



Afghanistan Situation

Regional Refugee Preparedness and Response Plan

Summary & Inter-agency Funding Requirements July-December 2021

Overview

The humanitarian situation in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan has deteriorated dramatically, with significant consequences for the most vulnerable among the population. Even prior to the events of August 2021, this year had seen the highest number of conflict-related casualties on record. In recent months, there has been a further striking decline in the security and human rights situation in large parts of the country. It is estimated that since the beginning of 2021 over 558,000 Afghans have been internally displaced by the armed conflict within the country (as of 23 August).¹

The situation remains uncertain and may evolve rapidly. The upsurge of violence across the country and the fall of the elected Government may have a serious impact on civilians and cause further displacement. Some 80 per cent of these newly displaced are women and children. UNHCR estimates that the number of displaced will rise, both internally and across borders. Separate to the internal displacement mentioned above, a potential worst-case scenario envisages over 515,000 newly displaced refugees fleeing across the borders.

New arrivals in those countries will join over 2.2 million registered refugees from previous waves of violence and a further 3 million Afghans of varying status including many undocumented persons who have been generously hosted in Iran and Pakistan over the past four decades. Any major influx will require the international community to support an immediate and sustained intervention to Afghanistan's neighbours, in a spirit of responsibility- and burden-sharing.

¹ <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/afghanistan/idps> (as of 23 August).


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INTER-AGENCY
PARTNERS IN A
COORDINATED
PREPAREDNESS AND
RESPONSE PLAN

FOR THE NEEDS OF

515,000


NEW AFGHAN
REFUGEES
IN A WORST-CASE
SCENARIO

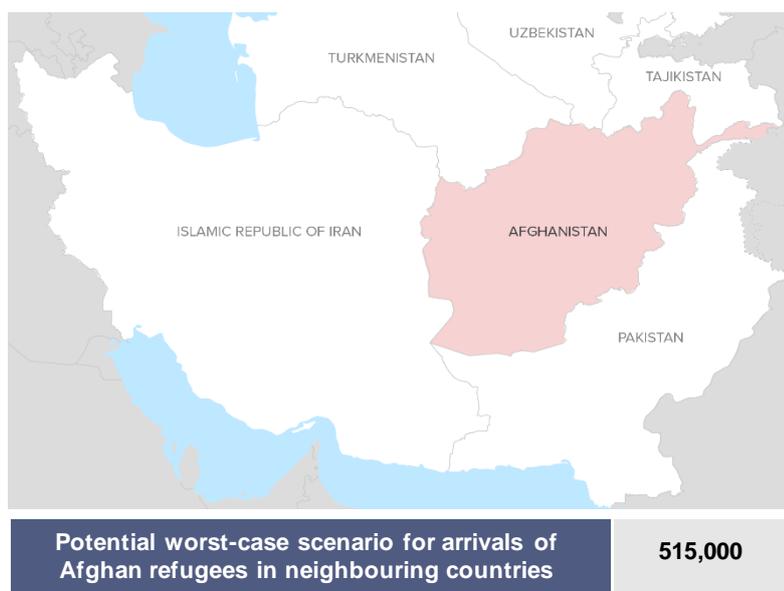

TO SUPPORT HOST
COUNTRIES: IRAN,
PAKISTAN, TAJIKISTAN,
TURKMENISTAN AND
UZBEKISTAN


WITH A TOTAL OF
\$299.2M
INTER-AGENCY
REQUIREMENTS

Inter-agency Partners are responding to the refugee emergency

The humanitarian programme to support the existing 2.2 million registered Afghan refugees in Iran, Pakistan, and other countries in the region remains critically underfunded, as well as the humanitarian response plan for the population inside Afghanistan. Attention must be drawn to the need to address the critical funding gaps. This inter-agency Regional Refugee Preparedness and Response Plan (RRP) thus outlines several underfunded elements of existing programmes for refugees by Partners in the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Additionally, the RRP outlines the humanitarian preparedness and priority interventions in the region in the event of outflows from Afghanistan. It covers the period from July to December 2021, including the contingency preparedness efforts that were put in place in July. The RRP will support Government responses to date and in the event of new refugee movements, and will be revised as needed and complemented with further activities from Partners to scale up the inter-agency response. The RRP builds on contingency planning undertaken at the country level with Partners, including UN agencies and NGOs, within the inter-agency coordination structures in each country. The ability to ramp up inter-agency interventions are greatly dependent on the availability and timely delivery of the resource requirements outlined in this plan.



Neighbouring Countries	Current Afghan refugee population
Iran*	780,000
Pakistan*	1,448,100
Tajikistan	10,700
Uzbekistan	<50
Turkmenistan	<50
Total	2,238,800

* Registered refugee figures as provided by the Government, as of 31 December 2020

Regional Protection and Population Needs

Based on an analysis of the ongoing social, economic, political and security situation, it is assessed that a further deterioration in Afghanistan may result in new refugee outflows before the end of 2021. A potential worst-case scenario envisages the arrival of an additional 515,000 Afghan refugees into neighbouring countries.

