



AFGHANISTAN

Protection Analysis Update

Update on the protection environment following the ban on female aid workers

JULY 2023

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In April 2023, following the ban on Afghan women working for international and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the Taliban de facto authorities (DFA) restricted Afghan women from working for the United Nations (UN), an action which was condemned by the UN Security Council as unprecedented, deeply concerning, and undermining human rights and humanitarian principles.¹ The subsequent restrictions led to hindering female humanitarian aid workers from providing life-saving assistance and basic services to the most vulnerable, reduced funding opportunities and increased bureaucratic impediments. Country conditions and current developments in Afghanistan impact all especially internally displaced persons. In this case, the DFA has imposed severe restrictions on Afghan women and girls. Restrictions placed on Afghan women and girls thwarts women working for NGOs and UN agencies, prevents girls from attending secondary and tertiary education institutions; prohibits girls and women from visiting parks, baths, and gyms and travel from their villages and towns. These restrictions erode the rights of women, limit their movement, their participation in economic, social and public life thereby inhibiting their personal growth and their contribution to the development of their country. Humanitarian agencies now have to negotiate exemptions and authorizations to resume or continue with their activities. Despite this, protection partners have implemented planned activities in areas where they negotiated exemptions and authorizations, adopting alternative modalities in areas where they have not received permission. There have been a number of informal authorizations for protection partners to resume activities with the participation of female aid workers across the country. These resumptons do not mean that partners have full access to all beneficiaries, it is either approval for females to go to the office, to the field or to work remotely. In the second quarter of 2023, humanitarian actors adopted “Minimum Standards for Quality Programming in Afghanistan”. In addition, protection partners also developed alternative modalities and risk mitigation matrix.

The following protection risks were identified in Q2 as requiring immediate attention and are therefore covered in this report:

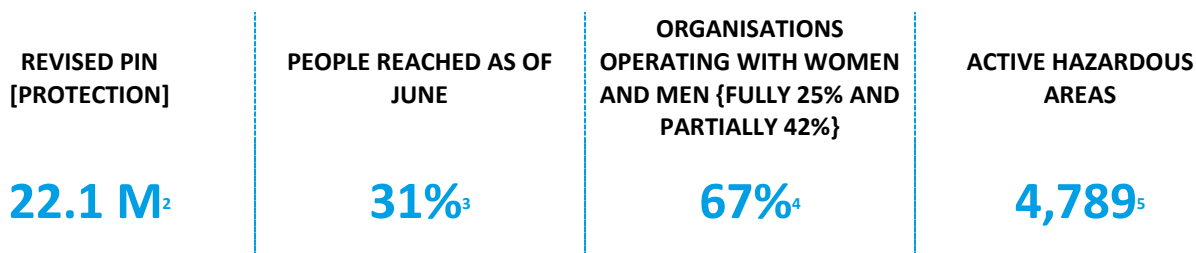
1. **Presence of mines and other explosive ordnance.**
2. **Unlawful restrictions to freedom of movement and forced displacement.**
3. **Discrimination and stigmatization, denial of resources, opportunities, services, and humanitarian assistance.**
4. **Impediments or restrictions to access to documentation, remedies, and justice.**
5. **Psychological distress and emotional abuse.**

URGENT ACTIONS NEEDED

- De facto authorities must identify **vital solutions that will allow women to deliver life-saving services to the most vulnerable people including women, girls, and boys** with the aids they need and when they need it.
- Humanitarian organizations must ensure the **most vulnerable people are reached with assistance in a safe and transparent** manner, without violating cultural traditions and religious values, and **not compromising humanitarian principles including impartiality and independence.**
- Donors must **ensure sufficient funding for the humanitarian response in Afghanistan to continue despite the ban** and they must bear the augmented operational and administrative costs of delivery of service and aid to vulnerable people.

