



Afghanistan | **Protection Analysis Update**

Update on post conflict and climate-related protection risks trends

DECEMBER 2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Widespread protection risks persist in Afghanistan as a consequence of the continuing humanitarian and economic crisis, as well as due to shrinking protection spaces particularly for women, girls, and other vulnerable groups. The human rights situation has been exacerbated by **conflict, forced eviction**, bureaucratic access impediments, as well as natural disasters like **earthquakes and flooding**. This has a devastating effect on population coping capacities and vulnerabilities, which is escalating the impact of existing protection risks.

During this quarter, de facto authorities (DfA) continued **threatened and actual forced eviction** of people living in informal settlements both on public and private land. Moreover, following the armed clashes between Mawlawi Mehdi Mujahid, Hazara Commander and DFA forces, more than **3,000 families were displaced from Balkhab district** and fled to mountainous areas and neighbouring districts and provinces. By mid-July most of the affected families had returned to their villages, and reportedly **the majority were forced to return by the authorities**. The limitations on movement of women go far beyond the mere issue of ability to move, and present grave implications for women who are struggling to support their families, especially those women who are breadwinners or the heads of their families.

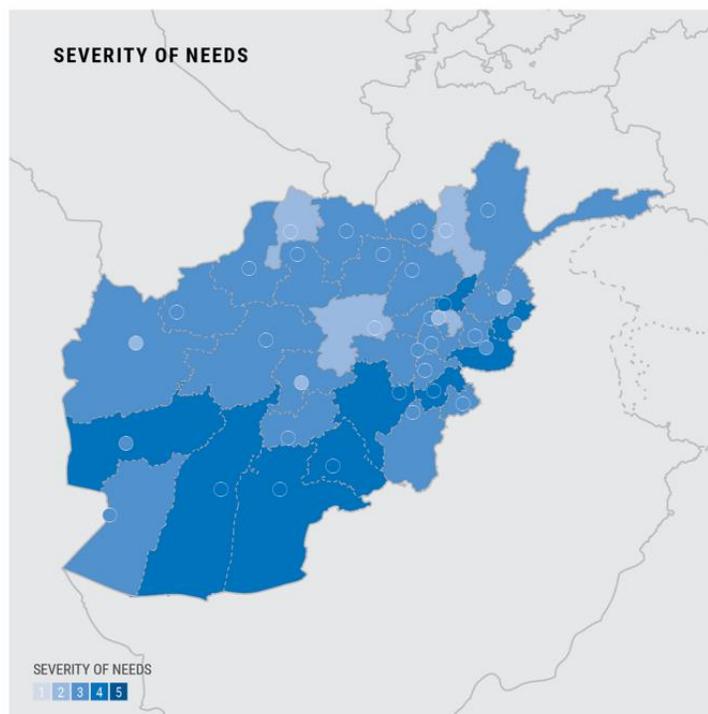
The DfA are increasingly asserting their control over the provision of humanitarian assistance and using bureaucratic mechanisms to influence humanitarian service provision. This is leading to protection risks for affected population and a worsening complex operating environment for NGOs. The protection risks requiring immediate attention in the period covered by this analysis are:

1. **Discrimination and stigmatization, denial of resources, opportunities, services and/or humanitarian assistance**
2. **Unlawful Impediments or restrictions to freedom of movement and forced displacement/eviction**
3. **Psychological and inflicted distress**
4. **Presence of mines and other explosive ordnance**
5. **Forced and child marriage**

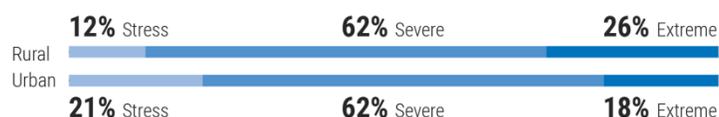
URGENT ACTIONS NEEDED

Urgent actions are needed to address the drivers of the worsening protection environment, primarily the economic crisis, conflict, access impediments and the unprecedented policies of discrimination and deprivation of fundamental rights of women and girls.

- Strengthened advocacy and dialogue between the Humanitarian Coordination Team (HCT) and DfA is needed to compel the authorities to uphold their responsibilities towards the population under their control, to facilitate access to basic government services without discrimination, to provide unhindered humanitarian assistance and cease policies and practice generating forced evictions and movement restrictions for women and girls.



