

AFGHANISTAN SITUATION

REGIONAL REFUGEE RESPONSE PLAN

2022 Mid-year Report



Cover photograph:

Pakistan. Afghan children play in the streets of Sector I-12 settlement in Islamabad, Pakistan. © UNHCR/Roger Arnold

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Regional Overview	5
Key Regional Indicator Achievements by Sector	6
Situation Overview	7
The Islamic Republic of Iran	8
Situation Overview	8
Key Highlights	9
Gaps & Challenges	11
2022 Mid-year Achievements.....	12
The Islamic Republic of Pakistan	13
Situation Overview	13
Key Highlights	14
Gaps & Challenges	15
2022 Mid-year Achievements.....	16
Tajikistan.....	17
Situation Overview	17
Key Highlights	17
2022 Mid-year Achievements.....	19
Gaps & Challenges	19
Uzbekistan	20
Situation Overview	20
Key Highlights	21
2022 Mid-year Achievements.....	22
Gaps & Challenges	23
Turkmenistan.....	24
Situation Overview	24
2022 Mid-year Achievements.....	25
Funding & Partnerships	26
Importance of Flexible Funding.....	26
Refugee Funding Tracker	26
Partnership.....	26
Donors.....	26

REGIONAL OVERVIEW

The humanitarian, economic, and human rights situation inside Afghanistan continues to deteriorate. No mass influx into neighbouring countries has been observed in 2022 through official regulated borders surrounding Afghanistan. Borders into the Islamic Republic of Iran remained officially closed for those trying to seek asylum and are only open for those with valid passports or visas, but Afghans continue making their way to Iran informally through unofficial border crossing points. To Pakistan, border entry at Torkham is limited to those with valid passports and visas. Exceptions may apply to those with critical medical conditions on humanitarian grounds at both Torkham and Chaman border crossings and those with Tazkiras from neighbouring districts at Chaman. Meanwhile, in Central Asia, borders are only open to visa holders. Across the region, a steady flow of new arrivals including via unofficial border crossings, continued which, cumulatively, has placed a significant additional burden on neighbouring host countries. There have also been voluntary returns to Afghanistan on a small scale.

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran estimates that up to 1 million Afghans have arrived in the country since the start of 2021, although deportations have occurred on a large scale. Some 40,710 Afghan new arrivals have approached UNHCR in Iran since January 2021. In Pakistan, of the 250,000 new arrivals reported by the Government, approximately 216,000 have approached UNHCR. According to the Government of Uzbekistan, 13,020 Afghans have arrived in the country since January 2021, the majority arrived before 15 August with valid visas issued by the Uzbek consulate in Mazar-i-Sharif. Some 5,700 Afghans have arrived in Tajikistan since the start of 2021.

The Government of Pakistan – the Ministry of States & Frontier Regions (SAFRON), the Chief Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees (CCAR) – and UNHCR, with the technical support of the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA), conducted the first large-scale verification and documentation renewal exercise for registered Afghan refugees in Pakistan since 2010, officially known as the Document Renewal and Information Verification Exercise (DRIVE). The exercise ran from March 2021 until February 2022, with the [final report](#) released in September 2022. A separate verification of Afghan Citizenship Card holders in Pakistan (current Government figure for this population is 840,000) is expected to be conducted by the Government of Pakistan in coordination with IOM in the near future. In Iran, the Government conducted a [headcount exercise](#) of undocumented Afghans in the first half of 2022. The exercise was open to all undocumented Afghans, including new arrivals. Initial results suggest that approximately 2.2 million Afghan nationals registered and received headcount laissez-passers which provide temporary protection against refoulement. Final data from the exercise is expected in the second half of 2022. Meanwhile, the 17th round of the Amayesh card renewal exercise is ongoing.

Conditions of refugees and other Afghans in host countries have deteriorated, worsened by the economic situation across the region with lack of livelihoods opportunities and socio-economic perspectives. Inflation, global supply chain pressures (including due to the war in Ukraine), and rising costs of living manifested in increases in rent and price hikes of basic staples like bread and rice, compounded by limited livelihood opportunities, continue to erode purchasing power in host countries. This severely impacts vulnerable populations' ability to afford basic goods and services. In Iran, sanctions continue to have a negative impact on the economic situation, while natural disasters continue to pose a significant threat to affected populations in host countries, as evident in Pakistan with the recent floods having a devastating impact for already vulnerable populations. Nearly 800,000 refugees are estimated to be hosted in more than 40 calamity-hit districts in Pakistan, including over 175,600 women and 400,000 children. Two thirds of these are hosted in just four districts: Peshawar (210,000) and Nowshera (77,700) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Quetta (170,000) in Balochistan Province, and Karachi (71,500) in Sindh province. Separate to the RRP, to cover additional unforeseen needs, an interagency Floods Response Plan was first issued in early September 2022, with a revised version launched on 4 October, seeking USD 816 million to support the Government of Pakistan with relief and early recovery activities until May 2023.

In light of the worsening conditions in host countries, significant support is needed to meet immediate basic needs of Afghans, but host communities also need significant support. Furthermore, investments in national infrastructure require major attention since they continue to support large Afghan populations. As a result, the community – and area-based approach taken by the RRP, focusing the response on Afghans and the communities that host them is even more pertinent. Partners continue to work through government systems wherever possible, supporting the Governments to maintain and strengthen those systems in the spirit of burden sharing, demonstrated by the examples in the key achievements sections of the country chapters below, and this will continue in the second half of 2022. Opportunities for resettlement and complementary pathways remain limited but continue to be pursued wherever possible and have increased significantly from recent years. In Pakistan, over 1,500 resettlement submissions have been made for Afghan refugees between January and August 2022, while in Iran the figure is over 1,250.

Key Regional Indicator Achievements by Sector



EDUCATION

- 166,465 children (including Afghan refugees, Afghans of other status and members of the host community) supported to access primary (147,427 children) & secondary (19,038 children) education
- 574 Afghan students supported to access tertiary education
- 48 educational facilities constructed / rehabilitated



FOOD SECURITY

- 168,136 individuals received in-kind food assistance
- 122,919 individuals received CBI for food security purposes



HEALTH AND NUTRITION

- 348,072 Afghans supported to access secondary and tertiary healthcare services
- 33 health facilities constructed/rehabilitated
- 159 health facilities supported with equipment, medicines, medical supplies and salaries, including 6 ambulances



LIVELIHOODS AND RESILIENCE

- 269 individuals supported with business grants, seed funding, cash for work, or in-kind support to establish their own businesses
- 3,501 individuals benefited from vocational training



LOGISTICS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

- 1 warehouse maintained for safe storage of relief items in Termez, Uzbekistan
- 104 housing units stored in Termez, Uzbekistan, were donated through the interagency Tajikistan response to the Committee for Emergency Situations and Civil Defense under the Government of Tajikistan



PROTECTION

- 1,115 newly identified children at heightened risk (among them, 49 unaccompanied and single children (UASC))
- 42,220 persons accessed feedback and response mechanisms (calls to hotline, messages to mailbox, or in-person approach)
- 625 individuals received CBI for protection related purposes



SHELTER AND NON-FOOD ITEMS (NFI)

- 11,150 individuals provided with core relief items, including winterization assistance
- 22,380 individuals received CBI for shelter/NFI purposes
- 12,515 individuals received Multi Purpose Cash Assistance (unconditional)



WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

- 720,457 people reached with installation of new water supply systems, rehabilitation/ improvement of the existing water supply, while around 9,311 benefited water storage tanks in Iran (Islamic Republic of)
- 449,827 persons received hygienic supplies

