



UNHCR Representation to Central Asia

Eight years ago, Farhad and his family were forced to flee Afghanistan and sought asylum in Kazakhstan, where they were granted refugee status. Initially, Farhad worked for private companies to support his family, and with the help of UNHCR, he secured a direct scholarship from Al-Farabi Kazakh National University to study International Relations. Having recently graduated, he looks forward to pursuing a career in this field. (Photo: UNHCR/ Elyor Nemat)

Key figures as of 30 June 2024

22,772*



Refugees and Asylum-Seekers

in Kazakhstan (669), the Kyrgyz Republic (2,754), Tajikistan (10,381), Turkmenistan (13) and Uzbekistan (5)*.

* Based on government reports in mass media, UNHCR estimates there are as many as 106,212 people in Central Asia in a refugee-like situation, including 8,950 forcibly displaced Afghan citizens in Uzbekistan.

36,994



known Stateless people

in Kazakhstan (8,019), the Kyrgyz Republic (60), Tajikistan (3,629), Turkmenistan (2,760) and Uzbekistan (22,496).

In 2024, UNHCR requires \$10.03 million to protect refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless people across Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.



**Funded
58%**

**Unfunded
45%**

As of 30 September 2024

SUB-REGIONAL

- With 21 [pledges submitted from Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic and Uzbekistan](#) at the **2023 Global Refugee Forum** – including from government, academia, civil society and UN Country Teams – UNHCR is actively engaging stakeholders to support implementation of their commitments to protect forcibly displaced and stateless people. As of 30 September, four of the 21 pledges have already been completed.

SEE ALSO



See also: [Factsheet: Central Asia's commitments to the Global Compact on Refugees](#)

- As the 10-year global **#IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness** concludes in 2024, States, UNHCR and partners are accelerating efforts to achieve the goals of the campaign, including accession to the Statelessness Conventions. Turkmenistan is the only Central Asian country that has acceded to the Statelessness Conventions.
- From October 2023 to June 2024, UNHCR led a [“Sustainable development and addressing statelessness in Central Asia” contest for media](#), to support quality and impactful reporting on the importance of addressing statelessness in Central Asia to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The contest brought together media professionals, freelance journalists, videographers, photographers, graphic designers, writers, and other content creators across Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, and Uzbekistan, providing grants to support implementation of winning proposals. The three winners and three special prize awardees created diverse works that include video-stories, illustrations, longreads, articles, radio programs, social media posts, interviews, and podcasts exploring the topic of statelessness in Central Asia.
- UNHCR partners Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights and Rule of Law (BHR) and Legal Clinic Adilet in the Kyrgyz Republic **attended the annual UNHCR Global NGO Consultations** in Geneva, 11 to 13 June, focusing on solutions, inclusion in national systems, and gender equality.
- Partially funded by UNHCR, seven representatives from government institutions, NGOs and national human rights institutions in Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Turkmenistan attended the San Remo 12th Online Course on Statelessness in Russian, 10 June to 5 July. As part of the course programme, on 17 June, UNHCR delivered an **online presentation on Nationality and Statelessness in International Law**. The course aims to enhance knowledge and capacity to prevent, reduce and address statelessness and to protect stateless people worldwide.
- From 18 to 28 June, UNHCR hosted a **monitoring mission of the US State Department Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration**, in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic. The delegation met with refugees, asylum-seekers, and stateless people, as well as NGO partners and UN Resident Coordinators in each country, and visited project sites including a fashion showroom in Dushanbe supporting refugee designers and fashion collections.
- On 15 July, UNHCR launched the **2024 session of the Refugee Status Determination Distance Learning Programme** – a capacity-building initiative to enhance the quality of refugee status determination (RSD) procedures across Central Asia. The programme consists of a 12-week distance learning phase followed by a residential workshop. Forty participants from Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan are engaged in the online phase of the course, representing asylum authorities, members of national RSD Commissions, judges, and staff from the Ombudsperson's Office, the General Prosecutor's Office, and other relevant organizations providing legal assistance and support to asylum-seekers and refugees.
- From 5 to 9 August, UNHCR hosted a **monitoring mission of the European Union Directorate-General for International Partnerships**, in Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, to review activities within the three-year *Support to Afghan refugees and displaced people in Pakistan, Iran, Central Asia and Afghanistan* programme. The delegation met with forcibly displaced Afghan nationals, government representatives and NGO partners, and visited project sites including the Vahdat Youth Centre in Tajikistan where UNHCR supports a range of activities such as sports, art, sewing and cooking classes for refugees and host community.

