


AFGHANISTAN MONTHLY PROTECTION MONITORING SUMMARY


DECEMBER 2024





10,264 assessments conducted in December. 

74,896 persons reached.

10% increase of conducted assessments compared to November. 

Conducted across **102 districts** in **29 provinces**.



28% of interviewed households are headed by women. Out of the overall household members, **53%** are female, of which **34%** are girls, and **64%** are children.



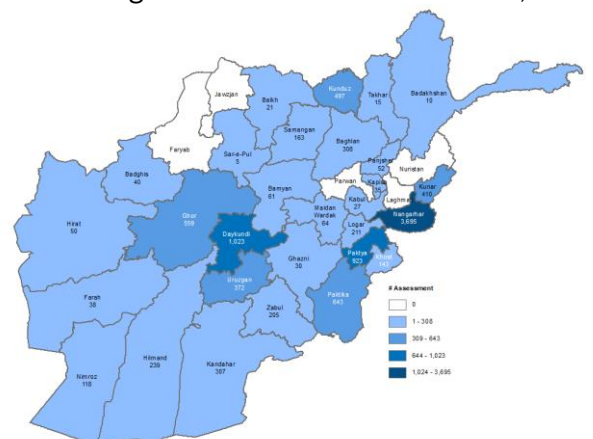
11% heads of households with **disabilities**.

Introduction

The analysis provided in this report relies on data gathered through UNHCR's protection monitoring tools. UNHCR's **Community Based Protection Monitoring (CBPM)** interventions include household-level assessments, key informant interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs), aiming to collect evidence-based information on the protection needs and risks of displaced, returnee and host communities. CBPM outcomes inform UNHCR programming and strategic decision-making and advocacy and also feed into the [Afghanistan Protection Cluster's analysis](#) and information products. UNHCR has also developed a public version of its [Community Based Protection Monitoring Dashboards](#), which will enhance transparency and accessibility for all stakeholders. **Rapid multi-sectoral household assessments (RHAF)** aim to identify persons in need of assistance through UNHCR's protection and assistance programmes and also provide valuable insights into the vulnerabilities of households as well as related protection needs and risks. The selection of areas is based on the high density of displaced and returnees among communities, including priority areas of return and reintegration and newly accessible areas. UNHCR's population groups include refugee returnees, IDPs, IDP returnees, refugees and asylum seekers and vulnerable members of the host communities.

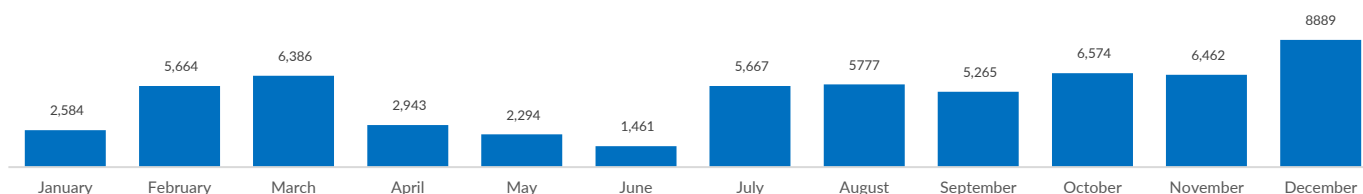
KEY POINTS

- **Women and girls** continue to face significant challenges in accessing basic services and assistance, reflecting their systemic discrimination and movement restrictions.
- **Among the surveyed population in December, 56% of head of households** reported experiencing one or more forms of vulnerabilities, indicating **6%** decrease compared to November.
- **Food assistance** was the most crucial need highlighted by surveyed households, followed by clothing/CRI.
- **Many families reported having resorted to harmful coping mechanisms**, such as selling assets, involvement of household members in street vending, stop sending children to school, borrowing money, and a delay in seeking medical attention for critical health problems.