RRP 2022 MID-YEAR RESPONSE IN NUMBERS



1,268,730

GOVERNMENT ESTIMATE OF
NEW ARRIVALS TO RRP
COUNTRIES SINCE JAN 2021

262,420

NEWLY ARRIVED AFGHANS
WHO APPROACHED UNHCR
AS OF 30 JUNE 2022



39%
FUNDED

USD 623,415,539

FUNDING REQUESTED
IN 2022

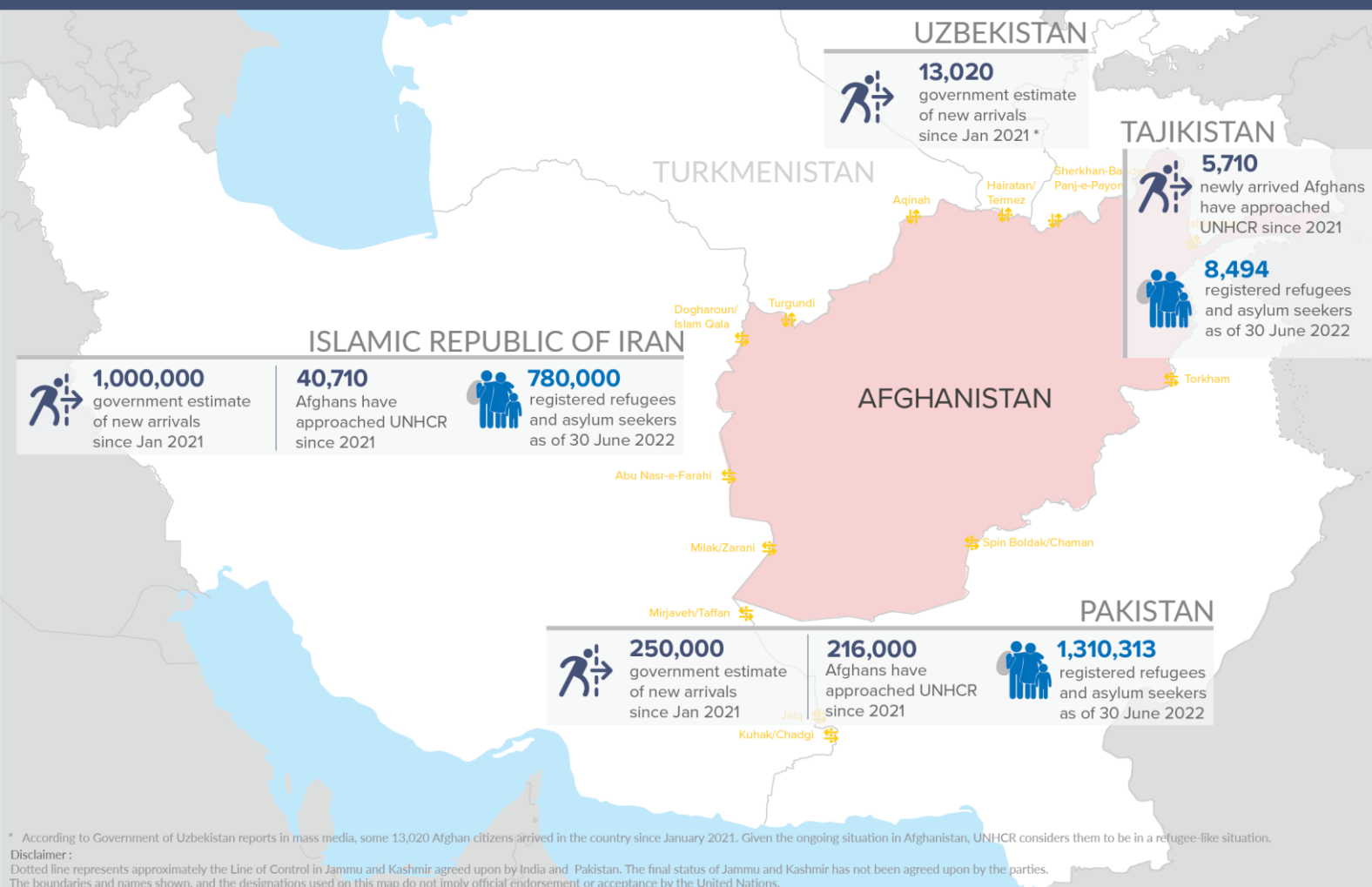
USD 245,329,038

FUNDING RECEIVED
BY 30 JUNE 2022



40
PARTNERS
INVOLVED

Source: [Refugee Funding Tracker](#)



Population at Glance



2,073,809

Registered Refugees
from Afghanistan
(in Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan,
Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan)



> 4 million

Afghans of other status
in host countries



1.4 million

Members of Host
Communities targeted
by RRP 2022

Source: [UNHCR Afghanistan Situation](#)
© UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency

*In Iran, the government estimates that some 1 million Afghans have arrived since the start of 2021. UNHCR continues to follow-up with authorities to receive updated and disaggregated data as well as an estimate of how many presently remain in Iran. Of the reported 1 million new arrivals, approximately 40,710 Afghans have approached UNHCR. Of the 250,000 new arrivals reported by the Government of Pakistan, approximately 216,000 have approached UNHCR. According to Government of Uzbekistan reports in mass media, some 13,020 Afghan citizens arrived in the country since January 2021. Given the ongoing situation in Afghanistan, UNHCR considers them to be in a refugee-like situation. The majority arrived before August 15 with valid visas issued by the Uzbek consulate in Mazar-i-Sharif.

The Islamic Republic of Iran

2022 MID-YEAR RESPONSE IN NUMBERS

 **1,000,000**
GOVERNMENT ESTIMATE OF
NEW ARRIVALS SINCE JAN 2021

40,710
NEWLY ARRIVED AFGHANS WHO
APPROACHED UNHCR
AS OF 30 JUNE 2022


42%
FUNDED

USD 258,735,082
FUNDING REQUESTED
IN 2022

USD 107,992,719
FUNDING RECEIVED
BY 30 JUNE 2022

 **16**
PARTNERS
INVOLVED

Situation Overview

The 2022 Refugee Response Plan (RRP) targets 2.2 million people in Iran, including Afghans of varying status and host communities. In the first half of 2022, Iranian borders remained officially closed for those trying to seek asylum, but Afghans continued making their way to Iran informally through unofficial border crossing points. According to evolving estimates by the Government some 500,000-1,000,000 Afghans have arrived in Iran since the start of 2021.¹ Some 40,710 Afghans who arrived in Iran from 1 January 2021 to 30 June 2022 have approached UNHCR requesting assistance and protection.² RRP 2022 estimated that 274,000 of the new arrivals/asylum seekers, including those that have arrived in 2021, will remain in Iran by end of 2022. In April, the Ministry of Interior announced the undertaking of a headcount exercise of all undocumented Afghan nationals in Iran, including new arrivals, and this exercise ended on 30 June 2022. Approximately 2.2 million Afghan nationals are said to have registered and received headcount slips reportedly valid until January 2023 and which provide temporary protection against deportation/ refoulement. The Government, through the Bureau for Aliens and Foreign Immigrants' Affairs (BAFIA), also launched a new yearly renewal exercise for Amayesh and Hoviat cards for all Afghans and Iraqi refugees respectively, which has been extended till mid-September.³

Response progress against strategic objectives:

- Most of the response was delivered outside settlements, including urban areas, with the highest number of beneficiaries reached in the provinces of Tehran, Kerman, Isfahan and Razavi Khorasan which are the provinces with the highest population of Afghans⁴.
- Reflecting an area-based approach, public services like education are being supported in areas with a high refugee concentration, but also benefiting the wider community. A majority of those reached were Amayesh card holders. In Q2, 68 per cent of the overall response was delivered to Amayesh card holders, while a further 27 per cent of beneficiaries reached were reported as 'mixed' (including Afghans of other status and host community).
- Primary Health Care services are accessible to all affected populations regardless of documentation status countrywide. Such services include vaccinations, ante- and post-natal care, mother and child-care, under-five children's growth monitoring, communicable disease care and treatment, non-communicable disease care and family planning. Secondary and tertiary health care is likewise available to all regardless of documentation status, although treatment costs, which further increased due to ongoing effects of sanctions, may act as a barrier for many. RRP partners reached up to 171,000 beneficiaries in Q1, 49% per cent with Health and Nutrition assistance, with the government-run and UNHCR-supported Universal Public Health Insurance (UPHI) initiative supporting 83,000 people. In Q2 RRP Partners reached 640,000 beneficiaries through direct interventions, of which 45 per cent were reached with food security related assistance.
- The protection sector is conducting a service mapping, with the purpose of developing and strengthening interagency referrals including by understanding current practice on identification and referral modalities.

¹ UNHCR Iran Factsheet Jan – May 2022

² Of whom 27,816 from 1 January to 31 December 2021 and 12,898 from 1 January to 30 June 2022

³ UNHCR Iran Factsheet Jan – May 2022

⁴ As per Q1 5W's data, an estimated 77% of the response was delivered outside settlements and 23% inside settlements.