SEVERITY OF NEEDS*



CONTEXT

PIN 17%¹	NEW IDPs 32.4k²	REFUGEE RETURNEE 728k³	GIRLS' SCHOOL DROPOUT 37%⁴	HAZARDOUS AREAS 4,328⁵
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Afghanistan has been in a civil war for over four decades from 1970s. With Taliban's takeover in Aug 2021, there is a significant reduction in number of security incidents, however this does not mean that the protection situation has been improved. UN (United Nations) Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, Richard Benet, has painted a grim picture of the situation in the country in his first report to the UN Human Rights Council, delivered in September 2022.⁶ In his report, Mr. Benet expresses concern over the "staggering regression in women and girls enjoyment of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights" a deteriorating security situation, including owing to the actions of the Islamic State – Khorasan Province (ISIL-KP), ongoing arbitrary detention, torture, extrajudicial killings and forced disappearances. This state of affairs is confirmed through protection monitoring, as well as protection-related queries that UNHCR receives through its hotline phones and protection email box. UNHCR continues to observe a high number of queries from individuals who claimed to be displaced from Panjshir Province and well as from former-government officials, journalists, social activists, and people from minority groups who allege that their lives are in danger and requesting to be evacuated from the country. Between January – September 2022, UNHCR received 26,634 queries with a total of 60,190 queries since 01 August 2021. The UNHCR HELP website, which provides relevant information to persons of concern to UNHCR, has been visited 337,787 times (the number of sessions on the site) with 815,290 views (the number of times pages on the site are viewed), since its launch in August 2021.



Despite an overall, significant reduction in armed violence, between mid-August 2021 and mid-June 2022, UNAMA recorded 2,106 civilian casualties (700 killed, 1,406 wounded).⁷ Between Jan-June 2022, the Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR) verified 829 violations affecting 489 children (380 boys and 78 girls and 31 unknown sex) and including 56 attacks on schools, 11 attacks on hospitals and 273 incidents of denial of humanitarian access.⁹ The majority of civilian casualties were attributed to targeted attacks by the armed group self-identified "Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant – Khorasan Province" against ethnic and religious minority communities in places where they go to school, worship, and go about their daily lives.

The erosion of women's rights has been one of the most notable interventions of the de facto administration to date. Women and girls have progressively had their rights to fully participate in education, the workplace, and other aspects of public and daily life restricted and in many cases completely taken away. The decision not to allow girls to return to secondary school means that a generation of girls will not complete their full 12 years of basic education (average of 36% in 16 out of 34 provinces, however, higher figures range from 40% to 70% in Samaghan (66%), Bamyan (60%), Baglan (59%), Kabul (53%),

¹ 17% increase of People in need (HPC 2023)

² Snapshot of Population Movements (January to October 2022), OCHA

³ Snapshot of Population Movements (January to October 2022), OCHA

⁴ WoAA

⁵ MASC, Afghanistan

⁶ [A_HRC_51_6_AdvanceUneditedVersion.docx \(live.com\)](#).

⁷ Human Rights in Afghanistan: 15 August 2021 to 15 June 2022, UNAMA Human Rights Services

⁸ Human Rights in Afghanistan: 15 August 2021 to 15 June 2022, UNAMA Human Rights Services

⁹ Afghanistan Country task force on monitoring and reporting (CTFMR) 2022.

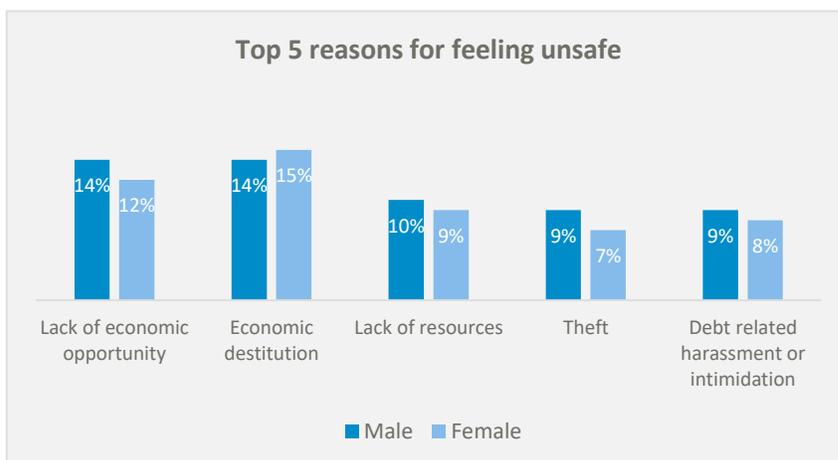
Helmand (56%), Badakhshan, Badghis and Takhar all at 46%).¹⁰ At the same time, access to justice for victims of gender-based violence has been limited by the dissolution of dedicated reporting pathways, justice mechanisms and shelters.

