



IOM Afghanistan presence and delivery of assistance as of January 2024

\$ US 556 million
total appeal amount



to address the needs of over **8.2 million people** including internally displaced persons (IDPs), cross border returnees, and host communities

Afghanistan continues to face unprecedented, growing, and compounding humanitarian crises as it grapples with the fallout of forty years of conflict, widespread poverty, extreme and variable climactic conditions, and barriers to women's equality and participation in public life. Following the takeover of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan by the De-facto Authorities (DfA) in August 2021, humanitarian and development needs have only continued to rise. As we move into 2024, Afghanistan is entering its fourth consecutive year of drought and faces economic contraction of roughly 25 per cent since August 2021.¹ These dynamics further aggravate economic instability among both rural and urban populations, exacerbating humanitarian needs and underlying fragilities and creating a ripple effect on the social fabric of the country. The international community estimates that in 2024, nearly sixty percent of Afghans will be in urgent need of humanitarian assistance and 90 percent will be living in poverty, underscoring the sheer scale and magnitude of this crisis.²

Through this appeal, IOM seeks to mobilize **\$ US 556 million** to address the humanitarian and recovery needs of over **8.2 million people** in Afghanistan, including IDPs, vulnerable migrants, cross-border returnees, and host communities.

¹ [Afghanistan's Contracted Economy Faces Uncertainty, Afghan Families Are Struggling](#). World Bank. 2023.

² [Afghanistan Humanitarian Needs Overview 2024](#). January 2024.

IOM's strategic approach in Afghanistan will continue to prioritize life-saving, multi-sectoral humanitarian and protection assistance across the country and in targeted crisis-affected areas and border-crossing points while laying the foundation for durable solutions for return, recovery, and longer-term interventions.

Following a decree banning Afghan women's higher education and a subsequent 24 December 2022 decree banning Afghan women from working for (I)NGOs, on 4 April 2023, the DfA issued a ban on Afghan women working with the United Nations (UN).

Despite these measures, during 2023, IOM remained committed to ensuring women's meaningful engagement and participation as deemed culturally acceptable and when needed throughout its programming. Through these efforts, IOM continues to uphold its commitments to not replacing female staff with male staff and prioritizing staff safety and security. IOM also continues to operate in a principled manner under the guidance of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) framework for humanitarian operations in Afghanistan.

All interventions under this Appeal are evidence-based, founded on data collected through the IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) and partners. Additionally, all interventions are implemented via a participatory approach involving affected populations across all steps of the programme cycle to promote a needs-based and inclusive response as well as accountability to affected populations (AAP).

This Appeal outlines IOM's proposed response plan for Afghanistan in 2024, in alignment with the multi-agency [Afghanistan Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan](#), the [United Nations Strategic Framework for Afghanistan](#), and IOM's regional [Comprehensive Action Plan for Afghanistan and Neighbouring Countries](#).

MISSION OVERVIEW

Since 1992, IOM has maintained an uninterrupted operational presence in Afghanistan, noting that the operating environment in the country remains increasingly complex. While physical access to people in need has largely improved since August 2021, bureaucratic obstacles, threats, and intimidation of humanitarian workers as well as restrictions on female humanitarian staff have also grown more commonplace, hindering the delivery of critical assistance. IOM's mandate and presence throughout the country has allowed a rapid scale-up to meet the needs of people in both urban and remote, un(der)served areas, namely IDPs, returnees, and host communities. IOM's vast presence and adaptable programming enables agile responses to sudden onset disasters or unforeseen crises, allowing for coordinated and targeted regional programming approaches in support of both life-saving assistance and more sustainable solutions.

IOM Afghanistan's work is also guided by *IOM's Strategic Plan 2024-2028* and its three core objectives: saving lives and protecting people on the move; driving solutions to displacement; and facilitating pathways for regular migration. Notably, IOM Afghanistan offers a robust emergency and preparedness programme, aiming to provide life-saving assistance to vulnerable Afghans, including those on the move. IOM Afghanistan's Durable Solutions coordination and programming meanwhile strives to promote longer-term solutions to displacement in the country. Lastly, IOM Afghanistan is seeking to potentially resume programming in support of regular migration pathways.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

In coordination with the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and partners on the ground, IOM aims to deliver timely and effective multi-sectoral, life-saving humanitarian assistance and protection to people on the move and affected populations. The sectors of intervention include Cross-Border and Post-Arrival Humanitarian Assistance (CB-PAHA) which aims to assist vulnerable undocumented Afghan migrants at four major land border crossing-points with Pakistan and Iran. In areas of return, the focus extends to emergency response and humanitarian assistance, including Emergency Shelter and Non-Food Item (ES-NFI) responses to disasters and winter conditions, comprehensive protection services, and Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) across temporary and informal settlement sites. Furthermore, IOM implements life-saving migration health interventions, including

mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and a Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) programme, providing hygiene kits. Humanitarian efforts transition into community stabilization and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) interventions.

