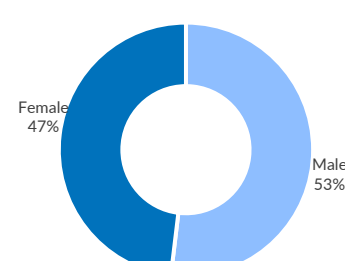


47% of MHPSS beneficiaries are women and girls

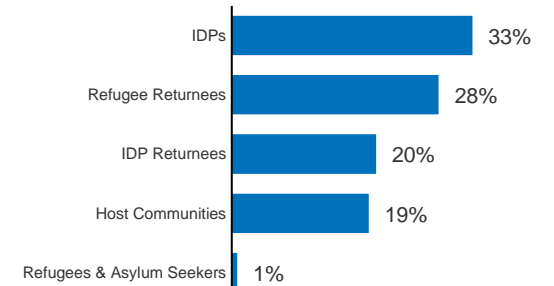


78,143 benefited from service orientation and awareness raising sessions (19,246 in September)

MHPSS Beneficiaries by gender

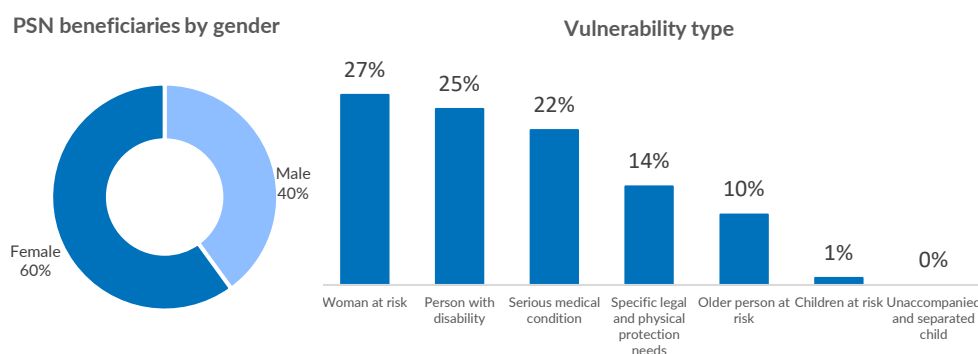
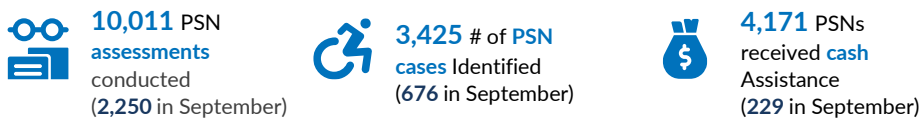


MHPSS Beneficiaries by population type



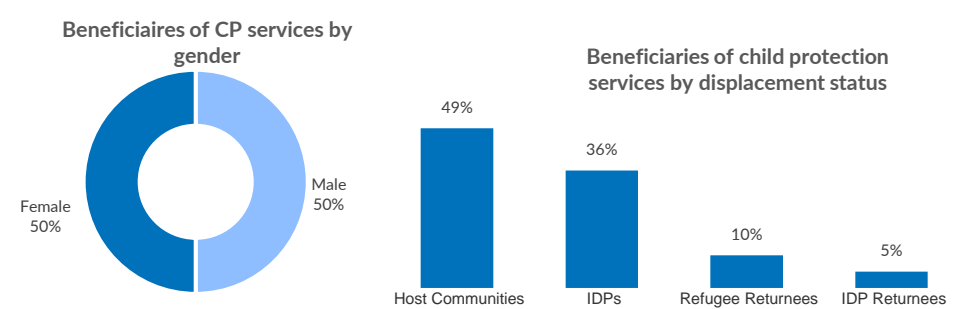
PSN PROGRAMME

UNHCR's programme for persons with specific needs (PSN) aims to strengthen the protection environment for persons who have been assessed to have acute vulnerabilities across Afghanistan, applying a whole of community approach. The program includes case management by UNHCR's PSN partners and material assistance, aiming to mitigate the immediate protection risks of the individual. The identification of cases is conducted through community-based protection monitoring, household assessments, community outreach and other partners implementing UNHCR protection activities.



