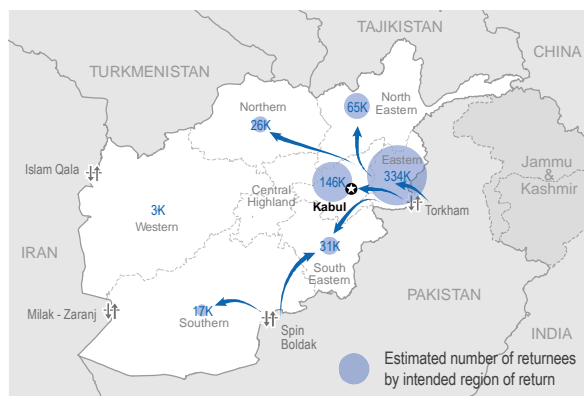




This report is produced by OCHA Afghanistan in collaboration with humanitarian partners. It covers the period from 30 December to 12 January 2017. The next report will be issued on or around 26 January 2017.

Highlights

- In 2016, almost 620,000 undocumented returnees (249,832) and registered refugees (370,102) returned to Afghanistan from Pakistan. The overwhelming majority – 93% (577,454) – returned since July.
- In the last month, no registered refugees have returned following the winter pause in UNHCR’s repatriation programme. Undocumented returns have also slowed, with 2,243 arriving between 1 and 10 January.
- CHF partners NCRO and Relief International commenced cash distributions for food and shelter to 4,763 undocumented returnees in Behsud, Jalalabad and Sorkhrod districts on 27 December 2016 following extensive coordination to avoid de-duplication with other partners. Cash for winter assistance provided by AfghanAid to 1,847 undocumented returnees started on 5 January 2017, along with post distribution monitoring supported by members of the OCHA Humanitarian Financing Unit.



Source: UNHCR & IOM
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

- Reports of two groups of mixed returnee families settling in camp-like situations in Gamberi (500) and Khairokahil (300) districts in Laghman province are being followed up by partners with an inter-agency assessment planned for 15 January. To date, provincial authorities in Laghman have prevented the delivery of humanitarian assistance to those settled in Khairokhail, while only mobile health services, emergency latrines and water trucking (the latter of which stopped on 15 December) has been provided to those in Gamberi. Initial visits to both sites indicates that returnees are living in makeshift shelter and in need of winterisation support.
- Following a sudden surge in pediatric admissions to Nangarhar Regional Hospital in early January – 197 children were admitted within 24 hours – the Department of Public Health (DoPH) has called for urgent additional support in the form of beds, equipment, personnel and medical supplies. While temporary measures have been put in place to ease overcrowding, including the allocation of a portion of the casualty ward to accommodate an extra 30-40 beds, more permanent solutions are required. The DoPH has initiated an assessment to determine the reasons behind the increase, although it is expected to be a combination of seasonal occurrences in winter-related illnesses, the influx of returnees and IDPs to the province and limited health services in surrounding areas which make the Hospital the service provider for a significant population.
- In late December, the Education in Emergencies Working Group finalised its 2017 response plan. The plan, which has three overarching strategic objectives, will target 600,000 returnee and IDP children and has requirements of approximately USD 48.2 million.

Financial Update

The Afghanistan Flash Appeal, One Million People on the Move, was closed on 31 December 2016. Overall, the Flash Appeal received contributions totaling USD 91.2 million (60%, pledged and confirmed) against overall requirements of USD 152 million.

Requirements for registered refugees and undocumented returnees from Pakistan are now incorporated into the 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan for Afghanistan which can be accessed at the following link: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/afghanistan/document/afghanistan-2017-humanitarian-response-plan>.



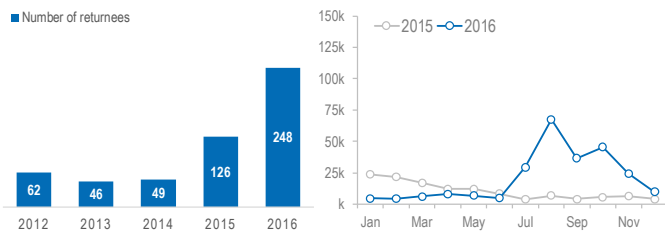
Situation Overview

While no needs assessments have been carried out in the past two weeks, our understanding of the humanitarian situation has not changed: returnee families continue to be absorbed for the most part into host communities, where they are either accommodated by family or friends, or rent from private landlords. Isolated reports of small groups of returnee populations congregating in informal settlements have, however, been received in Kabul and Nangarhar province and are being followed up on, although generally the number later verified is found to be much smaller than that initially reported.