KAZAKHSTAN

State Party to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol

- As part of its 2024 Expert Council plan, the Office of the **Human Rights Commissioner in Kazakhstan is conducting research on the rights of stateless people and refugees** in the country. NGOs were requested to provide information on their work and proposals to address existing challenges. On 11 June, UNHCR partner Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights and Rule of Law (BHR) submitted recommendations – developed in collaboration with UNHCR – that address key issues, including: access to and quality of asylum procedures; limited healthcare and government services benefits; problems obtaining documents; and continuing socio-economic vulnerability. BHR also provided proposals to align national legislation with the Refugee Convention.
- On 6 September, UNHCR held a **Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse training** for 17 staff from partners BHR, Sana Sezim, and Kazakhstan Red Crescent Society. A follow-up session on anti-fraud was held on 27 September for the same participants.
- Throughout this period, UNHCR **continued bilateral regular engagement with key government counterparts** to advance protection of forcibly displaced and stateless people, including the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Human Rights Commissioner, Commissioner for Rights of Socially Vulnerable Categories of Population, Department for the Coordination of Employment and Social Programs.

Protecting Refugees and Asylum-Seekers

- In 2023, asylum authorities in Almaty region rejected the applications of a family of asylum-seekers from Afghanistan. Following UNHCR advocacy, the District Court of Almaty region overturned the first instance decision, and the **family was granted refugee status in Kazakhstan in July 2024**.
- In support of the **Concept of Inclusive Policy** being drafted by the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, UNHCR submitted written comments outlining the challenges faced by refugees and asylum-seekers with disabilities in the country, and recommendations for their inclusion.
- On 9 June, the order of the Minister of Labor and Social Protection of the Population approving a sample **refugee certificate – produced in accordance with international requirements and standards for machine-readable travel documents** – came into force. This is an essential step towards Kazakhstan fulfilling its 2019 pledge to the Global

Compact on Refugees of issuing International Civil Aviation Organization standard machine-readable convention travel documents to refugees.

- For **World Refugee Day 2024** – observed on 20 June each year – UNHCR organised:
 - An [art therapy session with Jargyn Project](#) for 20 KIMEP and NARXOZ university students, and DAFI refugee scholarship holders, in Almaty on the theme of ‘solidarity’, celebrating the strength and courage of people forced to flee.
 - Two friendly football games together with partner Red Crescent Society, with eight forcibly displaced children, six forcibly displaced adults, and the host the community in Almaty.
 - Public screenings of movie “The Swimmers” at American Corners in Astana and KAZNU University in Almaty, attended by some 45 people and including post-film quizzes.
 - A three-day summer camp for refugee teenagers in Almaty, which included sessions on leadership, marketing, entrepreneurship, financial literacy, and healthy habits, along with motivational speeches and activities.

READ ALSO



Photo: UNHCR/Alaru Siyaz

Read also: [UNHCR Central Asia celebrates World Refugee Day 2024](#)

- DAFI scholar and refugee, Armin Talebi, participated in the inaugural **Youth Advisory Board meeting** in Astana, 8 and 9 July, which gathered 25 young leaders from across the country to collaborate as partners in advancing UN programmes and Sustainable Development Goals in Kazakhstan.

