

Tajikistan

February 2023

UNHCR is providing assistance to the Government in developing border management safeguards, **strengthening the national asylum system**, and supports refugees in attaining full self-reliance.

UNHCR is taking the lead in efforts to bolster the capacities of governments and inter-agency **emergency response** to the possible risk of a refugee influx from Afghanistan.

UNHCR has been providing assistance to the Government in the process of legalizing persons who are at **risk of statelessness** and are illegally residing in Tajikistan.

POPULATION OF CONCERN (AS OF DECEMBER 2022)

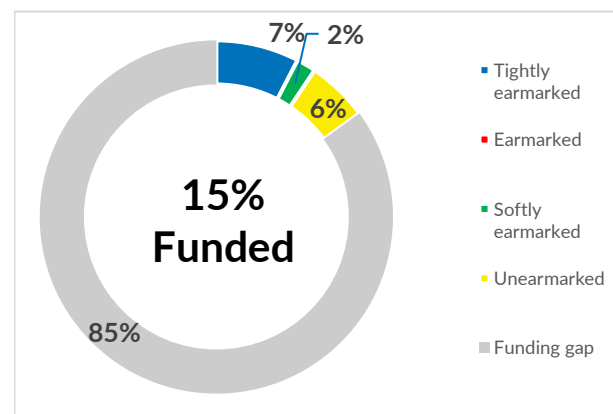
A total of **14,964** persons of concern, including:

- Refugees: 8,460
- Asylum Seekers: 1,113
- Stateless persons: 5,391

FUNDING (AS OF FEBRUARY 2023)

USD 3,600,000

requested for the Tajikistan situation
USD 540,664 funded



UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff:

- 9 National Staff
- 4 International Staff
- 4 Affiliated Workforce

Offices:

- 1 Country Office in Dushanbe



Working with Partners

- UNHCR is an active partner of the United Nations Country Team, Development Coordination Council, Rapid Emergency Assessment and Coordination Team, and other inter-agency coordination forums. In addition, UNHCR co-chairs the Refugee Coordination Model for refugee emergency preparedness and response with the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan. This model involves humanitarian and development partners, international financial institutions, and donor communities.

Main Activities

Strengthening the National Asylum System

- The Republic of Tajikistan has ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol and has developed national asylum legislation and procedures. UNHCR is providing enhanced capacity-building to Government stakeholders, directly and through its implementing partners. Thus, in accordance with the workplan agreed between UNHCR and the Parliament, UNHCR is providing technical and expert support to draft new Law on Refugees, to expand the asylum space, enhance the quality of asylum procedures and the overall protection environment.
- Close cooperation with the Department of Citizenship and Work with Refugees of the Passport Registration Service of Ministry of Internal Affairs, allows UNHCR to further strengthen protection of refugees and asylum seekers by enhancing coordination and provision of expert and technical support.
- Following the sustained advocacy of the Office, the visit of the UNHCR High Commissioner to Tajikistan held in March 2022. Which resulted in a meeting with His Excellency the President of Tajikistan. Subsequently, the work of the state RSD Commission was resumed. UNHCR continues its advocacy with the Government to ensure that refugees and asylum-seekers enjoy international protection and access to territory of Tajikistan for asylum, in accordance with country's national framework and international obligations.

Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

- UNHCR, the Government, UN and NGO partners collaborate to support refugees' economic inclusion through skills training, job placement and small business initiatives, as well as the realization of basic socio-economic rights such as access to education, healthcare and social protection. UNHCR and its partners also provide legal and material assistance to the most vulnerable.
- UNHCR is devoted to the advancement of community-based projects that are advantageous to both refugees and host communities - encouraging social harmony and peaceful coexistence, promoting socio-economic inclusion of refugees. To achieve this, UNHCR continues to collaborate with the private sector, including the Hilton, Serena, and Hyatt Regency Hotels in Dushanbe as well as Auchan Hypermarket and Coca – Cola Tajikistan.

Durable Solutions

- UNHCR ascertains the intentions of refugees in order to identify the most suitable durable solutions for them. For those refugees willing to return to their homeland, UNHCR provides necessary support and information, so they can make informed decisions on voluntary repatriation when the circumstances are suitable for return. Refugees preferring to stay in Tajikistan are being assisted in obtaining professional training and job placement that will foster their self-reliance capabilities and local integration prospects. Resettlement opportunities remain unavailable.

Addressing Statelessness

- Since 2014, UNHCR - in partnership with the Government of Tajikistan and its implementing partners has been carrying out a project to address statelessness in Tajikistan. Since then, 58,951 stateless persons and persons with undetermined nationality have been registered in Dushanbe, Districts of Republican Subordination

(DRS) as well as in target regions and districts of Sughd, Khatlon, Rasht, GBAO. Up to date, 54,402 persons have had their nationality confirmed.

- In December 2019, the Government of Tajikistan adopted an Amnesty Law with the aim to regularize the stay of stateless persons and foreign nationals residing in the country illegally. To facilitate the implementation of the Amnesty Law, UNHCR has provided extended technical support, capacity building and facilitated identification and legal counselling for potential persons falling under the afore-mentioned law, to submit their documents for legalization of stay, to the Passport Registration Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. This law expired in December 2022. UNHCR and its implementing partners are currently advocating for the prolongation of the Amnesty Law.
- To prevent statelessness at birth, UNHCR is advocating for changes in the Civil Registration Law to ensure universal birth registration for every child born in Tajikistan regardless of the parent's legal status and availability of documents.

Emergency Preparedness

- Despite the ongoing instability in Afghanistan that affects the security and socio-economic situation of the population across the country, the possibility of an influx of arrivals from Afghanistan is considered to be minimal. Nevertheless, in Tajikistan, the refugee emergency preparedness and response process has been maintained through regular inter-agency coordination activities with the government, with the aim of providing assistance to the government in establishing the necessary conditions for the reception and accommodation of refugees in the event of an influx.
- In close coordination with the Committee for Emergency Situations, WASH led by UNICEF and Shelter led by UNHCR completed construction works at the Jaloliddin Balkhi area in Khatlon region and in September 2022 handed over the temporary accommodation site for 500 refugees to the Government of Tajikistan.
- The government is currently considering the implementation of reception facilities at border crossing points for emergency shelter, the provision of essential assistance, screening, and preliminary registration of potential asylum seekers from Afghanistan.
- RRP 2023 is a joint plan to build resilient communities in the region in line with the Global Compact on Refugees and the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees. The plan aims to support Government of Tajikistan and its national services, particularly in the areas of health & nutrition, education, food security, WASH, livelihoods, resilience and social inclusion, to be prepared and be able to respond to the potential influx of refugees, natural disasters, and other crises. For 2023 it envisages USD 17.5 million and targets people of concern residing in Tajikistan, with 11 international and national partners participating in the response.

External / Donors Relations

UNHCR appreciates the partnership and financial contributions of both unearmarked and broadly earmarked funds from donors, as well as for those who have contributed regionally and directly to UNHCR in Tajikistan:

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