

During late June and in July 2025, Afghanistan witnessed one of the largest waves of returnees arriving from Iran in recent years, with tens of thousands of Afghans. Many of them were deported, while others returned voluntarily. These returnees arrive with no resources and face urgent humanitarian needs at the border and longer-term challenges to resettle in Afghanistan. Various actors, including the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA), international and national NGOs, and Afghan communities, have mobilized to provide immediate food, shelter, medical care, and onward transportation. However, the scale of needs far exceeds the support available.

Overview of Returnee Flows

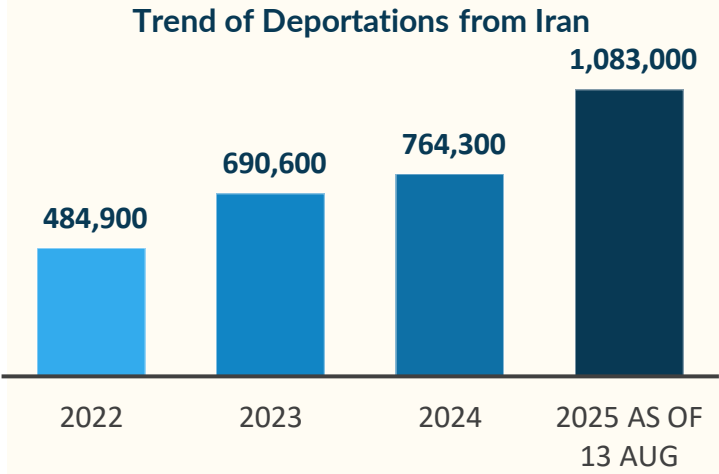
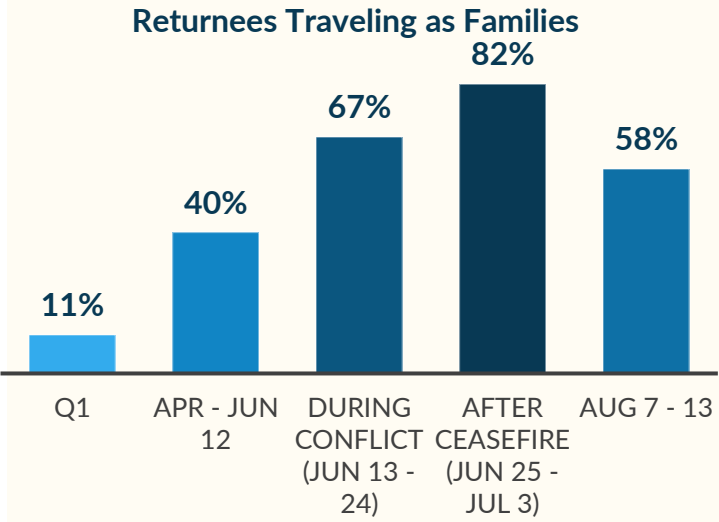
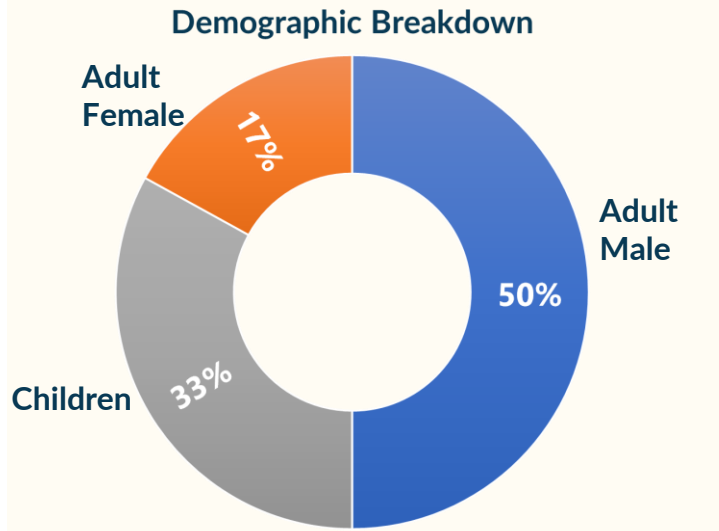
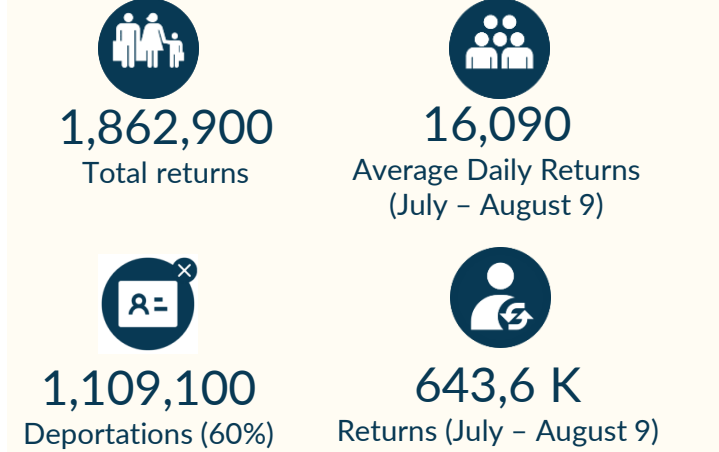
- According to a UN agency, in June alone, more than 256,000 Afghans returned from Iran, and an unprecedented surge in repatriations has hindered their ability to provide aid, reaching only 10% of those in need. Daily returns increased sharply after June 13th, with further spikes observed after June 25th.
- As of July 25th, more than 2.24 million Afghans have returned to the country since the beginning of 2025 from Iran and Pakistan.
- In July, the number of returnees increased drastically. The UN agencies and local officials in Herat reported that over 30,000 people crossed the Islam Qala border per day into the country. Between July 1st and August 9th 643,600 individuals returned from Iran.
- The highest numbers of returnees were recorded in the first week of July, with 50,000 people on July 4th alone. Other notable figures include 43,000 Afghans who returned on July 1st, 33,956 on July 9th, and 30,635 as of July 8th.
- In the first 23 days of July, 409,500 Afghans were deported, which is almost double compared to the entire month of June. June previously had the highest monthly deportation figures in the past three years. Over 526,100 Afghans were deported between June 13th and August 9th.
- As of August 4th, OCHA reported that among the people returned from Iran, 50% are adult males, 17% are adult females, and 33% are children under the age of 18.
- According to UN agencies, as of August 13th, 1.86 million people have returned from Iran.
- However, the trend has shown a decline over the last several weeks. Between August 7th and 13th, the average daily returns were 6,300, which is a 44% decrease from 11,300 in the previous week. Despite this drop, the current level remains significantly higher than the first quarter of 2025, when the daily average stood at approximately 3,500.
- As of August 13th, 1.11 million Afghans have been deported from Iran since January 2025, almost 60% of the total returns from Iran. This is the highest number of deported people in the last few years.

