

AFGHANISTAN QUARTERLY PROTECTION MONITORING SUMMARY

APRIL TO JUNE 2025



Figure 1. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) in Qezil Village, Lal Sarjantal District, Ghor Province



1706 assessments conducted

12,366 persons reached



Coverage: across **66** districts



46% of interviewed households are headed by women.

Out of the overall household members, **48%** represent female.



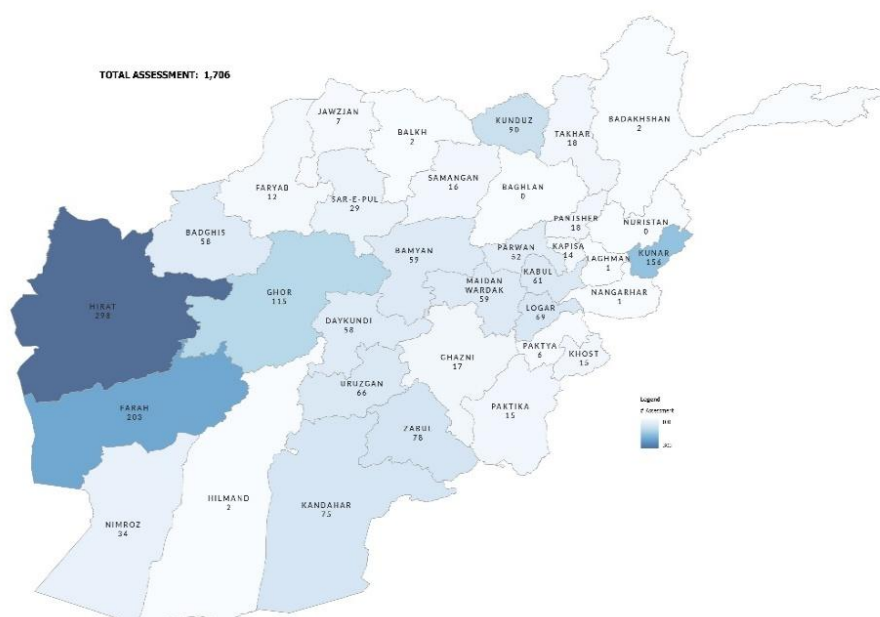
10.9% heads of households with disabilities

Introduction

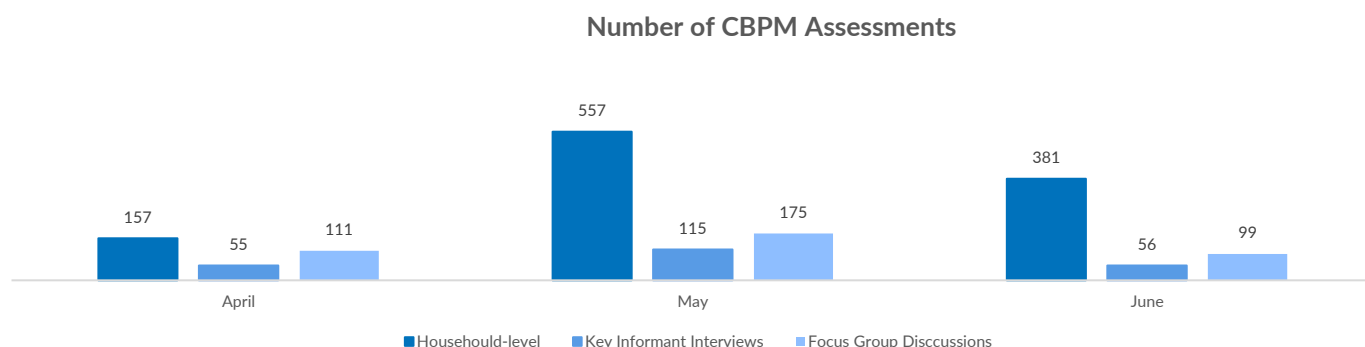
The analysis provided in this report relies on data gathered through UNHCR's Community-Based Protection Monitoring (CBPM) tools. The tools also used by the Afghanistan Protection Cluster. UNHCR's CBPM include household-level, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions (FGDs), aiming to collect evidence-based information on the protection needs and risks of displaced, returnee, and host communities. CBPM outcomes inform UNHCR programming and strategic decision-making and advocacy, and also feed into the [Afghanistan Protection Cluster's analysis](#) and information products. The selection of areas is based on the high density of displaced and returnees among communities, including priority areas of return and reintegration and newly accessible areas. UNHCR's population groups include refugee returnees, IDPs, IDP returnees, refugees and asylum seekers, and members of the host communities.