- On 19 July, UNHCR partner Kazakhstan Red Crescent Society launched a **free three-month Russian language course for refugees and asylum-seekers** to help participants improve their language skills and better integrate into their host community. Seven participants completed the course.
- From 22 to 25 July, UNHCR partner Kazakhstan Red Crescent Society conducted **living assessments of asylum-seeker and refugee families in Aktope** region, visiting their homes and consulting on medical and social assistance, and procedures for obtaining cash assistance. Refugees and asylum-seekers reported increased prices for rent and essential items, and difficulties finding official employment. Red Crescent met with the regional Department of Social Protection and Labor to discuss these issues, as well as procedures for assigning and receiving targeted social assistance.
- On 2 August, the **Commissioner for the Rights of Socially Vulnerable Categories of Population under the President of Kazakhstan met with refugees and asylum-seekers** in Almaty – facilitated by UNHCR and partners Red Crescent Society and BHR – discussing their concerns and challenges, including access to basic services and legal assistance.
- Together with partners Red Crescent Society and BHR, on 8 August UNHCR met with the **Department of Employment and Social Programs of Almaty, discussing actions to improve the protection environment**, and the authorities' role in: ensuring access to territory and asylum procedures; improving the quality of Refugee Status Determination procedures; and applying international standards and national legislation to prevent human rights violations. With Almaty hosting the largest population of refugees and asylum-seekers in Kazakhstan, the parties also exchanged views on potential areas of direct support, including employment, healthcare, targeted social assistance, language courses, education, and temporary accommodation.
- On 14 August, UNHCR and the Ministry of Justice held a hybrid **training for more than 400 lawyers and legal consultants on the legal framework of international refugee protection and national asylum legislation**. Over 60 lawyers and legal consultants involved in providing legal assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers attended the event, with a further 350+ participants online. Sessions included the concept of international protection, procedural standards for determining refugee status, and case management on asylum issues. The activity supports implementation of the Migration Policy Concept of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2023-2027, which aims to improve the legal regulation of migration processes and protect the rights of asylum-seekers.
- On 27 August, UNHCR and partner BHR **visited the crossing point between East Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation, monitoring admission practices** and briefing authorities on refugee protection. UNHCR and BHR observed that the overall conditions



Held with the Ministry of Justice, the hybrid training engaged more than 400 lawyers and legal consultants involved in providing legal assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers. The activity supports implementation of the Migration Policy Concept of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2023-2027. (Photo: Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan/ Abishev Shohan)

at the border should be improved, including establishing facilities for arriving asylum-seekers. UNHCR met with the Representative of the Ombudsperson for Human Rights for East Kazakhstan, discussing challenges of ensuring access to the asylum system for individuals in detention facilities, and coordination between the penal system and local executive bodies responsible for asylum matters.

- DAFI refugee scholar, Armin Talebi, **participated in UNICEF's "Youth in youth policy and programs"** meeting on 9 September in Almaty, sharing his personal experiences as a refugee and challenges faced in Kazakhstan, including employment, medical care, social assistance and naturalization.
- On 10 September, UNHCR and partner BHR conducted a **border monitoring mission at Astana International Airport**, assessing admission practices and evaluating the border crossing point's compliance with international standards. A session was delivered to 15 members of the Border Guards Service on the rights of asylum-seekers, in line with national asylum legislation, the Refugee Convention, and other international instruments.
- On 13 September, UNHCR held an orientation and **'back-to-school' event for four new and 12 (of the 14) continuing DAFI refugee scholarship students** in Almaty, briefing on the scholarship rules and entitlements, and opportunities to be involved in outreach activities. UNHCR also met with representatives of NARHOZ university and Almaty Management University where new DAFI students are enrolled, briefing on the refugee scholarship program and the expectations for students.
- UNHCR partner Red Crescent Society **visited the homes of six refugee and asylum-seeker families in North Kazakhstan**, 3 to 6 September, consulting on questions related to medical and legal assistance, and procedures in obtaining cash assistance. Red Crescent met the Department of Employment and Social Programs, discussing issues related to refugee status, and procedures for assigning and receiving targeted social assistance.
- On 19 and 20 September, UNHCR partner BHR participated in the Regional Working Meeting on Pandemic Preparedness and Infection Control in Eastern Europe and Central Asia's Migration Realities, held in Uzbekistan, highlighting challenges faced by refugees and asylum-seekers in Kazakhstan, including lack of access to mandatory social medical insurance, and asylum-seekers' limited access to guaranteed (minimal) volume of healthcare.



- So far in 2024, UNHCR has provided **cash assistance** to 79 vulnerable refugee and asylum-seeker families (reaching 97 individuals) to help them cover basic needs, including 21 disbursements for medical assistance.