¹ Security Council Resolution 2681 (2023), S/RES/2681 (2023), 27 April 2023. Available at: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4009989?ln=en#record-files-collapse-header>

CONTEXT



Restrictions on Afghan women from working for UN and non-government organizations (NGOs), is part of a series of discriminatory measures imposed by the DFA on Afghan women and girls since August 2021 erasing them from all aspects of public and daily life. The consequences are severely felt by the Afghan people themselves as female staff are unable to carry out their duties to provide life-saving humanitarian assistance to millions of vulnerable women and girls amidst an increasing humanitarian crisis with 28.8 million (up from 28.3 million at the beginning of 2023) people reportedly in need.⁶ The protection environment has deteriorated since the DFA decree on female aid workers resulting in reduced funding opportunities and administrative obstructions faced by partners, including difficulties in registering projects with DFA and interference in beneficiary selection and other operational areas. Protection threats and resulting risks continue to be prevalent across the country including family and child separation, forced evictions, presence of mines and explosive ordnance, discrimination, denial of access to services, impediments on the freedom of movement, restrictions to access to documentation and justice, and psychological distress and emotional abuse.

Family separation in Afghanistan is a complex issue arising from various factors including displacement caused by climatic changes, such as harsh winters or droughts, as well as internal conflicts and forced evictions. The cross-border family separation is primarily driven by economic challenges, which prompt parents or caregivers to send boys to neighboring countries in search of better opportunities. In most cases, boys cross the border alone to supplement their family's income through work (child labor), while girls are typically accompanied by their parents, making them less vulnerable to separation compared to boys who become unaccompanied and may face deportation from neighboring countries. The caseload of cross-border family separation responses in Afghanistan encounters difficulties, such as restriction on female staff at border control points due to the female humanitarian worker ban. This situation often hampers the safe identification and referral of the few girls in need of family tracing and reunification services.

The inadequate capacity to support the post-reunification reintegration of unaccompanied and separated children perpetuates a cycle of secondary voluntary separation. Because of these, children may undergo involuntary separation again, necessitating further tracing and reunification efforts after migration and deportation since the push factors within the communities and family are not often addressed by parents and authorities. Addressing these challenges requires concerted efforts. Adequate resources and support systems should be established to prevent family separation, ensure the well-being of separated children, facilitate successful family reunification, and promote effective reintegration processes. The barriers posed by restrictions on female staff at border control points augment the challenges to ensure the proper identification and referral of separated children in need of assistance.

Information needs on how to access aid and provide feedback/complaints remains critical as can be seen from the initial findings of the Inter Cluster Coordination Team's Needs Monitoring Framework (NMF). NMF reported that, in 353 districts (33 provinces), accounting for 87% of all districts, over 25% of those interviewed (NMF) reported that only the minority of households in their settlement knew how to access aid or are aware of feedback or complaint mechanisms to reach aid

² Afghanistan: Revised Humanitarian Response Plan (Jun - Dec 2023), 12 June 2023. Available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/afghanistan-revised-humanitarian-response-plan-jun-dec-2023>

³ Afghanistan: Protection Cluster Response Snapshot, January-May 2023. Available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/afghanistan-protection-cluster-response-snapshot-january-may-2023>

⁴ Tracking Impact Report on the ban on women working with NGOs, INGOs and UN in Afghanistan Fifth Snapshot (May 2023).

⁵ IMSMA database.

⁶ Afghanistan: Revised Humanitarian Response Plan (Jun - Dec 2023), 12 June 2023. Available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/afghanistan-revised-humanitarian-response-plan-jun-dec-2023>

providers about community needs, assistance received or problems with assistance. In terms of the information needs, according to Protection Monitoring results, the most frequently cited information needs were “where to access humanitarian assistance in general” (30%) followed by “who is eligible to receive cash assistance” (19%) and “how to assess against eligibility criteria for WFP food assistance” (18%). The top three topics were common among both male and female respondents. The high interest in accessing cash and food can also be seen from Awaaz Afghanistan Dashboard where the requests for food assistance and cash assistance were the top two expressed needs of people who contacted the Awaaz hotline number⁷. It is critical that the humanitarian community fully integrates the Minimum Standards on AAP, PSEA, Gender, and Disability Inclusion endorsed by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) in May 2023. This ensure information is provided in formats and languages preferred, trusted and accessible by the affected communities, and complaint and feedback mechanisms are designed and implemented based on the communities’ preferences to be accessible by various segments of the society.