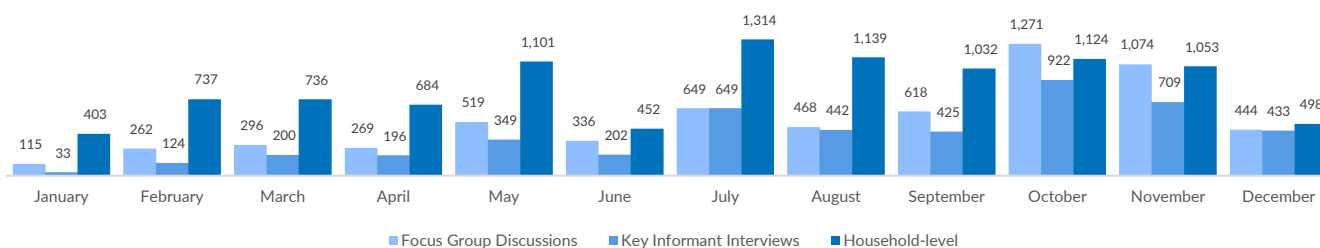


OVERVIEW OF THE DATA COLLECTED

RHAF Assessments (household-level)



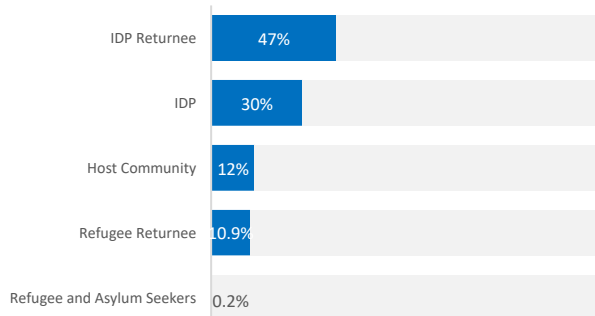
CBPM Assessment



UNHCR conducted 10,264 assessments in December 2024, using various tools such as household assessments, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions to assess communities' protection needs and risks.

- **Most interviewed households were IDP returnees**, followed by IDPs, reflecting UNHCR's focus on the specific protection issues that Afghans face during the phases of displacement.
- Across all RHAF and CBPM assessment modalities, **UNHCR reached 74,896 individuals** in December, primarily women and children. Women headed households account for 28% of the interviews, indicating a 5% increase compared with November.
- UNHCR is working closely with all its partners to **ensure the participation of female staff in all activities** and is using various modalities to **capture the voices of women and girls despite the severe restrictions**.

Population Type



IDENTIFIED VULNERABILITIES



56 % with vulnerabilities



57% experienced stress affecting their day-to-day life



11% heads of households with disabilities

- According to the RHAf surveys conducted in December, **56% of heads of households have some form of vulnerability, such as being female headed households, persons with disabilities, persons with life-threatening health issues, women at risk, children at risk, , and older persons at risk.** These findings are supported by the CBPM household assessments, which also point to 3% of the households surveyed being headed by widows (showing a decrease of 3% from the previous month) and 6% by older persons or children (decrease by 2% from the previous month).
- According to the CBPM survey conducted in December, **57 % of respondents indicated that they or their family members had experienced feelings of stress that affected their day-to-day life.** While this is a 10% increase from the previous month, the results point to a high prevalence of MHPSS issues among the surveyed population. The main stressors identified were lack of employment and severe economic hardship, food insecurity, school dropout, child labor and unavailability or lack of access to services, alongside physical health problems, denied access to education, forced marriage, denial of services and opportunities, physical and emotional abuse in the family and community tension. As a result of experiencing stress, 43% of the respondents indicated that they had observed **behavioral changes** in the household (increase by 5% from the previous month), which included family members appearing sad and stressed, eating disorder, aggressiveness, self-isolation, and thoughts of self-harm.
- Vulnerabilities were also high among household members, pointing to the **multi-faceted protection risks that Afghan families face.** The main vulnerabilities observed among the head of households under the RHAf include female headed household (15%), persons with disabilities (13.5 %), persons with life-threatening health issues (13%), women at risk (10%), children at risk (9%), and older persons at risk (6%). CBPM data also points to high rates of school dropouts (47 %) among surveyed families due to a lack of financial support by families and the engagement of children in child labor. This has increased by 10 % from the previous month. Life-threatening health issues (28%), age (8%), and legal protection and security needs (4%), are among other risks and vulnerabilities pointed out by the CBPM respondents. **The Findings of the household assessment also indicate that 16% of the households observed tension or violence within the households** affecting predominantly children (42%), women (28%), persons with disabilities (15%) as well as older persons (14%) .

SAFETY & FREEDOM



41% mentioned community areas off-limits for women and girls

- According to the findings of assessments conducted at the household level, **41 % of the heads of households indicated that there are places in the community that women and girls cannot access,** highlighting the continued significant challenges in freedom of movement and participation in public life.
- The **main places that women and girls cannot go to** include education facilities, markets, clinics, water points, and latrines, indicating the level of imposed restrictions to women and girls, depriving them

from their basic rights. These include the ban on girls' education, the need of a male guardian in public spaces, especially in rural areas and additional family-imposed restrictions to avoid any potential risks that the male members may face from the DfAs.