As noted, widespread conflict is not anymore, the primary driver of displacement. Nonetheless, displacements are still taking place in some provinces. In this respect, OCHA (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) recorded the displacement of 32,410 individuals (4,630 HHs)¹¹ primarily from the north, northeast, central, and central highland regions since the beginning of this year.

Despite a reduction in overall concern over safety and freedom of movement caused by conflict amongst the population, widespread protection risks persist in consequence of the continuing humanitarian and economic crisis in the country as well as due to shrinking protection spaces particularly for women, girls, and other vulnerable groups. The 2022 Whole of Afghanistan Assessment conducted by REACH to inform the 2023 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), notes that a key driver of humanitarian need is economic shock, with families continuing to prioritise food, livelihoods, and healthcare, although needs remain consistently high across all sectors. The WoAA shows that economic capacity amongst families is extremely low, subjecting them to food insecurity and the need to resort to harmful coping strategies, whilst humanitarian assistance has prevented a further deterioration in the situation to a certain extent. Amidst this situation and considering the restrictive policies that have been put in place by the *de facto* authorities, female headed families have reported increasing social and cultural barriers that restrict their access to livelihoods and access to basic services resulting in a compounding of their vulnerability. This is also the case of women within male headed households who face major barriers to access services.

DETERIORATING ECONOMY LEADING TO HARMFUL COPING MECHANISMS AND UNSAFETY

The five top priority reasons cited by both female and male respondents in household assessments as to their feeling of insecurity does not stem any longer from conflict and related effects but from the inability to meet basic needs owing to the ongoing economic crisis and increased criminality such as theft. It is notable that both groups mention a threat stemming from intimidation related to debt, which is also linked to the economic crisis with the WoAA confirming that families continue to resort to accrual of debt as a harmful coping mechanism.



The findings derived through household assessments are largely confirmed through the KIIs. The majority of persons interviewed do not raise a major concern related to safety, with 86% of men and boys and 72% of women and girls indicating that they feel safe. The reasons presented by KIIs for feeling unsafe are broadly like those indicated in the HHAs and relate to economic destitution and criminality with debt related intimidation cited by both female and males as a top reason contributing to a lack of safety. While these factors were also cited by KIIs from the various status groups, it is notable that female and male KIIs amongst the refugee returnee group mentioned fear of community violence, both in their communities and with other communities, as a key concern relating to safety.

BARRIERS TO ACCESS DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND JUSTICE MECHANISMS

The formal justice system and legal framework under the *de facto* government continued to remain uncertain, one year after the takeover from the former government. Courts are reportedly relying on the Majallat al-Ahkam al-Adliyya (Ottoman Empire codification of Hanafi jurisprudence) and Taliban procedures and guidance to resolve disputes, but procedural practices in

¹⁰ WoAA Sep 2022

¹¹ As of 13 September 2022: [Conflict Induced Displacements Dashboard](#) | [ReliefWeb Response](#).

courts and other formal institutions continue to vary across the country.¹² General restrictions on the movement of women and lack of women representation in justice mechanisms continued and impede women's access to these mechanisms. This is both in informal justice mechanisms (less women involved in resolution of disputes such as through shuras or jirgas) and in formal institutions. In household interviews, the main problem reported by women in relation to accessing dispute resolution mechanisms was cultural barriers, suggesting that the family and socially related barriers that women face in resolving disputes continue to be intensified.

Household survey respondents report that overall, communities prefer informal dispute resolution mechanisms. The most preferred informal dispute resolution option were mullahs, for both women and men respondents. This was followed by elders and religious leaders, and then family and relatives, which again was a more preferred option for women than men. Only a small percentage of respondents indicated taking a dispute to court, which is lower than the previous quarter. Undocumented returnees reported a higher preference for resolving disputes through family and relatives as opposed to host communities and IDPs who preferred mullahs and elders. In KI (key informants) interviews, men indicated a higher preference for shura councils and religious leaders, whereas family and relatives remained the preferred option for women. FGD (Focus Group Discussions) participants also indicated an overall preference for informal justice mechanisms, especially elders and religious leaders.