PROTECTION RISKS

RISK 1 Presence of mines and other explosive ordnance

The presence of explosive ordnance comprised of Explosive Remnants of War (ERW), Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) and landmines continues to threaten the lives of civilians across the country and is an imminent threat to humanitarian personnel, in particular in Uruzgan, Kunduz, Hilmand, Kandahar, Kunar, Badghis, Faryab, Nangarhar, Ghazni, Farah, Maidan Wardak, and Samangan provinces, as these locations are deemed to be the most severely impacted by explosive ordnance. It is a hindrance to scaling up humanitarian operations and the launch of emergency development initiatives. As per the UNAMA human right data, during the 1st Quarter of 2023, 98 people were killed or injured by explosive ordnance with ERW being the leading cause of the incidents and children accounting for over 85% of the total casualties. Nevertheless, the actual number of casualties could be much higher as there is no systematic data collection and surveillance system in place. Following are some of the incidents that occurred in March 2023: **17 March 2023:** Two children were killed and 2 others were injured by an explosive ordnance in Qarghayee District of Laghman Province; **22 March 2023:** 5 children killed and 2 injured when an explosive ordnance exploded in Tagab District of Badakhshan Province; **22 March 2023:** 4 children and a woman were injured and 1 child was killed by an explosive device in Waghaz District of Ghazni Province; **29 March 2023:** 5 children and a woman were killed by an explosive device in Cheghcharan District of Ghor province.



A school in Naw-i-Barakzai District of Helmand Province, contaminated with Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) being cleared by mine action teams.

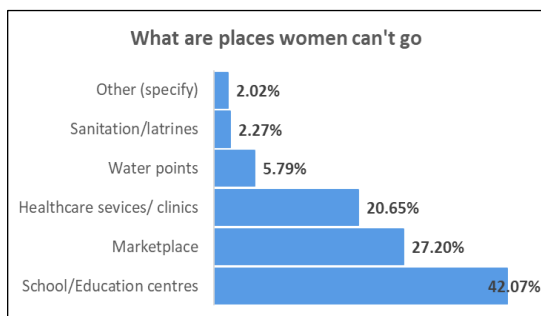
Moreover, so far in 2023, the Mine Action AoR has received some 781 requests for urgent mine action support from the local communities via mine action hotline and Awaaz Afghanistan, however mine action partners could not provide on time response to all these requests due to the funding challenges they are facing and as the quick response teams, providing response to such requests, remain un-funded in 2023. The documented and undocumented returnees are also one of the population groups most vulnerable to the risk of explosive ordnance, but unfortunately, they were not able to receive explosive ordnance risk education activities due to the ban on female employees and the funding shortage.

RISK 2 Unlawful restrictions to freedom of movement and forced displacement

Since the takeover by the de facto authorities in August 2021, various human rights have been restricted through a series of decrees. Women and girls were once again excluded from public life by DFA, thus access to civil, economic, social rights and liberties has been significantly restricted including the right to freedom of movement. Women and girls are not allowed

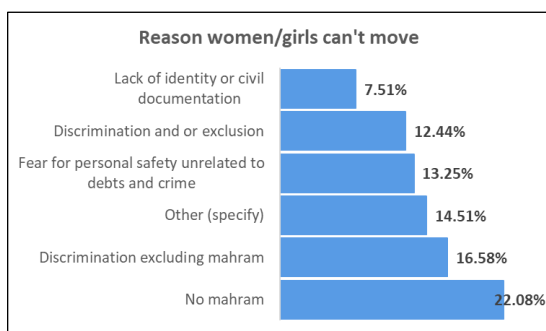
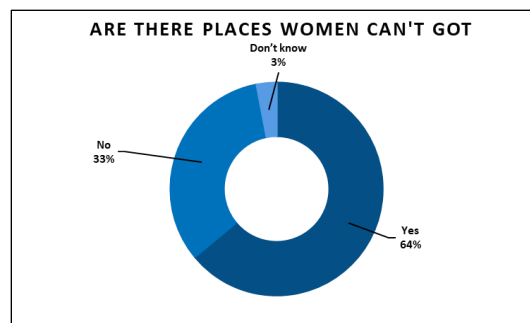
⁷ Awaaz AFGHANISTAN Dashboard. Available at: <https://awaazaf.org/>

