

Afghanistan situation: Emergency preparedness and response in Iran

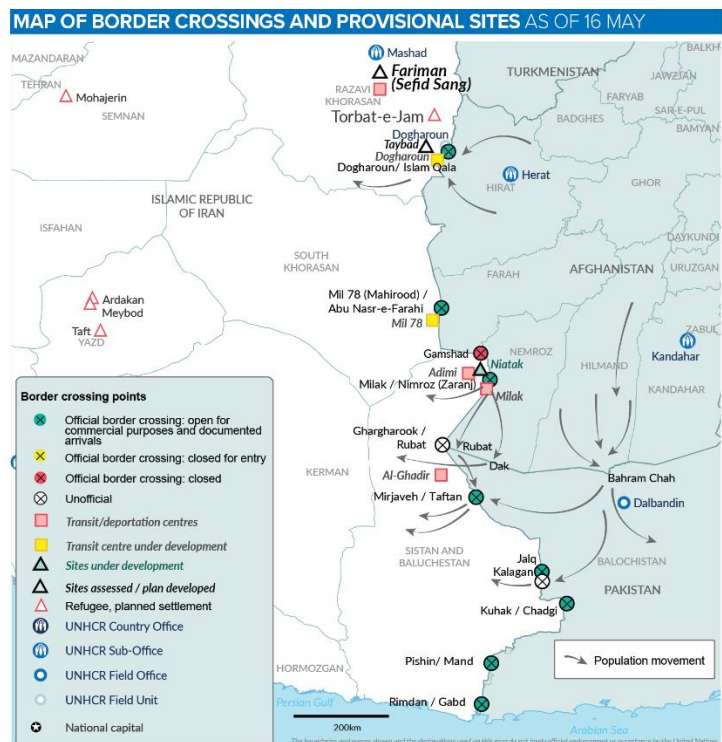
15 May 2022

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Over **789,590** persons have been internally displaced in Afghanistan since the start of 2021, of which 20% are women and 60% are children. Approximately 170,000 have now returned to their previous places of residence, as the security situation. According to evolving estimates by the Government of Iran, approx. **500,000** Afghans have arrived in Iran in 2021. Some **37,595** Afghans, who arrived in Iran from 1 January 2021 to 10 May 2022 have approached UNHCR requesting assistance and protection.

According to BAFIA Central, the provision of **90**-day Laissez-Passers (LPs) for **220** newly arrived families (**1,100** individuals) relocated from Fariman (a government-run transit/detention centre at the border to Torbat-e-Jam settlement in Khorasan Razavi province) is part of a wider policy of the BAFIA to transfer populations from supervisor sites to regular settlements.

This recent development towards new arrivals is a **positive step towards the provision of documentation/regularization to new arrivals, which UNHCR have been advocating since July 2021 at the onset of emergency in Afghanistan.**



DISPLACEMENT TO IRAN

- The Director General (DG) of BAFIA said, according to a [report](#) on 14 May, that undocumented Afghans in the country who have not been able to participate in the on-going headcount exercise yet must participate in it. The DG noted that the headcount plan for newly arrived Afghans started on 11 April 2022 continues until 7 June 2022 and will not be extended, stressing that those who do not participate in this plan are considered as irregular foreign nationals and must leave the country. According to the recent announcement by the Ministry of Interior, Afghan nationals who are neither in possession of valid residence permits nor have participated in the headcount exercises in 2016-2019, can participate in the new round of the headcount exercise on its [website](#) and also obtain a referral letter for vaccination. When referring to the designated centres, applicants are requested to present any document, certificate or referral letter issued in Afghanistan. UNHCR Iran provides complementary information on the headcount exercise on its website (both in [Persian](#) and [English](#)) and on its [Instagram account](#) for undocumented Afghan nationals. UNHCR is currently waiting for confirmation from BAFIA on what documentation will be given out through the headcount exercise as well as confirming recently reported deadline of 7 June in the media.
- According to the latest update from BAFIA Khorasan Razavi (KR), Fariman empowerment site has reached its maximum capacity accommodating **4,000** individuals. In the past, persons of concern in Fariman used to

request release to urban areas, while now many express their preference to be relocated to Torbat-e-Jam settlement where they can have access to facilities and services for free despite the fact that no sufficient shelters are currently available in the settlement (*BAFIA Central and KR have recently agreed for the rehabilitation of shelters in the settlement).

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** (*65% of deportations are estimated using the data from UNHCR daily monitoring, IOM, and media monitoring. These sources indicate a high rate of deportations, up to 70% of arrivals are estimated to be deported. A more conservative and lower rate, 65%, was adopted for this estimation to factor in possible fluctuations and unaccounted movement to balance the possible under-reporting of new arrivals). 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.
- By the end of April, UNHCR facilitated the repatriation of **90** returnees to Afghanistan and one returnee to Iraq. Most of returnees are from Khorasan Razavi, Qom and Tehran and mostly returned to Herat and Balkh provinces. This represents a decrease compared to the **535** returns facilitated in the same period in 2021. Voluntary repatriation declined by **83%** compared to the same period in 2021. This decrease is understood to be due to the continued instability and deteriorating humanitarian situation in Afghanistan.

THE REGIONAL RESPONSE PLAN (RRP) 2022

- A UNHCR multifunctional team from Kerman and Tehran conducted a two-day mission on 9 and 10 May to Sistan and Baluchistan (S&B) to monitor the ongoing implementation of the activities in Niatak and to meet with UNHCR partners and contractors. The UNHCR team confirmed an obvious progress development in the **36** new transitional shelters in terms of completion of flooring, tiling of the kitchen's walls in zone one. Based on the observation, it is expected that the first phase of construction (mainly in Zone one) to be finalized by end of June in close collaboration with partners and contractors on the ground, including the completion of **108** transitional shelters as well as provision of WASH and power for part of the shelters to have them operationalized. During the meeting between the DG of BAFIA in S&B, UNICEF and UNHCR, the DG emphasized on the importance of full construction of Niatak site for government of Iran.



A joint visit of UNHCR, BAFIA S&B and consultancy company to Niatak settlement to observe the ongoing construction activities.



Renovation of existing administration building, South Side of Niatak Settlement, funded by UNHCR.

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 10 May 2022, UNHCR's **overall programs in Iran** (regular and emergency programming) were **56% 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 37.1 million**.

France 11.5 million | Austria 10.6 million | Private donors USA 6.7 million | Australia 4.4 million | Switzerland 4.3 million | Netherlands 4 million | Private donors United Kingdom 3 million | Private donors Germany 3 million | Spain 2.3 million

SOFTLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

France 11.5 million | Austria 10.6 million | Australia 4.4 million | Switzerland 4.3 million | Netherlands 4 million | Spain 2.3 million

MAJOR UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the major donors of unearmarked contributions:

Sweden 95.2 million | Norway 72.5 million | Netherlands 37.2 million | Denmark 35.6 million | Germany 27 million | Private donors Spain 19.9 million | France 18.5 million | Switzerland 18.4 million | Private donors Japan 14.9 million | Belgium 11.9 million | Ireland 11.8 million | Italy 10 million

For more information, please contact:

Farha Bhoyroo

External Relations Officer

bhoyroo@unhcr.org, +98 912 132 7183 (mobile and WhatsApp).