INCREASE IN RENTAL DISPUTES AND IMPACT OF DEBT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

In quarter 3, the main HLP (Housing, Land and Property) issue reported both in household and KI interviews was rental disputes, by both women and men respondents. This was reported as a high concern in most provinces across the country. This is not surprising given the ongoing socio-economic difficulties faced by the Afghan population, with households taking on more debt and high levels of unemployment. In July 2022, it was reported that crisis-coping strategies are five-times worse than prior to August 2021 and households are spending on average 90% of their income on food.¹³ Challenging economic circumstances, combined with a general lack of adequate rental agreements, put households that are privately renting at huge risk of disputes and forced eviction.¹⁴

Other significant HLP issues reported during this quarter were access and use disputes, boundary disputes and inheritance disputes. Ownership disputes and lack or loss of ownership documentation were also reported, the latter being reported as a particular challenge faced by undocumented returnee populations, as well as unlawful occupation of their land. In FGDs conducted during this quarter, participants also highlighted that populations were facing challenges regarding ownership disputes and inheritance.

Household survey respondents also indicated several ongoing issues with inadequate shelter. Lack of WASH facilities was the main issue reported, followed by overcrowding and damaged/destroyed shelters, with women reporting higher concerns about overcrowding. These issues also came up in FGDs conducted across multiple locations, particularly the issue of damaged shelters, with participants complaining that households could not afford to repair damage that had occurred in past conflict.

¹² Unpublished situational reports on legal government context by a HLP partner.

¹³ WFP, Afghanistan Food Security Update Round 10 June 2022, July 2022.

¹⁴ NRC, Private renters facing risk of eviction: NRC assessment on threat of eviction in households privately renting their homes, October 2022.

PROTECTION RISKS

RISK 1

Discrimination and stigmatization, Denial of resources, opportunities, services and/or humanitarian assistance

Access to services remained challenging across the country throughout the quarter, specifically for women, among whom 54% say they were not able to access services¹⁵. 34% of women reported having been denied access to services (compared to 25% of men), showing gender discriminations when it comes to access to services, which could also be linked to restrictions continuing to affect women's movement and their access to service providers. According to both men and women KIIs, women headed households were still among the most at risk of not accessing services. Fees and having to pay for services were mentioned as an additional barrier to access services, which was more likely to be mentioned by women KII.

The 23% of households interviewed reported being denied access to essential services- with the majority reported by IDPs (33%). Further analyses showed that females reported higher cases of denial by 39%.

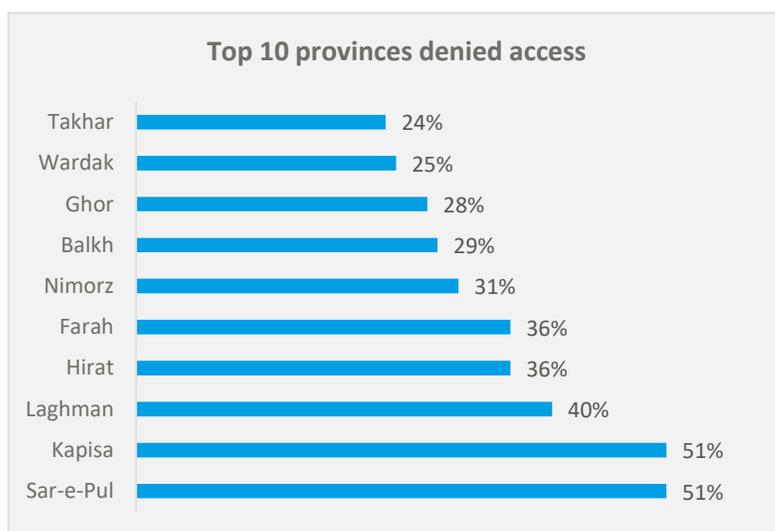
Existing services were generally denied in the community due to documentation required to access (34%) and discrimination (21%). Results from KII 14% faced discrimination and exclusion. Moreover, 14% reported the service was not inclusive (of gender, age, disability), 10% lacked documentation needed for services and 9% could not access services for socio-cultural reasons, particularly requirement for Mahram.

The result of KII survey indicates that the top eight services to which households reported being denied access are: Livelihood (10%), Health (9%), Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) (8%), Education (7%), Electricity (7%), Psychosocial Support (PSS) (7%) and Food assistance (7%).