Ending Statelessness

- The 3 June meeting of the **Consultative and Advisory Body under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, titled "Dialogue Platform on Human Dimension"**, focused on eliminating discrimination against women, combating domestic violence, and measures taken by the government to fight human trafficking. During the meeting, UNHCR partner Sana Sezim highlighted the heightened risk of human trafficking faced by refugees, asylum-seekers, and undocumented individuals, called for ratification of the UN Statelessness Conventions, and raised concerns regarding the current issues with DNA expertise for establishing paternity in citizenship matters.
- On 28 May, the **Committee of Migration Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and UNHCR signed the Joint Action and Identification Campaign Plans for 2024**, which aim to enhance identification and documentation of people with undetermined nationality in Kazakhstan, reduce statelessness, strengthen the protection environment, and align national legislation with international standards. The 6-month campaign kicked-off on 1 July.

As part of the campaign, on 23 September UNHCR and partner Sana Sezim **met with government representatives in Zhambyl region** – including from the local migration service, Human Rights Commissioner, Civil Service Center, Center for the Adaptation of Individuals in Difficult Life Situations, and Committee of Migration Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs – to discuss statelessness reduction and prevention.

- UNHCR and the Chairperson of the **State Migration Service under the Ministry of Internal Affairs went to Taraz, Shymkent and Turkestan** regions, 23 to 26 September, briefing local authorities and consulting with State representatives from registration, social services, and regional administration. The delegation visited offices of UNHCR partner Sana Sezim, and Centers for Adaptation of Minor Children, and Social Adaptation, where there were more than 40 people facing significant barriers accessing medical services, disability recognition, and social support due to a lack of identity documents. In a follow-up briefing on 27 September, UNHCR committed to provide technical support to help the government identify barriers in the documentation process; develop internal instructions for unified implementation of existing guidelines by regional migration authorities; and propose legislative amendments to enhance the efficiency of these efforts for vulnerable communities.

THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

State Party to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol

- To support implementation of the UN Country Team the Kyrgyz Republic's commitment to the UN Common Pledge 2.0, the UN Resident Coordinator's Office and UNHCR convened a workshop with participation of 12 UN agencies on 14 June in Bishkek. The UN Resident Coordinator's Office presented a draft Action Plan, and participants discussed coordination fora to streamline implementation of the pledge. Agencies agreed to identify opportunities to integrate issues related to refugees and stateless people within their existing projects, plans and activities.
- On 19 July, UNHCR and UNICEF signed a Letter of Understanding for collaboration in the Kyrgyz Republic for 2024 to 2027. Guided by the Strategic Collaboration Framework between the two UN agencies at a global level, the local-level agreement aims to facilitate bilateral collaboration, establish operational modalities, and promote shared implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- On 19 July, UNHCR partner Legal Clinic Adilet held a seminar on international and national legislation on asylum, citizenship and statelessness for 16 staff of the central office of the Service of Legal Aid under the Ministry of Justice.
- As part of regular efforts to ensure accountability to affected people, UNHCR and partner Adilet conducted a Participatory Assessment – 19 to 21 August in Bishkek, and 23 August in Osh cities – involving 140 convention refugees, mandate refugees, asylum-seekers, and stateless people. Assessment groups were formed based on legal status, country of origin, and gender, with specific sessions held for children. Key issues raised by participants included lack of financial resources, access to formal employment, and legal stay for mandate refugees.
- Throughout this period, UNHCR continued advocacy efforts to promote the rights of forcibly displaced and stateless people, including regular engagement with the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, including meetings with the Ministries of Labor, Social Security and Migration; Digital Development; Foreign Affairs; and Education, as well as the Ombudsman Institute, and General Prosecutor's Office.

Protecting Refugees and Asylum-Seekers

- On 3 June, UNHCR and the Ombudsperson's Office of the Kyrgyz Republic signed a joint work plan for 2024, strengthening collaboration on refugee protection and rights. Workplan activities include

enhancing the capacity of Ombudsperson staff on refugee rights and legal procedures; establishing a platform for discussions on regularizing the legal status of mandate refugees; and ensuring refugees in detention centres have access to refugee status determination procedures.