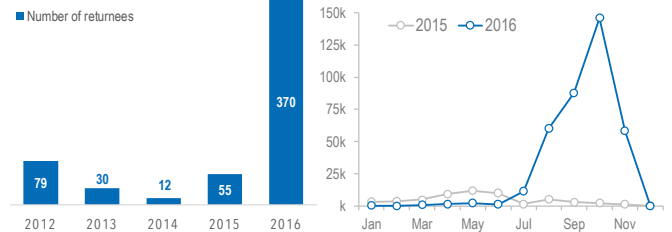
In addition to ongoing humanitarian response, partners have, over the last few weeks, been working to complete winterisation activities. So far, UNHCR have distributed cash for winter support to 22,406 vulnerable IDP, refugee, returnee and host families across the Central, Southern, North and Northeastern regions of Afghanistan, while in the Central Region 6,370 undocumented returnees have received shelter support and blankets. NGO partners, including NRC and IRC, have also distributed cash for winter support to 2,880 returnee households in Nangarhar province. Concerns of a spike in winter-related illnesses among particularly vulnerable populations, including the returnees, have so far not materialised: in the Northern region, 939 cases of pneumonia were recorded in the last week of 2016 in comparison to a three year average of 1,170.

Returnee trends (2012-2016)

Undocumented Afghan returnees *

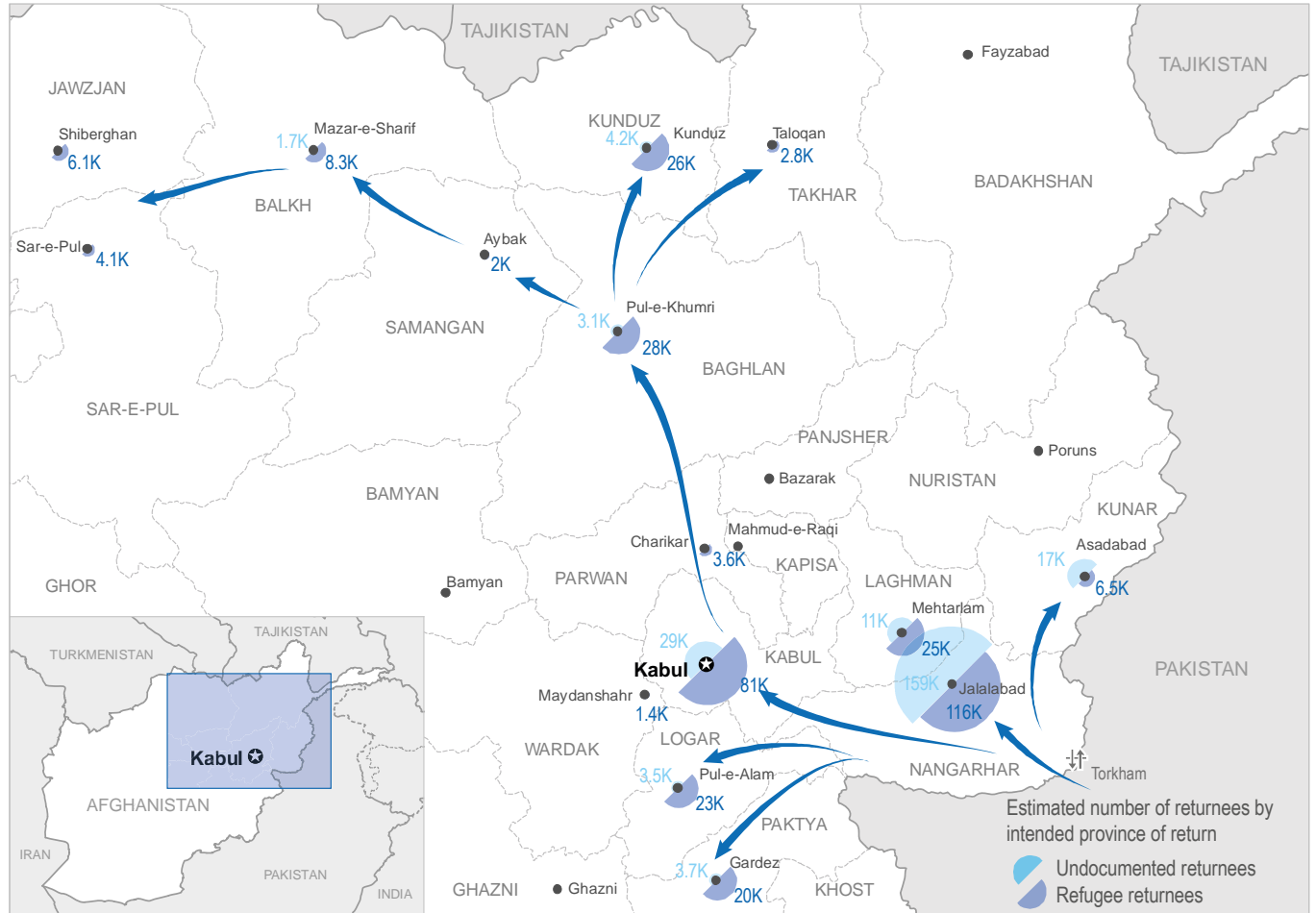


Registered Afghan refugee returnees



Source: IOM (undocumented returnees, as of 7 Jan 2017), UNHCR (registered refugee returnees, as of 31 Dec 2016)
 * Figures include deportees from Pakistan.

Estimated number of returnees by intended province of return



Humanitarian Response: Reporting by Clusters



Needs:

- IOM will carry out a shelter assessment in coordination with the ES/NFI cluster during the third week of January in Nangarhar, Kunar and Laghman and distribute shelters and assistance for 1,925 vulnerable undocumented returnee families. A secondary assessment will later be carried out in Kabul, and a further 1,725 families will receive shelter support and winter assistance.
- Islamic Relief is conducting winterisation assessments in the central and Eastern regions with response capacity for as many as 2,124 households (in-kind support) in Kabul, and 3,789 households in Nangarhar with 2 double-size blankets per family.