However, it is worthy to note that ability to pay the fee for the service (41%) and ability to obtain transportation (20%) were also recorded under the denial of services as a response. The economy is a major driving factor that prevents people accessing services.

The result of the Household survey shows that 55 % of respondents reported that community members were unable to access existing services compared to 45% in the previous quarter. The most affected groups among the community members based on the KII data included: persons with disabilities (19%), elderly person headed households (10%), child headed households (9%), women at risk headed households (8%), children at risk headed household (7%), female headed household (women living without a husband) (7%), older person at risk headed household (7%) and person with life threatening health household (6%). These findings are in line with those from focus group discussions where access issues were reported among 51% of FGD participants.

Lack of economic opportunity was still seen as one of the main safety issues, both for men and women, and economic destitution as the main reason both women and men did not feel safe. For women this is linked to restrictions on their freedom of movement and women's inability to work under the new regime, including in the context of restrictions such as dress code and mahram requirements. Indeed 12% of women also mentioned that they could not move freely. The main reason cited for



¹⁵ KII June- Sep 2022

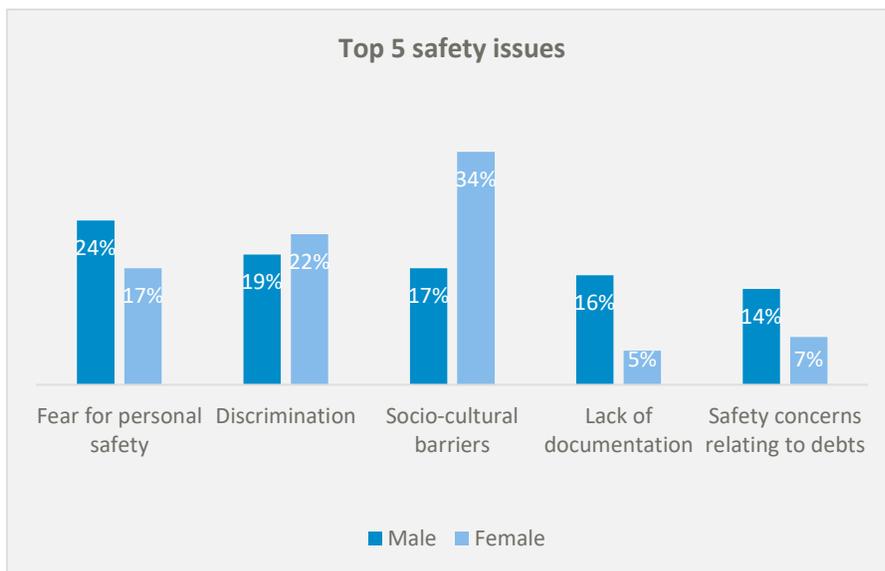
women not being able to circulate was socio-cultural barriers, while the second reason was discrimination. This shows gender specific issues in movement, impacting women’s safety and more broadly women’s access to services.

RISK 2 Unlawful Impediments or restrictions to freedom of movement and forced displacement/eviction

Sporadic conflict related violence has continued leading to displacement following fighting between the *de facto* authorities and other entities, such as in Panjshir province, the Anghandab district of Baghlan province as well as in Sar-e-Pul province. Likewise, *de facto* authorities continued threatened and actual forced eviction of people living in informal settlements both on public and private land, in Kabul, Balkh, Herat and Zabul. Reports came from a number of different sites, both associated with displaced populations living on them, and households affiliated with and living in shelters provided to them by the former government. Movement restriction policies for women and girls continue to remain unchanged despite of the dialogs and advocacy. As a result, female headed families have reported increasing social and cultural barriers that restrict their access to livelihoods and access to basic services increasing their vulnerability.

Overall, from January 2022 to the end of the third quarter, most of the respondents from the HHAs indicated that it is possible for them to move freely (90%). However, the data from the third quarters shows that the percentage of women and girls who indicate that they can move freely is slightly lower (88%) compared to male respondents (92%). This expression of ability move has remained stable amongst the two different gender groups over the three quarters of the year. While freedom of movement of women and girls are restricted due to mahram policy, such restriction is not well captured in protection monitoring, possibly due to the perception of respondents.

