

# Afghanistan situation: Emergency preparedness and response in Iran

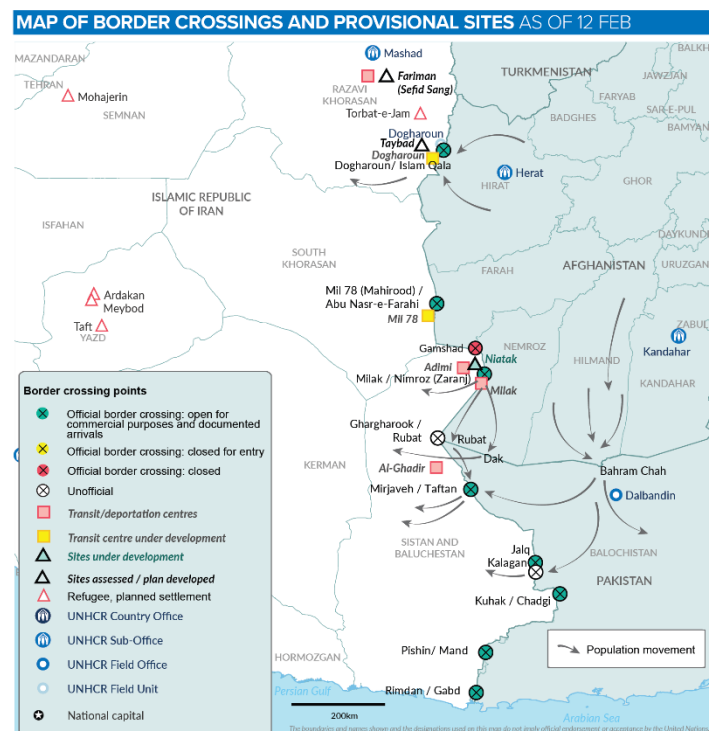
1-10 March 2022

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

**710,039** people have been internally displaced in Afghanistan since the start of 2021, of which 21% are women and 58% are children.

According to evolving estimates by the Government of Iran, approx. **500,000** Afghans have arrived in Iran in 2021. As confirmed by BAFIA, **750** individuals are currently at Fariman center – also known as Sefid Sang. BAFIA is reportedly planning to relocate **100** individuals from Fariman and settle them inside Torbat-e-jam settlement. The tentative timeline for this development is estimated to be one month.

As reported by the UNHCR office in Kerman, **23 families** (115 individuals) are being held by the government in the Alghadir site in Sistan and Baluchestan province. **Four families** (19 individuals) have been given exceptional permission by BAFIA to be relocated to Zahedan city. Their movement is no longer restricted by BAFIA; however, they are still awaiting the finalization of their accommodation, which is likely to be supported by NRC.



## POLITICAL, SECURITY & HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN

- In its first major **human rights report** since the Taliban seized power in August 2021, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) cited that from 15 August 2021 to 15 February 2022, UNAMA and OHCHR documented at least **1,153 civilian casualties (at least 397 killed and 756 wounded)**, including **173 child casualties (55 killed, 118 wounded)** and **25 civilian casualties among women (11 killed, 14 wounded)**. “The human rights situation for many Afghans is of profound concern,” said Michelle Bachelet, High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Geneva-based rights council is set to appoint a special rapporteur on Afghanistan to probe alleged violations by the Taliban and others at the end of its current month-long session.
- In a **press release published on 8 March**, on the occasion of the International Women’s Day, the **United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)** said that it stands with Afghan women and girls as they face the consequences of conflict, in addition to drought and a collapsing economy. “What we are witnessing today in Afghanistan is a crisis of catastrophic proportions. Everyone in the country is affected by the current crises, but the situation for women and girls is particularly concerning as their rights and access to opportunities have become increasingly challenged,” said Deborah Lyons, the Secretary-General’s Special

Representative (SRSG) for Afghanistan. Further, the press release added that durable peace and stability in Afghanistan will not be achieved without the active role of women in the economic and political life of the country.

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## DISPLACEMENT TO IRAN

- UNHCR continues to rely on the Government of Iran to share figures on the total number of Afghans who arrived in Iran in 2021 and 2022. For now, UNHCR is working with the assumption of approximately **500,000** arrivals in 2021, with the understanding that a large number have likely been deported, others moved to Iran for livelihoods or family reasons, and a small number may have moved onwards towards Turkey.
- **According to the Government of Iran, only 505 Afghans have officially applied for asylum in Iran as a result of the upheaval in Afghanistan last summer.** UNHCR continues to seek clarity from Iranian authorities in relation to asylum procedures in Iran, including how persons with international protection needs can fill in their asylum claims in accordance with Iranian legislation and international standards.<sup>1</sup>
- Refugee focal points in Kerman have told UNHCR that **the majority of new arrivals are families- as opposed to single males.** It is understood that most settle in suburbs upon their arrival, as they are not able to afford rent in urban areas. Once settled they often take up work as daily labourers, which is usually tolerated by the government. Borders remain officially closed for asylum-seekers. The requirements of valid visas and passports are still being strictly applied and tighter border control measures are being enforced at unofficial border crossing points. **34,398** Afghans who arrived in Iran from 1 January 2021 to 5 March 2022 have approached UNHCR requesting assistance and protection.