Key Highlights

Education

UNICEF is supporting formal and non-formal education, including by **delivering educational kits to children in 400 schools**, expansion of educational spaces and WASH facilities, training teachers, and providing student kits in settlements and host communities. UNICEF also continues to advocate and support the Ministry of Education to increase access to quality education for refugee and host community children.

Relief International (RI) enhanced access to education for Afghan refugees through cash and in-kind support; provision of self-learning kits for over 4,000 students; conducted remedial classes for 2,000 students; **equipped 49 schools and constructed 14 classrooms**.

In 2022, upon the request of the government, and in close cooperation with the **Ministry of Education (MoE)** and **BAFIA**, UNHCR jointly with MoE is co-funding the **construction of 20 schools** in refugee-populated areas across the country targeting boys and girls, including both refugees and nationals. This project seeks to improve the access of refugees to formal education both at primary and secondary levels, and thus to maintain and enhance the protection space for refugees established through governments inclusive policies.

Protection

Refugees, asylum seekers and persons at risk of statelessness in Iran can contact UNHCR **in person in five locations across the country as well as through a hotline** system, offering a variety of services and advice. Counselling is provided with possible case identification which enables tailored assistance and follow-up including on documentation, psychosocial support, cash-based interventions, access to health insurance, and referrals, including to protection sector partners and Government entities. These engagements support resettlement efforts and inform the interagency response through identification of trends in the protection environment. Some 18,307 individuals contacted UNHCR from January to end of June 2022, often more than once (32,854 approaches).

UNHCR operates, in coordination with the Government, a Legal Services Project which provides legal assistance and alternative dispute resolution mechanisms to Afghans in Iran. Although refugees have access to Iranian courts, the 16 supported Dispute Settlement Committees offer an alternative and free-of-charge mechanism that complements judicial processes by finding amicable solutions in civil matters involving refugees. Family disputes, financial disputes, and wage-related disputes were the three most prevalent issues across 313 cases from January to June 2022. Additionally, 17 UNHCR-hired lawyers provided free consultations and legal support to 1,165 Afghans with legal issues e.g. violence within families, access to documentation but also labour related matters during the same period.

Health

In partnership with the Ministry of Health and Medical Education (MoHME) and BAFIA, UNHCR supports refugees' **access to quality and free-of-charge primary health care (PHC's)** in settlements and urban areas on par with locals, regardless of their documentation status. On secondary and tertiary health care, UNHCR supports **subsidizing the premium fee for 120,000 most vulnerable refugees** countrywide while opening the access for premium payers to self-enrol by paying the premium themselves, allowing refugees access to all public hospitals at par with host communities.

Despite the access to vaccines and other health services, the uptake by Afghan refugees was very low in many districts due to barriers such as lack of trust, wrong information, or cultural and language barriers that deter many Afghan refugees from accessing these services. To address this, the establishment of a **network of Afghan Community Health Workers/Volunteers** in Iran is being developed through collaboration between WHO Iran and MoHME to gain community trust and access to the health system.

Sistan and Baluchestan, one of the largest host provinces for Afghan refugees, has the highest prevalence of mental health disorders in Iran. The recent Afghan refugee influx, the impact of COVID-19 on the health system, and economic hardships have increased host community and Afghan refugee vulnerability to mental health disorders. WHO in collaboration with Zahedan University of Medical Sciences and with support of MoHME is **providing essential mental health services in the Community Mental Health Center** and the Comprehensive Health Center in Shir-Abad district with 80,000 population of Iranians and Afghan refugees. In addition, revision of essential mental health services and enhancement of referral system protocols and standard operating procedures are part of the project.

Relief International supports access to health services, including by providing over 300 lifesaving cash cards, **health equipment for 10 medical facilities** and 1 Mobile Medical Unit, and supported coordination among international and national organizations, stakeholders and government agencies, through meetings, communications and advocacy materials.

Nutrition

UNICEF has procured **nutrition supplies to address malnutrition cases** in settlements and is supporting the establishment of baby-friendly corners and treating severely malnourished children in the Fariman site. UNICEF will also support health centers with growth monitoring equipment in priority areas.

Food Security

WFP reached a maximum of 31,662 vulnerable refugees living inside settlements through its **unconditional food assistance programme**, implemented in partnership with BAFIA, each month providing a hybrid of in-kind wheat flour and vegetable oil plus cash transfers, contributing 80 percent of the daily food needs of food-insecure men-headed households and 100 percent of the needs of women-headed households with no income. In addition, following a Government WFP has extended food assistance to some 1,100 new arrivals relocated from Fariman site to Torbat-e-Jam settlement since June.

WFP and UNHCR, in coordination with BAFIA, conducted a **Joint Assessment Mission (JAM)** to review the food security and nutrition situation of refugees inside settlements, assess current assistance programmes and make recommendations to support improved food security and self-reliance. The JAM found that WFP's food assistance, girls' education incentive, school snack programme and income generating workshops were well received by refugees who rely on assistance to meet their food needs. However, refugees remain vulnerable to food insecurity as increasing prices continue to erode their purchasing power.

WASH

Leading the WASH Sector, UNICEF coordinates efforts aimed at ensuring access to WASH for vulnerable Afghans in settlements. UNICEF supports the construction of a water feeder line to the Niatak settlement in Sistan and Baluchestan, while also partnering with other agencies, including the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), to establish WASH facilities and hygiene promotion inside settlements in the border provinces.

Relief International addresses multiple vulnerabilities among Afghans living in three provinces of Iran (Sistan and Baluchestan, Khorasan Razavi, and South Khorasan), **contributing to improvements in people's well-being** across a variety of sectors including WASH, education, and nutrition, responding to people's immediate needs and strengthening their resilience.

Shelter/ Non-food items/ Basic Needs

UNFPA procured 6,000 dignity kits with culturally appropriate items for menstrual hygiene to uphold the dignity of Afghan women and girls. 1,000 kits were distributed to Afghan women and girls crossing from Afghanistan into Sistan and Baluchestan, and the rest are to be distributed in other border provinces and the settlements. During distributions, field staff and volunteers of partners provide information on available services and basic sensitization on GBV related matters.

Livelihoods

Sustainable socio-economic recovery for refugee, migrant and host communities from the impact of COVID-19 in Iran. With the support of its local partners, Relief International assists the safe resumption of small businesses run by or employing refugees or migrants, by providing business development support training and technical support to business owners. Additionally, the project strengthens access to economic opportunities to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable households through the provision of technical and vocational training to Afghans to increase livelihood opportunities, in coordination with Livelihoods Sector.

Multi-sectoral

Integrated response in Dasht-e-Zahmat-Keshan (DZK) settlement in Kerman province. NRC conducted a blanket intervention in DZK aiming at improving the living conditions of displaced Afghans, including new arrivals, through emergency cash assistance for 1,150 households, children's kits, legal information sessions, distribution of IEC materials on best hygiene practices and on nutrition to encourage the use of cash to improve food consumption. The project was part of a larger response in DZK including activities in the Multi-Purpose Service Centre (MPSC) and, due to good coordination with the authorities on this, is hope that this initiative will be replicated in other areas.

Interagency coordination has been activated in response to the influx of new arrivals in Torbat-e-Jam settlement. As part of this response, NRC has conducted **rapid needs assessment** and provided assistance to address WASH and education needs, while several coordination meetings have been held to increase coordination across sectors and with BAFIA.








Gaps & Challenges

Access to refugees continues to remain a challenge which hampers delivery of services in a timely needs-based manner. Data on and access to newly arrived Afghans particularly lacked in urban settings, where the vast majority of new arrivals were located. Inter-sector coordination remained primarily focused on settlement infrastructure development, with limited focus on collaboration and joint advocacy on protection, health, livelihoods and education, which are key components of RRP 2022. The deteriorating socio-economic status, increasing inflation, and continuing sanctions have led to an increasingly difficult situation among refugees and host communities making it imperative to continue supporting the growing needs of affected populations. The response also faces challenges due to the limited number of active RRP partners, as well as the limited pool of local NGOs that RRP partners are permitted to work with. One of the negative impacts of this is lack of protection and other related services in areas where these partners do not have a presence, thus making access to services by Afghans ad-hoc and geographically dependent, rather than standard practice.