The reasons cited by male and female respondents for not being able to move freely are broadly similar, although while socio-cultural barriers feature as the top reason cited by female respondents the link to debt related safety concerns are evident in the responses of male respondents. It is notable, that lack of documentation is a reason impeding movement cited by female respondents. While factors, denoted in above graph, are broadly evident amongst the different population groups, lack of documentation is also cited as reason affecting movement by several of the population groups, including male respondents.



While the majority of persons do not have issues with freedom of movement, there is evidence that persons with specific profiles may face a higher level of risk in Afghanistan, including in relation to freedom of movement. The above findings also lend support to the report of the UN Special Rapporteur for Afghanistan related to discrimination and the situation of women and girls. It is also the case that socio-cultural factors, which are likely to include the restrictions on women and girls are impacting on freedom of movement.

Like the findings from HHAs, data generated through KIIs confirms that through the first three quarters of 2022 persons do not indicate a major problem with freedom of movement (78% of females and 93% of males indicate they can move freely) within the community. In addition, since the second quarter, where 63% of female respondents indicated that they could move

freely, there is a significant increase in the percentage of women indicating that they do not have a problem with movement. On the other hand, male respondents have consistently reported a high ability to move freely over the three quarters of 2022. The factors cited as contributing to difficulties with freedom of movement are also similar to the reasons mentioned during HHAs by both male and female respondents, although based on a different hierarchy. The reasons are also broadly the same between male and female KIIs amongst different status groups.

21% of women were worried about threats of eviction according to the data (for 13% of men). This seems to be one of women’s key concerns and shows the need to add a gender lens to all analyses looking at evictions. Women are indeed more likely to be impacted by evictions. Due to the restrictions in place and the socio-cultural context, they are less likely to have economic support in place and to find solutions to such threats. This applies particularly to women headed households who are overwhelmingly represented in informal settlements. Conversely, economic hardship was the main reason for IDP women who wanted to return to their place of origin (33.5% of women for 18% men), showing the impact of the dire economic situation on women.



Key words generated through FGDs shed light on why women and girls, in FGDs, expressed a limitation on freedom of movement

RISK 3 Psychological and inflicted distress

The protracted war, economic crises and mental health problems affect most households. The risk of multiple displacements due to extreme climate change compounded by economic uncertainties and loss of livelihood to fend for the needs of children are risks that families are contending with. Over 11 out of 34 provinces have severity scale 4 (Critical) falling above 40% for Angry, Aggressive/Violent behaviour and pessimistic view for the future. The provinces with high prevalence are Paktya (71%), Helmand (69%), Nangarhar (48%), Parwan (46%) and Sar-e-pul at 45% indicating an increase in mental health factors of the population.¹⁶

More households are at risk of not satisfying the basic services and security, and the community and family support systems are weakened. Due to the ongoing emergency, children and families have borne immense psychological distress experienced by 39% of family members (32% in Q2) caused by lack of employment at 19%, conflict at 12%, and denial of resources at 6%. Most of the household heads are single males with no source of livelihood. There are close to 5% of households headed by children including children who are at risk while 14% of households have children at risk. In view of the already perilous circumstances, psychological distress has further exacerbated the protection risks faced by the civilian population. Psychological distress exhibited through violence/aggression by male caregivers, self-withdrawal, and self-harm that require attention.

RISK 4 Presence of mines and other explosive ordnance

Conflicts over the past 4 decades have left behind vast areas contaminated by explosive ordnance that have negatively impacted the lives of civilians; however, the picture of the contamination remains unclear. The political change in the country following 15 August 2021 has provided new access opportunities for mine action partners. Children were the major population group affected by explosive ordnance in the reporting period, accounting for 81%. The main reason being the weak economic

¹⁶ WoAA Sep 2022

conditions of people, which forces them to explore negative coping mechanisms for their livelihood such as sending children to collect scrap metal or firewood, etc. In some cases, this results in loss of limbs or lives. Most of the incidents reported happened in the areas that have witnessed increased levels of conflicts.

There are still 4,32817 hazardous areas in the country that are affecting at least 1,527 communities and posing a threat to vulnerable populations such as internally displaced persons, returnees, refugees, and conflict-affected non-displaced civilians. The presence of explosive ordnance (EO) in Afghanistan, particularly improvised mines from armed clashes in the past 20 years and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW), continues to be a top humanitarian priority.

During the reporting period a total of 99 km² of newly contaminated area was identified and recorded in the national mine action database¹⁸. The mine action team have destroyed 3,783 items of explosive ordnance including but not limited to anti-personnel mines, anti-tank mines, cluster munitions, abandoned improvised mines, and explosive remnants of war.

