

Afghanistan – Complex Emergency

SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

SITUATION AT A GLANCE

<p>23.7 MILLION</p> <p>Number of People in Need of Humanitarian Assistance</p> <p><i>UN – December 2023</i></p>	<p>17.3 MILLION</p> <p>Number of People Prioritized for Humanitarian Assistance Under the 2024 HNRP</p> <p><i>UN – December 2023</i></p>	<p>32.1 MILLION</p> <p>People Reached With Humanitarian Assistance in Afghanistan in 2023</p> <p><i>UN – December 2023</i></p>	<p>6.6 MILLION</p> <p>Number of IDPs in Afghanistan as of December 2022</p> <p><i>IOM – June 2023</i></p>	<p>734,817</p> <p>Number of Afghan Returnees From Pakistan Since September 15, 2023</p> <p><i>IOM – September 2024</i></p>
--	---	---	--	---

- The Taliban released a new directive in August, which imposes severe personal conduct restrictions on Afghans, particularly women.
- More than 2.2 million Afghans returned from Iran and Pakistan between September 15, 2023, and September 30, 2024, driving humanitarian needs, according to UNHCR. In response, State/PRM partners reached nearly 588,000 returnees from Pakistan with lifesaving humanitarian assistance.
- Relief actors, including USAID/BHA partners, are providing emergency assistance to people affected by severe flooding in July and August that resulted in at least 132 deaths and widespread damage.



TOTAL U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN FUNDING For the Afghanistan Response in FY 2024	USAID/BHA ¹	\$534,719,064
	State/PRM ²	\$162,299,944
Total		\$697,019,008

For complete funding breakdown with partners, see detailed chart on page 6

¹ USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA)

² U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM)

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Afghan Women Continue to Face Protection Risks and Rights Violations

On August 21, the Taliban released the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice (PVPV) directive, which imposes severe restrictions on the personal conduct of Afghans, including requiring women to cover their faces and bodies and not speak in public and prohibiting unrelated men and women from looking at each other. The law represents the first written codification of restrictions related to personal conduct since the Taliban's takeover in 2021 and an escalation of restrictions on women, international media report. The directive grants the Taliban's so-called Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and Prevention of Vice increased enforcement powers, including imprisonment, confiscation of property, and verbal warnings.

The release of the PVPV directive coincides with an increase in incidents of Taliban interference in relief activities in Afghanistan, including demands to participate in beneficiary selection, unannounced visits to humanitarian offices, suspension of specific projects, attempts to influence nongovernmental organization (NGO) procurement and recruitment processes, and requests for sensitive data from humanitarian organizations. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) recorded 173 incidents impacting humanitarian operations during September, representing a 31 percent increase compared to the 132 incidents recorded in August and a 66 percent increase compared to September 2023. The more than 170 incidents in September included the temporary suspension of approximately 80 projects, the detention of nine aid workers, and the forced closure of three facilities. Furthermore, seven incidents—including checkpoints and restrictions on female aid workers' participation in response efforts—hindered the delivery of humanitarian assistance. Notably, many incidents affected women, including restrictions on female participation in humanitarian activities; dress code and *mahram*, or male guardian, requirements; and halted aid distributions to female-headed households. Men also faced dress code regulations and beard length requirements.

Women in Afghanistan continue to experience significant safety risks amid ongoing Taliban efforts to exclude them from public life, according to an April survey of Afghan women across 33 provinces conducted by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, and UN Women. Respondents reported frequent public harassment and intimidation by authorities and community members, with more than 60 percent of respondents feeling unsafe leaving the house alone and reporting severe mental health challenges exacerbated by a lack of financial autonomy due to exclusion from employment opportunities, inability to borrow funds, and lack of access to land ownership documents. Humanitarian donors, including the U.S. Government (USG), continue to prioritize the protection of women and girls, including safeguarding the ability of women to participate in decision-making related to the design and implementation of aid programs. USG partners and other relief actors continue to engage with Taliban entities to secure authorizations and exemptions that allow them to include women in the provision of humanitarian assistance despite broader restrictions on women's employment.