- The **main reasons for movement limitations** include discrimination, harassment, and intimidation in public areas, lack of identity and civil documents, mahram requirements, and safety concerns related to debts and social and cultural barriers.

CIVIL DOCUMENTATION



33% reported barriers **accessing legal services**

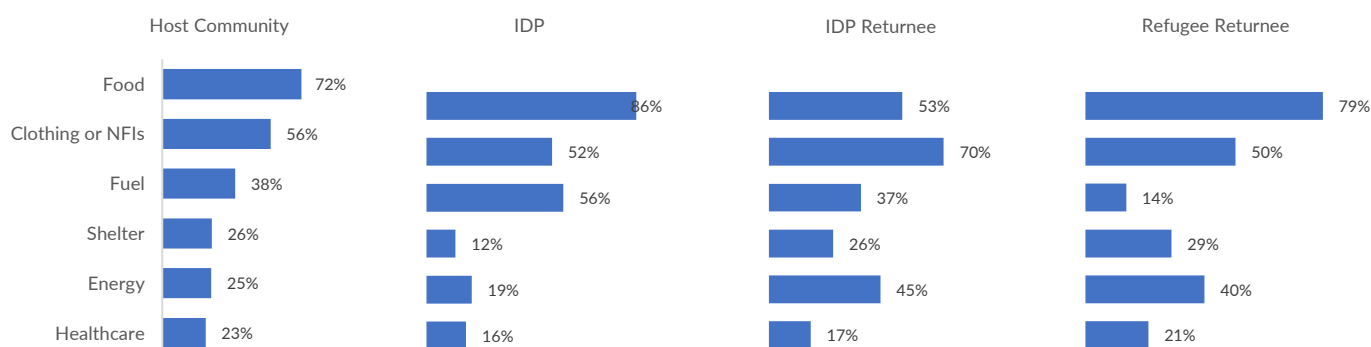
- **Lack of civil documentation** continues to be a key concern raised by household members surveyed. **Women and children are by far the most affected population groups. Refugees, undocumented returnees and IDP returnees displayed significantly higher rates (64% and 59%, respectively),** while the percentage of IDPs and refugee returnees and is lower (51 and 41%, respectively). Considering the civil documentation needs reported for Afghan returnees from Pakistan, this trend will be closely observed over the following months.
- The **primary documents missing are** e-Tazkera, followed by passport, marriage certificates, birth certificate and other certificates. The main reason is that these documents were never obtained. The households interviewed also lacked knowledge about the procedures, reissuance problems, destruction of the documents, the importance of these documents (indicating that the documents are not needed).
- The **CBPM survey conducted in December indicates** that legal assistance projects were more effectively implemented and reached more people compared to the last months. Compared to November, the trend in CBPM assessments shows a 1% decrease in barriers faced by respondents in accessing legal assistance, including civil documentation and HLP. The unavailability of services, high cost and the lack of information on services, disallowance by the families and lack of identity documents are the main reasons, affecting women and girls the most.
- The **impact of not having documentation is drastic**, with two-thirds of the respondents indicating that it prevents them from accessing basic services. It is also a barrier to accessing education and governmental or humanitarian assistance and contributes to movement restrictions and property ownership disputes.