A total of 43 civilian casualties, 86 per cent of which being children, were recorded from July to Sep 2022 in the national mine action database, though systematic victim data collection remains disrupted. While explosive hazards kill and maim indiscriminately, children, particularly boys are at high risk of death or injuries from EO accidents in Afghanistan - 37 children (including 28 boys and 9 girls) were reported to have died or injured during the reporting period. ERW were the leading cause of civilian casualty accounting for 81% of the total civilian casualties followed by improvised mines which accounted for 14%. Children are particularly vulnerable to becoming victims to ERW with the majority (71 %) of ERW casualties being children.

The results from WoAA show that 47% respondents in Hilmand Province, 46% in Kabul Province, 33% in Farah Province and 10% in Paktika Province felt unsafe due to the threat of explosive ordnance. The Humanitarian Access Group (HAG) also recognized the presence of mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) as one of the key access constraints for humanitarian access. Provinces of top concern from the mine action perspective in terms of explosive ordnance contamination are Kandahar, Hilmand, Uruzgan, Kunar, Farah, Baghlan, Logar, Ghazni, Maidan Wardak and Nangarhar.

RISK 5 Early and forced marriage

Reports of people resorting to forced and early/child marriage were reported by 2% and 1% of the household survey respondents respectively, with undocumented returnees and refugees more likely to resort to these coping mechanisms in Daykundi, Hilmand and Faryab provinces. Protection partners have informed that the issue is large, and underreporting may be due to sampling error, or due to stigmatization, and reason highlighted during various consultation for early/forced marriages were restrictions to girls' access to education, deteriorating economic conditions, severe food insecurity and movement limitations for girls/women.

Additional reports have also shown that the current economic and food crises had the potential to increase the use of child marriage as a coping mechanism. To cope with the lack of food, households have resorted to coping mechanisms which are often impacting women and girls disproportionately. These have ranged from women selling their assets to high-risk coping mechanisms such as child marriages, where cash strapped families unable to feed all their children resort to selling or marrying off their children, most often girls.¹⁹ The negative coping mechanism adopted after exhausting almost all avenues for sustaining family needs include borrowing, child marriage highest in provinces of Hilmand 33%, Sar-e-pual 8% Farah 12% and Badgish 8%. This finding (2% of child marriage prevalence rate percentage) is not an accurate one and shows only the trend.

¹⁷ Based on the reports from Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA). The changes in the figures are due on-going nationwide mine action non-technical survey.

¹⁸ Nationwide explosive contamination survey (Kandahar, Hilmand, Uruzgan and Kunduz)

¹⁹ https://www.care-international.org/sites/default/files/2022-08/Afghanistan%20Food%20Security%20Report_advocacy%20brief_August%202022.pdf

RESPONSE

PROGRESS MADE ON PROTECTION

As of Sep 2022, **40 protection partners** are responding to the protection needs of over **4.6 million people** in need in Afghanistan. Among those 67% were women and girls. During the reporting period, protection partners **assisted over 100,000 earthquake affected population** in the South-eastern part of the country. While MASC partners launched a Nationwide Explosive Contamination Survey and deployed a large number of teams, the mine action response - particularly for the survey and the deployment of Quick Response Teams - remains critically underfunded. An assessment has been conducted on Data Protection and Impact to strengthen the Child Protection and information management systems by CPAOR.



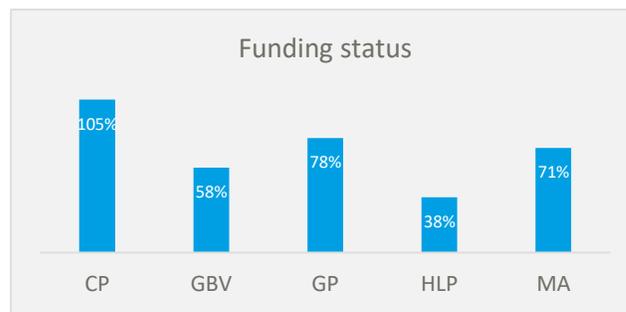
ACCESS-RELATED CHALLENGES AND ACTIONS



In September, aid workers continued to operate in a volatile environment often undergoing serious threats and risks with 31 instances of ‘physical violence (attacks against humanitarian workers)’, ‘arrest/detention of humanitarian workers’, and ‘threats against humanitarian workers, assets and facilities’ reported, resulting in the temporary closure of 3 programs, injury of 6, and detention of 13 staff. Furthermore, presence of IEDs and UXOs were found to be a potential threat to the lives of civilians across the region, particularly in Uruzgan and Hilmand provinces when insufficient financial resources are slowing IED clearance. New policy of MoU with DFA, pressure to share the beneficiary list, pressure from DFA to be part of assessment were some of the operational challenges that not only affect implementation but violate the protection principles too.