to travel unless they are accompanied by a male chaperone “mahram” (i.e., father, husband, brother, son, or other close male relatives). They can leave their house for urgent matters but must be fully covered. Presenters on TV news programs, female medical personnel, teachers, and other females allowed to work have to wear a full veil and comply with the measures imposed by the DFA.



Access to education for women and girls has shrunk since the Taliban returned to power. When asked what the places are where women can't go, the place mentioned by 42% of the interviewees and ranking first is “school and education centers”. This continued restriction in various forms severely impacted the civic space for women, men, girls, and boys which the 2023 HRP described as “a new era characterized by the almost-total exclusion of half the population – women and girls – from public life”.

The Afghanistan Protection Cluster protection monitoring data reveals that, at household level, 66% of females and 92% of males reported that they can freely move. These figures show a significant decline in freedom of movement for females (-22%) compared to 2022. The key informant interviews corroborate these findings. In 2023, key informants indicated that 94% of men and boys can freely move whereas 64% stated that there are places (such as schools/education centers, marketplaces, healthcare services/clinics) where women/girls cannot go. This decline is attributed to shrinking protection environment with the further restriction imposed on women and girls.



Based on key informant interviews, socio-cultural barriers featured as the top reason cited by female respondents for not being able to move freely, while the link to fear for personal safety was the primary reason cited by male respondents. At household level, “No mahram” was the most frequently cited reasons by both male and female respondents as to why women/girls cannot move (22.8%) followed by discrimination (not link to mahram) (16.6%). Compared to 2022, while the percentage of female respondents claiming personal security issues as the reason of impeding movement decreased, a higher proportion of females cited discrimination and mahram as common

reasons for hampering their mobility.

It is important to note that during the reporting period nearly 60% of the interviews have been conducted in rural areas where the characteristic of human and women’s rights including freedom of movement may not be fully acknowledged by interviewees as community members including men, boys, women, and girls may have a different perception of these rights. For instance, in many rural areas, it has been the traditional norm that women and girls stay at home and are only able to go outside of their houses while accompanied by a male chaperone, for example visiting a medical facility, or going to the nearest shopping centre. In the context of urban areas, the perception may be different where more women and girls have been less restricted in their movements and were able to go to work, the market, school, and university.

RISK 3 Discrimination and stigmatization, denial of resources, opportunities, and services

Access to services across the period monitored has been significantly affected by the restrictions on female humanitarian workers that encompasses NGOs, INGOs, and UN agencies. This precludes many humanitarian actors from working in a principled, non-discriminatory way. Respondents continue to inform protection actors that their access to basic services is

limited, with women and girls disproportionately affected – specifically with regards to healthcare and psychosocial support, and WASH. According to the Protection Monitoring results, 38% of respondents could not access a health facility in the reporting period, with women and girls accounting for 55% of this total. The DFA continue to insist that female health workers be accompanied by a mahram while undertaking their work, creating huge challenges both for female health workers to access female beneficiaries and for female beneficiaries to access health services. Of those unable to access health services, 66% said it was because the service was unaffordable, and 23% said the service was not available. One third of respondents did not have access to a toilet in the reporting period – an issue which suggests that access to WASH remains a widespread, and continuing, challenge. Lack of access to services is compounded in many cases by individuals being actively denied access to services, most often because of discrimination or because of the prohibitive cost of the service which is particularly high for undocumented returnees.

