KEY DISPLACEMENT FIGURES

3.22M
Estimated internally displaced persons (IDPs) by conflict within Afghanistan as of **30 June 2024**

824,200
Total returns from Pakistan to Afghanistan since 15 September 2023[1]
21% 20% 59%

34,800
Refugees in Afghanistan as of 30 June 2024

22,700
IDP returnees recorded in 2024

5.53M
Refugees and asylum-seekers from Afghanistan in neighbouring countries as of **30 June 2024**

405
Refugee returns to Afghanistan in 2025[2]
22% 22% 56%

1.6M
Afghan new arrivals to neighbouring countries since August 2021[3]

HIGHLIGHTS

- On 17 January, UNHCR and the European Union (EU) launched a new initiative to provide durable solutions for displaced Afghans and host communities across Afghanistan, the Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan, and Central Asia. This initiative, backed by a significant EU contribution of EUR 36 million within UNHCR's broader EUR 110 million programme, will strengthen protection, self-reliance, and social cohesion for refugees, returnees, and IDPs. It includes core protection activities such as registration, legal assistance, and access to documentation, alongside essential services in health and education. It also promotes economic independence through cash-for-work opportunities, microloans, and vocational training, with a strong focus on empowering women and girls. Special attention will be given to vulnerable groups, including women, children, and people with disabilities, through community-driven initiatives that ensure their protection and inclusion.
- As part of his visit to Afghanistan, the UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Operations reaffirmed UNHCR's leadership in advancing solutions for Afghan refugees by launching the Afghanistan Local Core Group of the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) in a high-level hybrid event on 19 January. The event was chaired by the Netherlands, with its Ambassador in Doha delivering opening and closing remarks. Joined by the Deputy Director of UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific and the UNHCR Representative in Afghanistan, the Assistant High Commissioner for Operations underscored SSAR's alignment with the Global Compact for Refugees and the urgent need for strengthened partnerships. UNHCR Afghanistan Representative underscored the necessity of sustained funding to ensure long-term impact while expressing concern over regressive measures against women and girls. The Qatari *Chargé d'Affaires* echoed these concerns, while the EU and UK called for a principled nexus approach. IOM and UNDP recognized their ongoing collaboration with UNHCR, reinforcing its central role in coordinating responses and driving sustainable solutions for displaced Afghans.
- Between 15 September 2023 and 31 January 2025, around 824,200 Afghans returned from Pakistan as part of Pakistan's (Islamic Republic of) Illegal Foreigners' Repatriation Plan, with UNHCR providing critical assistance to over 118,300 of these returnees. Notably, nearly half (49%) of those assisted are women, including 28% girls, while 29% are boys and 22% men. Among returnees, 2.5% have disabilities and 31% are female-headed households, highlighting the vulnerability of those returning. In Afghanistan, UNHCR continued its vital work, providing biometric processing and cash assistance to Proof of Registration (PoR) card holders and their families, UNHCR slip holders, asylum-seeker certificate holders, and those referred for protection. For more information, please see the latest UNHCR Pakistan-Afghanistan Returns Emergency Response Update.

AFGHANISTAN

Assistance provided in 2025

9,500[4] total persons supported

22 out of the **34** total provinces supported

5,200 persons assisted with cash assistance

4,300 persons benefited from in-kind and other assistance, including community-based support

9,600 individuals assessed

3,500 persons benefiting from activities in 80 PARRs[5]

1,500 persons assisted with disability

[1] *An umbrella term that covers all returns, including deportations, assisted voluntary repatriation and other returns of Afghans of all statuses such as Proof of Registration (PoR) card holders, Afghan Citizen Card (ACC) holders, and the undocumented. UNHCR began monitoring return trends from mid-September 2023 before the official announcement of the Illegal Foreigners' Repatriation Plan by the Government of Pakistan in October 2023. The validity of PoR cards was retroactively extended to 30 June 2025.*

