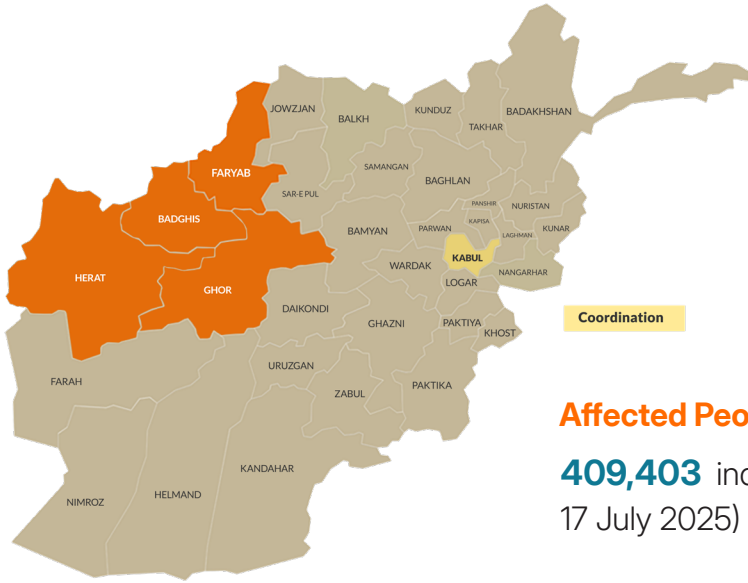


# West Afghanistan Forced Returnees Response (WAFRR)

## Situation Report 02 | Date of report: 25 June - 17 July 2025



Coordination

Response Model: Cat II National Response  
Duration: Six months

### Affected People

409,403 individuals (between 1 July and 17 July 2025)

Current Locations of Emergency  
Afghanistan - Herat – Islam Qala  
Border



### People reached as of July 17:

5,733 individuals, (3,863 men, 1,650 women, 127 boys & 93 girls)



### Funding Status

Funding Target (USD):	4,700,000
Funding Achieved PNS	256,000
Funding Achieved Grant	557,670



### Humanitarian Situation Overview

Afghanistan is facing one of the world's most severe and complex humanitarian crises. Over half of the population—approximately 23 million people—are in need of humanitarian assistance due to a combination of conflict, economic collapse, prolonged drought, high food insecurity, and widespread displacement. The situation has been further exacerbated in 2025 by a sharp increase in the number of Afghans returning from neighbouring countries—more than [2.5 million people have returned](#) from Iran and Pakistan this year alone. These returns are placing immense pressure on already overstretched services, especially in border provinces and areas of high return.

The returnee crisis from Iran has escalated sharply in recent months. As of 16 July 2025, more than [1.25 million Afghans returned from Iran](#) since the beginning of the year, with 60% of them deported. Between 10 and 16 July, the average number of daily returns exceeded 29,600, peaking at some 38,000 returnees on 10 July alone.

Based on World Vision's Afghanistan's (WVA) needs assessment, 90% of returnees were forced to return. Return movements intensified following a 20 March deadline issued by the Iranian government requiring all undocumented Afghans to leave the country and were further accelerated by political tensions in the region, including the June conflict between Iran and Israel.

There has also been a significant demographic shift in returnee profiles. Where previous months saw mainly single young men returning, recent weeks have seen a surge in families crossing the border—many with women, children, and elderly relatives.

### Needs

Many returning families are highly vulnerable when they arrive: they lack shelter, food, and access to basic services such as healthcare and safe water. Needs at the border are acute, with thousands requiring immediate multi-sectoral assistance, including protection and livelihood support.

Our needs assessment reveals that 51% of returnees are sleeping on the streets,

underscoring the urgent need for shelter at the zero-point border. However, the humanitarian response remains severely under-resourced. Due to funding constraints, current capacity can support only a small fraction of those in need. Border facilities and reception centres are overwhelmed, and agencies have been forced to divert resources from other critical operations to address the surge in returns. Meanwhile, the needs that drove many Afghans to migrate to Iran in the first place remain, and home communities are not well-placed to sustain substantial numbers of returning people in need of support. In many parts of rural western Afghanistan, where WVA operates, 'working age' males (children of 13 years and over) have been working in Iran in huge numbers. The pace and scale of arrivals continue to exceed available resources, leaving thousands without timely support and increasing the risk of exploitation, protection incidents, and deepening poverty for both returnees and host communities.

Given these challenges, humanitarian organisations are urgently calling for increased international support to scale up the response and prevent a further deterioration of the already fragile situation. Without additional funding and coordination, Afghanistan will struggle to absorb the growing number of returnees and meet their basic needs.