- For [World Refugee Day](#), observed on 20 June, UNHCR and the National Historical Museum of the Kyrgyz Republic in Bishkek held a screening of movie 'The Swimmers' for invited government, donor and international organization guests. The event was facilitated by members of the Refugee Youth Group, with welcoming remarks delivered by the Head of Refugee Department at the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Migration, and the UN Resident Coordinator.
- On 21 June, UNHCR partner Adilet held a [masterclass on felt making for 15 women asylum-seekers](#) in Bishkek. The session sought to support integration of the women, providing the opportunity to learn a new craft, as well as engage with others in their community.



The masterclass on felt making for asylum-seeker women in Bishkek sought to support integration, while also providing the opportunity to learn a new craft, and engage with others. (Photo: Legal Clinic Adilet)

- With the support of UNHCR, in June the Refugee Youth Group in the Kyrgyz Republic set up a debate club for its members. Nine youth group members participated in the 16 meetings, which focused on the British debate system, exploring both theory and practice of argumentation. The Refugee Youth Group in the Kyrgyz Republic was established in 2021 and currently has 22 members between the ages of 15 and 26.



UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres met with youth during his visit to Kyrgyz Republic, including Afghan mandate refugee Maryam who spoke about the challenges faced by refugees in the country. (Photo: UN Kyrgyz Republic)

- **Mandate refugee from Afghanistan Maliha participated in the UN International Youth Day celebrations** in Bishkek on 12 August, sharing her personal story, connecting with other active young people, and raising awareness about the challenges and aspirations of refugee youth in the Kyrgyz Republic.
- On 12 August, UNHCR partner Adilet facilitated an **information session for 11 refugees on the topic "Fundamentals of Taxation"**, providing an overview of the Kyrgyz Republic's tax system, and helping attendees to understand their tax obligations and rights of their host country.
- **Fifteen Refugee Youth Group members, accompanied by the debate club trainer and UNHCR, held a one-day teambuilding trip** to the Ala-Archa gorge on 31 August. Activities included hiking and games designed to assess communication levels, identify gaps, and strengthen overall team dynamics. Several members shared their progress in public speaking and confidence increased through such initiatives.
- UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres visited Central Asia, 1 to 6 July. With UNHCR support, **Afghan mandate refugee Maryam participated in the meeting with the Secretary-General and youth of the Kyrgyz Republic** on 2 July, representing the refugee community. Maryam delivered a statement reflecting on the challenges faced by refugees in the country.
- As part of its 2023 pledge to the Global Compact on Refugees, on 20 August, the American University of Central Asia (**AUCA**), **launched a two-month free English language courses for 17 refugees and asylum-seekers** to enhance their language skills and prepare them for opportunities such as employment or enrolment in higher education institutions. All 17 participant successfully completed the course.
- Between 26 August and 10 September, **UNHCR and the State Border Service under the State Committee for National Security visited 11 crossing points** on the borders with China, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, and three international airports, training over 260 border guards on international and national legal standards on asylum, as well as rights and obligations of asylum-seekers, refugees, and stateless persons.
- Three **young refugee women participated the Regional Conference of Youth and Children on Climate Change in Central Asia and Afghanistan**, held in Bishkek 5 to 6 September, hosted by the Ministry of Natural Resources, Ecology, and Technical Supervision, and co-organized by UNICEF and UNDP. One of the women spoke at the event representing Afghanistan, raising a question about the engagement of young volunteers in climate change initiatives, and highlighting climate-related issues in Afghanistan. The global youth



conference, officially endorsed by the youth wing of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Secretariat, brought together around 200 participants to foster dialogue, build capacity, and empower the next generation of climate leaders.

- So far in 2024, UNHCR has provided **cash assistance** to 48 very vulnerable refugee and asylum-seeker families (reaching 200 family members) to support them to cover their basic or emergency needs. In addition, 26 children were provided with financial assistance to help them purchase school supplies for the new academic year.