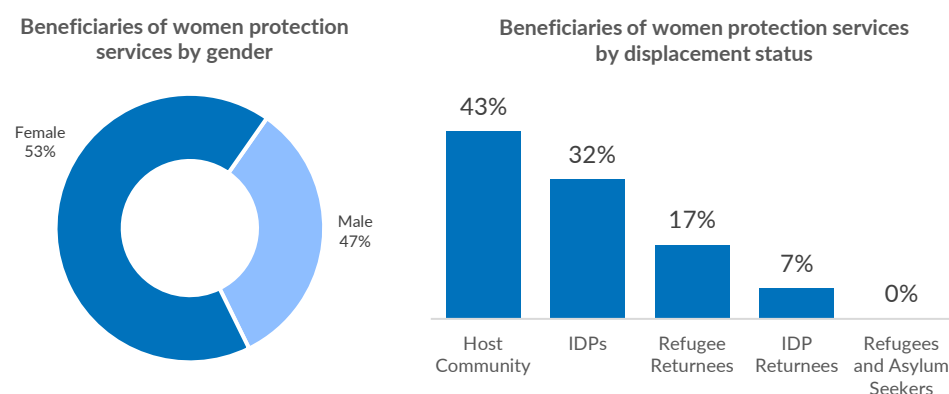
CHILD PROTECTION

UNHCR Child Protection (CP) interventions aim to address child protection risks in Afghanistan employing a coordinated, multi-stakeholder approach. In close collaboration with the CP Sub-Cluster and its local partner NGOs, UNHCR offers essential support to children at risk and their families through the provision case management, psychosocial support and other recreational activities for children at child-friendly spaces, community awareness raising and the strengthening of community-based child protection network.



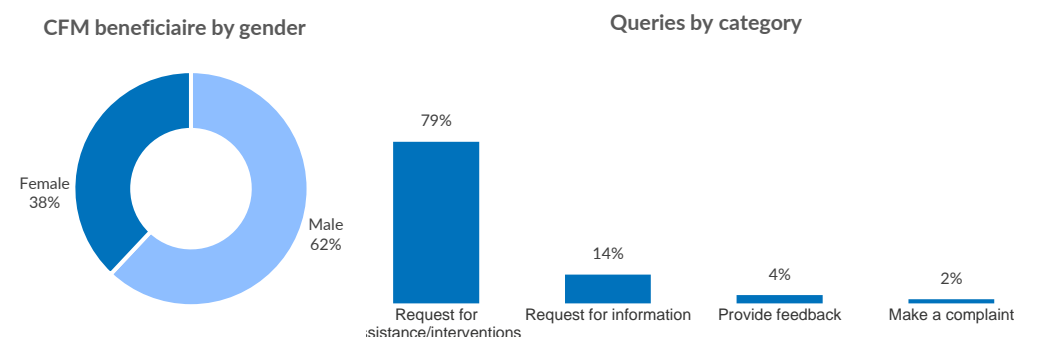
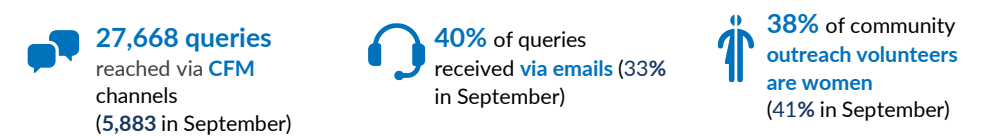
WOMEN PROTECTION

UNHCR Women Protection interventions aim to respond to the specific protection needs of women and girls and empower community members with knowledge and skills to mitigate harmful practices and create a safe and enabling environment. The activities contribute to the operationalization of inter-agency referral systems designed to support women and girls at risks through community awareness raising, dialogues with community leaders, MHPSS support, economic empowerment and wellbeing activities, the provision of female hygiene kits, and conducting safety audits.



ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED POPULATIONS

UNHCR's Complaint and Feedback Mechanism (CFM) provides community members with the opportunity to raise questions, feedback, suggestions and complaints. It relies on a variety of communication channels accessible across the country, including one mailbox, five hotlines, 30 complaint boxes and helpdesks set up in Encashment centers. As a part of its strategic objective to strengthen its engagement and communication with communities, UNHCR has also established a country-wide network of community-outreach volunteers (COVs), nearly 50% of whom are women. Placing communities at the center of the response and empowering them to become agents of their own protection has significantly improved UNHCR's outreach to the most vulnerable population groups, especially women, girls and persons with disabilities.



COORDINATION

UNHCR Afghanistan is a key actor in the Inter-Agency structure to respond to the protection and humanitarian needs in the country. As such, UNHCR leads and actively participates in several clusters and working groups within the coordination architecture of international presence in Afghanistan.

Entity	Role	Entity	Role
Protection Cluster	Lead/Member	Humanitarian Access Group	Member
GBV Sub-Cluster	Member	Disability Inclusion Working Group	Chair
Child Protection Sub-Cluster	Member	Legal Identity WG	Co-chair
GBV Sub-Cluster Strategic Advisory Group (GBV-SAG)	Member	Housing, Land and Property Working Group	Member
Accountability to Affected Population Working Group (AAP WG)	Co-lead/Member	Education Cluster	Member
UNHCR/IOM Protection Advocacy Thematic Working Group	Co-lead/Member	Country task force on Monitoring and reporting (CTFMR)	Member
CCCM WG	Lead/Member	Population Movement Task Team (PMTT)	Member
Inter-Cluster Coordination Team	Member	Gender in Humanitarian Action (GiHA) Working Group	Member
PSEA Network	Member	Border Consortium	Co-chair

COORDINATION

Entity	Role	Entity	Role
Youth Working Group	Member	Gender Theme Group	Member
Thematic Working Group for Gender and Human Rights	Member	UNSFA Results Group 3	Co-chair
Education Strategic Thematic Working Group (Ed-STWG)	Member	Thematic Working Group on Information Management for Solutions Monitoring and Reporting	Co-convenor
National Durable Solutions Working Group	Core Group Member	Thematic Working Group on Resource Mobilization	Member
Thematic Working Group on Protection Mainstreaming in Durable Solutions	Convenor	Regional Durable Solutions Working Group – West	Co-chair
Thematic Working Group on Capacity Building in Durable Solutions	Co-convenor	Regional Durable Solutions Working Group – East	Chair
Thematic Working Group on Accountability to IDPs and Returnees	Co-convenor	Regional Durable Solutions Working Group – South	Chair
Thematic Working Group on Data and Analysis for Solutions	Convenor	Regional Durable Solutions Working Group – North	Co-chair
Regional Durable Solutions Working Group – Center	Co-chair	Regional Durable Solutions Working Group – Northeast	Chair
Regional Durable Solutions Working Group – Southeast	Chair	Regional Durable Solutions Working Group – Central Highlands	Co-chair

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by the donors who contributed to UNHCR's response in Afghanistan in 2024, as well as those who contributed to UNHCR programmes with unearmarked funds which allow us to respond in an agile manner where the needs are greatest:

Bulgaria | Canada | China | Czech Republic | Denmark | European Union | Finland | France | Islamic Development Bank | Japan | Luxemburg | Norway | Republic of Korea | Saudi Arabia | Sweden | Switzerland | United States of America | Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund | Central Emergency Response Fund | Special Trust Fund for Afghanistan

Private donors: Qatar Charity | Other private donors from Australia, Egypt, France, Hong Kong, Italy, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and USA

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