### World Vision Afghanistan Response

WV Afghanistan requires immediate funding of USD 4.6 million to provide lifesaving assistance and scale up medium to longer term support for 150,000 displaced individuals and families, including:

- expanding on our helpdesk facility at the Islam Qala border crossing in Herat province
- providing emergency care and referrals for primary health and nutrition services (including breastfeeding centres and medicine)
- delivering food and livelihood assistance (in kind and cash)
- offering transportation assistance
- ensuring access to safe and clean water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities
- providing psychosocial support services and safe spaces and protection services for women and children.



### Child Well-being

WVA continues to deliver essential protection services for at-risk returnees, particularly focusing on women, children, and persons with disabilities at key border entry points. We have established a Help Desk and Call Centre at Islam Qala, enabling returnees to access real-time information, service referrals, and communication support.

Between June 25 and July 17, a total of 4,899 individuals (3,592 males and 1,307 females) utilised Call Centre services. These services encompassed free national and international calling, internet access, and Wi-Fi connectivity, allowing families to reconnect and receive updates about available services at their destinations.

Trained staff at the Help Desks also guide returnees to critical services such as registration, food and water assistance, health facilities, toilets, and hygiene resources ensuring they receive comprehensive support at every stage of their journey. The programme's objective is to foster a safe and welcoming environment where returnees can begin rebuilding their lives with dignity, safety, and hope.

As part of the enhanced child protection response, WVA distributed 70 Psychosocial Support (PSS) kits to children returning from Iran. Each kit contained toys, educational materials, and age-appropriate learning resources designed to support the emotional well-being and developmental needs of returnees. This targeted intervention addresses the psychological impact of displacement and cross-border experiences, providing children with therapeutic play materials and educational continuity tools.



### WASH

WV Afghanistan's Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) sector continues to coordinate closely with stakeholders and the WASH cluster to assess and respond to lifesaving WASH needs among returnees. As an immediate measure to ensure access to safe drinking water, the team conducted rapid water quality testing and surveillance at the reception point—where returnees

undergo documentation before being dispatched to the collection centre. The results are tabled for discussion in the WASH cluster for improvement in safe water transportation and daily checks by water monitors. WV Afghanistan also supported the Reception Centre (RC) with 50 waste bins each 100 litres capacity and 150 kgs of plastic bags to support solid waste management at the reception centre. Planned interventions under a crisis modifier project include:

- Distribution of hygiene and dignity kits to 250 families and 250 children at the child friendly space

- Continuous water quality surveillance at the reception centre

In parallel, mobilisation is underway for both emergency response at the boarder points and early recovery interventions in areas of return. These will focus on:

- Rehabilitation and construction of new water systems
- Basic sanitation services
- Climate-resilient WASH adaptation
- Behavioural change and environmental awareness activities

These efforts aim to ensure both immediate and long-term access to safe water and improved hygiene for vulnerable returnee populations.



### Health & Nutrition

Between 25 June and 17 July 2025, a total of **834 individuals** received medical care during night shifts provided by WVA doctors and nurses. The night duty support significantly strengthened the capacity of health facilities to meet the growing medical needs of returnees, especially during peak night-time arrivals. This consistent presence of healthcare providers ensured timely and quality care for vulnerable individuals, contributing to improved health outcomes across the camp.





### Food Security and Livelihoods

WV Afghanistan's food security and livelihood sector is coordinating with stakeholders under the emergency and durable workstream to facilitate targeted, life-saving, and early recovery livelihood interventions.

We have secured funds to support 450 households in the destination area of Herat Province with Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance. Additionally, funds have been secured as part of recovery livelihoods initiatives, which will support 40 women-headed households already possessing skills with small grants to start viable businesses and generate income.

WV Afghanistan has also engaged with other donors, including the Dutch Relief Alliance, with the aim of supporting 1,200 households with Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance in Injil District, an area with high settlement levels. WV Afghanistan will continue its engagement with donor communities to mobilize additional resources, to support for emergency needs, recovery, and resilience building initiatives.



### Rapid Need Assessment

#### Rapid Need Assessment at Islam Qala Border Highlights Urgent Returnee Needs

To align its response to the needs of Afghan returnees from Iran, WV Afghanistan conducted a Rapid Needs Assessment at the Islam Qala (Zero Point) border crossing in Herat province. The assessment aimed to evaluate the immediate living conditions, vulnerabilities, and priority needs of returnee households—particularly in the areas of food security, health, protection, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH)—as well as their intended provinces of settlement.

Using a rapid data collection methodology, structured questionnaires were administered to a representative sample of 300 returnee households, with 78% of respondents being male and 22% female.

#### Key findings include

- Only 38% of households reported having sufficient food, while nearly 15% faced severe shortages. Around half of respondents reported consuming only two meals per day.
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- Health concerns are widespread, with households reporting high incidences of diarrhoea, respiratory infections, and mental health issues. Nearly 30% reported limited or no access to health services.
- Shelter remains a critical concern, with 51% living on the streets or in temporary camps, and 25% considering their current shelter unsafe.
- WASH services remain inadequate, with gaps in access to sanitary pads, oral hygiene items, and other basic supplies.
- Protection risks are prominent, including issues related to elder care, child protection, gender-based violence, and interrupted access to education.