Ending Statelessness

- On 21 August, UNHCR partner Adilet **trained 76 employees of the regional branches of the Department of Population Registration under the Ministry of Digital Development in the north of the**

Kyrgyz Republic on citizenship and statelessness law. The same session was delivered on 28 September to 65 employees of the same department in the south.

- Developed within the framework of Government Accelerators, the **Kyrgyz Republic's project on the integration of information systems for registration of newborns, was in the top 20 best global digital initiatives** of the international SDG Digital Game Changers competition. Initiated by the Ministry of Digital Development – and supported by the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labor, Social Security and Migration, and UNHCR – the project aims to ensure full documentation of newborns. Now information about births comes directly from maternity hospitals to the Ministry of Digital Development, and if parents do not apply for a birth certificate within 60 days, social workers receive a notification and assist with registration, helping to prevent statelessness.

TAJIKISTAN

State Party to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol

- On 4 June, UNHCR participated in a [dialogue with Women Parliamentarians of Tajikistan](#) organized by the UN Country Team and the Parliament, discussing issues such as digitalization, gender-based violence, and HIV/AIDS. UNHCR briefed participants on the refugee law review and current work on amendment of civil registration laws to ensure universal birth registration.
- On 22 and 23 August, UNHCR convened the **annual refresher sessions on Operational Management and Ethical Compliance** for over 40 staff of its four implementing partners. Sessions included Code of Conduct; Conflict of Interest; Personal Use of Social Media; Procurement Procedures; and UNHCR's Project, Reporting, Oversight and Monitoring tool.
- [UNHCR and IOM extended their Data Sharing Agreement](#) in Tajikistan at a signing ceremony on 6 September in Vahdat, facilitating and reinforcing joint efforts to support refugees and vulnerable groups.
- As part of its commitment to accountability to affected people, and to support improved programming, from 12 September to 1 October, UNHCR and its partners conducted a **participatory assessment with 300 asylum-seekers, refugees, and stateless people in 15 locations** across Tajikistan. The exercise sought to gather updated information on protection risks faced, and underlying causes, while also discussing solutions. Key issues raised by participants included limited access to loans, non-recognition of professional diplomas by the Government of Tajikistan, and inaccessibility of technology courses in Rudaki district.
- Throughout this period, UNHCR **continued regular engagement with key government counterparts** to advance protection of forcibly displaced and stateless people, including representatives from the Ministry of Justice, Ombudsperson's Office, State Committee for National Security, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Committee of Emergency Situations and Civil Defense .

Protecting Refugees and Asylum-Seekers

- For [World Refugee Day](#), observed on 20 June, UNHCR held a "Solidarity Cup" Futsal Competition at the Vahdat Youth Centre – in partnership with Tajikistan Football Federation – bringing together 40 boys and 10 girls from the refugee and host communities to compete in five teams. Relay races were also held for 40 children, with UNHCR's partner providing entertainment, including music and dancing.
- On 21 June, UNHCR opened a one-day **exhibition titled "Power of Resilience", dedicated to [World Refugee Day](#)**, at an event bringing together government, donor, UN and humanitarian partners. The exhibition's 10 displays showcased significant personal objects brought by refugees from their home countries to Tajikistan, accompanied by individual stories, offering a window into their personal experiences.
- UNHCR partner Inson va Adolat and the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs convened a **roundtable discussion on 29 June, dedicated to World Refugee Day**. Participants – including refugees, asylum-seekers and UNHCR – shared their legal opinions concerning the current legislative framework on



The UNHCR-led “Power of Resilience” exhibition showcased 10 individual, meaningful objects brought by refugees when they were forced to flee their homes. Each item was accompanied by their story, in Tajik and English, offering a glimpse into their lived experiences. (Photo: UNHCR/ Muhammadkhuja Davlyatov)