As part of preparedness efforts in communities that face a high risk of disaster and displacement, IOM supports hazard and vulnerability analyses, community-based disaster risk management (CBDRM), livelihoods diversification strategies, and the establishment of community early warning and preparedness systems to mitigate risk and enable a more effective response.

RESILIENCE, SOLUTIONS, AND MIGRATION PATHWAYS

In line with the *Strategic Framework for Solutions to Internal Displacement in Afghanistan (2023 – 2024)*, IOM aims to lay the foundation for sustainable solutions to internal displacement and returns through three main pathways (voluntary return, local integration, or resettlement elsewhere), using area- and neighbourhood-based approaches and synergizing recovery initiatives and crisis prevention among humanitarian, development, and peace nexus (HDPN) actors. IOM recovery and transition interventions aim at addressing basic needs while supporting individual resilience and community stabilization by promoting: community infrastructure projects; economic revitalization and sustainable livelihoods, especially for women; access to essential basic services, including health

COORDINATION AND COMMON SERVICES

IOM is a co-lead agency of the ES-NFI Cluster and an active member of the CCCM Working Group (CCCM WG), as well as of the Protection, WASH and Health clusters. IOM is also now co-chair of the Migration Health Working Group (MH WG). In 2023, IOM became the lead of the Border Consortium, coordinating among partners involved in responding to the influx of returnees from Pakistan. Together with UNHCR, UNICEF, and UNDP, IOM is also one of the co-chairs of the Durable Solutions Working Group (DSWG) which is under the overall leadership of the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC). IOM is working to establish a fit-for-purpose structure to promote adequate coordination services at the regional and provincial levels.

IOM's DTM is comprised of various tools and methodologies that support information on mobile populations, IDPs, and returnees and their respective needs, as well as informs the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) in Afghanistan. DTM in Afghanistan aims to regularly and systematically capture, process, and disseminate multi-layered information regarding population sizes, locations, geographic distributions, movements, vulnerabilities, evolving multi-sectoral needs, and the drivers of migration among returnees, IDPs, vulnerable migrants, and mobile populations. The majority of DTM data is open source and shared with partners to inform the humanitarian and resilience response on the ground.

PROVIDING ASSISTANCE ACROSS THE MOBILITY SPECTRUM

In response to the complex and evolving dynamics of the Afghanistan crisis and in the wake of the mass influx of undocumented Afghan returnees from both Pakistan and Iran (over 1.4 million individuals in 2023), IOM Afghanistan adopts a comprehensive approach to address the multifaceted challenges faced by affected populations. Recognizing the need for interventions that span the mobility spectrum, IOM aims to systematically reduce risk and enhance the resilience of high-needs populations, enabling a coordinated, inclusive, and data-driven response. This involves a departure from isolated project-level interventions and a promotion of holistic programmatic engagement. This framework extends support to communities across the entire spectrum of human mobility, from anticipation and mitigation to prevention, preparedness, response, recovery, and resilience building. The strategic integration of programmes at the area-level emphasizes a phased approach, incorporating humanitarian and resilience interventions that provide a continuity of care to households and communities affected by displacement and irregular migration.

Integral to this approach is the establishment of Community Resource Centres (CRC's) that are strategically placed to support the coordination and referral of services in areas of return. These CRCs serve as one-stop information and service support centres, influencing the extent to which they become enablers for "solutions" outcomes. Further building on solutions-related interventions, the DSWG enables area-based coordination to empower affected communities, optimize resources, and multiply the impacts of integrated, multi-sectoral assistance.

IOM is additionally seeking to resume programming to support regular pathways for migration to minimize the vulnerabilities associated with irregular movements.

CROSS-CUTTING PRIORITIES

Gender

Afghanistan is one of the largest humanitarian crises in the world and women, comprising half the population, face unique challenges and vulnerabilities in this context. Women's exposure to risk and vulnerabilities has worsened significantly since the DfA takeover, with a cascading series of edicts that have drastically restricted their rights, including: limiting women's return to work; requiring male relatives to accompany women in public; preventing women from receiving education beyond 12 years of age; and prohibiting women's work with (I)NGOs and the UN. IOM Afghanistan's interventions are guided by the *IOM Gender Equality Policy (2023)*, including conducting and integrating gender analyses, applying gender-sensitive and responsive approaches, and promoting intersectional considerations throughout all programming to allow for a principled approach, the identification of inequalities, the incorporation of protection and gender perspectives in assistance delivery, and the participation of all affected populations in response and recovery strategies—with specific attention placed on the needs of women and girls.

Community-Centered Approach, Participation, and Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)

IOM places people at the centre of all operations, promoting AAP and adapting programming and approaches based on community and stakeholder feedback. This is based on the understanding that affected people are agents, enablers, and drivers of their own resilience, recovery, and development at the household, community, and national levels. IOM continues to operate feedback mechanisms through its partnership with Awaaz, conduct focus group discussions (FGDs), manage hotlines, and support media outreach campaigns to enable beneficiaries the space to participate, advise, respond, complain, and most importantly, influence the design and delivery of IOM programmes. IOM's misconduct platform, "We Are all In", is confidential and accessible to all beneficiaries in multiple languages, including Dari and Pashto, enabling communities to report any type of misconduct, including the occurrence of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA). IOM remains actively engaged in supporting all inter-agency reporting and coordination mechanisms where they have been established and are functioning.