In April 2022, NRC distributed emergency cash cards among vulnerable Afghans in Kerman province, supported by the EU. Photo: Society for Recovery Support (SRS).

2022 Mid-year Achievements

Sector	Inter-Agency Achievement (January – June 2022)
Education 	<p>20 schools planned by UNHCR for construction in 2022 are underway, in addition to 10 classrooms in 5 schools planned by Relief International.</p> <p>90,952 children (including Afghan refugees, Afghans of other status and members of the host community) supported to access primary (78,845 children) & secondary (12,107 children) education,</p> <p>650 students provided with tablets</p> <p>2,806 parents or caregivers received trainings on life skills and positive parenting</p> <p>152 teachers received education in emergency, psychosocial support, or pedagogical trainings</p>
Food security 	<p>165,636 individuals received monthly in-kind food assistance</p> <p>122,919 individuals received monthly cash for food, as well as food vouchers for 120 households.</p> <p>534 newly arrived households supported through multi-purpose cash to cover basic needs, including food needs.</p>
Health & Nutrition 	<p>9 health facilities constructed and rehabilitated (including health posts, safe delivery posts)</p> <p>28 health facilities (including primary, secondary, and maternal hospitals) supported with equipment, medicines and medical supplies, salaries</p> <p>151,329 Afghans supported to access secondary and tertiary healthcare services</p> <p>59 individuals received CBI for health and nutrition purposes</p> <p>6 ambulances provided and/ or supported</p> <p>59 Pregnant and Lactating Women (PLWs) provided with micronutrients, including folic acid and iron</p>
Livelihoods and Resilience 	<p>225 individuals supported with business grants, seed funding, cash for work, or in-kind support to establish their own businesses</p> <p>2,697 individuals benefited from vocational training</p>
Protection 	<p>1,115 newly identified children at heightened risk were identified (among them, 49 unaccompanied and single children (UASC))</p> <p>580 individuals provided with cash assistance for protection outcomes</p>
Shelter & NFIs 	<p>11,150 provided with core relief items, including winterization assistance</p> <p>3,730 households received CBI for shelter/NFI purposes (around 22,380 individuals reached) *</p> <p>11,906 individuals received multi-purpose cash assistance (unconditional)</p>
WASH 	<p>11,744 people reached in Settlements/ Refugee Villages/ Camps through installation of new water supply system, rehabilitation/ improvement of the existing water supply while 9,311 benefited with water storage tanks</p> <p>22,826 households received hygienic supplies (around 136,856 individuals reached) *</p>

* Standard household size is consisted of 6 individuals

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan

2022 MID-YEAR RESPONSE IN NUMBERS



250,000

GOVERNMENT ESTIMATE OF
NEW ARRIVALS SINCE JAN 2021

216,000

NEWLY ARRIVED AFGHANS
WHO APPROACHED UNHCR
AS OF 30 JUNE 2022.



41%
FUNDED

USD 310,442,000

FUNDING REQUESTED
IN 2021

USD 128,231,725

FUNDING RECEIVED
BY 30 JUNE 2022



32

PARTNERS
INVOLVED

Source: [Refugee Funding Tracker](#)

Situation Overview

The 2022 Refugee Response Plan (RRP) targets 3.4 million people in Pakistan, including Afghans of varying status and host communities. RRP partners continue to advocate for better access for refugees and asylum seekers to basic rights in the country while enhancing self-reliance among refugees and their host communities for sustainable solutions because Pakistan does not have a national asylum system in place nor is it signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention. In February 2022, the Document Renewal and Information Verification Exercise (DRIVE) targeting Government-registered Afghan refugees (Proof of Registration card holders) was completed. Following this, the current Government-registered Afghan refugee population stands at 1,282,963 individuals. In addition, 135,745 unregistered members of registered families (UMRFs) were recorded during the exercise, who will receive Family Information Certificates confirming their family link to the PoR card holder. 266,711 new-born registration (NBR) applications were received during DRIVE.

Affected populations, including host communities continue to face significant challenges, not least access to basic needs and livelihood opportunities, but also significant multifaceted protection needs; this is especially true for new arrivals and undocumented Afghans.

Response progress against strategic objectives:

- In efforts geared towards providing multi-sectoral assistance with a focus on basic needs, education, health care, nutrition livelihoods social protection, clean energy, WASH, documentation, and humanitarian protection, including child protection and GBV programming, RRP partners provided assistance through the implementation of multiple activities/actions in sectors above through 4,454,953 interventions. 2,238,155 individuals have benefitted from assistance.
- Support to primary healthcare facilities/units continued (including vaccination, antenatal and prenatal care, providing hospitals with health equipment) thus increasing access and quality of health assistance provided during the first half of the year. Primary Health Care services are accessible to all affected populations regardless of documentation status countrywide. Such services include vaccinations, ante- and post-natal care, mother and child-care, under-five children's growth monitoring, and communicable disease care and treatment.
- In order to strengthen the protection environment and enhance the prospects of realizing sustainable solutions, RRP partners provided protection services, which included GBV and child protection services, legal assistance (representation for release in cases of detention, documentation, legal advice) and cash-based support (multi-purpose cash) to affected populations. Some 11,602 were provided legal assistance ranging from advice/consultation on documentation, representation for the release of detained Afghans and other legal issues.

Key Highlights

Education

As sector lead, UNICEF focuses on the continuation of Education for Afghan Refugees in Hosting Areas. **School assessments were conducted to identify out-of-school and vulnerable children and school facilities** in 66 Public schools and 60 Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) centers in targeted areas in close coordination with local teachers, and religious and community leaders. In addition to trainings of teachers, UNICEF's partner distributed school supplies benefitting 17,982 students (12,466 Boys, 5,516 Girls) including 5,000 Afghan children.

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) is offering services at individual, community, and system levels by establishing **Accelerated learning programmes (ALPs) for Afghan refugees and host children**, CP prevention and response services, information dissemination and awareness activities, community-based protection, and improving 40 schools' capacity to accommodate Afghan refugee children through school's improvement plans and teachers' training, NFI and cash assistance to most vulnerable Afghan families.

Food Security

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is implementing projects in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces with a focus on **strengthening economic resilience and food security** for women home based workers and women farmers, women's economic empowerment, promotion of promising horticultural value chains, and alternative livelihoods development of the farmers. Under the collaboration between FAO and UNHCR, 20 Afghan refugees from Peshawar, Dera Ismail Khan and Bannu were trained by FAO, along with local farmers, in poultry management. Based on a recent food security analysis for the refugee areas of Balochistan and KP, livelihoods and resilience may be supported by enhancing agricultural productivity through innovative climate-smart farming practices such as a recent JICA initiative for KP in which women from host communities work side by side with Afghan women in profitable tunnel farming and food processing practices.

Health

IRC is implementing projects to ensure Afghan refugees and host communities' **safe and meaningful access to integrated protection** including child protection, GBV, health, nutrition, education services and assistance in 19 refugee hosting districts of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and 5 districts of Balochistan. with UNFPA, UNICEF and others. IRC is supporting 11 health facilities (health staff, medicine, commodities, rehabilitation) and deploying 8 mobile health teams in Afghan refugee hosting districts of Baluchistan. These projects support government authorities to facilitate access to mainstreamed basic services for Afghan refugees and will support the principles of participation, empowerment and resilience of affected communities that cut across the overall humanitarian response.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, refugees and host communities living below poverty line were particularly vulnerable. Handicap International⁵ enhanced its support toward them in Health, WASH, MHPSS and GBV sectors. Interventions focused on **supporting Primary Health Care Services in 11 refugee villages in 6 districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**. One HDU/ICU, which consisted of 14 beds, was also established in Buner (Koga) before being handed over to Government Health Department. In 2022, 515 Assistive devices have been provided to Persons with disabilities and 14,750 Kits (Hygiene kits, Baby Kits, Delivery Kits, First Aid Kits, and PSS kits) were distributed among Afghan refugees. In order to improve the accessibility of WASH services, accessible hand pumps, solarized water pumps and accessible toilet blocks were established.