- asylum issues, specifically hierarchy of legal acts, refugee status determination, and rights of asylum-seekers and refugees as reflected in legislation of Tajikistan.
- On 2 August, UNHCR and partner Inson va Adolat – together with the Vahdat City Hukumat (regional government) and Civil Registry Office – held a **roundtable titled "Legal status of asylum-seekers and refugees: Cooperation of State bodies working on refugee issues"**, discussing refugee rights and protection. Twenty-eight participants attended, including from Housing and Communal Services, Vahdat Tax Authority, Jamoats (town councils), the Center for Free Legal Aid of the Ministry of Justice.
 - Under the EU Foreign Policy Instruments “Stabilization of Tajikistan’s Southern Border Region with Afghanistan” project, in July and August, UNHCR facilitated four days of **training for over 100 high and mid-level officers from the Border Guards** service in Khorog City in Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Province, and Kistakuz village and Khujand city in Sughd Province. The trainings aimed to enhance the capacity of Tajik Border Guards to effectively manage individual and mass crossings of the State border by asylum-seekers from Afghanistan (particularly important given the prevailing contradiction between the Law on Refugees and the Criminal Code regarding non-penalization for irregular border crossings by people seeking asylum), as well as uphold the principle of non-refoulement, and provide access to asylum procedures.
 - On 19 August, UNHCR delivered a **session on protection of forcibly displaced and stateless people at the International Organization for Migration (IOM)-organized Migration, Environment, and Climate Change Youth Academy Camp**. The camp brought together 30 youth from Districts of Republican Subordination, Sughd, and Khatlon regions – including 16 Afghan participants.
 - On 27 August, a joint selection committee – comprising representatives from the Embassy of Germany in Tajikistan, UNHCR, and partner Refugees, Children and Vulnerable Citizens – interviewed **shortlisted DAFI scholarship applicants** to finalize candidates for the upcoming academic year. Out of 26 applications, 18 applicants were selected for interviews, with 14 candidates chosen to receive DAFI scholarships starting 2024.
 - On 28 August, UNHCR participated in a **Border Implementation Group meeting**, hosted by OSCE with participation of embassies, EU Delegation, BOMCA, UN and other international organizations. UNHCR presented on current activities with the Border Troops, including capacity building to improve access to territory, and proposed joint advocacy to operationalize referral mechanisms and address the lack of infrastructure at border crossing points.

- On 6 September UNHCR delivered a one-day **training to 22 female participants from Border Guard Services, Customs and Migration Authorities** of OSCE's member states within the framework of the Staff Course of Female Leaders. UNHCR's session covered global displacement trends; international principles governing refugee protection and refugee law; refugee protection in the context of mixed migration flows; and striking a balance between asylum and national security.
- On 14 September, UNHCR partner Inson va Adolat delivered a **training on legal status of asylum-seekers and refugees** in Tajikistan, relevant legal acts regulating their rights and obligations, and the importance of compliance with the rules of stay in the country, for 15 students of the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Training participants proposed amending Government Resolution No. 323 of 2000 ("On the list of States, where refugees and asylum-seekers temporarily resided before arrival to the Republic of Tajikistan and constitute a basis for refusal of registration of applications for granting asylum and a refugee status"), highlighting that it is outdated and inconsistent with international and national standards.
- So far in 2024, UNHCR has **supported 595 refugees with livelihoods activities**, including vocational training, apprenticeship programmes, business training, provision of tool kits and small grants and connecting to employment.
- So far in 2024, UNHCR has provided **multi-purpose cash grants** to 131 vulnerable refugee and asylum-seeker families (reaching 652 family members) to support them to cover their basic or emergency needs. A further 93 individuals received disability allowances and 145 received medical reimbursements.

Ending Statelessness

- On 3 June, **UNHCR signed a joint workplan with the Ministry of Justice of Tajikistan**, supporting the government's ongoing efforts to end statelessness. The plan envisages developing a comprehensive legal analysis to prevent statelessness at birth, and conducting a study visit to Moldova to learn from best practices.

Within the joint workplan, on 24 September, UNHCR convened a **roundtable to discuss amendments to national birth registration legislation and accession to the UN Statelessness Conventions**, with participation of the Ministry of Justice, Department for the Protection of Children's Rights, Department of Civil Status Documents, and Department of Citizenship and Work with Refugees of the Passport and Registration Service.