- In 2025, UNHCR and its partners provided humanitarian assistance to over 9,500 people across 22 provinces. Among those reached, over 5,200 people received cash assistance, while over 4,300 benefited from in-kind and other forms of assistance, including core relief items, shelter, seasonal assistance, and community-based interventions. Needs assessments were conducted for close to 9,600 people to determine the specific support required.
- On 18 January, UNHCR, in partnership with the International Finance Cooperation, convened a high-level roundtable aimed at strengthening private sector engagement in the reintegration and self-reliance of returnees in Afghanistan. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for Afghanistan and the UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Operations opened the event, stressing the critical role of the private sector in providing employment, capacity building training, financial literacy, and investment opportunities. Demonstrating UNHCR's commitment to sustainable responses, the event showcased best practices, identified key challenges, and explored opportunities for fostering livelihoods. Participants included Afghan entrepreneurs from Herat and Jalalabad supported by UNHCR's livelihoods programmes, alongside financial institutions, business associations, and key development partners such as FAO, ILO, UNCTAD, UNDP, the EU, and ADB. Discussions underscored the skills and economic potential of returnees, emphasizing that, with the right support, they can contribute to Afghanistan's development.

REGIONAL

- In January, UNHCR assisted 690 returns from Iran and Pakistan (Islamic Republics of), with the last quarter (September – December) registering the lowest number of returns at 6,382 compared to the preceding quarters. Among the total returns, 50% were female, including 29% girls, while 79% were women and children. In addition, approximately 2.5% of those assisted were individuals with disabilities. Moreover, an estimated 1.66 million IDPs returned to their places of origin between 2021 and 2024. IDP returnees benefit from various forms of support, including cash assistance, vocational training, rehabilitated WASH facilities, and access to education.[6]
- In line with UNHCR's Global Strategy for Sustainable Energy, UNHCR Pakistan is advancing clean energy solutions to enhance protection, improve livelihoods, and promote socioeconomic benefits for refugees and host communities. As part of its 2025 renewable energy initiatives, UNHCR is spearheading the solarization of public and community facilities, reducing reliance on costly fossil fuels and aligning with UNHCR's Operational Strategy for Climate Resilience and Environmental Sustainability. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, UNHCR is installing solar systems at key public facilities to provide sustainable energy access for both refugees and host communities. The project is set for completion by mid-February, after which the systems will be handed over to facility management, ensuring long-term impact and sustainability.
- In Pakistan, UNHCR renewed its Letter of Understanding with Serena Hotel in Quetta, reinforcing its commitment to fostering economic empowerment and self-sufficiency for Afghan refugee artisans in Balochistan. The signing ceremony brought together representatives from UNHCR, Serena Hotel, and the Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees. Under this renewed partnership, the hotel will continue to provide dedicated spaces for refugee artisans to showcase and sell their handmade crafts, generating income while preserving cultural heritage. Serena Hotel will also offer skill development training and three-month internships to 15 Afghan refugees, equipping them with valuable experience.
- In January, UNHCR Iran submitted 225 refugees for resettlement consideration. Another 63 refugees departed for resettlement. Meanwhile, in Pakistan, UNHCR submitted 31 refugees for resettlement. During the month, 47 refugees departed for resettlement. Resettlement provides a critical durable solution for refugees, offering them a chance to rebuild their lives in a safe and secure environment, which is why it remains an essential part of UNHCR's mandate and response efforts.

[2] *This category includes all refugee returnees as well as PoR card holders who returned without passing through established Voluntary Repatriation Centres (VRC) set up in Pakistan.*
[3] *In Iran, UNHCR is using an average figure based on various government estimates and is actively engaging with authorities to obtain updated, disaggregated data and an estimate of the current number of Afghans remaining in the country. Of the estimated 1 million new arrivals in Iran since August 2021, over 92,000 Afghans have approached UNHCR. In Pakistan, where the government reports 600,000 new arrivals, more than 476,000 have approached UNHCR.*
[4] *The total number of people supported may include multiple counts of beneficiaries who received assistance through more than one activity during the reporting period.*

EU delegation visits the Encashment & Transit Centre in Herat, where refugee returnees receive support from UNHCR & partners. ©UNHCR/Barzin

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

UNHCR's total funding requirements for the Afghanistan situation in 2025 stand at $478.4 million. By late January, only 13% of this critical funding had been secured. UNHCR appreciates the generosity of donors who have stepped up to support the Afghanistan situation response with earmarked, softly earmarked and unearmarked contributions, ensuring life-saving assistance reaches those most in need:

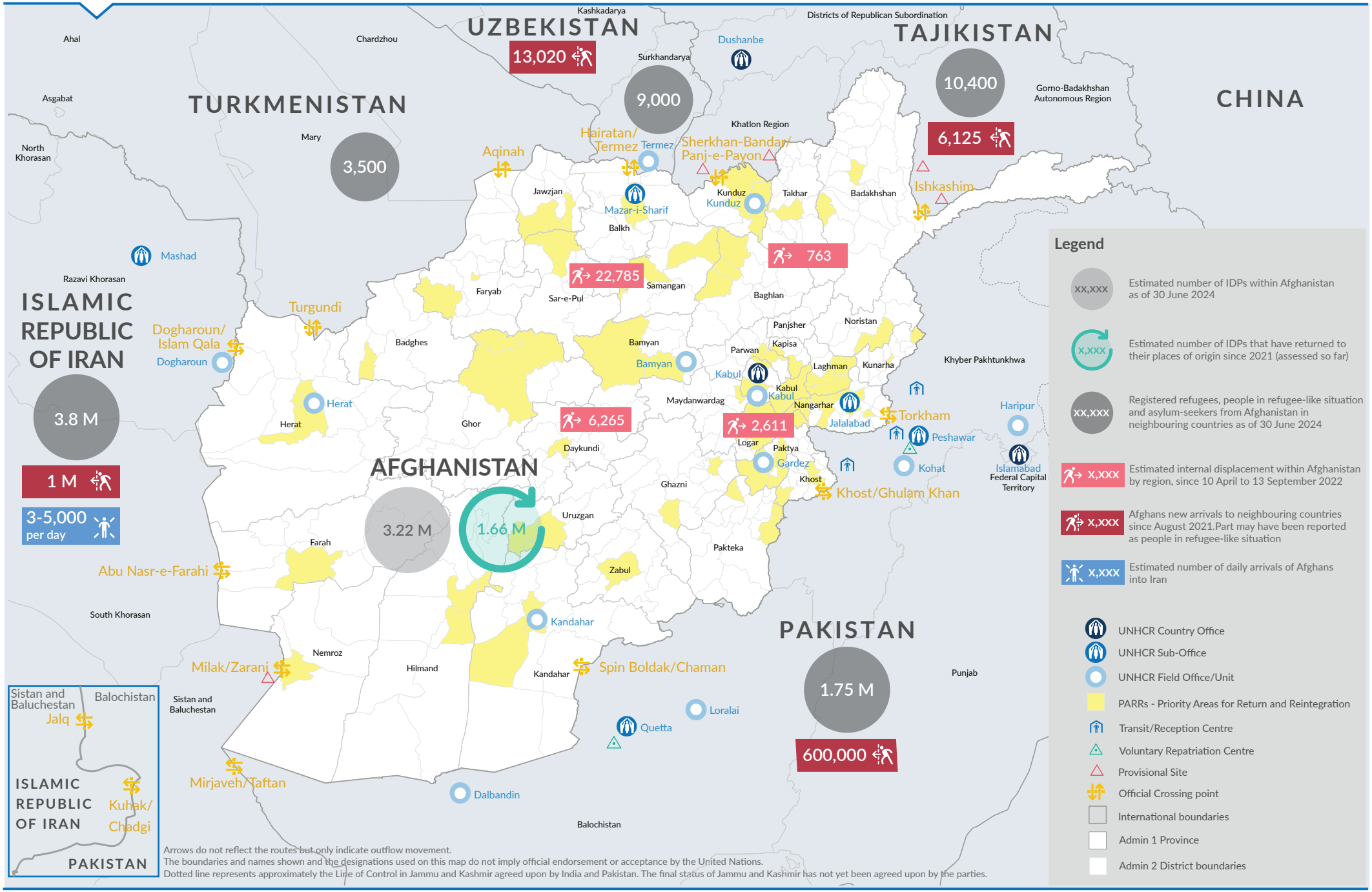
Australia | Belgium | Bulgaria | Denmark | China | European Union | Iceland | Ireland | Luxembourg | Republic of Korea | Norway | the Netherlands (Kingdom of) | Switzerland | Sweden | United Kingdom

However, urgent gaps remain, and continued support is essential to sustain and expand this vital work. For more information on the Afghanistan situation, please see the 2025 Global Appeal and 2023 Global Report.

UNHCR REGIONAL BUREAU FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

AFGHANISTAN EMERGENCY - REGIONAL OVERVIEW MAP

as of 31 January 2025



Data sources: UNHCR operations, OCHA | Author: UNHCR Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (RBAP)

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