Voluntary Repatriation of Afghan Refugees
South West Asia - Quarterly Update
April - June 2021

RETURNS PROCESSED AT ENCASHMENT CENTRES IN AFGHANISTAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Apr-Jun 2021*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Returns from</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Countries</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Returns in 2021</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Countries</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Since 2002, nearly 5.3 million Afghan refugees have returned to Afghanistan under UNHCR’s facilitated Voluntary Repatriation programme. During the second quarter of 2021, a total of 575 Afghans have returned, adding to a total of 1,139 in the first half of the 2021. This represents a 200% increase when compared to similar period of 2020, however a reduction of 60% if compared to 2019. This large increase in number of returnees, when compared to 2020, is largely due to the temporary suspension of UNHCR’s facilitated voluntary repatriation linked to COVID-19 in 2020, while security and economic situation across Afghanistan deteriorates.

During the first half of the year, some 76% of the returnees have returned to five locations, Herat (33%), Kabul (18%), Sar-e-Pul (10%), Kunduz (10%) and Balkh (6%) provinces.

At Encashment Centres in Afghanistan, returning refugees receive a cash grant of approximately USD 250 per individual, as well as a range of services to support their reintegration.

RETURNEE DEMOGRAPHICS 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 - 5</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 - 11</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 - 17</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 - 59</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 - 5</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ASSISTANCE AT ENCASHMENT CENTRES (ECs) IN AFGHANISTAN

USD $148,230 was provided in cash assistance to returnees at ECs in Q1 of 2021.

A total of $296,256 was provided in 2021.

Beside cash grants, a range of inter-agency services are provided for returning refugees, including basic health and malnutrition screening and vaccination, mine risk awareness, information on school enrolment, and overnight accommodation, if needed. In addition, UNHCR, in line with the measures recommended by MoPH and WHO, adopted a new SOP in all ECs, aiming to prevent the spread and transmission of COVID-19.

PROVINCE OF DESTINATION 2021 (Figures reflect returns processed at encashment centers in Afghanistan)

- 706 returns from Iran
- 396 returns from Pakistan
- 37 returns from other Countries

The data has not been independently verified and is subject to error or omission, deliberation or otherwise by the various sources.

* The number of refugees processed for return in Pakistan and Iran may sometimes be higher than those processed at encashment centres in Afghanistan. This is due to the presence of recycled cases applying for voluntary repatriation a second time and also persons not showing to collect the cash grant in Afghanistan.
### REASONS AND INTENTIONS RELATED TO RETURN

#### Reasons for leaving Pakistan and Iran
- High cost of living/ high rent: 35%
- No employment opportunities: 33%
- Fear of COVID-19: 18%
- Denial of access to basic services: 7%
- Seasonal weather conditions: 3%
- Other: 4%

#### Reasons for return to Afghanistan
- UNHCR assistance package: 34%
- Reunion with family/relatives in Afghanistan: 28%
- Land allocation scheme and/or shelter program: 20%
- Employment opportunities: 11%
- Other: 6%

#### Reasons for not returning to Province of Origin
- To reunite with relatives: 50%
- Lack of income opportunities: 19%
- Perceived insecurity: 13%
- Lack of basic services: 10%
- Lack of land: 5%
- Other: 2%

#### Concerns related to the return to Afghanistan
- Lack of and 16%
- No concerns: 21%
- Security: 23%
- Other: 21%

81% of the respondents have information regarding the situation in their place of origin while in the Country of Asylum.

#### Upon return, how do you plan to spend the cash grant?
- Paying transportation cost: 39%
- Buy food and other commodities: 33%
- Rent accommodation: 13%
- Investment in livelihoods: 8%
- Build shelter: 5%
- Payback loans: 2%

#### After you spend your cash grant, how will you support your family?
- 87% of the respondents were aware of cash grants prior to the return. However, only 35% had actual information regarding its amount.

#### Interviewed returnees' skills/qualifications
- Tailoring: 27%
- No skill: 24%
- Unskilled daily wage labor: 11%
- Shopkeeper: 9%
- Embroidery: 5%
- Other: 24%

#### What will be your living arrangements after return?
- Relatives house: 41%
- Rent a house: 34%
- Own house: 23%
- Other: 2%

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### REGISTERED VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION TO AFGHANISTAN 2002-2021

![Graph showing registered voluntary repatriation to Afghanistan 2002-2021](image)

### REGISTERED VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION (zoomed in view 2018-2021)

![Graph showing registered voluntary repatriation (zoomed in view 2018-2021)](image)


For feedback and clarifications, please write to UNHCR RBAP at rbapdima@unhcr.org

Source: Enrichment Centres monitoring data. Timeframe: Findings from January to June 2021.