



Informal IDP settlements in the outskirts of Herat City. © IOM 2021 (Photo: Amanda Nero)

**5.5 million**

Internally Displaced Persons in Afghanistan

**550,780**

people displaced between 1 Jan - 9 Aug 2021

**32** out of **34** provinces hosting IDPs

## SITUATION OVERVIEW

Following the announcement of the withdrawal of United States (US) troops and other international military forces (IMFs) from Afghanistan, the security situation in the country has deteriorated rapidly, with a rapid Taliban advance and the eventual collapse of Government on 16 August 2021.

Large scale displacement driven by conflict and drought, with the COVID-19 pandemic continuing and with poverty and food insecurity deepening, is generating massive humanitarian and protection need in the country. A total of 32 out of 34 provinces had recorded some level of forced displacement. Inadequate shelter and insufficient access to sanitation and health facilities have resulted in extremely precarious living conditions for affected families. Many Afghans are seeking options for out-migration through regular and irregular routes.

Businesses and shops continue the gradual process of reopening. Government employees have also been encouraged by the Taliban to return to work. Banks remain closed. The situation at the airport remains tense and volatile.

The future of security at Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA) is uncertain and there is no clarity regarding resumption of non-military services.

Senior leaders of the Taliban Political Commission in Doha, including Deputy Leader Mullah Baradar, have arrived in Kandahar from Qatar and are expected to start negotiations on behalf of the Taliban with the members of the Transition Council soon.

IOM has identified priority response and funding needs required for early action in response to the current situation in Afghanistan. IOM is requesting for USD 24 million for an initial period of three months (August to November 2021) for humanitarian and protection activities. These are in line with the existing requirements in the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP).

## CONTACTS

## IOM RESPONSE

While IOM's activities have paused in areas where there is active conflict or local insecurity, IOM is engaging in line with other organizations to establish parameters according to humanitarian principles to continue or restart life-saving humanitarian response for people affected by the crisis as quickly as possible. At present, this includes:

- The Humanitarian Assistance Programme (HAP) is participating in joint assessments and provision of emergency shelter and NFI and DRR support in areas with access – assessment is currently underway in Ghazni and being negotiated for Kabul and other provinces.
- Protection case-management and protection monitoring is underway in 11 locations, operating on a mix of remote and in person working modalities, with all women staff working from home (Herat, Faryab, Ghor, Sar-e-Pul, Balkh, Takar, Badakshan, Nangahar, Kabul, Nimroz, Kandahar).
- Cross-border facilities at Milak in Nimroz are operational, with others under negotiation to re-open (at Islam Qila-Herat, Spin Boldak- Kandahar, and Torkham - Nangarhar).
- Migration Health programming is currently ongoing at Nimroz, including primary healthcare and referrals, reproductive healthcare, and counselling.



## DISPLACEMENT TRACKING

- From 1 January to 9 August 2021, 550,780 individuals fled their homes due to conflict, according to UNOCHA.
- As of 5 August, more than 708,000 undocumented people had returned to Afghanistan over land borders since the start of 2021, with anticipated continuation of flows at the borders over the coming months.
- Approximately 4.2 million people are estimated to be in protracted internal displacement nationwide, throughout Afghanistan.
- Flow monitoring is currently ongoing at the Milak border point in Nimroz.



## SHELTER AND NON-FOOD ITEMS (NFI)

- IOM co-leads the ES/NFI cluster with UNHCR. IOM mobile teams have been participating in joint assessments and distributing emergency shelter and NFI in accessible locations.
- 630 conflict displaced families in Kabul received NFIs immediately prior to Sunday 15 August. Negotiations are underway to resume assessment and distributions in

Kabul and elsewhere (including Ghor, Herat, Takhar, Kunar and Kunduz). Assessment of conflict IDPs is currently underway in Ghazni.

- Construction of disaster risk mitigation infrastructure is underway in Herat, with more expected to recommence tomorrow.
- IOM has prepositioned shelter and NFI stocks in 16 warehouses across the country. IOM is currently assessing the remaining stocks and whether they can be allocated to families impacted by the current crisis.
- A key gap is winterisation response given the approach of winter.



## PROTECTION

- Protection Monitoring continues with remote household surveys and key informant interviews in 11 provinces. Protection Case Management also continues remotely, however cash distribution is halted until the service provider can safely secure cash and distribution.
- While IOM continues to provide protection services, many organisations halted service delivery so referrals to partners for GBV, Child protection, MHPSS are not presently an option in most provinces.
- Access to legal documentation is completely on hold. Access to legal identification is a critical need for people to facilitate safe and regular migration.



## HEALTH

- Activities are currently ongoing in Nimroz at the Milak border point, including border surveillance, primary health care, referrals, emergency case management, psychosocial counselling. This includes female nurses, midwife and counsellors who have been granted permission to work.
- Health teams that have relocated to Kabul are being made available to the Health Cluster for response in Kabul displacement sites until they are able to return to the provinces.
- Negotiations are underway to restart in Herat, Kandahar and Nangahar, following requests to all agencies to resume working.

The mission is identifying key immediate priority activities and updated funding requirements. All response is dependent on unimpeded access in line with humanitarian principles, and security of staff. At this stage the mission foresees the most effective and impactful areas of interventions will be in the areas of:

- Emergency Shelter and Non-food Items (ES/NFI) including cluster coordination and site management
- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)
- Protection case management and protection monitoring
- Displacement Tracking Matrix – particularly flow-monitoring and displacement event tracking
- Emergency health
- Emergency livelihoods and social cohesion