RISK 4 Impediments to access to documentation, remedies, and justice

The reporting period witnessed widespread criticism of the de facto Supreme Court in Afghanistan – as well as from a number of United Nations Special Rapporteurs – sanctioning the use of punishments that include stoning, flogging and burying under a wall. The lack of a clear and uniform legal system in Afghanistan under DFA-rule continues to create problems for those seeking justice with 16% of respondents not satisfied with the dispute resolution mechanisms available to them⁸. Among these respondents, more than half said either that the service was not available, or they were unable to pay for it. Informal dispute resolution mechanisms continue to be the most accessible justice system for those lacking documentation and facing marginalisation. Mechanisms such as intervention of family and relatives, elders, shura councils and religious leaders remain popular among undocumented returnees in particular, notwithstanding their lack of legal safeguards and failure to respect the rights of women, children, and minorities. More generally, the lack of female representation within these informal justice systems often results in women’s claims going unheard and rulings in favour of men with protection threats faced by women remaining unaddressed and unresolved consequently.

Notwithstanding the resumption of the issuance of passports online at the beginning of March 2023, lack of access to Tazkira, e-Tazkira, as well as passports continues to be reported. This in turn creates challenges to accessing other services, such as education and healthcare. According to findings from Protection Monitoring household-level interviews conducted in Q1, 45% of respondents cited lacking civil documentation (42% among males and 48% among females) with Paper-based Tazkiras and E-Tazkiras being the most frequently cited lacking documents. Reasons for lacking documents varies, however, the most cited reason is having never obtained documents in the first place (65%) followed by the lack of knowledge about procedures (10.9%). Such finding indicates the need to raise awareness about the need for and benefits of obtaining documents as well as its application procedures and requirements. In many cases, limited access to documentation coupled with the increasing costs of acquiring it officially leaves many individuals with little option but to migrate irregularly, using harmful coping mechanisms to fund their journeys.

Disputes over land remain a critical concern. This concern is acute in situations where property rights are frequently undocumented. HLP partners have identified four priority issues and populations requiring urgent support: (i) Women face severe HLP challenges as part of a broader curtailing of women’s access to social and economic services. Less than five per cent of ownership documents are registered in the name of a woman, and women face constraints accessing legal services to protect their land claims through formal and informal justice systems⁹. (ii) Access to justice for residents of informal settlements under threat of eviction remains a critical issue, affecting over 1,000 sites across the country¹⁰. International safeguards and respect for legal processes should be observed to mitigate these threats¹¹. (iii) Low-income groups renting housing and/or land lack legal tenancy agreements, rendering them vulnerable to eviction without recourse to protection

⁸ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/05/afghanistan-un-experts-appalled-taliban-announcement-capital-punishment>

⁹ HLP-TF (2021) *A brief guide to women's land rights in Afghanistan*. Available at https://reliefweb.int/attachments/67481099-3f27-323b-9d76-f513a03189bd/hlp-tf_brief-on-women-land-rights.pdf

¹⁰ HLP-TF (2022) *HLP Briefing note on Kabul Informal Settlements (KIS) sites: challenges and options*, Kabul.

