Since 2002, UNHCR Iran has supported nearly 1 million refugees to voluntary repatriate in safety and dignity to Afghanistan and Iraq, taking into account the UNHCR Non-Return Advisory⁴ and UNHCR Global Guidance Note on the International Protection Needs of People Fleeing Afghanistan⁵. However, as the situation in Afghanistan remains fragile, only a small number of Afghan refugees in Iran shown willingness to return to their home country. Repatriation of Afghan students to obtain visas to continue their studies in Iran has significantly declined from 59% of the repatriates in January 2022 to 22% of the repatriates in June 2022. UNHCR supports the Iranian Government in providing Afghans with health, education and livelihoods opportunities. Individuals who are healthy, educated and have marketable-skills are typically more likely to return and feel capable of rebuilding their lives. Nonetheless, ultimately, a longer-term, political solution for Afghanistan’s protracted crisis is the only way to ensure safe, sustainable and voluntarily return of refugees.

By the end of June, UNHCR facilitated the repatriation of 173 returnees to Afghanistan and one returnee to Iraq. This represents a substantial decrease compared to the 706 returns facilitated in the same period in 2021. Voluntary repatriation declined by 75% compared to the same period in 2021. This decrease is due to the instability and deteriorating humanitarian situation in Afghanistan.

By the end of January, UNHCR facilitated the repatriation of 173 returnees to Afghanistan and one returnee to Iraq. This represents a substantial decrease compared to the 706 returns facilitated in the same period in 2021. Voluntary repatriation declined by 75% compared to the same period in 2021. This decrease is due to the instability and deteriorating humanitarian situation in Afghanistan.