Although 65% of households reported receiving some form of assistance, the assessment underscores the urgent need for coordinated, multi-sectoral interventions to address ongoing vulnerabilities and support the safe and sustainable reintegration of returnees into their communities of origin or intended destinations.

In collaboration with the UN Development Program (UNDP), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), and Women Activities and Social Services Association (WASSA), WV Afghanistan also participated in a joint qualitative rapid needs assessment in the returnees' destination areas in Badghis and Herat provinces. The assessment was led by the Durable Solutions Working Group (DSWG). The collected data has been submitted to the DSWG, which is currently working on producing a consolidated report.

We also conducted another quick assessment at the Transition Centre (IOM camp) in Herat to identify the needs and priorities of the returnees residing in this province. Findings indicate that many people expressed a need for hygiene kits and summer kits, including clothing. Other forms of assistance—such as food, shelter, and medical support—were provided by peer organisations such as Agency for Assistance and Development of Afghanistan (AADA), Handicap International (HI), and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

Additionally, WV Afghanistan is conducting ongoing process monitoring at the

reception centre, particularly focusing on our project activities such as kit distribution and Help Desk services, to ensure quality implementation and accountability to affected populations. For learning and documentation purposes, we have established an online dashboard that provides daily updates from the reception centre on the number of people reached through our interventions.



### Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)

WV Afghanistan ensures accountability to returnees and affected communities by implementing a comprehensive Community Feedback and Response Mechanism (CFRM). Key measures include:

- **Information Sharing:** Communities receive information about the organization, AAP/CFRM system, and projects through banners, business cards, help desks, and staff communication.
- **Community Participation:** Feedback and complaint channels are available for communities to report issues, including misconduct or SEA. WVA promotes inclusive participation, ensuring women, children, and persons with disabilities are consulted and engaged.
- **Community Consultation:** WVA conducts FGDs and meetings to understand communities' preferred information needs, channels, and languages.
- **Feedback Collection & Action:** Trained staff collect and analyse complaints and feedback through Digital Accountability Platform (DAP),

As part of World Vision's response, AAP measures have been implemented at the reception centre in Islam Qala. The AAP team has conducted two rounds of information sessions for returnees to ensure they are informed about available services and feedback mechanisms.

To strengthen community engagement, two Community Feedback and Response Mechanism (CFRM) banners have been installed at the Help Desk Centre, and CFRM business cards have been distributed among returnees to raise

awareness about the available feedback channels. The MEAL team continues to conduct regular monitoring visits, while project staff actively deliver key AAP and CFRM messages to returnees on a daily basis, ensuring both accountability and meaningful engagement.

In Herat city, at the Parke Molana Jami settlement site, similar AAP measures have been put in place. CFRM cards have been distributed, awareness-raising activities have been conducted, and observations from both locations have been documented and shared to inform programme improvements.



Number of  
Staff Engaged  
in the Response

Expatriate: 6 | Nationals: 30+



### Communication Resource

Multimedia stories:

- <https://storyhub.wvi.org/Share/n0035pbuqsn62851kokedlp52734412i>
- [Inside the growing crisis of Afghan returnees at the Iran border | World Vision International](#)

Video: [What Awaits Them in Afghanistan? Inside the Forced Return Crisis at Islam Qala | Afghanistan | World Vision International](#)

Press Release: [World Vision declares emergency response at Iran-Afghanistan border | Afghanistan | World Vision International](#)

### Media Engagement

Al Jazeera : <https://storyhub.wvi.org/Share/nu6113iix3tdbjsg170582im8m3hg62v>

Associated Press : <https://apnews.com/article/afghan-iran-refugees-war-deportation-b58f3772e3e50a722a9f0b17d8ee1f9a>

The Independent: [Thousands of Afghans are fleeing Iran every day to escape war and deportation | The Independent](#)

Al Jazeera: [Nowhere to run: The Afghan refugees caught in Israel's war on Iran | Israel-Iran conflict News | Al Jazeera](#)

Deutsche Welle: [هزاران مهاجر افغان به خاطر جنگ ایران را ترک می کنند - DW - ۱۴۰۴/۳/۳۱](#)

Reliefweb: [Inside the growing crisis of Afghan returnees at the Iran border - Afghanistan | ReliefWeb](#)

Radio Liberty: [روند اخراج افغانها از تهران شدید تر شده است](#)



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World Vision  
AFGHANISTAN



At the Islam Qala border, World Vision staff support a returnee by facilitating a phone call to reconnect with her loved ones.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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