

Afghanistan

Global Appeal 2026 situation overview

Countries affected: Afghanistan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan



Akhtar Bibi, a mother of five and internally displaced from Faryab, has faced immense hardship in Herat, including poverty, disability, and family challenges. Through UNHCR's Persons with specific needs program in Afghanistan, she receives support to care for her children and rebuild her life with dignity. © UNHCR/Oxygen Empire Media Production

2026 Population planning figures

8 million forcibly displaced people

Refugees and asylumseekers
2.3 million

Returnees (Refugees and IDPs)
427,000



Afghanistan enters 2026 facing a convergence of crises that threaten its fragile stability. Human rights violations, acute food insecurity and recurrent natural disasters continue to compound one another, while funding shortfalls and a struggling economy are eroding already limited coping mechanisms. UNHCR will begin the year with sharply reduced resources, implementing a modest, prioritized plan focused on the most urgent needs, with scope to expand activities as additional funding becomes available. These overlapping challenges disproportionately affect the most vulnerable, particularly women and girls, whose access to education, public spaces, work and services is severely restricted under discriminatory policies imposed by the de facto authorities.

While overall security has improved in Afghanistan and previously inaccessible areas are now reachable, significant protection, human rights, and operational challenges persist. Given these concerns, UNHCR will continue to call on States to uphold international protection standards, respect the principle of non-refoulement, and grant safe access and asylum to civilians fleeing the country, in line with its updated [Guidance Note on Afghanistan](#). UNHCR will also operationalize a 'whole-of-route' approach that reduces risks along mixed movement routes, provides alternatives to dangerous journeys, and supports States in strengthening asylum capacities where feasible.

In tandem, UNHCR will provide targeted protection and assistance to returnees and internally displaced persons, focusing on priority needs due to funding constraints. Community- and area-based investments in the Priority Areas of Return and Reintegration (PARRs) will maximize impact, particularly given rising returns from the Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan. In Pakistan, UNHCR will provide targeted, multi-pronged protection assistance, which address urgent needs and enable people to live in dignity.

Amid deepening hardship for Afghans in Iran and Pakistan, UNHCR will continue its support as resources allow, while promoting longer-term solutions and strengthening host community assistance. To meet these growing needs, greater responsibility-sharing will be essential to improve conditions for voluntary, safe and sustainable return and expand strategic investments in resilience and stabilization programmes to prevent further displacement and ease pressure on national systems.

UNHCR will advance commitments under the [ReSolve multi-stakeholder pledge](#) at the Global Refugee Forum, coordinated through the [Support Platform for the Solutions Strategy for Afghan](#)



Budget needs for the Afghanistan situation in 2026, inside the country and in neighbouring countries:

\$454 million

[Refugees](#), to boost critical support and align international efforts. UNHCR will prioritize sustainable approaches and diverse partnerships with development actors and the private sector, focusing on protection and solutions, particularly for women and girls, while promoting self-reliance, resilience and integrated humanitarian, development and peacebuilding approaches.

The dramatic decline in resettlement opportunities in 2025 risks reversing the significant progress made in upscaling resettlement for Afghan refugees in recent years. With more than 570,000 Afghan refugees projected to be in need of resettlement in 2026, UNHCR will advocate to increase resettlement opportunities and expand access to complementary pathways in third countries where possible, including education, labour mobility, family reunification and private sponsorship.



Thousands of Afghans continue returning from the Islamic Republic of Iran through Islam Qala border. Sulaiman, 11, came back with his family after years away, facing an uncertain future with few belongings and unfamiliar surroundings.