

KEY DISPLACEMENT FIGURES

→ 3.5M

Estimated internally displaced persons (IDPs) by conflict within Afghanistan as of 31 December 2021¹

→ 1,155

new conflict induced IDPs between 10 April to 10 May 2022 (ongoing verification)²



→ 67,200

Refugees and asylum-seekers in Afghanistan as of June 2022

→ 64,900

IDP returnees recorded so far in 2022

→ 2.3M

Refugees and asylum-seekers from Afghanistan in neighbouring countries as of 31 December 2021

→ 180,780

Reported newly arrived Afghans in need of international protection to neighbouring countries since 1 January 2021³

→ 1,178

Refugee returns to Afghanistan in 2022

HIGHLIGHTS

- Deputy High Commissioner (DHC) for Refugees visits Afghanistan and Pakistan.** The DHC visited Afghanistan and Pakistan from 11-17 June to focus attention on the humanitarian situation facing Afghans and the need to continue to support displaced people, including host communities, refugees and returnees, and women and girls. During her four days in Afghanistan, she met with interim officials and visited Herat Province, in the west of the country, inaugurating a women's business centre. The DHC also met with women and girls in Herat and Kabul and listened to their concerns, which included the need for an inclusive human rights-based approach to support voluntary return and sustainable reintegration of displaced persons.
- In Pakistan,** the Deputy High Commissioner highlighted the critical right to asylum for Afghans and thanked the people and government for generously hosting millions of Afghans for more than four decades. She met with Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, and Minister of States and Frontier Regions, Muhammad Talha Mahmood, among other officials. Her discussions focused on the need for peace in Afghanistan and lasting solutions for the refugee population in neighbouring countries. The DHC also visited Haripur in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, where she met with Afghans, including girls and women.
- Earthquake response in Afghanistan.** On 22 June, a 5.9 magnitude earthquake struck the Central Region of Afghanistan, with four districts in Patika province (Gayan, Barmala, Naka and Ziruk), as well as Spera district in Khost province affected. Some 770 people are estimated to have been killed with 1,500 people reported wounded. Following the earthquake, UNHCR and other agencies assessed the area, with findings reaffirming extensive damage to houses, absence of basic services such as water, education, health, electricity, access roads in the remote locations, and lack of viable livelihood opportunities.
- In response,** UNHCR, as part of the inter-agency effort, has distributed 1,600 tents and non-food item kits benefiting a total of 11,200 affected individuals in Khost and Pakitka provinces. UNHCR has also distributed 1,500 dignity kits to the two affected provinces for 10,500 vulnerable women and girls. Further to the assessments, UNHCR and UNDP have additionally launched a joint program to assist earthquake affected families in two Priority Areas of Return (PARR) districts – Spera in Khost and Barmal in Paktika – aimed at rebuilding lives and resilience by improving access to essential services.



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¹ This figure comprises the 2020 year-end figure of 2.9M (Source: UNHCR), the total estimated conflict induced IDPs within Afghanistan in 2021 (Source: OCHA), excluding the recorded number of IDPs which have returned to their places of origin (Source: UNHCR), with the inclusion of the underestimated number of newly displaced IDPs during 2021. .

² Source OCHA, <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/afghanistan/idps>

³ The number of new arrivals includes those who approached UNHCR and Partners in Tajikistan (5,710), Iran (40,720) and Pakistan (117,550), new arrivals reported by the Government of Uzbekistan (13,020), as well as the Afghans who were kept by the Iranian authorities at border locations (3,780) since 1 January 2021, although only 738 individuals of the latter group remain in the country. The vast majority of those interviewed report leaving Afghanistan for security-related reasons. The overall number of Afghans with international refugee protection needs is likely to be much higher. The increase on the overall figure does not necessarily reflect the displacement of that same period, but rather the date of assessment.

- **UNHCR’s broader response in Afghanistan continues.** The broader humanitarian situation in Afghanistan remains challenging across the country, with more than half of the population remaining dependent on assistance. This includes many displaced people, who often live in makeshift settlements under difficult conditions. In response to the humanitarian situation, UNHCR and partners have reached more than 535,000 displaced people in nearly all provinces with essential relief and assistance since the beginning of the year. In addition, some 2.5 million individuals have also benefited from health centres, schools, water systems and other infrastructure that UNHCR has supported in areas prioritised for the return of refugees and IDPs.
- For UNHCR’s assistance and relief programmes, this assistance in 2022 has included the following:



- **Support to IDP returnees.** A priority for UNHCR’s work in Afghanistan remains the sustainable return and reintegration of displaced Afghans to their places of origin. At least 64,900 IDP returnees have been identified by UNHCR in 2022, and the 2021 IDP returnee figure has recently increased to at least 846,700 individuals, bringing the total number of IDP returnees identified by UNHCR since 2021 to more than 911,000. These figures are expected to increase with assessments ongoing. The data is from household-level rapid assessments conducted by UNHCR and partners undertaken in all 34 provinces.
- In support of returnees, UNHCR has provided cash assistance for reintegration of nearly 100,000 returning IDPs since the start of the year, while nearly 24,000 people have received cash and vouchers for the start-up of businesses. Of note in the reporting period, UNHCR provided cash support to 2,700 formerly displaced persons in Laghman province to help them to rebuild their lives.



People displaced by conflict in Afghanistan continue to return home. This week in Laghman province we provided cash support to 2,700 formerly displaced persons to help them meet basic needs. © UNHCR Afghanistan

REGIONAL

- **New arrivals from Afghanistan.** There are more than 180,000 reported newly arriving Afghans seeking international protection to neighbouring countries since 1 January 2021, composed of 53% children and 22% adult women in Iran and Pakistan. In Tajikistan, Afghan new arrivals are composed of 31% adult women and 40% children. Many of those interviewed report leaving Afghanistan for protection-related reasons. The overall number of Afghans with international refugee protection needs is likely to be much higher, as not all approach or contact UNHCR.
- Authorities in Pakistan have indicated that more than 250,000 Afghans have arrived in the country since August 2021 for a variety of reasons, while authorities in Iran indicate that, according to evolving estimates, that between 500,000 and 1 million Afghans have arrived in the country since January 2021.
- **Voluntary repatriation to Afghanistan continues.** Since the start of the year, nearly 1,200 Afghan refugees have returned under UNHCR's facilitated voluntary repatriation programme, including 168 from Iran and 1,006 from Pakistan. This figure surpasses the 1,150 Afghans who came back during the same period in 2021, and more than triple number who returned up to this point in 2020. Returnees have indicated that the main reasons for their returns movements from Iran and Pakistan include costs of living and lack of employment opportunities in their host countries, reunification with family in Afghanistan, improved security situation, and land allocation opportunities in Afghanistan. As highlighted above, UNHCR provides cash assistance to those returning to help support their reintegration in Afghanistan, while also running programmes and projects in priority areas of return and reintegration.