Livelihoods and resilience

As sector lead, WFP has supported 2,802 **protracted Afghan refugees with cash-based Transfers**, within its larger programme for other population groups. Some 2,800 structural schemes and capacity-building activities have been completed including major activities like 460 irrigation channels (801 KM in length) in 146 villages, providing enough water for irrigation to host and refugee communities. Road infrastructure initiatives will also benefit 411 villages (13,270 families) providing improved access to schools, markets, hospitals, and other villages.

⁵ Handicap International is now "Humanity & Inclusion" internationally but is still working as "Handicap International" in Pakistan.

Under their Livelihoods and Integrated Health and WASH Service project, CARE International Pakistan support displaced and other affected populations in Pakistan. The project focuses on two outcomes, **income generation and livelihoods opportunities (outcome 1) and integrated basic services (outcome 2)**, targeting two districts North Waziristan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and district Pishin in Baluchistan provinces in Pakistan and targeting 40 per cent Afghan refugees, 20 per cent Pakistani returnees and 40 per cent host communities.

With the financial support of UNHCR, Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund has supported over 5,000 Afghan refugees' families in KP and Balochistan through its **Poverty Graduation Project**, which aims at enhancing self-reliance and livelihoods by providing productive assets and transferable skills. PPAF's poverty graduation approach is aligned with SDG 1 and Pakistan Vision 2025 which seeks a just and equitable society in Pakistan where vulnerable and marginalized segments of society are mainstreamed. PPAF is capitalizing on updated data from the recent DRIVE verification exercise carried out by the Government of Pakistan, with the support of UNHCR, to target the most destitute refugee families, assisting them with needs-based livelihood interventions. PPAF is also aiming to facilitate refugees' access certain essential services through capacity building, particularly banking.

Protection

The gender-based violence (GBV) component of the RRP, led by UNFPA, has reached 84,843 beneficiaries, including 40,212 women, 14,664 girls, 23,279 men, and 6,688 boys, from January to July 2022. The key focus areas in the GBV prevention and response activities include **access to safe spaces, Mental Health, and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), referral support and case management, community engagement and awareness, capacity-building, and integration of GBV mitigation** in inter-sectoral plans. Under the government's leadership, partners are coordinating closely through GBV sub-working groups' platforms to ensure complementarities, cooperation, and standardization of guidelines. The donor and partners have provided the needed support to the government in addressing the needs and priorities of refugees and host communities.

Under MHPSS, Handicap International reached some 13,293 individuals with **psychosocial support in group and individual sessions**, while 3,580 persons were reached by GBV Sessions in the implementation of specific GBV Prevention and Protection measures.

WASH

UNICEF in close coordination with the Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees (CAR) and UNHCR is providing **WASH services to Afghans living in refugee villages and host communities** in KP and Baluchistan, and to Afghans in hosting communities in Sindh. This includes provision of safe water through installation of new, rehabilitation/ improvement and solarization of existing water supply systems, installation of household/ communal toilets, rehabilitation/ improvement of existing drainage lines, the establishment of the solid waste management system, rehabilitation of WASH infrastructure at schools and health care facilities along with dissemination of messages on safe and hygienic practices including use of clean and safe drinking water.

Gaps & Challenges

While RRP Partners continue to make concerted efforts to implement the RRP's key priorities, the economic situation in Pakistan poses serious challenges. The post-COVID situation as well as effects of Russia-Ukraine war (Russia being one of the countries Pakistan relied on for the import of cereal, vegetables, mineral fuels, oils, and distillation products) have had a serious impact. Inflation rates jumped from 13.8 per cent in May to 21.3 per cent by end-June, causing unprecedented increases in the cost of living and increasing the costs of partner responses.

Supporting children to access primary education, provisions of education supplies were both affected and only 35,849 were reached while there is a potential to support many more school aged children with additional funding. Health services in Pakistan are fully inclusive, in principal refugees and asylum seekers have full access to all levels of healthcare at par with Pakistani nationals and this policy is expected to continue, albeit made more difficult by the difficult economic situation. However, as national system health facilities do not record refugees separately, it is challenging to extrapolate, record, and report the number of Afghans receiving healthcare.

2022 Mid-year Achievements

Sector

Inter-Agency Achievement (January – June 2022)

Education



74,225 children (including Afghan refugees, Afghans of other status and members of the host community) supported to access primary (67,432 children) & secondary (6,793 children) education,
38 education facilities constructed / rehabilitated or improved
547 Afghan student who received scholarships for tertiary and higher education

Health & Nutrition



131 health facilities supported with equipment, medicines and medical supplies, salaries
23 health facilities were constructed / rehabilitated
Around **196,324** Afghans were supported to access healthcare in supported facilities

Livelihoods and Resilience



620 Afghan refugees & Afghan of other status benefited from vocational training to empower them through livelihoods/income generation projects/programs inclusion

Protection



40,981 persons have accessed feedback and response mechanisms
41 individuals reached with cash including cash for protection and multi-purpose cash

WASH



705,113 people reached in Settlements/ Refugee Villages/ Camps through installation of new water supply system, rehabilitation/ improvement of the existing water supply
423,701 people have received hygienic supplies



Pakistan: A Carpet weaving is one of the most lucrative businesses. © UNHCR/Asif Shahzad

Tajikistan

2022 MID-YEAR RESPONSE IN NUMBERS



5,710

NEWLY ARRIVED
AFGHANS WHO
APPROACHED UNHCR
AS OF 30 JUNE 2022.



12%
FUNDED

USD 40,457,486

FUNDING REQUESTED
IN 2022

USD 4,677,337

FUNDING RECEIVED
BY 30 JUNE 2022



9

PARTNERS
INVOLVED

Source: [Refugee Funding Tracker](#)

Situation Overview

Following the deterioration of the situation in Afghanistan in 2021, the Tajik government initially expressed its commitment to keep the borders open for possible influx, leading to some population movements. However, soon after, the government decided to close the border. Despite UNHCR's advocacy with the government at the highest-level, including during the UN High Commissioner for refugees' (HC) visit to Tajikistan and his meeting with President Rahmon in March 2022, no progress has been observed until now. The closure of borders continues to be justified by national security imperatives. As a proactive measure, UNHCR continues to monitor the evolving situation and trends in the Tajik-Afghan border areas with an enhanced focus on ensuring access to territory and non-refoulement through partnership with the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan as the sole entity with access to the borders.

Repeated efforts have also been made to advocate with the Tajik Government for the resumption of the national asylum system. Among other measures, working and high-level meetings have been initiated and several Note Verbale have been sent out via MFA. Strong advocacy on resumption was also conducted in different fora and meetings organized by other development actors. These efforts were reinforced by HC's mission to Tajikistan back in March 2022, through meetings with line Ministers and the above-mentioned meeting with the President. As a result of these advocacy actions, those who were in legal limbo (a refugee like situation) were able to get their asylum applications registered and the national RSD Commission resumed its work as of 17 March 2022.

The handover of registration activities to the Government of Tajikistan in 2014-2015 led to the situation when partners and the Government started using different databases and sources; with the result that there is not one single unified database. This complicated the recording of assistance, leading to inconsistencies and incoherence of partner data. A recent roll-out of UNHCR's PRIMES tools with ProGres v4⁶ and other applications will enhance integrity and minimize opportunities for fraud, ensure effective management of assistance, legal and protection activities, ensure one unique record with unique identifier for each person and will serve as a consolidated database for all partners. Following this, a country-wide verification exercise started in mid-July in Vahdat district to verify and update individual data.

Key Highlights

Education

With UNHCR and partner support, 1,150 refugee children were enrolled in primary education; 138 refugee children attended secondary schools, of whom 72 graduated from High school in June 2022. Public schools in Vahdat have doubled the number of refugee children in their classrooms in the last couple of years. The increase is attributed to the deteriorated security situation in Afghanistan and high numbers of newly arrived refugees in Tajikistan in 2021. In view of limited capacity and financial constraints the Department of education in Vahdat appealed to UNHCR to support local school infrastructure to accommodate growing needs of both local and refugee children. A rapid assessment by UNHCR and UNICEF revealed serious infrastructural gaps and needs in the areas of Shelter and WASH, while the schools also lacked heating systems and school furniture. To respond to emerging

⁶ ProGres V4 is the latest iteration of UNHCR's registration and case management software application which has new and enhanced functionalities.

needs of the local schools in locations where refugees reside, UNHCR has initiated rehabilitation works in 5 schools and refurbishment in one public school attended by refugee children.