NEEDS PRIORITIZATION, ACCESS TO SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE PROVIDED

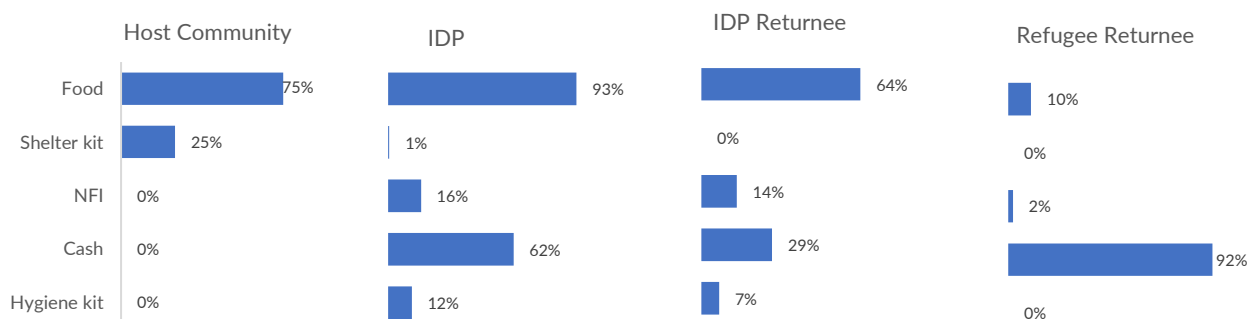


69 % mentioned food as the most pressing need

Top Needs



Assistance Provided



- **Food assistance** continues to be the most crucial need prioritized by households surveyed under the RHAf, followed by clothing/CRI fuel, energy, shelter, healthcare and purchasing productive assets to run a small business.
- The vulnerability analysis of the RHAf data for December revealed that despite the assistance provided, **93 % of the surveyed households are still in need of humanitarian assistance**. Notably, 91.5% of refugee returnees surveyed in December have received cash assistance.
- The vulnerability analysis is confirmed by the CBPM findings, which show 91 % of all households reported not receiving food assistance in the past three months, mainly due to discrimination or exclusion by the community leaders, not being assessed for assistance and lack of knowledge about eligibility criteria and procedures. The percentage is even higher among female respondents (94%) than male respondents (89%), pointing to the heightened economic vulnerability of women. **Respondents also face challenges accessing MHPSS services, health and drinking water**, with 52%, 31% and 24% of households respectively needing access to these essential services. However,

irrespective of the gender of the head of household, **all respondents highlighted that among those facing access challenges, women and girls are by far the most affected groups.** Refugee returnees and refugees are particularly affected by overcrowded shelters. Other shelter-related concerns include damaged shelter, lack of privacy and protective walls and doors, exposure to the natural environment (weather), and exposure to security (due to location).

- **Overall, women and girls continue to face significant challenges in accessing the most basic services,** reflecting systemic discrimination and movement restrictions.
- Other main barriers to accessing services include unavailability of services, high costs (including for transportation), lack of information on services as well as lack of documents.

LIVELIHOODS AND COPING STRATEGIES

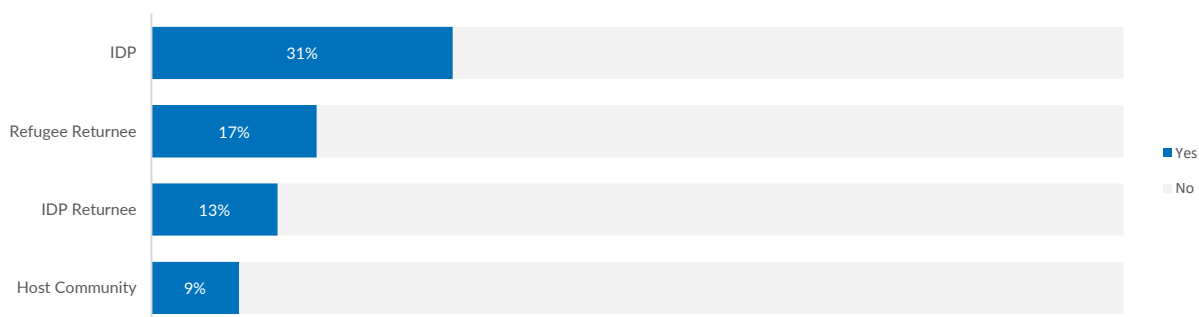


82% reported selling assets to meet vital needs.