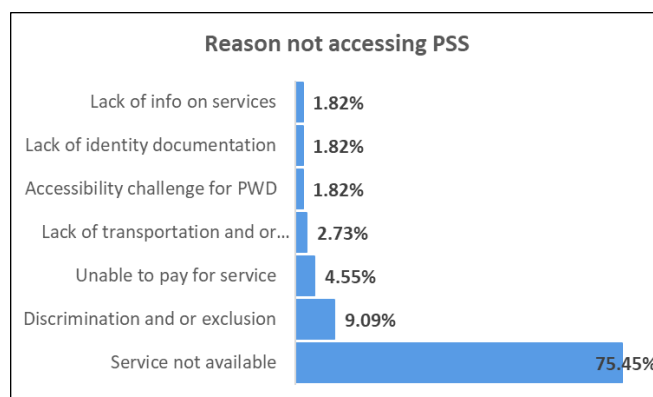
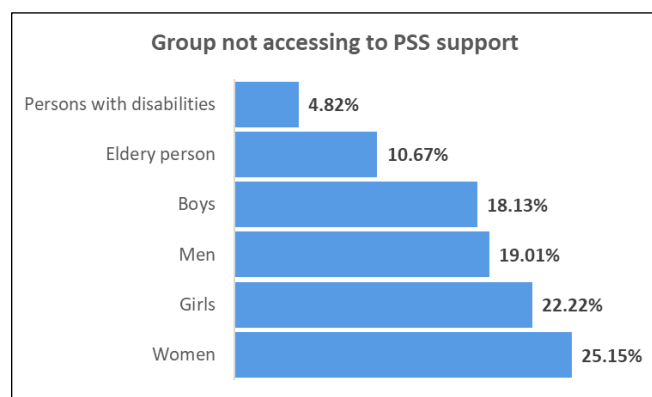
¹¹ HLP-TF (2022) *Briefing note on international and domestic frameworks safeguarding against forced eviction in Afghanistan*. Available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/briefing-note-international-and-domestic-frameworks-safeguarding-against-forced-eviction-afghanistan>

afforded through legally protected tenancy rights¹². (iv) IDP returns to place of origin require access to legal support to access land and housing and resolve land conflicts associated with secondary occupation of property. In this regard, a recent household survey of Jalalabad’s IDP informal settlements (covering 116,652 people) found that the leading factor precluding return is a lack of land or housing in the place of origin, accounting for 36 percent of all responses¹³.

RISK 5 Psychological distress and emotional abuse

People in Afghanistan continue to experience a range of stressors including long-term exposure to violence, political instability, restrictions for women and girls to freedom of movement and education, lack of livelihoods and income, poverty and poor living conditions, food insecurity, and a lack of access to basic services such as health care, education, and social care. These stressors significantly interfere with daily living including the ability to engage in livelihood activities, pursue educational opportunities, or maintain social support networks and meaningful relationships, resulting to immediate and long-term effects on the population. On average, 59% of household interview respondents reported that a member in their household has experienced psychological distress. This was a staggering increase from the last quarter of 2022, reported at 41%. This is an indication of the severe impact of the current humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan on psychosocial wellbeing of individuals, families, and communities. The pervasiveness of psychosocial needs is also corroborated by the initial findings of the Inter Cluster Coordination Team’s Needs Monitoring Framework where, in 307 districts (26 provinces), accounting for three-quarters of all districts, more than 25% of the respondents reported having a household member experiencing behavioral changes such as anger, aggression, violent behavior, and substance abuse.

Access to necessary psychosocial support remains a challenge particularly for women and girls with 47% of respondents reporting that women and girls did not have access to psychosocial support services. Additionally, 7.43% of key informant respondents reported that psychosocial support services for children were not available in their communities. Lack of psychosocial support services result in increased psychological distress, development of negative coping mechanisms, increased discrimination, abuse, exploitation, and violence, making women and girls less resilient.



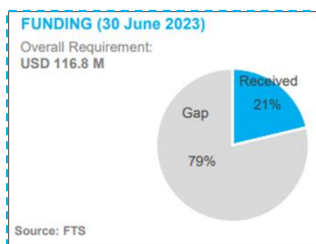
¹² NRC (2022) *Private renters facing risk of eviction: NRC assessment on threat of eviction in households privately renting their homes - Briefing Note*. Available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/private-renters-facing-risk- eviction-nrc-assessment-threat- eviction-households-privately-renting-their-homes-briefing-note-october-2022>

¹³ UN-Habitat-UNHCR (2023) *Draft report on Jalalabad IDP informal settlements survey*, Kabul.

RESPONSE

The recent bans on Afghan women working for I/NGOs and the UN by the DFA have increased the already complex protection environment, added to the existing protection needs, and further constrained the operational capacity of partners to deliver efficient and inclusive responses. Considering the worsening protection situation, the estimated PIN of protection assistance has increased to 22.1 million (up from 20.3 million at the beginning of 2023).