- Recent HEAT assessments on returnee households in Khogyani (545 families) and Batikot (735 families) districts in Nangarhar indicate that permanent shelter is the first priority of 46% and 35% of assessed households respectively. While some ES-NFI cluster partners are currently providing cash for rent to returnees living in the open or in rented houses, durable shelter solutions have not yet been found for most. A UNHCR-led assessment of more than 462 registered refugees in the Central region has also revealed that the shelter is the main priority need of returnee groups.

159,000

returnees are being assisted through ongoing ES/NFI activities

Response:

- In Nangarhar, NRC and IRC have distributed cash for winter assistance to approximately 1,000 and 1,880 undocumented returnee households respectively.
- As part of its winterisation assistance, UNHCR distributed cash to 6,525 vulnerable IDP, refugee, returnee and host families in 25 provinces in the central, southern, north and northeastern regions of Afghanistan.

Gaps & Constraints:

- The absorption capacity in semi/peri-urban centres remains to be seen, as large numbers of returnees continue to seek accommodation. Greater emphasis should be placed on preparedness in urban settings.
- With the number of returnees and IDPs increasing significantly over the course of 2016, needs have continued to outpace resources. Funding is required to provide longer term shelter solutions for these populations, particularly in regions where their numbers are heavily concentrated.



Food Security & Agriculture

Needs:

- A recent field mission by the FSAC cluster to Behsud district, Nangarhar has revealed that almost 100 returnee families have arrived since completion of the OCHA-led HEAT assessment at the end of October and are waiting to be assessed and responded to.
- Preparation for an IPC assessment at district level is currently underway with training for Ministry of Agriculture & Livestock (MAIL) enumerators to commence next week followed by a month of data collection before analysis can take place in the second half of February. The cluster plans to have final results and a summary report available by early March.

