

## HIGHLIGHTS

- People are frequently forced to endure multiple displacements, reducing their coping and recovery capacities.
- 36% of IDPs and returnees are diagnosed with life-threatening non-communicable diseases.
- Floods have had significant and devastating impacts on the fragile education systems.
- Conflict is consistently depriving Afghan children of an education in situations where their schools are occupied or damaged in fighting.

## MULTI-YEAR HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PLAN IN 2019

12% FUNDED

611.8 million  
requested (US\$)

71.5 million  
received (US\$)

<https://fts.unocha.org/appeals/645/summary>

by 07 Apr 2019



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## Displacement in Afghanistan

Afghanistan has suffered from its most severe drought in decades and been hard hit by floods. This edition of the Humanitarian Bulletin considers the human costs of the resulting displacements and the myriad ways lives are upended and disrupted. How will the international humanitarian community continue to tackle problems caused by cycles of drought, flooding and conflict, all of which derail progress throughout Afghanistan?



Mobile clinic in Afghanistan. Photo: WHO

### Health matters: access to health services during displacements

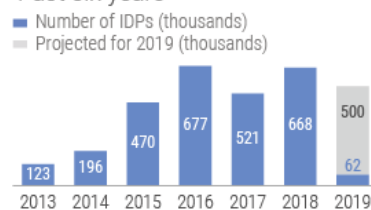
*Contributions from WHO and the health cluster in Afghanistan*

In 2018, over 380,000 people were displaced from their homes because of conflict. Also last year 800,000 undocumented Afghan people returned home from neighbouring countries. These undocumented returnees face significant difficulties in accessing social services and consequently often experience significant poverty.

Under the basic package of health services (BPHS) in Afghanistan, the whole population, including displaced people, returnees and migrants, are ensured adequate access to essential health services. The BPHS is a strategy for the implementation of primary health care (PHC) which outsources service delivery to NGOs.

## INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE

Past six years



Monthly trends



### Tackling chronic diseases for IDPs and returnees

Some 36 per cent of IDPs and returnees in Afghanistan are diagnosed with life-threatening non-communicable diseases (NCDs). In 2018, the health cluster and its partners began to supply essential medicines and supplies for NCDs as part of the emergency response for IDPs and returnees. The overall response strategy is also strengthening the capacity of frontline workers through new training on how to recognize, assess and treat NCDs.

For more information about the health cluster, please [click here](#).



Distribution site of non-food items in Kandahar. Photo: OCHA

### Responding to multiple drivers of displacement

*Contributions from IOM, UNICEF, FAO and UNHCR*

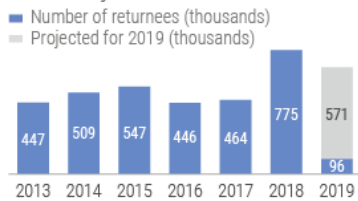
Kandahar, southern Afghanistan, was already a city accommodating many displaced families. Some were displaced by conflict, others by severe drought from various provinces, and some by both. A number of them are returnees from Pakistan. The recent March floods in Kandahar have exacerbated all of these problems and resulted in displacements for a second, possibly a third time for the same people.

Despite the recent floods, however, Kandahar is still a city that can successfully start integrating those who want to return to Afghanistan. For example, IOM works with the Government of Afghanistan, UNICEF, WHO, WFP, UNFPA, DRC and USAID in its Kandahar transit center to provide returnees with social and integration support. It's a place for the families to rest and receive some cash and food items while preparing to settle in other provinces, and a temporary stopping off point for immediate humanitarian post-arrival help. It hosts the families and provides them with meals, accommodation, health care and psychosocial support, non-food items, and cash for transportation. This all helps them towards reintegrating within Afghanistan.

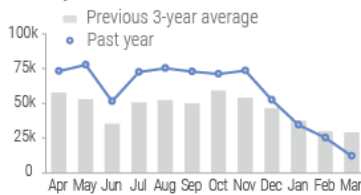
One of the reasons that 29-year-old Malika and her husband decided to come back to Afghanistan was because of challenges they faced as undocumented refugees in Pakistan. "My children were not allowed to attend government schools in Pakistan. They were only allowed to go to the madrasas to receive religious education" Malika said. She is optimistic about returning to Afghanistan, with high hopes of rebuilding her life in Hilmand. But as Hilmand is one of the country's most insecure provinces, she doesn't know what the future holds.

## RETURNEES FROM IRAN

Past six years

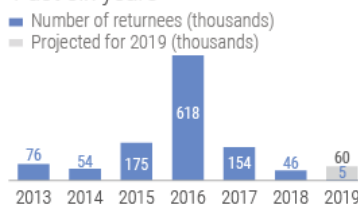


Monthly trends

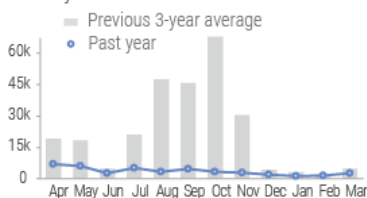


## RETURNEES FROM PAKISTAN

Past six years



Monthly trends



School in Afghanistan. Photo: UNICEF

### Education

Forced to flee the ongoing conflict, 13-year-old Hawa and her family are at the Zaimati IDP settlement in the western province of Badghis. Hawa spends most of her day helping her mother with household chores, preparing food for the family and taking care of her younger siblings. But she says she would rather be going to school. "My sisters and brothers attend classes at the temporary learning space every day. I get to see their books when they get back, and I try to learn what they are being taught," says Hawa, who adds that she rarely goes out, except for when she visits her aunt in an adjacent tent.