KEY POINTS

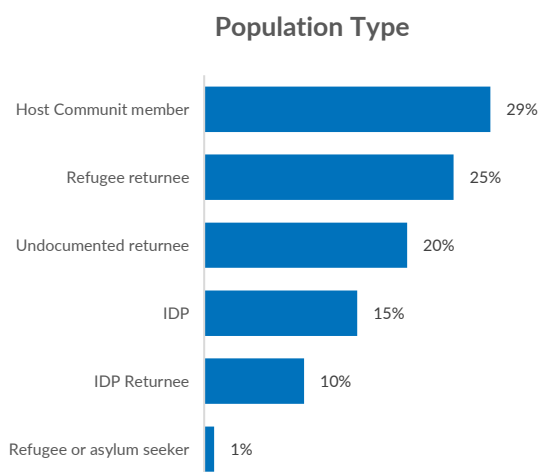
- **Women and girls** continue to face significant challenges in accessing basic services and assistance, reflecting systemic discrimination and movement restrictions.
- **Among the surveyed households, 50%** have at least one **family member lacking civil documentation**.
- **In addition, 55% of heads of household** reported experiencing one or more vulnerabilities, such as being unable to work, elderly person (7%), female head of household (6%), and persons with life-threatening health conditions (6%).
- **Food assistance** was the most crucial need highlighted by surveyed households.
- **Many families reported having resorted to harmful coping mechanisms**, such as borrowing money, selling assets, or other harmful practices. These harmful coping mechanisms often arise from poverty and limited livelihood opportunities, forcing families to take desperate measures to meet their basic needs. This, in turn, triggers protection concerns, including increased risks of child labor, forced marriage, or child marriage. The findings highlight the strong linkages between socio-economic vulnerability, displacement status, and protection risks, requiring integrated programming responses across different sectors.



OVERVIEW OF THE DATA COLLECTED



- UNHCR conducted 1,706 assessments in the second quarter of 2025, utilizing household assessments, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions to identify protection risks and needs across communities. This figure was low in the first quarter, primarily because of delays in being able to implement the activities due to various operational constraints.
- Most interviewed households were returnees (documented and undocumented) with 45%**, reflecting UNHCR's focus on the specific protection issues that Afghans face upon their return.
- Across all assessment modalities, **UNHCR reached 12,366 individuals** in the second quarter of 2025, the majority (55%) of whom were women and children. 46 % of the households were headed by women. UNHCR is working closely with all its partners to **ensure the participation of female staff in all activities** and is using various modalities to **capture the voices of women and girls despite the severe restrictions imposed by the DfA**.



IDENTIFIED VULNERABILITIES



60% with vulnerabilities (affecting 68% female HHs)



50% returnees and 68% IDP returnees experienced stress



10.9% heads of households with disabilities

- According to the CBPM assessment conducted in the second quarter of 2025, 68% of Female heads of households were **found to have some form of vulnerability**. These include persons with serious medical conditions, lactating women, single parents or caregivers, elderly individuals unable to work, women or older persons at risk, child laborers, and persons with specific legal or physical protection needs.
- According to the CBPM survey conducted in the second quarter of 2025, 50% of Refugee returnees and 68 % IDP returnees indicated that they or their family members had **experienced feelings of stress**

that affected their day-to-day life, pointing to a high prevalence of MHPSS issues among the surveyed population. The main stressors identified were loss or lack of income, lack of livelihood opportunity, food insecurity and restrictions on employment and severe economic hardship, and lack of services, alongside physical health problems, child labor, and children dropping out of school. The **behavioral changes observed** in the household include family members appearing sad and stressed, loss of appetite, withdrawn, and aggressiveness.

- Vulnerabilities were also observed among household members, with survey findings indicating elevated rates of school dropouts. This is largely attributed to the lack of financial support within families and the engagement of children in child labor.
- CBPM monitors have also reported that **27% of incidents involve violence against women**, mostly perpetrated by family members, 12% relate to community tensions - primarily affecting women and girls and 18% involve violence affecting men and boys.
- **CBPM monitors observed that 86% of women, girls, children, persons with disabilities, or individuals with specific legal or protection needs were unable to access specific services** such as legal, protection case management, MHPSS, and civil documentation. In addition, **81% of households (both male and female)** reported that they would not know where to access services for women and girls in case someone in their community experienced violence.

SAFETY & FREEDOM



40% mention community areas **off-limits for women and girls**

- **40% of households surveyed mentioned that there are places in the community that women and girls cannot access**, highlighting the significant challenges in movement and participation in public life.
- The **main reasons for movement limitations** include socio-cultural barriers, Mahram (male chaperon) requirement for females, discrimination, harassment, bullying, fear of personal safety, safety concerns related to debt, and lack of identity and civil documents.

CIVIL DOCUMENTATION



64% reported lack of **civil documentation**



52% reported barriers **accessing legal services**

- Around **64 % of all households** surveyed have members who need civil documentation. **Women and girls are by far the most affected population groups. Undocumented returnees, refugee returnees, and IDPs interviewed display significantly higher rates of members with missing documents (75%, 65%, and 59%, respectively)**, followed by IDP returnees and the host community (55% and 52%, respectively).
- The **main documents missing are the e-Tazkira and the paper Tazkira**, followed by passports, marriage, birth, and other certificates. The main reason is that these documents were never obtained, or the households interviewed lack knowledge about the procedures.
- In addition, the findings reveal that 52% of respondents reported being unable to access legal services, including civil documentation and Housing, Land and Property (HLP). Women and girls were disproportionately affected due to factors such as never having obtained documentation, high costs, lengthy and complex procedures, inability to travel to their place of origin, and limited access to information about available services.