USD 54.4 mil

required to provide basic food assistance and livelihoods support to returnees in 2017

Response:

- To date, FSAC partners have provided food and cash assistance to 123,715 undocumented returnees, approximately half of all those reported to have returned (249,832). Of these, WFP, Save the Children, OXFAM, NCRO and DRC have supported 122,430 undocumented returnees in the Eastern Region, while Islamic relief have provided food assistance to 1,285 undocumented returnees in Arzan Qeemat, PD12 in Kabul.
 - WFP have provided one month food rations to 96,635 undocumented returnees at the IOM Transit Centre (TC). Of these, 14,980 were assisted in January 2017;
 - In Nangarhar, cash for food has been provided to 5,565 undocumented returnees in Jalalabad, Behsud and Surkhrod by Save the Children; to 1,915 families in Jalalabad, Surkhrod, Kama and Behsud by Oxfam; to 740 families in Kama district by DRC; and to 235 families in Jalalabad and Behsud districts by NCRO.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Due to difficulties in locating and identifying undocumented returnees in their areas of settlement, some 50% have yet to receive food or cash assistance.



Needs:

- An assessment of the retrospective load increase in 19 health facilities across Jalalabad (3), Behsud (6), Surkhrod (5), Rodat (2) and Khogyani (3) districts in Nangarhar province revealed that some 60% - 12 facilities in total¹ – experienced a 10% increase in outpatient consultations in August 2016 in comparison to the same month in 2015. Within that same timeframe, suspected cases of TB rose from just over 500 in August 2015 to approximately 1,400 in August 2016, while the number of deliveries requiring skilled birth attendance rose from around 2,700 a month to 3,400 a month. The assessment found that no triage area was available at Khogyani District Hospital (DH), while 5 Comprehensive Health Centres and 5 Basic Health Centres were found to have no emergency rooms for stabilisation and First Aid Trauma Posts. A follow up needs assessment is currently being organised by the Health Cluster to improve trauma care facilities at Khogyani DH.
- Prospective data (for October 2016) captured during the same assessment indicates returnees account for 9% and 10% of all outpatient and inpatient consultations respectively. Acute respiratory infections are the most common disease among returnee populations with an average of around 750 anticipated cases a month, while hypertension is the number one non-communicable disease, with an average of around 75 a month.

USD 2.2 mil
required to meet immediate health needs of returnee populations in 2017

Response:

- WHO continues to provide medicines to BPHS and EPHS service providers and humanitarian agencies for distribution at points of entry, while other health cluster partners are operating 8 mobile health teams in Nangarhar.
- To date, over 51,320 children have been vaccinated with the polio and measles vaccine at entry points. Expansion of vaccination activities will be carried out according to the influx rate and needs.
- Enhanced surveillance and outbreak response has been initiated in returnee locations – each new health facility is now considered a sentinel site and has a dedicated focal point.
- WHO are preparing to conduct public awareness campaigns among returnee populations in Nangarhar in collaboration with the MOPH/health promotion department with a focus on common diseases and the availability of health services in their settlement locations.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Lack of sufficient and predictable funds will inhibit the health response should returns increase from March 2017.
- The weak capacity of implementing partners, especially governmental departments and local NGOs, as well as limited monitoring remains an ongoing challenge.



Needs:

- Based on 2016 projections, an estimated 51,000 undocumented returnee and 60,000 registered refugee children are under the age of 5 and should have received vitamin A supplementation from September to the end of 2016, while 76,000 are between 2 and 5 and should have received deworming treatment by the end of the year.
- These 111,000 children under 5 also require acute malnutrition screening to, with an expectation that around 1,000 children identified as severely malnourished and 3,000 moderately malnourished. Currently, only 33,000 children – around 30% of those who returned since September – received emergency nutrition assistance until the end of 2016. The nutrition cluster is currently adjusting its targets for 2017.

46,308
children and women have received emergency nutrition assistance

Response:

- At Zero Point, UNICEF and AADA have provided 2,772 children under five with Vitamin A supplementation, 2,056 children between 2 and 5 with deworming tablets and 876 women with IYCF counselling. To date, 3,456 children have been screened for acute malnutrition, with 93 identified as suffering from SAM (2.7%) and 167 MAM (4.8%) and referred for treatment.
- At the IOM TC, emergency nutrition assistance has been provided to a total of 2,803 children under 5 with Vitamin A supplementation, 2,387 children between 2 and 5 with deworming tablets. 1,895 children were

¹ These were: Nangarhar RH, Khogyani DH, Najmul Qora CHC, Rodat CHC, Sultan Poor CHC+ Najmul Jihad CHC, Wach Tang SHC, Qalae Malakh BHC, Kan aw qatraghi BHC, Zaren Abad BHC, Kariz Kabir BHC and Nahre Shahee BHC.

screened for acute malnutrition, with 50 identified with SAM (2.6%) and 86 with MAM (4.5%), and referred for treatment. In both locations, supplies of RUTF were delivered for distribution to children identified with SAM.