When IDPs arrived in Badghis, temporary learning spaces were established in Kharestan, Baghlar, and Zaimati IDP settlements to provide education. In the IDP communities, pre-school and school children are often left to themselves while their parents and siblings desperately search for food and water. Most adolescent girls are kept inside makeshift family tents and rarely, if ever, go outside. Adolescent boys are engaged in income generating activities, including negative coping mechanisms such as begging and petty crimes in the nearby cities.

The Education in Emergencies Working Group (EiEWG) and its partners provide humanitarian support and quality learning opportunities to children in emergencies. In 2018, partners of the Working Group recruited teachers and provided school materials to nearly 2,600 temporary learning spaces, allowing more than 100,000 displaced children to receive education. For 2019, the EiEWG has identified half a million children needing education in emergencies throughout Afghanistan. These children are out of school for multiple reasons. These include poverty, a shortage of teachers (especially female teachers) and cultural norms which de-prioritize education for girls.

### Shelter

Already this year, floods and storms caused by heavy torrential rains in the eastern, south-eastern, southern, western and north regions resulted in significant displacements, with more than 63 people reported to have died, and hundreds reported as injured or missing. For 2019, the shelter/non-food items (NFI) cluster aims to assist 820,000 of the most vulnerable people in need. This will include emergency shelter and NFI assistance and a winterisation response. It also incorporates site management and physical site planning activities for drought-displacement in the Badghis and Hirat sites in the first half of the year.



Internally displaced children in Hirat. Photo: UNICEF

### **Water, sanitation and hygiene**

Afghanistan suffered from the worst drought in its history due to very low precipitation and limited snowfall during the entire wet seasons of 2017-2018. More than one million people suffered from serious shortages of water across 18 provinces and almost 200,000 had to leave their places of origin in search of drinking water. One way the WASH cluster moved to alleviate the situation was to provide water tankering to 848,179 people. Water tankering saves lives by preventing outbreaks of waterborne diseases (including cholera). At the same time it stops women and children from harassment by having to travel long distances to fetch water. In addition WASH projects have been implemented in coordination with the food security and agriculture cluster.

### **Providing some level of food security**

#### *Contribution from FAO*

It's important to remember that flash floods and droughts are not the only causes of displacement: in 2018, 384,790 people fled their homes because of conflict in 33 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces.

As a result of displacement, there are currently eight IDP camps in Qala-e-Naw where approximately 65,000 IDPs live. FSAC (partners include FAO, WFP, NGOs, donors etc.) successfully assisted all these IDPs with food and cash. However, as there is no government land available in Badghis to host IDPs, camps are located on private land.

In Hirat, similar food and cash assistance was provided to drought-induced IDPs. By the end of February 2019, more than 160,000 IDPs received food and cash assistance from WFP, DRC, NRC and IRC. FSAC partners also provided food and livelihood support to drought-affected people at their places of origin to prevent further displacement. FAO provided concentrated animal feed, livestock deworming services, fodder seed, improved wheat seed, fertilizers, vegetable seeds, planting tools and training to over 700,000 people across 16 provinces. Interviews with communities and shuras have reported that assistance provided to both IDPs and people at their places of origin have been key to helping them sustain their lives and livelihoods.

Given the continuing high levels of food insecurity, insufficient alternative livelihoods, and the use of irreversible coping strategies (such as the 'distress' selling of livestock until families no longer own any livestock), FSAC will continue providing food/cash assistance

to drought-induced IDPs until the end of June 2019. Livelihoods assistance will be provided to vulnerable farming families until the end of December 2019.

Visit [here](#) for more information about the food security & agriculture cluster

Please [visit here](#) for more information on the Education in Emergencies Working Group ...[and here](#) for the WASH cluster.

To date, the Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund (AHF) has supported humanitarian actors through two reserve allocations in 2019 to address critical humanitarian needs. The first US\$4.5M provided immediate assistance to drought affected populations that did not previously receive help.

The second AHF reserve allocation of US\$2M allowed the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) to continue providing vital air services for humanitarian actors.

As of 3 April this year, AHF received US\$11.1M contributions and US\$1M in pledges from donors.



AHF and Handicap International deliver rehabilitation services in Afghanistan. Photo: Handicap International

### Supporting mental and physical health with AHF

Handicap International (HI) has been in Afghanistan since 1996, and an Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund (AHF) partner since 2016. Through its current six-month project (emergency mental health, psychosocial support and physical rehabilitation services for drought affected communities in Hirat Province), HI specializes in providing emergency mental health, psychological support and physical rehabilitation services for drought affected communities in Kunduz, Kandahar and Hirat province (Hirat city, Injil and Gozarah districts). Teams work near the IDP sites where target communities are located, while mobile teams will also visit more inaccessible patients who have more severe conditions or physical disabilities.

Momtaz is a recipient of HI's services. Insecurity and conflict pushed her into leaving Afghanistan for Iran. She eventually returned to the Shindand district of Hirat, but widespread drought plus conflict forced her to go to Nowabad, another district in the province. For two years she suffered from backache and neck pain that caused severe breathlessness and fainting. Momtaz got to know about the HI project through a neighbor who has received treatment.

This led to treatments with a physiotherapist and psychosocial worker and, eventually, her recovery. Her son, meanwhile, was struggling with drug addiction and had left education. Momtaz introduced him to a psychosocial worker and, after following the HI treatment sessions, he began to make positive changes.

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