- The lack of documentation has a significant impact, with **34% of respondents reporting that it prevents them from accessing basic services**. It also poses barriers to receiving government or humanitarian assistance, obtaining other essential documents, and contributes to restrictions on movement.

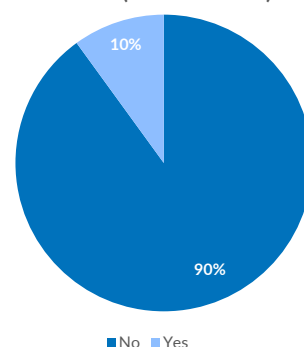
ACCESS TO SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE PROVIDED



89% mention food as the most pressing need

- The CBPM findings show that 89% of all households reported needing food assistance in the past three months, mainly due to a lack of knowledge about eligibility criteria and procedures. The percentage is even higher among female respondents (41%), pointing to the heightened economic vulnerability of women.
- **Respondents also face challenges in accessing MHPSS services and health services**, with 44% of households indicating a need for each service. Notably, female respondents reported greater challenges in accessing safe drinking water services compared to male respondents. Lack of access to potable water can lead to various health issues, such as diarrhea, parasitic infections, gastrointestinal diseases etc.
- However, irrespective of the gender of the head of household, **all respondents highlighted that among those facing access challenges, women and girls are by far the most affected**, with limited access to **health, legal, education, civil documentation, food, and MHPSS**.
- Returnees and host community members are particularly affected by overcrowded shelters. Other shelter-related concerns include damage, lack of protective walls and doors, and privacy.
- **Overall, women and girls continue to face significant challenges in accessing the most basic services**, reflecting the systemic discrimination and movement restrictions.
- Other main barriers to accessing services include unavailability of services, high costs (including for transportation), lack of information on services, as well as lack of documents.

Female Beneficiaries Receiving Food Assistance (Past 3 Months)



SOURCE OF INCOME AND COPING STRATEGIES



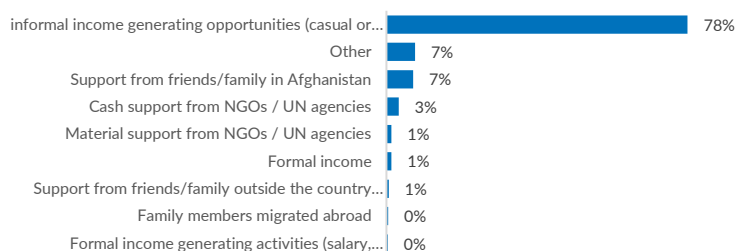
78% engaged in **informal income-generating activities**



83 % relied on accrued **debt**

- According to the CBPM survey conducted in the second quarter of 2025, **78% of households rely on informal income-generating activities**, such as casual or seasonal labor, as their main source of livelihood, and **83% rely on accrued debt**. A total of **62% of the surveyed households were not able to afford daily life expenses** such as food, rent, and other basic critical needs.

Sources of Income



- The lack of economic opportunities, entrenched poverty alongside repeated and protracted displacement, and the shrinking protection space have been eroding people's resilience and point to the critical need for livelihood and economic empowerment interventions.
- Due to financial constraints and high poverty, many families have resorted to harmful coping mechanisms, with severe implications that especially impact women and children. CBPM data indicate that most **households borrow money to cope with their financial problems**. The prevalence was even higher for refugee and forced returnees surveyed.
- Other coping mechanisms** identified were skipping meals or reducing meal sizes, support from friends and family in Afghanistan, and selling assets (including livestock, jewelry, furniture, etc.)
- Alarming, a significant number of CBPM respondents indicated that due to acute poverty and financial reasons, their **families had adopted harmful practices that imply serious child protection risks**, including sending children to work and child marriage. The findings highlight the urgent need to support vulnerable families through integrated programming interventions, including child protection, livelihoods, and community engagement.

LEADING CAUSES OF DISPLACEMENT, AND INTENTIONS FOR RETURN AND REINTEGRATION



58% of all IDPs were displaced within the last three years, of which 48 % cited **natural disaster** as the primary cause for their displacement.

According to the CBPM survey conducted in the second quarter of 2025, the main reason for the displacement of IDPs in the last three years is natural disasters, followed by security and communal tensions. **Only 3% of the IDPs displaced in the last three years expressed their intention to return due to lack of humanitarian assistance, lack of services and infrastructure, while 75 % indicated that they will remain in the current location, mainly due to family consideration, relatives, economic opportunities, friends, property, and children's education.**

The findings also indicate that 22 % of IDPs displaced in the last three years expressed uncertainty about whether to return, integrate, or move onward, mainly due to the overall security situation, economic hardship, children's education, natural disasters, and lack of humanitarian assistance.