Health & Nutrition

Significant needs have been identified in hospitals in Vahdat and Rudaki e.g. bathrooms and toilets are dysfunctional and require complete rehabilitation. UNHCR has initiated **rehabilitation works in five hospitals in locations where refugee reside**. Such support is also expected to expand the capacity of these hospitals to treat more patients from both local and refugee populations. A health and nutrition action plan was drafted with focus on required activities, supplies, technical assistance, training, human resources, budget and timeframe. The Action Plan consists of two parts: one outlining the requirements at border crossing points and the other those at the refugee temporary accommodation facility. Following this, a series of training sessions was organized to build the capacity of the staff of the Public Health Emergency Operating Center, PPE has been provided to the government and renovation works of a building located within the compound of the Balkhi refugee temporary accommodation facility have been initiated for use as a first aid health point.

Livelihoods and Resilience

The textile sector has been recognized by the Government as a priority area for the economy with potential to grow and generate jobs. It should be noted that the textile sector is the second largest exporting industry of the country. More specifically, some private companies have expressed interest to employ refugees if some support from UNHCR would be provided to **expand their operational capacity to accommodate both refugees and vulnerable local populations**. Remote employment through IT hubs/Techno parks is another emerging area of cooperation identified recently. This includes employment opportunities for refugees to provide services to employers internationally, predominantly USA and Europe. It is an innovative concept for the labor market in Tajikistan and offers high potential for growth in view of global demand on outsourcing through online services. It is specifically beneficial for Afghan refugee women who could be placed in a safe environment to perform such online duties.

Protection

Coordinators of sub working groups under the protection working group carried out a field visit in April to assess the needs of the protection infrastructure in Balkhi refugee settlement. The recommendations were submitted to the Inter-Agency Coordinator for consideration and incorporating the findings in future programming. The Protection Working Group (PWG) also organized a **one-day training on international refugee protection**, UNHCR's mandate, introduction to child protection and GBV and protection mainstreaming to interagency partners. Terms of reference were also finalized for Child Protection and GBV Sub working Groups.

Shelter and NFI

The sector has engaged in the **set-up of a temporary refugee settlement in Balkhi district**, south Tajikistan, agreed with the Government, to meet refugees' emergency shelter needs in the event of refugee influx from Afghanistan. Inter-agency technical assessments of the site carried out to identify necessary works. The non-encampment policy agreed with the Government will allow potential refugee influx to benefit from services (health, education, livelihoods) available with the host communities. The construction of the temporary refugee settlement with the capacity of accommodating up to 500 persons has been completed and the facility will be soon handed over to the Committee for Emergency Situations and Civil Defence under the Government of Tajikistan (CoESCD). It was agreed with CoES that the facility can be used to assist Tajik nationals affected by natural disasters if refugee influx does not occur. Core relief items have been prepositioned for up to **5,000** persons.

WASH

WASH rehabilitation works is ongoing in 10 schools where children of Afghan refugees study located in Vahdat, Rudaki and J. Rasulov districts. In total 2,525 children of which 200 of them were Afghan children, 108 of the school staff are benefiting from this project. Hygiene supplies for a period of one year including soap, disinfectants and supplies were delivered to 12 schools located in Vahdat, Rudaki and J. Rasulov districts where 750 Afghan refugee children study and 1,118 schools staff benefited. Meanwhile, the construction of WASH facilities in the Temporary Accommodation Center for potential Afghan refugees J. Balkhi district is completed.

2022 Mid-year Achievements

Sector

Inter-Agency Achievement (January – June 2022)

Education



1,150 primary school-aged children supported to access primary education
138 primary school-aged children supported to access secondary education
27 Afghan students supported to access tertiary education through DAFI scholarships
10 educational facilities were constructed / rehabilitated, and **1** facility supported with in-kind school furniture and equipment

Food security



2,500 individuals received in-kind food assistance

Health & Nutrition



1 health facility rehabilitated
64 Afghans received CBI for health and nutrition purposes
419 Afghans supported to access secondary and tertiary healthcare services

Logistics & Telecoms



1 warehouse maintained for safe storage of relief items in Termez, Uzbekistan
104 housing units stored in Termez were donated through the interagency Tajikistan response to the Committee for Emergency Situations and Civil Defense under the Government of Tajikistan

Protection



12,803 identity documents issued to refugees and asylum seekers
8 new arrivals were able to access asylum procedure
1,610 persons have accessed feedback mechanisms through response mechanisms in place

Shelter & NFIs



605 individuals received multi-purpose cash assistance (unconditional)

WASH



3,300 persons received hygienic supplies

Gaps & Challenges

Denial of access to the territory remains a challenge in Tajikistan. The Tajik-Afghan border has been closed since September 2021 at the initiative of Tajikistan, and there are no indications suggesting possible re-opening of the border in the near future. Refoulement instances and denial of access to the territory involving Afghan nationals continued to occur during the reporting period, involving national security authorities and border guard troops. Documented individuals, including women and children have been among those who were forcibly returned to Afghanistan, in some cases resulting in families being split. Forcible returns have been carried out without due process and in violation of the national law and international refugee law.

The situation of mandate refugees remains precarious in terms of employment and enjoyment of rights, still leaving them in legal limbo with no integration opportunities. Against this background, UNHCR continues working closely with the Government to foster local integration through ensuring access to basic services and promoting self-reliance. Following HC's meeting with the president in Tajikistan in March 2022, the latter agreed to review this caseload and decide accordingly. However, this does not guarantee that all the UNHCR mandate refugees will be granted convention status, so many remain at risk of deportation and refoulement. UNHCR continues advocacy with the government and in parallel seeks other possible solutions, i.e., resettlement as protection tool.

Uzbekistan

2022 MID-YEAR RESPONSE IN NUMBERS



13,020*
NEWLY ARRIVED
AFGHANS AS
OF 30 JUNE 2022



24%
FUNDED

USD 10,631,036

FUNDING REQUESTED
IN 2022

USD 2,600,000

FUNDING RECEIVED
BY 30 JUNE 2022



5
PARTNERS
INVOLVED

Source: [Refugee Funding Tracker](#)

Situation Overview

In the first six months of 2022, there has been no large influx of refugees from Afghanistan into Uzbekistan. Prior to mid-August 2021, Afghan passport holders could enter Uzbekistan on a tourist visa, however access has since been restricted to only those with education, business, or diplomatic visas.

Uzbekistan is not a State Party to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol; Uzbekistan does not have a national asylum system and no refugees or asylum-seekers are registered with national authorities. The only avenue to seek asylum is the 2017 Presidential Decree on Political Asylum. While the definition of a political asylee is similar to the refugee definition, the procedure is not in line with international standards and its implementation is unknown. As such, as of June 2022, Uzbekistan officially hosts only 11 mandate refugees, all recognised by UNHCR before 2006, and all from Afghanistan. However, in November 2021, the Government of Uzbekistan reported via mass media that 13,020 Afghan citizens had arrived in the country on short-term visas, of whom around 2,000 have valid visas as of July 2022. RRP partners have limited access to this group or further information on the official numbers. Given the volatile situation in Afghanistan, UNHCR considers that they may need international protection. RRP partners continue to advocate to the Government of Uzbekistan for official access to the group, and to enable safe and unhindered access to territory. With no mass influx into Uzbekistan and with little access to the group of 13,020 Afghans announced by the government, RRP partners continue to focus on preparedness efforts and collaboration to meet the critical international protection needs of Afghan citizens already in the country who have approached partners, as well as any potential new arrivals.

In June 2022, in accordance with a Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Termez Cargo Centre in Surkhandarya region, bordering Afghanistan, was given the status of an International Multifunctional Transport and Logistics Hub for Humanitarian Assistance. RRP partners have varying levels of presence in the Centre, including UNHCR's 9000m² Regional Humanitarian Logistics Hub.

On 5 July 2022, five rockets reportedly fired from Afghanistan landed on Uzbekistan territory causing damage to buildings, but no human casualties. Reports of other rocket attacks in April and July were rejected by Government of Uzbekistan. The de facto authorities in Afghanistan have since avowed that Afghan soil would not be used to launch attacks against other countries.

UNHCR is leading inter-agency preparedness and response efforts, in collaboration with the UN Country Team. RRP partners focus their efforts on areas where they have the greatest operational impact based on their respective expertise and experience.