- At the UNHCR Encashment Centre (EC) in Nangarhar, 3,695 children under 5 have received Vitamin A supplementation; 2,500 between 2 and 5 received deworming tablets, and 3,706 children were screened for acute malnutrition with 154 children were identified as SAM (4.2%) and 88 children as MAM (2.4%), and referred for treatment. 3,961 women and caretakers of children 6-23 months received IYCF counselling
- In the Kabul UNHCR EC, the MoPH/PND with UNICEF support provided Vitamin A supplementation to 20,177 children under 5 and deworming tablets to 13,178 children between 2 and 5. 11,983 women and caretakers of children under 2 received IYCF counselling. 15,070 children have been screened for acute malnutrition, with 218 identified with SAM (1.4%) and 587 children with MAM (3.9%) and referred for treatment.
- Both UNHCR ECs are closed as of 15th of December and therefore no nutrition activities are currently provided.

Gaps & Constraints:

- NSTR.



Needs:

- Health care professionals working in facilities in high return areas require training on GBV response procedures and protocols, while a mobile approach needs to be adopted for GBV outreach to cover areas beyond the static health facility locations.
- HEAT assessments conducted in Nangarhar and Kabul show that around 22% and 14% of undocumented returnee households have no family member with a tazkera, while 5% and 8% of children have a birth certificate. The lack of civil documentation significantly hinders undocumented returnee families to access essential services both in the short and long-term, while lack of formal identification for children limits access to other types of documentation in the future.

USD 37.8 mil

required to provide protection assistance to returnee populations in 2017

Response:

- In January 2017, 2 GBV cases among returnees from Pakistan were registered and assisted at the IMC family protection centre in the Eastern Region. IMC continues to conduct monitoring visits to health facilities to strengthen the identification and referral of GBV cases, especially in high return areas. Additionally, IMC has procured essential medicines for the treatment of GBV cases which will be delivered to health facilities in Nangarhar province this week. DRC has also conducted GBV awareness sessions for 70 people.
- Between end December and January 10, 9 cross-trained teams (specialised in survey, clearance and mine risk education) provided MRE to 11,225 individuals, including 835 undocumented returnees in the Southern region.
- In the East, 6,752 returnees, host community and IDPs in high return areas and Zero Point received MRE.
- UNICEF partner Tabish continues to provide complex assistance, including psychosocial support, to children in child friendly spaces at the IOM TC. 423 children including 217 girls were assisted in the reporting period.
- NRC has registered 12 HLP cases; 5 cases were solved and 20 persons provided with civil documentation.
- A land commission meeting chaired by the Deputy Governor in Laghman took place on 9 January 2017. 34 families were allocated with a Baba Sahib Returnees Township land plot in Mihterlam, while 20 were sent back for corrections. The land allocation site requires estimated 600,000 USD for mine survey and clearance before relocation. 294 returnee families have been selected since the process was initiated during last quarter of 2016.
- On 5 January 2017, the Cabinet endorsed the amendment to the land management law, adding an article on the registration of informally occupied houses and properties, despite an initial suggestion from ARAZI to have a detailed chapter outlining the procedure to solve the issue of documentation of informally owned property. Moving forward, the special procedure will be specified in Standard Operating Procedures or a regulation to be adopted by the government, enabling numerous inhabitants of informal settlements, including IDPs and returnees, to receive certificates of occupancy and potentially ownership documents. Currently, the majority of returnees and IDPs living in the outskirts of big cities and in the Kabul Informal Settlements are at risk of forced eviction and lack security of tenure.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Increasing insecurity across the country, but specifically in the East, combined with limited partner resources presents a significant gap to respond adequately.
- There is a lack of actors with psychosocial and GBV services and specifically in Nangarhar and Kabul.
- Protection partners have a limited number of staff trained in child protection and GBV, especially females.
- Outside of the IOM TC, UNHCR EC and Gambiri Islam Dara in Nangarhar province, there is a limited number of child friendly spaces available for children inhibiting outreach to high return communities in places of settlement.
- In the North no cross-trained teams for survey, clearance and MRE are deployed due to lack of funding.