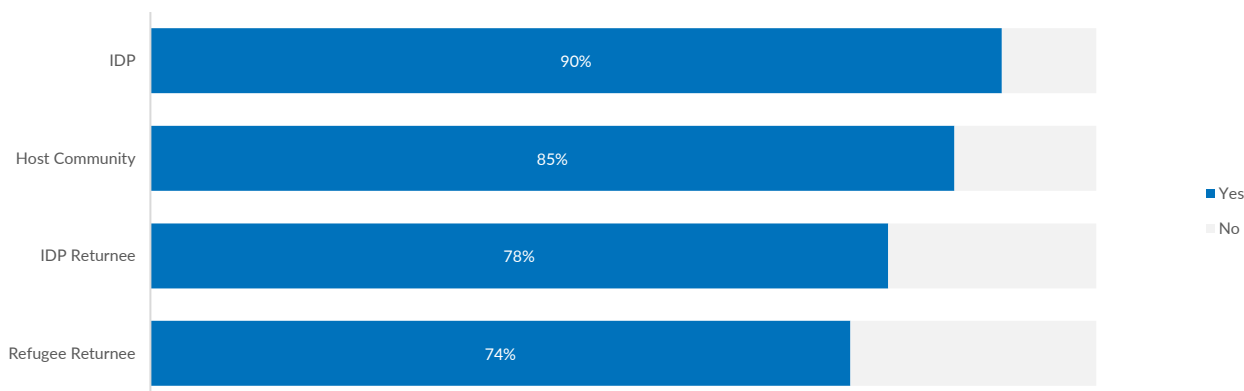


82% struggled to cover **daily living expenses** (food, rent, and other basic needs).

Are you able to work and cover your expenses (food, rent, etc.) on a daily basis?



Did you or any of your household member sold any assets including livestock, jewelry, furniture, electronics, etc?



- According to RHAf survey, 90% of IDPs followed by host community (85%), IDP returnees (78%), and refugee returnees (74%), revealed that their household members sold the assets and resorted negative coping mechanisms such as selling livestock, jewelry, furniture, and other home essential appliances to meet their life basic needs.

- Due to financial constraints and high poverty, many families have resorted to harmful coping mechanisms with severe implications that significantly impact women and children. CBPM and RHAF data indicate that most households borrow money to cope with **financial problems**. The prevalence was even higher for refugee returnees and undocumented returnees surveyed. **Other coping mechanisms** identified were selling assets (82% of RHAF respondents and 57% of CBPM respondents have resorted to this measure), child labor, skipping meals or reducing meal sizes, engaging in hazardous work, or relocating family members abroad.
- According to the CBPM findings, a significant number of the surveyed respondents indicated that their **families had adopted harmful practices due to acute poverty and financial reasons**. These included borrowing money, selling assets, skipping meals, engaging in hazardous work, engaging children in labor, including sending them to neighboring countries to work, migrating abroad, and arranging early/forced marriages and contracted child workers given to landlord to alleviate the financial burden. The findings highlight the urgent need to support vulnerable families through integrated programming interventions, including child protection, livelihoods, and community engagement.

HOUSEHOLDS EMPLOYMENT STATUS & SOURCE OF INCOME



74% engaged in informal income-generating activities.

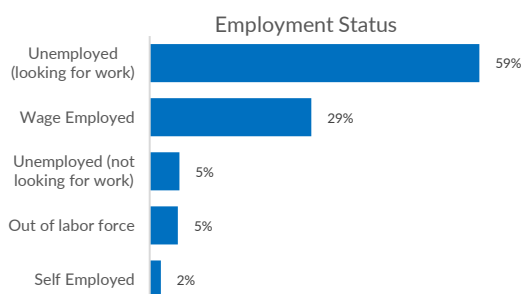


50% relied on financial support from relatives.



59% are unemployed.

- According to the RHAF survey conducted in December, over 59% of households are unemployed, 96% have accrued debts, and 29% rely on daily labor, with whatever income generated usually spent on essential needs and debt repayment. 82% of the surveyed households could not afford daily living expenses such as providing food, rent, and other basic critical needs.
- The lack of economic opportunities, entrenched poverty, repeated and protracted displacement, and the shrinking protection space have eroded people's resilience and point to the critical need for livelihood and economic empowerment interventions.



LEADING CAUSES OF DISPLACEMENT AND INTENTIONS FOR RETURN AND REINTEGRATION



71% of all IDPs displaced in the last three years indicate security concerns as top reason for their displacement, followed by natural disasters.

- According to the CBPM survey conducted in December, the main reasons for the displacement of IDPs in the last one year were security concerns, followed by natural disasters, communal tension, and household security.
- According to the CBPM survey conducted in December, 67% of the IDPs displaced last year expressed to remain in the current location return to their original places due to safety, access to economic opportunities and humanitarian assistance, while 17% indicated that they would remain in

- the current location and additional 17% are uncertain about whether to return, integrate, or relocate, mainly due to overall security situation, economic hardship, lack of services or infrastructure, children's education, natural disasters, and family.
- **According to the CBPM survey conducted in December**, 13% of FGD participants noted that their communities have received new arrivals. These include returnees deported from Pakistan and Iran, as well as families displaced by floods, drought, and security issues.