More Than 2.2 Million Returnees Arrive in Afghanistan From Iran and Pakistan Since September 2023

Afghan returnees from Iran and Pakistan, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and host community members continue to face protection risks and challenges in accessing services and assistance, according to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and ACAPS, a humanitarian data and analysis organization. Approximately 735,000 individuals returned from Pakistan to Afghanistan—primarily through Nangarhar Province's Torkham border crossing point (BCP) and Kandahar Province's

Spin Boldak BCP—between September 15, 2023, and September 30, 2024. Between September 2023 and June 2024, a majority of returnees from Pakistan indicated intentions to return to their places of origin in Kandahar, Kunduz, and Nangarhar provinces; however, a UNHCR post-return monitoring survey found approximately 32 percent of returnees did not return to their places of origin and 12 percent did not return to their intended province. Most individuals returned to Balkh, Helmand, Kabul, Kunduz, Laghman, and Nangarhar provinces. Additionally, up to 1.5 million individuals returned from Iran to Afghanistan between January 10 and September 30, 2024, primarily through the Islam Qala and Zaranj BCPs, according to IOM. Afghan returnees from Iran report facing heightened pressure to voluntarily leave or face deportation, a sentiment echoed in mid-September announcements by Iranian officials regarding plans to deport 2 million Afghans by March 2025.

Returnees from Pakistan face challenges in accessing food, health, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services. Returnees also have limited access to civil documentation and safe and secure shelter in Afghanistan, increasing their vulnerability to forced eviction and other protection risks, with approximately 60 percent of returnees identifying long-term shelter as a priority need, according to a June report from the Border Consortium—an initiative composed of relief actors responding to the needs of returnees and vulnerable populations in Afghanistan—and an August ACAPS report. Additionally, both returnees and host community members face difficulties in obtaining employment opportunities due to the deterioration of Afghanistan’s economy since the Taliban takeover in August 2021, contributing to returnees highlighting job placement and livelihood support as key needs, according to the Border Consortium report. Furthermore, due to barriers to education and limited income-generating opportunities, returnee children are at high risk of child labor, trafficking, and protection violations, such as early and forced marriage and gender-based violence, according to ACAPS and the UN. In addition, returnees who were long-term residents of Pakistan may have more limited family and community ties in their areas of return, leading to less financial support and coping mechanisms for sudden shocks. Meanwhile, 60 percent of returnees who stayed in Iran for more than one year arrived without civil documentation, exacerbating protection concerns and limiting access to basic services and freedom of movement.

Members of the Border Consortium, supported by State/PRM and other donors, assisted approximately 588,000 returnees between September 15, 2023, and September 30, 2024. Border Consortium members IOM and UNHCR continue to provide multi-sector assistance, including health, nutrition, and WASH support, to people entering Afghanistan, including undocumented returnees and voluntary repatriations, as of September.

Flooding Impacts People Across Afghanistan During July and August

Heavy rainfall, subsequent flash flooding, and windstorms affected approximately 10,900 people across Afghanistan during July and August, according to IOM. Flooding between July 15 and 16 adversely affected approximately 4,300 people and resulted in the deaths of at least 129 individuals and injury to more than 200 others across at least 22 districts in Badakhshan, Baghlan, Ghazni, Kabul, Kunar, Kapisa, Laghman, and Nangarhar provinces as of July 22, according to IOM. The floods also damaged or destroyed agricultural land, civil infrastructure, and private property, including at least 800 houses and food stocks for more than 600 households. Additionally, the storms destroyed an estimated 550 tents and severely damaged WASH facilities in Nangarhar’s Omari camp, near the Torkham BCP, where some Afghan returnees from Pakistan were sheltering, the UN reports. Primary needs among affected populations include cash, clothing, food, medical, shelter, and WASH services, IOM reports. In addition, flood-affected individuals, particularly those residing in the open or in temporary shelters, are exposed to a range of health and protection risks.