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Needs:

- New needs assessments are currently being planned in Nangarhar, Laghman and Kunar by DACARR, ACTED and Oxfam.

Response:

- During the reporting period on average 40 returnee families (300 people) have been provided with access to women and child friendly WASH facilities at the Zero Point and TCs through UNICEF and IMC support.
- DACAAR, IMC and PRRD are the only agencies supporting WASH for returnees in Nangarhar, Laghman, Kabul and Kandahar with financial support from UNICEF. Around 5,257 returnee families have received hygiene kits and approximately 6,930 returnee families have been reached through hygiene promotion initiatives.
- IMC and ZoAC have begun to provide durable solutions, including the provision of boreholes with hand pumps and solar pumping systems with public taps, targeting an estimated 4,300 returnee families and host communities in five villages in Nangarhar province.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Partners are not sharing assessment reports with the cluster in a timely fashion.
- Difficulties in identifying returnee populations interspersed with host communities and living in rented accommodation has delayed the WASH response in some areas. Partners are working closely with PRRDs and provincial health departments to identify appropriate solutions to address the gaps.
- Delays in land allocation have hindered the implementation of durable WASH solutions for returnees.
- In addition to in-kind assistance of hygiene kits, information and awareness raising on safe WASH practices must continue at the border given difficulties in identifying returnee populations in areas of settlement.

USD 15.1 mil

required to meet the emergency WASH needs of returnees in 2017



Refugee & Returnee

Needs:

- Returnees continue to require permanent shelter, food and winterisation assistance, as well as documentation for enrollment in schools (grade seven and up), income generation opportunities and psychosocial support. In recent weeks, DRC has identified a range of needs – food, NFIs, emergency shelter/tents and WASH – among returnee families in Jalalabad. Returnees were also found to lack access to information regarding access to basic services, programmes and legal assistance. An accountability feedback mechanism is needed to strengthen equitable distribution, ensure greater transparency, and mitigate discrimination or barriers to accessing programmes and services.

1.1 mil

returnees expected in Afghanistan in 2017

Response:

- IRC provided emergency support to undocumented returnees in the provinces of Nangarhar, Paktika and Khost. Between October and December 2016, cash grants were distributed to 3,561 families. Some 613 families also received cash for winterisation, and 158 families received tents. Some 46 families were provided with emergency latrines, and 202 families were given hygiene kits. IRC's needs assessments continue in these provinces.
- HealthNet TPO provided emergency primary health care, nutrition and psychosocial support services at four health facilities for registered refugees settled in four districts (i.e. Matun, Tani, Alishir/Terezayi and Spera) in Khost province.
- DRC provided cash for NFI assistance to 414 families to help address the needs of assessed undocumented returnee families. Some 47 additional families were unreachable and did not receive their assistance.
- IOM continued site expansion at the IOM TC in Torkham. Phase one of the construction process is now complete and phase two is under way. All six phases should be complete by early March.
- The Afghan Returnee Information System (ARIS) has registered over 24,000 refugees and returnees since beginning operation in Torkham in early November.
- IOM will begin to roll out of the Displacement Tracking Matrix in Nangarhar, Kunar and Laghman this month, with a training scheduled for district-level focal points on 22 and 23 January. A district-level assessment in the three provinces will follow thereafter.

Gaps & Constraints:

- Shelter construction assistance is lacking to help support returnees, particularly those who are secondarily displaced due to insecurity, lack of social services and intercommunal disputes.
- WASH, especially emergency latrines, are lacking for returnees residing in Jalalabad.



Education

Needs:

- Findings of OCHA-led Rapid Assessments indicate that undocumented returnee, registered refugee returnee, and IDP children do not attend school for three main reasons: i) lack of capacity of schools to enroll additional children; ii) lack of required documentation to facilitate enrolment (although schools are instructed to immediately enroll returnees without documents) and iii) costs associated with education. A follow up education-specific assessment by Save the Children International (SCI) found almost half of returnee children are not currently enrolled in school. More than 70 per cent of returnee parents and community leaders who took part in an education survey compiled by SCI said early marriage and child labor were major risks faced by repatriated children currently not in school. Among others, shortage of teachers, teaching and learning materials, textbooks, tents, establishment and rehabilitation of WASH facilities in formal schools, provision of language and catchup classes are some of immediate needs.