Centrality of Protection

IOM adheres to the IASC definition of protection as "all activities aimed at ensuring full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the relevant bodies of law" (that is, International Human Rights Law, International Humanitarian Law, and International Refugee law). IOM is committed to respecting, safeguarding, and upholding the safety, dignity, and integrity of all, leaving no one behind and placing protection at the center of its action in adherence with the *IASC Statement on the Centrality of Protection* and the *IASC Protection Policy in Humanitarian Action*.

To this end, IOM's humanitarian assistance aims to uphold humanitarian principles and ensures interventions that are sensitive and responsive to gender, age, ethnicity, and ability. Aligned with *IOM's Approach to Protection 2023*, IOM promotes the application of a rights-based approach (RBA) to programming in humanitarian contexts where

assistance is provided based on an assessment of needs that takes into account the diversity of vulnerabilities and threats faced by affected persons and on the basis of a “do-no-harm” approach.³ In addition, IOM is proactively and continuously implementing a comprehensive safeguarding approach including a *Zero-Tolerance Policy on SEA*. Through these approaches, IOM seeks to promote non-discrimination, meaningful access, safety, dignity, participation, empowerment, and accountability for beneficiaries throughout all programming cycles.

Climate-Induced Mobility

Since 2020, disaster incidence has steadily risen as one of the main forces driving displacement in Afghanistan. Reflecting these trends, Afghanistan is projected to be one of the countries most impacted by environmental and climate change in the coming years and is ranked 175 out of 181 countries according to relative vulnerability and ability to cope with climate change.⁴ IOM Afghanistan is working to address these needs, promoting interventions that will increase the knowledge-base surrounding the migration, environment, and climate change (MECC) nexus in Afghanistan and enable programming that will buttress community resilience to climate and environmental hazards. Through these efforts, IOM Afghanistan is aligned with IOM’s *Institutional Strategy on Migration, Environment and Climate Change 2021-2030*, striving to provide a) solutions for people to move, managing migration in the context of climate change, environmental degradation, and disasters due to natural hazards, b) solutions for people on the move, assisting and protecting migrants and displaced persons in the context of climate change, environmental degradation, and disasters due to natural hazards; and c) solutions for people to stay, making migration a choice by building resilience and addressing the adverse climatic and environmental drivers that compel people to relocate.



Afghan returnees from Pakistan wait to register at the IOM Transit Center in Kandahar. Photo: IOM/ Mohammad Osman Azizi

³ IOM’s [Approach to Protection](#), 2023.

⁴ Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative, 2020 [Rankings](#).

OPERATIONAL FORECAST FOR 2024 (IOM AFGHANISTAN)

Funding
Requirement
\$556 M

Funding
Confirmed
\$108.6 M

Funding
Gap
\$432.4 M

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

| Sector | Funding Requirement | Funding Confirmed | Funding Gap |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Emergency Shelter and NFI | \$166.4 M | \$21.5 M | 87% |
| Health | \$48 M | \$10.1 M | 79% |
| MHPSS | \$9 M | \$1.7 M | 80% |
| Protection | \$17 M | \$7.2 M | 58% |
| Post-arrival assistance | \$73 M | \$16.9 M | 77% |
| WASH | \$55.6 M | \$12.9 M | 77% |
| Sub-Total | \$369 M | \$70.4 M | 81% |

RESILIENCE AND SOLUTIONS

| Sector | Funding Requirement | Funding Confirmed | Funding Gap |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Livelihoods and Economic Empowerment | \$68 M | \$12.7 M | 81% |
| Infrastructure for Essential Services | \$40 M | \$2.3 M | 94% |
| Social Cohesion | \$7 M | \$0.9 M | 87% |
| Disaster Risk Reduction | \$22 M | \$9.6 M | 56% |
| Migration Pathways | \$15 M | \$0 M | 0% |
| Sub-Total | \$153 M | \$25.5 M | 83% |

CROSS-CUTTING PROGRAMMES AND INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION

| Sector | Funding Requirement | Funding Confirmed | Funding Gap |
|--|---------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| DTM | \$17 M | \$8.2 M | 52% |
| CCCM | \$10 M | \$2.6 M | 74% |
| Durable Solutions Working Group Coordination | \$2.4 M | \$0.6M | 75% |
| Shelter/NFI Cluster Coordination | \$3.6 M | \$1.3 M | 64% |
| AAP | \$1 M | \$0 M | 0% |
| Sub-Total | \$34 M | \$12.7 M | 63% |
| Total | \$556 M | \$108.6 M | 80% |