CRITICAL GAPS

Out of 40 implementing partners, only 30 have contributed for the analysis of funding. PC partners have received over 72% of fund against requested \$ 137 million. With the presence of challenges particularly around access/MoU and restriction on movement, protection cluster partners have no capacity to absorb additional funding between now and end of Dec 2022, except mine action implementing partners for activities included in the HRP, including survey and QRT. Limited inter-sectoral integration continues to be challenging and has created gaps in services provision due to strict target selection criteria. Critical gap remains for safe identification and referral of persons with protection concerns to non-protection services.



RECOMMENDATIONS

RISK 1

Discrimination and stigmatization, Denial of resources, opportunities, services and/or humanitarian assistance

DE FACTO AUTHORITIES

- Ensure that women and girls have safe access to humanitarian assistance and are able to safely reach distribution points as well as WASH and Health facilities.
- Ensure that women humanitarian workers are able to access women and girls in the field through providing a safe environment and enabling them to travel to field locations and reach affected women and girls.

RISK 2

Unlawful Impediments or restrictions to freedom of movement and forced displacement/eviction

HC and HUMANITARIAN COMMUNITY

- The HC, HCT and humanitarian partners should urgently scale up engagement, advocacy and dialogue to prevent threat of and actual forced eviction, specifically in Bagdhis.

DONORS

- Prioritize and scale up support to humanitarian partners that implement multi-sectorial interventions including cash for rent to support vulnerable households and mitigate protection risks such as threat of eviction.

RISK 3

Psychological and inflicted distress

CLUSTERS and PARTNERS

- Prioritize Paktya, Helmand, Nangarhar, Parwan and Sar-e-pul provinces for multisectoral intervention to support vulnerable households.

DE FACTO AUTHORITIES

- Ensure the presence of women staff in the field to engage with affected women and girls and enable their safe access to all services.
- DfA must take steps to facilitate progress regarding the economic situation and receiving development assistance from other countries, which must include engaging in constructive dialogue with international interlocutors beyond the humanitarian response.

RISK 4

Presence of mines and other explosive ordnance

DONORS AND PARTNERS

- Address funding gap of 20 million USD, at least 5 million USD before Mar 2023, for the Nationwide Explosive Contamination Survey (NECS) to establish an accurate picture of the current contamination across Afghanistan, as well as Quick Response Teams (QRTs) to enable the immediate and emergency response to newly identified hazards.
- Partners are encouraged to continue supporting clearance projects targeting abandoned improvised mines and explosive remnants of war, as well as to contribute funds to the humanitarian mine action coordination mechanism.

RISK 5

Early and forced marriage

HC and HUMANITARIAN COMMUNITY

- Advocate with the DfA to ensure women's safe access to humanitarian assistance, and the full participation of women humanitarian workers in the response.

DONORS and PARTNERS

- Continue strengthening the protection mainstreaming within sectors for quality response especially in addressing the extreme/negative coping strategies including forced and child marriages exacerbated by the economic crisis.

Methodology

Data from DRC, INTERSOS, IOM, IRC, NRC, Cordaid, AABRAR, DHSA/TKG and UNHCR (in partnership with WAW and ARAA) which include 9,243 (48% of female HH) Household-level Surveys, 2,431 Key Informants Interviews (56% female KI) and a significant number of Focus Group Discussions in 21 provinces/143 districts—have been used for this report. However, the protection cluster continues to face challenges in analysing the FGD data. Moreover, data on human rights violations are not made available on a quarterly basis which leads to relying on anecdotal data. Sensitivity around collecting data and requirement by authorities to accompany assessment limiting partners' capacity to gather quality information. The analysis is guided by the Global Protection Cluster Protection Analysis Framework (PAF). Other sources of data that are referenced include OCHA Displacement Trends, Humanitarian Access Snapshot, UNHCR CFM (Complaints and Feedback Mechanism)— Analysis and Human Rights in Afghanistan (UNAMA report).

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