600,000

returnee and IDP children are in need of education in emergencies in 2017

Response:

- The EiE WG finalised its 2017 response plan in December 2016. The plan, targeting 600,000 returnee and IDP children, aims to: i) create access to safe and secure quality education; ii) strengthen the capacity of the education system and resilience of the community; and iii) contribute to reducing risk and vulnerabilities of returnee and IDPs. Specific activities include: mapping IDP and returnee students, community mobilisation, strengthening school management capacity, temporary learning centres, supporting the construction of permanent structures, provision of drinking water and sanitation facilities, teacher recruitment and training, provision of teaching and learning materials, psychosocial and lifeskills development, integrating returnee teachers and students and strengthening effective leadership to coordinate EiE response.
- In the Eastern Region, 170 teachers (80 by Khowana da Afghanistan Ipara and 90 by PIN) have been deployed. NRC hired 60 teachers and is recruiting 60 additional teachers, and also provided 120 tents for 12 new schools. In the Eastern and Southern Regions, UNICEF have supplied 13,840 School bags and 30 ECD kits for 1,200 returnee children enrolled in formal schools. 369 School-in-a-Box were supplied for 16,240 (14,960 formal school & 1,280 returnee children) and 192 in the Southern region. 8,000 returnees in formal schools received 320 kits including various teaching and learning materials. 144 Community Based Classes have been established for 5,531 IDP & returnee children, 147 teachers trained on landmine awareness. A total of 50,000,000 EiE leaflets were distributed at provincial levels to provide information on the availability of services.
- As per the new decentralised exam procedures for returnees and IDPs, administration of exams for grade 1-6 students commenced on 4 January 2017 and will be followed for grade 7-12. Provincial Education Departments in all provinces committed to the registration of returnees and IDPs as per MoE directives. All returnee and IDP children are therefore expected to access learning opportunities (either formal or community-based schools).

Gaps & Constraints:

- Lack of funding for EiE, as well as an insufficient number of teachers, teaching and learning supplies and limited learning spaces, will inhibit the quality of the response.

Background on the crisis

Almost 620,000 Afghans returned from Pakistan in 2016 following continued pressure by Pakistani authorities through new visa requirements, shorter extension of proof of registration cards, increased police raids, detentions and deportations, restricted access to livelihoods, health care and education as well as lack of employment opportunities. While the flow of both registered refugees and undocumented returnees has stemmed in recent weeks, the rate of returns is anticipated to increase from 1 March 2017 onwards (following the end in the winter pause), with as many as 1.1 million Afghans anticipated to return by the end of 2017.

Registered returning refugees hold a Proof of Registration (PoR) card valid until 31 March 2017 which guarantees rights in line with international refugee law. Since March 2002, the return of Afghan refugees is facilitated by UNHCR through the Voluntary Repatriation Centers in Pakistan. Assistance and a cash grant is provided at four Encashment Centres in Afghanistan (Jalalabad, Kabul, Kandahar, Herat), while operational partners including UNICEF, WHO, MoRR and Ministry of Education provide emergency health services, vaccines, mine risk awareness and information on land, civil documentation and education.

Undocumented returnees are Afghans residing in Pakistan without a formal registration card (PoR) denoting refugee status. This may be either due to their non-participation in registration exercises, failure to keep their registration status updated or arrival after registration processes have concluded. Many Afghan returnee families are a mixture of both refugees (i.e. heads of households) and undocumented (women and children). Undocumented returnees are registered by MoRR and assisted by IOM and other humanitarian partners at the IOM-managed transit sites in Torkham and Kandahar where they receive post arrival assistance according to their assessed vulnerability.

Deportees are individuals removed by State authorities through judicial or administrative procedures.

For further information, please contact:

Dominic Parker, Head of Office, OCHA Afghanistan, parker@un.org, Cell +93 790 3001 101

Charlotte Ashley, Deputy Head of Office, OCHA Afghanistan, ashley@un.org, Cell +93 793 001 128

For more information, please visit www.unocha.org www.reliefweb.int