In late August, heavy rains and subsequent flash flooding in central and eastern Afghanistan's Kabul, Kunar, Nangarhar, Panjshir, and Parwan provinces affected nearly 6,600 individuals and resulted in the deaths of 3 people as of September 1, according to IOM. The floods damaged or destroyed more than 1,000 shelters and approximately 980 households lost their food stocks. During rapid needs assessments, nearly half of surveyed households reported insufficient funds to purchase food and nearly 20 percent of the surveyed population showed visible signs of malnutrition, IOM reports. In response, USG partner IOM distributed more than 780 WASH kits to nearly 600 flood-affected households and nearly 900 menstrual hygiene management kits to more than 1,300 women and girls. Additionally, IOM provided cash assistance to more than 800 households, comprising more than 6,500 individuals, and tarps and tents to approximately 140 households whose shelters were destroyed by flooding.

KEY FIGURES



421,900

People reached with USAID/BHA-supported WFP food assistance in August



11

Number of USG partners providing health assistance in 2024

U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

FOOD SECURITY

The USG supports the delivery of lifesaving emergency food assistance across Afghanistan, providing at-risk populations with cash transfers for food, food vouchers, and in-kind food assistance. With USAID/BHA support, the UN World Food Program (WFP) reached approximately 422,000 people across Afghanistan with food assistance in August. Additionally, USAID/BHA-supported international NGO (INGO) partners are providing seeds and livestock feed in areas at risk of food insecurity to bolster the agricultural capacity of vulnerable households, along with food assistance to meet immediate needs.

HEALTH

The USG supports UN and INGO partners to implement lifesaving health activities across Afghanistan to improve access to health care services for IDPs, host community members, and other conflict- and shock-affected populations. USG assistance supports clinics and mobile health teams to deliver emergency and primary health care services, conduct trainings for local community volunteers, provide essential medicines, and implement vaccination campaigns. Additionally, USG funding supports the UN World Health Organization (WHO) to coordinate emergency health response activities, maintain essential health services, and ensure the continued supply of critical health and medical commodities in Afghanistan. Furthermore, USAID/BHA partners are working to address winter needs of supported health facilities, including the provision of medical equipment, medicines, and essential winter supplies such as blankets. In June, a State/PRM partner reached nearly 437,000 people with a range of sexual and reproductive health support services, including nearly 11,300 individuals with antenatal care, nearly 6,600 individuals with maternal and reproductive health care, more than 6,400 individuals with postnatal care, and nearly 200,000 individuals with other health services.



14

Number of
USG partners
conducting protection
interventions

PROTECTION

USG partners—such as State/PRM partner UNHCR—provide protection assistance to IDPs, refugees, returnees, and other vulnerable populations in Afghanistan. Additionally, USG partners deliver mental health and psychosocial support services, including individual counseling, activities to support the development of coping skills, and safe healing and learning spaces for children. USG partners also implement child protection activities and family services and provide legal assistance to help returning refugees access documentation. With USAID/BHA support, the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and its NGO partners reached nearly 114,200 individuals with critical assistance—including essential health services, psychosocial support, and vocational training—through 23 maternal and child health centers across 15 provinces between July 1 and September 30. With State/PRM support, UNHCR reached more than 13,400 individuals in refugee or refugee-like situations who returned to Afghanistan between July and September 2024. UNHCR also reached nearly 660,000 individuals with in-kind and other forms of assistance, including protection support, with activities carried out under the 2024 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP).



9,000

Number of emergency
shelter modules pre-
positioned by USG
partner IOM

SHELTER AND SETTLEMENTS

Shelter needs among populations in Afghanistan remain significant due to natural disasters—such as earthquakes, floods, harsh winter weather, and landslides—and displacement within Afghanistan and from neighboring countries. USG partners provide emergency shelter for displaced and otherwise vulnerable people, as well as shelter repair kits, transitional shelters, and multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA) to support the housing needs of affected populations. In addition, USG partners pre-position shelter materials each year for distribution ahead of the harsh winter months and support heating costs for at-risk households. From October 2023 to March 2024, with support from USAID/BHA and other donors, IOM reached nearly 97,600 people with cash assistance for immediate winterization needs. IOM also reached more than 75,000 people affected or displaced by conflict or natural disasters with emergency shelter items, including blankets, clothing, and shelter repair tool kits.