In partnership with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and in coordination with the UN Country Team, in early 2022 UNICEF organised a rapid assessment of Afghan citizens in Surkhandarya region and trained government representatives to undertake the effort. The Ministry confirmed that the assessment was conducted, however the results have not yet been shared.

* According to Government of Uzbekistan reports in mass media. In light of the conditions in Afghanistan, these people cannot return and UNHCR considers them to be in a refugee-like situation

Key Highlights

Livelihoods and Resilience

UNDP has launched the “**Enhancing the Capacities of Surkhandarya Region to Educate and Train Afghan Citizens**” project which aims to increase Afghans’ opportunities for employment and integration into active social and economic life in Uzbekistan. The initiative is part of the broader effort of the Government of Uzbekistan and international development actors to improve resilience and livelihoods of Afghan communities in the Surkhandarya Region. The project is being implemented in collaboration with the Educational Centre for Training Afghan Citizens in Termez (ECTAC) and the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations via its regional “Ishga Marhamat” (Welcome to Jobs) centre. It covers the cost of education (including tuition fees, accommodation, catering, monthly allowances) for Afghan students (male and female) in a variety of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes.

To build capacity of government partners – including the Ministry of Finance and the State Committee on Families and Women Affairs – UNICEF conducted trainings and procured tablet computers with preinstalled modules for **conducting needs assessments and social support programmes in emergencies**.

Logistics and Telecoms

UNICEF has established a field presence in the Termez Cargo Centre in Surkhandarya region to facilitate effective coordination on emergency preparedness and response, support delivery of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan, and implement regular programmatic activities. In support of the Red Crescent Society of Termez, UNICEF is **rehabilitating a warehouse and training room** within their premises. Key emergency Health and Nutrition, WASH, and Education-related supplies have been procured and prepositioned in the warehouse.

Protection

In partnership with the National Human Rights Centre of the Republic of Uzbekistan (NHRC), UNHCR convened a **roundtable discussion on interim arrangements and referral mechanisms for persons in need of international protection**. As Uzbekistan does not yet have a national asylum system, the event explored provisional solutions to allow forcibly displaced persons access to rights guaranteed by national and international law. It was attended by representatives of Ministries, the General Prosecutor’s Office, the National Security Service, other State agencies and international organisations. Through high level meetings with Uzbek authorities, as well as the submission of Note Verbale, UNHCR has been advocating for no forced return of Afghan nationals in line with UNHCR Guidance Note on the International Protection Needs of People Fleeing Afghanistan.

Child Protection

In cooperation with the Children’s Ombudsperson, as a co-chair of the National Commission on Children’s Affairs, UNICEF developed **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on child protection, including in emergencies**, discussing them with regional and district level stakeholders in Surkhandarya region. The SOPs describe guiding principles, procedures, roles and responsibilities in the prevention of and response to child protection issues affecting children, with the aim of ensuring quality, consistency, and interagency coordination in services. The SOPs are being reviewed by the Child Protection Sector of the Cabinet of Ministers.

GBV

Across the sub-region, UNFPA is implementing the “**Strengthening national capacities to improve prevention of, and responses to Gender-Based Violence in Central Asia**” project. As part of this, UNFPA has rolled-out a Multi-Sectoral Response to GBV (MSR to GBV) package with established SOPs, and delivered Training of Trainers sessions to 291 individuals from key service providers of GBV prevention – law enforcement, healthcare, psychological support, and social sectors – which also addressed potential GBV survivors among refugees. UNFPA is working with faith-based organisations in Surkhandarya region to strengthen preparedness and community resilience to enable a direct response to any emerging peace and security risks. However, frequent changes of government officials and ministerial restructuring are a challenge to GBV efforts in Uzbekistan, interrupting implementation of activities.

2022 Mid-year Achievements

Sector

Inter-Agency Achievement (January – June 2022)

Health & Nutrition



Six ambulances procured by UNICEF for districts bordering with Afghanistan, with required medical equipment pre-installed, as well as modern life-saving and diagnostic medical equipment for the regional children's hospital.

100 (57 women) Afghan students selected by UNDP to study one-year Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes on ICT, Tourism, Sewing or Agribusiness.

Livelihoods and Resilience



136 (22 women) Afghan citizens supported by UNDP with costs of education (tuition fees, accommodation, catering, monthly allowances) in railway construction and management, and Uzbek language and literature for teachers.

48 Afghan students received cash assistance from UNICEF in Tashkent, Termez and Samarkand regions to help cover residence registration and visa extension fees for six months, enabling them to continue their studies without interruption/ fear of deportation.

A 6-month pilot project partnership agreement for vocational training and psychosocial support to Afghan citizens and local vulnerable communities has been signed partnership agreement between UNHCR national NGO "Barqaror Hayot" for. The pilot is expected to start in the second half of 2022.

Logistics & Telecoms



UNHCR Regional Humanitarian Logistics Hub in Termez supports the response across the region, enabling UNHCR to rapidly replenish stockpiles while reducing costs and risks associated with carrying large inventory in each country affected by the Afghanistan situation.

254 Afghan households (705 individuals) who approached UNHCR through its telephone and email hotline – a majority of whom are in Termez – were provided counselling, including information on how to request political asylum, mindful of the challenges.

537 professionals were trained by UNICEF – including regional and district Child Protection sectors specialists, members of regional and district Commissions of Children's Affairs and school psychologists and inspector psychologists – in Surkhandarya region to identify, respond and refer child protection issues in line with the draft SOPs on Child Protection.

Protection



112 Afghan children (47 boys, 65 girls) received psychosocial support services at centres in Termez and Muzrabad districts of Surkhandarya region through UNICEF.

69 Afghan children (39 boys, 30 girls) provided with child-friendly and gender-sensitive legal aid through UNICEF in Surkhandarya region.

85 religious' leaders, imams and otin-oyi (female preachers) were reached with capacity building activities on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Gender issues by UNFPA in Surkhandarya region.

2,450 tons of core relief items, including Refugee Housing Units, tarpaulins, sleeping mats and kitchen sets are prepositioned by UNHCR in Termez.

Shelter & NFIs



40 tons of core relief items were dispatched from Termez for the Afghanistan response, including **20** tons of humanitarian cargo to Tajikistan to support preparation for a possible influx of refugees from Afghanistan.

Nine WASH and Healthcare facilities assessed for potential renovation by UNICEF. A detailed design of work required is being developed encompassing improvements to water wells and handwashing facilities, installation of solar heaters, installation of water treatment systems (in 3 of the 9 facilities only – laboratory results indicate that the water in the other 6 is safe for drinking). The project design will be submitted to the Government for approval.

WASH



One hospital for which installation of a waste management system is planned as a pilot and procurement is ongoing.



Uzbekistan. UNHCR sends humanitarian cargo from Termez hub to Tajikistan as part of refugee emergency preparedness action. © UNHCR/Elyor Nemat

Gaps & Challenges

RRP partners in Uzbekistan have received little funding through the RRP and activities continue to be implemented by agencies using softly earmarked and unearmarked funding. A lack of official access to newly arrived populations also presents difficulties for RRP partners in implementing a response. Of the Afghans in Uzbekistan who have approached RRP partners, most issues reported relate to economic hardship, and lack of access to legal stay, employment, medical services and rights. Visa issuance is a significant challenge, including technicalities of how to access visa renewal, and official and unofficial costs involved – the visa renewal fee is US\$120 per person, for three months, which is particularly difficult for large families. Some Afghan nationals, notwithstanding the situation, returned to Afghanistan due to lack of financial resources to pay for the extension of their visas. As Uzbekistan does not yet provide any asylum, those without valid visas cannot access education or medical services and are not issued exit visas to leave Uzbekistan. Some Afghan nationals report running out of empty pages in their passports for visas, and that the Afghan consulate is unable to issue new passports. Minors who have since turned 16 are expected to have their own passport and visa which requires them to return to Afghanistan and without documentation, they fear that they are at imminent risk of deportation. In addition, there have been reports that Afghan citizens in Uzbekistan are facing difficulties registering the birth of their children. RRP partners are following up the reports with relevant authorities.