READ ALSO



Photo: UNHCR/ Muhammadkhujja Daviyatov

Read also: [Zenaat's legacy igniting fire of inspiration in Tajikistan](#)

TURKMENISTAN

State Party to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol
State Party to the 1954 and 1961 Statelessness Conventions

Ending Statelessness

- Coinciding with the 33rd anniversary of Turkmenistan's independence, on 25 September **1,146 formerly stateless people were presented with passports as new citizens of Turkmenistan** in a ceremony held at the State Migration Service in Ashgabat, also attended by UNHCR and other

representatives of the UN Country Team. Since the start of the #IBelong campaign in 2014, Turkmenistan has granted citizenship to 32,144 stateless people.



The #IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness directly links to target 9 of Sustainable Development Goal 16: to provide legal identity for all, including birth registration, by 2030.

UZBEKISTAN

- From 17 to 19 July, UNHCR participated in a workshop organised by the National Human Rights Centre of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and the UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR) **to develop a national action plan for implementing Uzbekistan's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) recommendations.** At the 2018 and 2023 sessions of the UPR in the Human Rights Council, Uzbekistan supported recommendations to ratify the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol and establish a national asylum system. At the 2018 review, Uzbekistan also supported recommendations to ratify the 1954 and 1961 Statelessness Conventions.
- Within the framework of the 2024 joint workplan with the National Human Rights Centre of Uzbekistan, from 16 to 19 September, UNHCR implemented a number of activities in Tashkent, including:
 - **Training for 25 staff of the Ministry of Internal Affairs from different regions of Uzbekistan on identification of stateless people and statelessness determination procedures** on 16 September. The training focused on specific procedures for status determination, and rights of stateless people as well as people in need of international protection under international and national law.
 - **A lecture to 30 students from the University of World Economy and Diplomacy on the principles of international refugee protection** on 17 September, covering international legal instruments for refugee protection, and the history and establishment of UNHCR.
 - **Training for 25 lawyers and staff from different NGOs that provide free legal aid in Uzbekistan, on statelessness and asylum** on 18 September. The session covered international refugee protection standards, efforts to prevent and reduce statelessness, and the role of civil society in raising awareness and supporting stateless people and those in need of international protection. The activity was held within the

framework of the 2024 joint workplan with the National Human Rights Centre of Uzbekistan.

- **Training for 20 judges on nationality and statelessness**, on 19 September, providing them with the necessary knowledge, skills, and tools to effectively process asylum, nationality, and statelessness cases. Sessions included international legal standards in protecting forcibly displaced people, access to territory, as well as addressing statelessness issues and ensuring birth registration for preventing statelessness.

Responding to Emergencies

- As of 30 September 2024, UNHCR has managed a total cargo turnover of 709 trucks and four airlifts from its **Regional Humanitarian Logistics Hub in Termez** to support emergency responses in Afghanistan, Kyrgyz Republic, Iran, Moldova, Myanmar, Poland, Pakistan, Romania, and Tajikistan, totalling 6,778 metric tons of relief items – including blankets, solar lamps, plastic sheets, family tents, jerrycans, buckets, refugee housing units and kitchen sets.



Following the May 2024 kick-off of the UNHCR and LONGi partnership in Uzbekistan, some 1,300 solar panels have been installed in Termez, solarizing the UNHCR Regional Humanitarian Logistics Hub. (Photo: UNHCR/ Elyor Nemat)

WORKING WITH PARTNERS

- As a member of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan UN Country Teams and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, UNHCR engages with governments, UN and development partners, international financial institutions and others across Central Asia to ensure refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless people are not left behind in States' achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



UNHCR delivered a lecture on the principles of international refugee protection to students at the University of World Economy and Diplomacy in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. (Photo: University of World Economy and Diplomacy)

Thank you for the support

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See also:

- unhcr.org/centralasia for the latest news and stories
- reporting.unhcr.org/kazakhstan for 2024 strategy, budget and funding updates
- data.unhcr.org/en/situations/central_asia for population figures and data.

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VISIT THE UNHCR
CENTRAL ASIA WEBSITE

UNHCR maintains email and phone 'hotlines' across the four countries for anyone in need of information or consultation on refugee and asylum issues. People forced to flee can find key contacts and updated information about asylum procedures in Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan on help.unhcr.org/centralasia, in English, Russian and Dari.