Critical life-saving humanitarian assistance will be required for refugee arrivals at border points and in designated sites in coordination with concerned Government counterparts. The inter-agency response will be flexible and adjust delivery of humanitarian services depending on refugees' location and specific situation. Rapid needs assessments and urgent multisectoral interventions will be undertaken as required in the areas of food, nutrition, health, WASH, shelter, core relief item (CRI) distribution, education, camp management, and the protection of the most vulnerable groups and individuals. Given the current COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing efforts to secure vaccines for both refugees and host populations will be intensified, especially in light of the critical situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Of the 558,000 Afghans already displaced in Afghanistan in 2021, 80 per cent are women and children. Inter-agency planning and preparedness efforts for larger outflows have considered the heightened risk of these and other specific population groups. Protection interventions will include the urgent identification of groups or individuals with specific needs who require immediate attention, including girls and boys at risk (including unaccompanied and separated children); women at risk (including single women and female-headed households); survivors of gender-based violence; persons with serious health conditions; persons with heightened legal or physical protection needs; older persons; persons with disabilities; and LGBTIQ+ individuals.

Regional Response Strategy and Priorities

As the situation in Afghanistan remains highly uncertain, UNHCR and Partners call on all countries to allow Afghans fleeing their country access to their territories and access to asylum procedures, and to respect the principle of non-refoulement. It is imperative that this human right is not compromised, that borders are kept open and that people in need of international protection are afforded asylum. In this context, it is equally important not to forcibly return refugees or asylum-seekers. Non-refoulement includes non-rejection at the frontier.

In event of significant refugee movements to neighbouring countries, this inter-agency response in support of the concerned Governments will ensure the rapid delivery of humanitarian assistance and protection. The inter-agency response will ensure that refugees' needs are identified and addressed with consideration of age, gender, and diversity in programming across all sectors.

The preparedness and response outlined in this RRP are drawn from available situational analysis. Humanitarian interventions will be scalable and adaptable as the emergency develops. Strong data collection and analysis will be essential in order to provide the evidence base for protection programming and for targeting those most at risk. Multisectoral, well-coordinated responses will also strengthen the capacity of national systems to cope with the additional influx of refugees. Strengthened support for regular protection and assistance programmes for the existing refugee populations in the host countries will be crucial and will serve as a shock-absorber while contributing to a more enabling environment for new arrivals.

The ability to respond in a timely and effective manner will depend on additional resources from the international community and donors to support host countries, in the spirit of the Global Compact on Refugees.

This preparedness and response plan is driven by the following objectives:

1. Preparedness measures are implemented to ensure a timely and effective humanitarian response.
2. Access to asylum is afforded and protection delivered in accordance with international protection standards including non-refoulement, registration, and documentation.
3. Provision of timely and life-saving humanitarian assistance, in support of national systems and responses, with a coordinated effort towards durable solutions.



Coordination

In support of the national humanitarian response mechanisms and in line with the Refugee Coordination Model in the host countries and the Global Compact on Refugees, UNHCR and Partners will support the concerned Governments to lead in humanitarian preparedness and to respond to the Afghan refugee emergency.

Building on existing country-level inter-agency coordination structures, the multisectoral response in the event of mass influx includes UN agencies and national and international NGOs in their

respective areas of expertise. This includes sector working groups in the areas of protection (including child protection and gender-based violence), education, health, food security, WASH, shelter, core relief items, and camp management, as required. Close collaboration and consultation will be maintained with relevant Government counterparts and line ministries in the countries of asylum to support and ensure complementarity with the national response. At the regional level, Partners will work together to update on developments and to undertake joint advocacy initiatives and resource mobilization efforts.

Any major influx would require the international community to provide immediate and sustained support to neighbouring countries, in a spirit of responsibility- and burden-sharing and in keeping with the Global Compact on Refugees. Specific information-sharing and updates will also be provided through the existing Afghanistan Regional Support Platform.

Financial requirements

The RRP inter-agency Partners are appealing for **\$299.2 million** to cover the emergency preparedness and response for new arrivals of Afghan refugees (in the worst-case scenario), as well as the relevant and critically underfunded protection and multisectoral assistance programmes for those in protracted situations, from July to December 2021.

It is critical that Partners receive adequate funding to ensure adequate emergency preparedness and timely response interventions in the interest of Afghan refugees, asylum-seekers, and affected host communities.

Regional budget summary per sector

Activities / Sectors	Food Security	Health & Nutrition	Protection	Shelter & CRIs	WASH	Livelihoods & Resilience	Education	Energy & Environment	Logistics & Telecom	Total Budget
Budget	\$28.32m	\$52.61m	\$20.91m	\$92.88m	\$57.59m	\$1.72m	\$22.83m	\$13.96m	\$8.40m	\$299.21m

Regional budget summary per appealing inter-agency Partner

Appealing Partner		Total Budget (all figures in US dollars)
Médecins Sans Frontières	MSF	\$144,000
Norwegian Refugee Council	NRC	\$36,224,876
Relief International	RI	\$5,900,292
UN - International Organization for Migration	IOM	\$410,180
UN - United Nations Children's Fund	UNICEF	\$65,497,257
UN - United Nations Development Programme	UNDP	\$5,810,000
UN - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	UNESCO	\$302,000
UN - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	UNHCR	\$130,896,656
UN - United Nations Population Fund	UNFPA	\$4,570,600
UN - World Food Programme	WFP	\$29,842,681
UN - World Health Organization	WHO	\$19,611,740
TOTAL		\$299,210,282

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