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## RETURNS TO AFGHANISTAN

- Afghans who are apprehended while trying to enter Iran continue to be returned to Afghanistan despite UNHCR's non-return advisory and advocacy for those fleeing conflict to be provide asylum. Through the analysis of available data and information, **UNHCR estimates that 65% of all newly arriving Afghan asylum seekers are deported from Iran by the Government.** In February 2022, UNHCR issued a [Guidance Note on the International Protection Needs of People Fleeing Afghanistan](#), superseding the previously issues non-return advisory in August 2021. In the same vein, UNHCR continues to call on asylum States to ensure that Afghans whose claim for international protection was rejected prior to the takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban are able to lodge a fresh or subsequent claim, on the basis that the current situation in Afghanistan amounts to changed circumstances that may give rise to a need for international protection as refugees or otherwise.
- **Based on the information received from BAFIA Khorasan Razavi, the number of Afghan deportees has been reduced from 1500 to 500 per day.** Meanwhile, the Iranian Consulate in Afghanistan says it has scaled up its visa issuance per day. According to [Shahr-Ara](#) local news, Afghan nationals who have Iranian visas (type A, B, C, and M) and consider extending the validity of the visa can apply for an appointment online through <http://kanoonnobat.ir/>. UNHCR had previously heard that Afghans who entered Iran with temporary visas were facing difficulties in getting them renewed in Iran. With many having no option to return to Afghanistan and having to stay in Iran on expired visas, risk of arrest and deportation increased.

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## THE REGIONAL RESPONSE PLAN (RRP) 2022

- **On 11 January 2022, UNHCR launched the 2022 RRP.** The RRP targets 5.7 million persons of concern in the neighboring countries of Iran, Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, in coordination with 40

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<sup>1</sup><chromeextension://efaidnbmnnnibpajpcglclefindmkaj/viewer.html?pdfurl=https%3A%2F%2Fspcommreports.ohchr.org%2FTMResultsBase%2FDownloadFile%3Fid%3D36808&clen=794955>

partners and requires **USD 623 million**. For Iran in 2022, the RRP is targeting 2.2 million persons of concern, including Afghans of varying status and host communities, with 16 partners involved, and requiring **USD 259 million**. This includes approximately USD 69 million on health and Nutrition, USD 42.5 million on Shelter and NFIs, USD 35.1 million on WASH, USD 27.5 million on education, USD 27.3 million on protection, USD 27 million on livelihoods and resilience, and USD 22.2 million of food security.

- UNHCR and BAFIA continue to make progress in the development of shelters and site infrastructure. So far, the progress in Niatak includes:
  - Shelters/ plots in zone 4, which comprises of 400 emergency shelters, is 94% completed, while zone 1, comprising 108 transitional shelters is 40% completed.
  - The boundary wall is 57% completed. NRC has initiated the tendering process for the development of 302 emergency shelters in zone 2- these shelters could, funding permitting, be upgraded to transitional shelters at a later date.
  - Shelter and basic site infrastructure (roads and boundary wall) are expected to be completed by April.
  - There continue to be delays/ bottlenecks in implementing UNICEF funded WASH activities (partnering with RI and NRC). Funding for a wastewater network/ water treatment system is a gap, with a further US\$1.5 million required to support this. In the continued absence of progress in developing WASH infrastructure, it is likely that the opening of Niatak will be further delayed.

## FUNDING NEEDS

The total [interagency regional funding needs](#) under the RRP in 2022 are:

- o **USD 623 million.**
- o Including almost **USD 263.7 million for UNHCR** alone.

For Iran, under the RRP in 2022, interagency needs are:

- o **USD 259 million.**
- o Including **USD 119.4 million for UNHCR.**

## FUNDING UPDATE

As of **08 March 2022**, UNHCR's **overall programs in Iran** (regular and emergency programming) were **38% funded**.

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to the operation in Iran, as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programs with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds. Whilst interest in the current emergency is relevant and opportune, UNHCR wishes to also highlight ongoing regular programming needs which are severely underfunded.

### EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Earmarked contributions for the Iran operation amount to some **USD 45.8 million**.

**Germany** 16.9 million | **Italy** 5.6 million | **European Union** 4.25 million | **Republic of Korea** 0.68 million | **UNAIDS** 0.009 million

### SOFTLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

**Netherlands** 4 million

Norway | Private donors

### MAJOR UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the major donors of unearmarked contributions:

**Sweden** 77.6 million | **Norway** 72.5 million | **Netherlands** 37.2 million | **Denmark** 35.6 million | **Germany** 27.6 million | **Switzerland** 18.4 million | **Belgium** 11.9 million | **Ireland** 11.8 million

Algeria | Armenia | Bulgaria | Canada | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Liechtenstein | Lithuania | Luxembourg | Monaco | Montenegro | Peru | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Singapore | Thailand | Turkey | Uruguay | Private donors

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