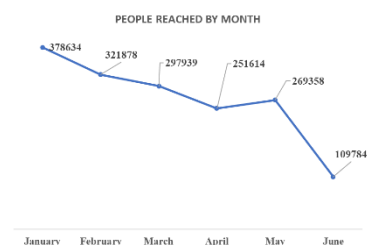
PROGRESS MADE ON PROTECTION



In response to the changing operating context, the 2023 HRP was revised in May to adjust the response according to the cluster capacity, delivery approaches to operate effectively within the current operating space and the protection priorities of unmet needs for the remaining seven months of 2023. Protection partners now aim to reach a total of 3.9 million people throughout 2023, including those assisted in the first half of the year, with a budget of \$116.8 million (instead of 169.6 million as planned at beginning of the year). As of end of June, protection partners have reached 1,629,207 people, which represents 31% according to the 3.9 million revised target (instead of 6.5 million people planned at the beginning of 2023).

ACCESS-RELATED CHALLENGES AND ACTIONS

Regarding the access context, 173 directives have been issued by the authorities concerning humanitarian action since December 2021; 37 of them are linked to restrictions on the participation of women in the response. A 23% increase in access incidents was recorded between January and May 2023, compared to the same period in 2022.¹⁴



According to the survey conducted in May by Humanitarian Access Group (HAG) and Gender in Humanitarian Action (GiHA) to track the impact of the ban on Afghan women working for I/NGOs and the UN, humanitarian operations are resuming. More respondent organizations reported having moved from ‘partially operating’ or ‘not operating’ to fully operating. 36% of respondent organizations are now fully operating compared to 29% in March and 22% in February.

For partners, requirements for strict dress code, mahram, as well as restrictions on the movement of women staff continue to be the main access challenges in the field.

As of May 2023, protection partners have resumed activities where authorizations are given and/or with alternative modalities. However, the new ban on Afghan women working for the UN (April), impacted the protection capacity and response delivery since April 2023.

FUNDING STATUS AND CRITICAL GAPS IN FUNDING

The revision of the HRP 2023 in May showed a funding gap of 92.5 million for protection to meet the critical need of people at high protection risk from June to December 2023. Based on the protection funding status monitoring in April, the top priority funding and response gaps of the cluster was \$15.7 million to cover the cost of priority activities across the AoRs over the spring period. The protection cluster partners carried over \$39.9 million from 2022, while \$24.850 million is the new funding received by protection as of June 2023 (FTS data). \$1.6 million is an urgent funding gap for mine action responses to target 460,000 people with urgent needs in prioritized locations, including the cost of quick responses team for the clearance of high priority hazard, assistance to victims and explosive ordonnance risk education.

¹⁴ Afghanistan: Revised Humanitarian Response Plan (Jun - Dec 2023), 12 June 2023. Available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/afghanistan/afghanistan-revised-humanitarian-response-plan-jun-dec-2023>

RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK 1 Presence of mines and other explosive ordnance

DONORS

- Address funding gaps of \$1.6 million to cover the funding gap in support of priority protection activities over the coming months, including deployment of quick response teams to respond to urgent mine action requests with removal of Explosive Remnants of War (ERW), Abandoned Improvised Mines (AIM), clearance of small hazards, and provision of Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE), across priority provinces.

HC AND HUMANITARIAN COMMUNITY

- Prioritize advocacy action and emergency funding of mine action response including clearance and provision of Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE), to support scaling up development humanitarian initiative and to reduce the risk of the mine casualties.

RISK 2 Unlawful impediments or restrictions to freedom of movement and forced displacement

DE FACTO AUTHORITIES

- Recognize and accept that women's involvement in the delivery of humanitarian aid is critical, and their absence implies that female will be excluded from life-saving assistance since it is inappropriate for men to access women in order to assess their needs or provide aid.

DONORS

- Prioritize and scale up funding support to humanitarian partners that implement multi-sectorial interventions including cash assistance to support vulnerable households and mitigate protection risks that increase negative coping mechanism including child labour.

