

UNHCR Afghanistan External Update#1 – 27 June 2022

To increase its emergency assistance for the people affected by the June 22 devastating earthquake in Afghanistan, UNHCR is sending additional support to areas most in need in the districts of Spera and Barmal in Khost Province. 900 additional shelter and non-food item kits departed Kabul today 27 June to support 6,300 individuals in Spera and Barmal districts in Khost province. A further 100 kits for 700 people will be sent to the same communities on 28 June in continuation of the emergency response. This is in addition to the initial 600 non-food item kits for 4,200 people sent earlier to Khost and Paktika provinces for those affected by earthquake.

The additional assistance follows the three-day visit (24-26 June) to the two provinces Khost (Spera District) and Paktika province (Giyani District) of the UNHCR Representative in Afghanistan, Leonard Zulu. During the visit to the remote locations, he and the team met with affected communities – to see first-hand the damage, oversee coordination, and ensure the equitable distribution of lifesaving assistance to the affected population. He also met with community elders and offered condolences and renewed the solidarity of UNHCR and reiterated the agency's commitment to support those affected by the earthquake and the concerted efforts to rebuild their lives and communities.

A support mission is on its way to the two provinces led by UNHCR Assistant Representative for Protection from 28 June to 01 July. The mission includes Protection, Reintegration & Partnerships, and Shelter staff to reinforce UNHCR presence, and work with partners identify the protection challenges faced by affected communities, particularly women and girls.

UNHCR estimates that the cost of not providing timely response exacerbates further protection risks of over 247,000 people in the five affected districts in the two provinces. Out of this number nearly 20 percent are persons of concern (refugees, refugee returnees and IDPs) to UNHCR. As the winter season approaches, it is critical that the affected communities receive the required support to protect them from the harsh weather.

According to the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), to date, around 770 people are estimated to have been killed across Barmal (500) and Giyani (238) districts in Paktika province, and Spera district (29) in Khost province. In addition, at least 1,500 people have been injured across three of the six most affected districts of Barmal, (1,000), Giyani (393), and Spera (62) – many of them seriously. Further, nearly 1,500 homes have now been verified as destroyed and damaged in Giyani District, Paktika Province.



UNHCR emergency relief items being distributed to affected communities in Paktika Province immediately following the earthquake on 22 June. Photo © Adnan Studio, Kabul.