Needs of Afghan Returnees

- The large waves of Afghan returnees arriving from Iran face urgent and overwhelming needs. Many return with nothing but the clothes they are wearing and lack food, clean water, shelter, and medical care at the border. Returnees themselves have reported critical needs for immediate assistance such as meals, safe drinking water, tents, blankets, and transport.
- The results from UN agencies' reports show food, financial support, and housing/accommodation are the top three needs of returnees upon arrival. During the interviews, 89% of returnees asked for food, 80% requested financial support, and 82% asked for housing/accommodation. In the same report, 67% of the returnees requested legal assistance, 34% were in need of support with family reunification, and 17% requested information on services and assistance, making them the top three protection services requested.
- In another report by OCHA on August 4th, Health, Protection, Cash, WASH and Transport were the priority needs for returnees.
- An international organization's assessment, revealed on July 11th:
 - 100% need items such as blankets, kitchen utensils, and clothing
 - 85% do not have money for transport to leave the border sites
 - 83% lack access to health facilities
 - 68% need tents and tarpaulins for shelter
 - 94% need access to hygiene kits and latrines
 - 72% do not have adequate food
 - 97% do not know how to access assistance, or lack the documentation to do so.

Sources

1. [Total Returns to Afghanistan in 2025 – UNHCR, August 2025](#)
2. [Afghanistan Returnees Dashboard – UNHCR Power BI, Augus 2025](#)
3. [Returnees Overview \(04 August 2025\) - OCHA, 4 August 2025](#)
4. [Emergency Border Response \(03-09 August 2025\) – ReliefWeb, 12 August 2025](#)
5. [Afghanistan Returnee Dashboard - August 2025 – UNHCR, August 2025](#)
6. [Afghanistan Returnee Dashboard - July 2025" – UNHCR, July 2025](#)
7. ["Afghanistan Returnees Overview" – OCHA, 19 July 2025](#)
8. ["Up to 3 million Afghans may return home this year: UN" – Daily Sabah, October 31, 2023](#)
9. ["Afghanistan Returnee Monitoring Weekly Update \(3-9 July 2025\)" – UNHCR, July 2025](#)
10. ["Iran, Pakistan Continue Mass Deportation of Afghan Migrants" – Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty \(RFE/RL\), July 12, 2024](#)
11. ["Afghan refugees face uncertain future as Pakistan extends stay deadline" – Arab News, July 14, 2024](#)
12. ["Iran expels half a million Afghans in 16-day stretch since recent conflict with Israel, UN says" - WRAL News, July 12, 2024](#)
13. ["Afghan families ordered to leave Iran now need urgent food and shelter" – Islamic Relief Worldwide, July 12, 2024](#)
14. ["Urgent and extensive assistance to thousands of migrants at the Islam Qala border" - Ava Press, July 12, 2024](#)
15. ["Returnees Receive Free Services at Islam Qala Border" – Bakhtar News Agency, July 15, 2024](#)



Response Overview (Area of Return)

INGOs and NGOs Response as of 4 August:

Food Security

64,695
Individuals reached with high-energy biscuits

10,800
Households received cash for food (5,800 AFN each)

Health

85,981
Health Screenings

43,341
Outpatient Consultation

79,027
OPV Vaccinations

The most common diseases seen were acute respiratory tract infections, acute watery diarrhea, and skin disease conditions.

Nutrition

40,352
Children under 5 were screened.

3,626
Cases treated

2,173
Pregnant & breastfeeding women were screened

Nutrition support provided services include **Vitamin A, Micronutrient supplements, and IYCF Counselling, Folic Acid Supplementation, Micronutrient Powder**

Protection

243,000 returnees were provided with case management, PSS, cash, documentation, awareness, referrals, dignity kits, and EOR. Over 8,000 unaccompanied or separated children received protection support. Moreover, mine action teams surveyed 10 hazardous areas, cleared 750,000m², and destroyed 34 explosive items

WASH

110,000 individuals were provided with safe water and sanitation. Nearly 21,000 received hygiene kits and NFIs, while hygiene promotion reached 1,174 people. Waste services removed 396m³ of solid waste and dislodged 870m³.

Response Overview (Border Consortium)

INGOs and NGOs Response as of 4 August:

WASH **386,000**

Food **694,000**

Health **647,000**

EORE **148,000**

Infrastructure **121,000**

Transport **49,000**

Protection **81,000**

Nutrition **8,000**

Polio **61,000**

Unaccompanied or Separated Children/CP **2,000**

IEA Response:

IEA sources reported that each family member receives 2,000 Afghanis in cash, warm meals for lunch and dinner, SIM cards, and medical services from IEA.

Afghan Communities:

- The Afghan communities, businessmen, and local charity foundation have played a major role in supporting returnees at the Islam Qala border. According to some social media reports, the transportation costs of returnees are 2 to 3 million Afghanis a day. Almost **90%** of these costs are covered by the Afghan communities.
- Mirwais Azizi, an Afghan businessman, has provided **1 billion Afghanis** to returnees.
- People in Herat provided **200 vehicles** to the returnees from Islam Qala to Herat city. Others provided free bus transport services to the area of return for the returnees.
- The local charity foundations also played a critical role in the provision of the urgent needs such as food, water, transport and shelter for returnees. For instance, Hajjat-ul-Islam Charity Foundation emphasizes the continuity and careful planning of aid and noted, “Every night, about 1,500 hot food parcels with drinking water are distributed to refugee families at the Islam Qala border.” At the same time, the Sayyid al-Shohada Charity Foundation has announced that more than 3,000 food packages, cold water, and other basic amenities have been sent to this region.