HC AND HUMANITARIAN COMMUNITY

- Advocate for de facto authorities, neighboring and transit States to transparently investigate reports of human rights violations against civilians at border crossings, provide for access to justice for survivors, and protection of civilians from harm.

RISK 3 Discrimination and stigmatization, denial of resources, opportunities, services and humanitarian assistance

DE FACTO AUTHORITIES

- Recognize that women humanitarian workers are knowledgeable and respectful of the Afghan culture and traditions and have humanitarian expertise. They must find vital solutions that allow women to deliver life-saving services to the most vulnerable people including women, girls, and boys with the aids they need and when they need it.

DONORS

- Ensure sufficient funding for the humanitarian response in Afghanistan to continue despite the ban and ensure added operational and administrative costs due to the ban are supported.

HC AND HUMANITARIAN COMMUNITY

- Ensure the most vulnerable people are reached with the assistance in a safe and transparent manner without violating cultural traditions and religious values and not compromising humanitarian principles including impartiality and independence.

DONORS AND HUMANITARIAN COMMUNITY

- Continue working on a political road map for Afghanistan and advocating with the DFA to lift all bans and restrictions on humanitarian workers to enable the delivery of critical protection services to vulnerable people.

RISK 4 Impediments and/or restrictions to access to documentation, remedies, and justice

DONORS

- Increase funding for legal assistance across priority provinces covering HLP rights, awareness-raising, and counselling of residents of informal settlements, IDP returnees and to strengthen communal land and property of undocumented returnees.

HC AND HUMANITARIAN COMMUNITY

- Provide within the last months of 2023, training and technical support to duty-bearers, DFA and humanitarian actors on HLP rights and initiatives taken to better develop formal legal justice and provided access to justice for Afghans across priority provinces.

DE FACTO AUTHORITIES

- Promptly respect the fundamental rights of women and girls including access to education, property, justice, and work, and consider the guiding principles of humanitarian operation including its independence and impartiality to guarantee unconditional access and implementation of humanitarian services based on identified needs and vulnerability.

RISK 5 Psychological distress and emotional abuse

HC AND HUMANITARIAN COMMUNITY

- Ensure sustainable mainstreaming and integration of psychosocial support services across all sectors to reduce the burden of psychological distress and mental illnesses on the Afghan population and strengthen their resilience.
- Support building of inter-sectoral and institutional capacity to integrate mental health and psychosocial services in all fields of humanitarian action.

Methodology

The report was prepared based on the data from AABRAR, Cordaid, DRC, INTERSOS, IOM, IRC, NRC, and UNHCR (in partnership with ARAA, WAW and WSTA) which include 3,046 household-level interviews (HH) in 16 provinces and 848 assessments with female HHs. 68% of the interviews have been conducted with undocumented returnees, 27% with IDPs including 8% IDP returnees and 5% with the host communities. 51% of the HH interviews were conducted in rural locations while 49% were held at urban centers. In addition, partners conducted 687 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) in 23 provinces among which 34% were female respondents. 55% of KII were conducted in rural communities against 39% in urban areas and 6 in semi-urban locations. Members of the community were involved (54%), undocumented returnees (22%) and IDP (24%) including 14% of IDP returnees. The FGD data analysis continues to be a challenge for the Protection Cluster which lacks the human resources to conduct in-depth trend analysis among provinces. Sensitivity around collecting data and requirements imposed by authorities to accompany assessment are limiting partners' capacity to gather quality information. Other sources of data that are referenced include ACBAR, AWAAZ, Humanitarian Access Snapshot, GiHA report on female aid workers' ban, HLP-TF, MASC Afghanistan, OCHA Displacement Trends, UN-Habitat-UNHCR, UNHCR CFM (Complaints and Feedback Mechanism), UN Security Council Resolution and WoAA. The analysis is guided by the Global Protection Cluster Protection Analysis Framework (PAF).



For further information please contact: Afghanistan Protection Cluster at afgkaprtcluster@unhcr.org