16

Number of USG
implementing partners
supporting WASH
programming

WASH

USAID/BHA and State/PRM partners—including IOM, the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and NGO partners—are working to meet WASH needs in Afghanistan through the provision of safe drinking water and essential hygiene items, the rehabilitation of water and sanitation systems, and hygiene promotion activities. With support from USAID/BHA and other donors, UNICEF reached approximately 10,700 people with safe drinking water in four flood-affected districts in Baghlan and Takhar provinces between May 16 and June 6. UNICEF also reached nearly 2,700 people with hygiene promotion messages and provided nearly 1,800 households in Baghlan with critical WASH supplies, including soap and water containers.



5

Number of USG implementing partners supporting livelihoods programming

LIVELIHOODS AND EDUCATION

With USG funding, partners deliver livelihoods programming and skills training to support refugee reintegration and boost opportunities for vulnerable host community populations through activities that increase literacy, business knowledge, and skills development. State/PRM partners support returning refugees, IDPs, and host communities in Afghanistan by providing access to skills training and adult literacy courses, in addition to access to education for Afghan refugees. Partners also support initiatives to improve infrastructure in schools within host communities and work to ensure IDP and returning refugee children have access to learning spaces and accelerated learning programs to help children prepare for enrollment in formal schools.

CONTEXT IN BRIEF

- The Taliban seized Kabul on August 15, 2021, following the successive capture of several provincial capitals and territory in early August 2021. Since the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, economic and political instability have resulted in the deterioration of basic services across the country, increased staple food and fuel prices, and reduced household purchasing power, affecting many Afghan households' ability to meet their basic needs.
- The cumulative effects of conflict, internal displacement, earthquakes and other natural disasters, and poor macroeconomic conditions have drastically increased levels of humanitarian need throughout Afghanistan. The UN estimates that 23.7 million people require humanitarian assistance in 2024.
- In late August 2021, the USG activated a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) based in the region outside of Afghanistan to lead the USG response to humanitarian needs generated by the crisis in Afghanistan and a Washington, D.C.-based Response Management Team to support the DART.
- On October 9, 2023, U.S. Chargé d'Affaires Karen Decker reissued a declaration of humanitarian need for FY 2024 due to the continued impact of the ongoing complex emergency.

USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE AFGHANISTAN RESPONSE IN FY 2024¹

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	AMOUNT
USAID/BHA			
UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	Humanitarian Coordination, Information Management, and Assessments (HCIMA)	Countrywide	\$500,000
IOM	Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Countrywide	\$61,500,000
OCHA	HCIMA	Countrywide	\$3,200,000
UN Development Program	Protection	Countrywide	\$5,000,000
UNFPA	Health, Protection	Countrywide	\$20,650,000
UNICEF	MPCA, Nutrition, Protection, WASH	Countrywide	\$40,245,916
WFP	Food Assistance—Cash Transfers for Food, Food Vouchers, Local, Regional, and International Procurement; Logistics Support; Nutrition	Countrywide	\$280,000,000

WHO	HCIMA, Health	Countrywide	\$6,833,333
Implementing Partners (IPs)	Agriculture, Economic Recovery and Market Systems (ERMS), Food Assistance—Cash Transfers for Food, HCIMA, Health, MPCA, Nutrition, Protection, Shelter and Settlements, WASH	Countrywide	\$114,370,434
	Logistics Support		\$1,683,800
	Program Support		\$735,581
TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING			\$534,719,064
STATE/PRM			
UNHCR	ERMS, HCIMA, Health, Logistics Support and Relief Commodities, Protection, WASH	Afghanistan	\$10,800,000
		Pakistan	\$24,684,750
IPs	Multi-Sector	Afghanistan	\$103,615,213
		Pakistan	\$23,199,981
TOTAL STATE/PRM FUNDING			\$162,299,944
TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR THE AFGHANISTAN RESPONSE IN FY 2024			\$697,019,008

¹ Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. Funding figures reflect publicly announced funding as of September 30, 2024.

PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for disaster responses around the world can be found at interaction.org.
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed, often in the affected region; reduce the burden on scarce resources, such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space; can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietarily, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
 - USAID Center for International Disaster Information: cidi.usaid.gov
 - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at reliefweb.int

USAID/BHA bulletins appear on the USAID website at [usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work](https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work)