Turkmenistan

2022 MID-YEAR RESPONSE IN NUMBERS



-
NEWLY ARRIVED
AFGHANS AS
OF 30 JUNE 2022



- %
FUNDED

USD 3,149,935

FUNDING REQUESTED
IN 2022

Note:

No funding information
has been recorded by 30 June 2022



3

PARTNERS
INVOLVED

Situation Overview

Following the August 2021 developments in Afghanistan, there has been no influx of refugees into Turkmenistan. As per Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan press reports, the situation at the Turkmen-Afghan border is stable and one of friendship and cooperation. Humanitarian partners have not received reports of any push-backs. Nevertheless, the humanitarian situation in neighbouring Afghanistan continues to pose a risk of a potential influx of refugees into Turkmenistan.

In September 2021, the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator in Turkmenistan presented to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs a matrix of support that the UN system would be able to offer in case of an influx of refugees from Afghanistan. The matrix included technical support, in-kind contributions, and cash for activities to be implemented with national authorities and the National Red Crescent Society across Protection, Education, Health and Nutrition, WASH, Livelihoods and Resilience, Logistics and Telecommunications sectors. The Government of Turkmenistan expressed willingness to work with the UN in case of a refugee emergency.

As of mid-2022, strict COVID-19 border closures are beginning to loosen with some international flights resuming. Border checkpoints operate as usual, with only those with valid passports and diplomatic, business or education visas able to enter the country. Turkmenistan is party to the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol and has established national asylum procedures. While no new asylum applications have been registered in Turkmenistan in the last 15 years, ensuring unhindered access to the territory and quality asylum procedures, including adequate referral mechanisms, remain priorities. As of June 2022, Turkmenistan hosts 10 mandate refugees from Afghanistan (15 mandate refugees in total). UNHCR and partners advocate with the Government of Turkmenistan to find durable solutions for mandate refugees – several of whom have close family ties with the host country – through their naturalization or granting of residence. During 2022, partners have identified 5,000 Afghans in Turkmenistan. In a recent vulnerability assessment, IOM identified 320 vulnerable Afghans (114 women, 206 men), while another 180 additional individuals most likely meet the vulnerability criteria (a formal assessment has not yet been completed). Partners are following up to ensure that vulnerable Afghans are provided with the assistance they need.

The assumption remains that in case of refugee movement, only government authorities and the National Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan will have access to the displaced people in the early stages of such movement. RRP partners are focusing on consolidating partnerships with the National Red Crescent Society for emergency preparedness and targeted, multi-sectoral humanitarian response. Partners continue to provide support to the Government and authorities to prepare to address any immediate protection and assistance needs of newly arriving Afghan asylum-seekers, and to strengthen the resilience of refugees and host communities. In the event of an influx, sector working groups could be activated as required. Close collaboration and consultation would be maintained with relevant government counterparts, such as the State Commission for Emergency Situations and line ministries in the countries of asylum to support and ensure complementarity with the national response.

Together with national organizations, RRP partners are bringing necessary technical expertise, implementation capacities and resources to raise awareness, and ensure that skills and knowledge are in place to respond to a potential refugee emergency. As there has been no refugee influx into Turkmenistan, partners have not received any direct funding for RRP in Turkmenistan. However, preparedness activities continue to be implemented by partners through regular budgets, including from softly earmarked and unearmarked funds.

2022 Mid-year Achievements

Sector

Inter-Agency Achievement (January – June 2022)

Education



10 Early Childhood Development Kits prepositioned by UNICEF in Ashgabat to provide young children with access to play and learning – essential to help restore a sense of normalcy for children amid humanitarian emergencies, including refugee influx.

Health & Nutrition



Warehouse capacity established by UNICEF as a preparedness measure, in Ashgabat to preposition child-centred supplies to ensure access to essential health and nutrition in case of an emergency, as well as WASH, education, Early Childhood Development and recreation services.

Protection



Translation of the UNHCR Guidance Note on the International Protection Needs of people Fleeing Afghanistan into Russian and officially communicated to the Government of Turkmenistan, as part of strategic advocacy efforts on safe and effective access to territory and prevention of refoulement, along with continued UNHCR meetings with representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan and the State Migration Service to discuss refugee issues.

National Child-Centred Disaster Risk Reduction strategy developed and disseminated by UNICEF, following 2021 amendments to the law on emergency situations, to better prepare children, families and communities for shocks and effective recoveries.

Two GBV hotlines operated by UNFPA with Civil Society partners in the capital Ashgabat, and in Lebap Velayat (province) – to identify and refer cases of GBV for further multisectoral support, including psychosocial counselling and legal assistance.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) developed by UNFPA on Multi-Sectoral Response to GBV, following which training has been delivered for national partners at the decision-making level, including in police, healthcare, and social sectors.

Guidance and SOPs developed by UNFPA for police on sensitivities when working with vulnerable women and girls, such as victims of domestic violence, and persons with disabilities.

Engagement of men to promote gender equality through sensitization and awareness-raising initiatives, as part of UNFPA's GBV prevention efforts, in Ashgabat, Lebap and Mary velayats,

Shelter & NFIs



Unrestricted cash assistance distributed to 3 mandate refugee families by UNHCR in the first half 2022 based on vulnerability criteria. Post-distribution monitoring indicates utilities and rent, health services, and food as the most common uses of the assistance.

Kitchen sets were distributed through UNHCR partners to nine refugee families.

WASH



WASH and Dignity Kits prepositioned for 300 families by UNICEF in Ashgabat, as well as a superstructures kit for latrine slabs, and double cubicles for communal latrines.

Funding & Partnerships

Importance of Flexible Funding

Overall, the RRP 2021 response was 58 per cent funded. The response was best funded in Pakistan (39 per cent, with USD 51.8 million received out of USD 132.6 million requirements) followed by Iran (25 per cent, with USD 33.4 million received out of USD 135.9 million requirements). The response in Central Asia fared worse, with Tajikistan 17 per cent funded (USD 4.2 million received out of USD 24.3 million requirements) and Uzbekistan only two per cent funded (USD 134,000 received out of USD 6.5 million requirements). Nonetheless, donors responded to the ask on the importance of flexible funding and around 30 per cent of the overall funding recorded was at the situation level, meaning that the partners could prioritise the most pressing needs across the region. Without flexible funding this would not have been possible.

Refugee Funding Tracker

In 2021, the RRP utilized the Refugee Funding Tracker⁸ to track interagency funding for the response. It was the first time it had been used in these countries. With the scale up to include 40 partners in the response in 2022, further training will be provided to partners at country level on the use of the RFT to ensure that funding tracking is as up to date as possible.

Partnership

RRP 2021 had 11 partners across the countries covered under the plan, listed below. However, the RRP is an inclusive and participatory planning process. The availability of more time for the RRP 2022 planning process has allowed the expansion to include all partners interested in participating in the response. In each country, UNHCR has worked with UN agencies and NGO partners during the development of the plan, in consultation with host governments through the relevant line ministries. For RRP 2022, some 40 partners are participating in the response across the 5 countries (16 UN agencies and 24 NGOs), a significant increase from 11 partners for RRP 2021.

RRP 2022 Partners: Action Against Hunger – Pakistan | Aga Khan Agency for Habitat | Bunyad Literacy & Community Council | CARE International in Pakistan | Concern Worldwide | Cooperazione e Sviluppo | Federation Handicap International | Friends Welfare Association | Help in need | Hundreds of Original projects for Employment | International Consortium for Refugees in Iran | International Rescue Committee | Intersos | Kokkyo naki Kodomotachi Japan | Médecins Sans Frontières | Norwegian Refugee Council | Pakistan Alliance for Girls Education | Participatory Rural Development Society | Relief International | save the children | Society for Human Advancement for Outreach Resource Pakistan | Special Talent Exchange Program | UN - Food and Agriculture Organization | UN - International Labour Organization | UN - International Organization for Migration | UN - Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS | UN - United Nations Children's Fund | UN - United Nations Development Programme | UN - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization | UN - United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women | UN - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees | UN - United Nations Human Settlement Programme | UN - United Nations Industrial Development Organization | UN - United Nations Office for Project Services | UN - United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime | UN - United Nations Population Fund | UN - World Food Programme | UN - World Health Organization | Voluntary Service Overseas | Women Empowerment Organization

Donors

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⁸ <http://refugee-funding-tracker.org/>

