

Annual Results Report

2022

Tajikistan

Acknowledgements

UNHCR would like to thank all the stakeholders that contributed data and evidence to this report and reviewed their progress against the joint results of the strategy, including forcibly displaced and stateless people, host communities and host governments, United Nations agencies, and international and national non-governmental organizations, civil society and private sector. Their contributions enable us to create positive changes in the lives of the people we serve.

[Contact us](#)

www.unhcr.org

Downloaded date: 03/05/2023

Table of Contents

Section 1: Context and Overview

- 1.1 - Changes to the Operational Context
- 1.2 - Progress Against the Desired Impact
- 1.3 - Challenges to Achieving Impacts
- 1.4 - Collaboration and Partnerships

Section 2: Results

- 2.1 - Outcomes and Achievements
- 2.2 - Age, Gender and Diversity

Section 3: Resources

- 3.1 - Financial Data
- 3.2 - Resources Overview

Section 1: Context and Overview

1.1 Changes to the Operational Context

Maintaining space for asylum in Tajikistan has been challenging. The Government maintained the closed border policy on security grounds.. Deportations of Afghan nationals, including those with valid documents continued throughout the year, reaching its peak in September. In total, 110 Afghans were deported while UNHCR maintained its guidance globally of advocating against forced returns to Afghanistan. However, 334 individuals, including new arrivals (87 individuals) were able to lodge asylum applications in 2022

UNHCR continued to lead the Refugee Coordination Model with partners and actively mobilized additional resources through the 2022 Regional Refugee Response Plan, which included the participation of nine agencies. In 2022, UNHCR constructed and handed over the Balkhi temporary refugee settlement to the Government in cooperation with UNICEF and WHO. In addition, UNHCR rehabilitated 10 public buildings (four hospitals and six schools) in refugee-hosting districts. The engagement of the Asian Development Bank and World Bank was welcome and allowed UNHCR and partners to engage in a broader dialogue on the support needed for refugees and host communities, benefiting the protection environment.

UNHCR continued its activities aimed at identifying, protecting, and reducing statelessness issues. Some 5,854 people achieved solutions and 5,157 people were also additionally identified

1.2. Progress Against the Desired Impact

1. Impact Area: Attaining Favorable Protection Environments

Refugees, asylum seekers and stateless people enjoy unhindered access to territory with zero cases of refoulment, asylum procedures, effective status determination and right to appeal negative decisions

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Actual (2022)
1.1 Proportion of individuals seeking international protection who are able to access asylum procedures.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	96.08%	98.80%
1.2 Proportion of PoC who are able to move freely within the country of habitual residence. [GCR 2.1.2]	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	100.00%	100.00%

The protection space in Tajikistan continued to face challenges, particularly as a result of tightened border security, and the suspension of the asylum procedure as well as increased use of deportation.

In September, 110 Afghans, including refugees and asylum seekers, were deported back to Afghanistan through the land border without prior access to legal assistance or recourse to the courts. UNHCR's protection concerns were raised with the Tajikistan authorities at different levels and fora.

Tajikistan resumed its asylum procedure in March with its Refugee Status Determination (RSD) Commission conducting nine hearings, and which saw 2,077 Afghans granted refugee status. Although there is no record of deportations after September 2022, UNHCR continued its advocacy effort on the need for asylum seekers to have access to territory.

UNHCR continued its engagement with the authorities to harmonize its local legislations and strengthen the asylum regime through a refugee law review process initiated mid-year by the Tajik Parliament. To this effect, a Joint Taskforce was established, in which UNHCR offered technical support and helped organize a study tour to Georgia to observe best practices in its asylum procedures as a good model. The finalized draft of the Joint Taskforce report is expected to be completed in 2023 for a formal submission to the Parliament.

In support of the authorities' efforts to respond to Afghan's seeking access to their territory, UNHCR and the RRP partners constructed temporary refugee accommodation near the border with the capacity to accommodate up to 500 people.

Refugee and asylum seekers data/information improved following UNHCR's biometric verification and registration of all refugees and asylum seekers in the country, in collaboration with the authorities.

2. Impact Area: Realizing Rights in Safe Environments

Refugees and asylum seekers can fully exercise their rights for basic services, including the right to health and education and are able to achieve meaningful socio-economic integration through enhanced livelihood opportunities and self-reliance programmes

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Actual (2022)
2.3 Proportion of PoC with access to health services	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	100.00%	100.00%

In Tajikistan, refugees and asylum seekers enjoy access to health, education facilities, and employment opportunities. However, the absorption capacity of services is limited and requires additional support to accommodate refugees and asylum seekers. To this effect, UNHCR, in close collaboration with other humanitarian and development actors, particularly UNICEF, assisted in rehabilitating selected public infrastructures in major refugee hosting areas, including schools and health facilities. Tajikistan sought to be inclusive with the inclusion of people into the national COVID-19 vaccination plan. 512 people benefited additionally from access to Tajikistan's national social protection system, receiving assistance on par with Tajik citizens. UNHCR, in collaboration with private and public organizations, sought to enhance livelihoods through targeted projects for the displaced and vulnerable host community with the underlying aim to also promote trust, acceptance and friendship among asylum seekers and local people. Some 569 people completed vocational training, and 278 people undertook apprenticeship programmes. Additionally, 357 people trained on business basics, 196 received business grants, and 117 received tool kits. This has helped with job placements, seeing 331 people take up selected opportunities to make a living. Some 1,044 refugee children were enrolled in primary education while 163 attended secondary education, with 72 graduating from high school in 2022.

UNHCR continued the provision of limited medical support to a group of refugees with specific needs. The interventions included provision of free medical consultations and referral to state medical facilities; home visits; reimbursement of prescribed medications; and other support. 490 home visits were conducted to identify vulnerability levels and other protection needs. 1,866 people were supported with mental health counselling.

To alleviate the economic impact of COVID-19 pandemic, UNHCR provided a one-time cash distribution to all refugees and asylum seekers (9,979 individuals /2,090 households).

4. Impact Area: Securing Solutions

Refugees, asylum seekers and stateless people are provided avenues for naturalization, regularization of their legal stay and status and are able to fully exercise their right to voluntary repatriation

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Actual (2022)
4.1 Number of refugees who voluntarily return in safety and dignity to their country of origin. [RF/GCR 4.2.1]	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	0	15
4.2b Number of PoC who departed through complementary pathways	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	119	4,213
4.3a Number of stateless persons for whom nationality is granted or confirmed.	Stateless Persons	9,761	719

UNHCR is providing assistance to Afghan refugees in cases where refugees decide they wish to voluntarily return to Afghanistan. The level of returns in the region remains low as most refugees are cautious about returning to Afghanistan due to rights concerns, access to land and work, a dire humanitarian situation, and weak economic conditions. Some 15 refugees decided to voluntarily return home from Tajikistan in 2022. Naturalization options do not exist in Tajikistan, and there is no resettlement programme. However, a small resettlement programme is needed to address the situation of mandate refugees with limited options or solutions. Meanwhile, people have continued to benefit from complementary pathways, without UNHCR engagement. According to IOM, in 2022, a total of 4,213 Afghans departed from Tajikistan with 4,199 departing to Canada through the Canadian sponsorship programme, and 14 departing to the United States through a Government-Assisted Resettlement scheme.

A statelessness identification and reduction project implemented in Tajikistan from 2014-2022 has led to resolving (granting and confirming nationality) around 90 per cent of the total identified cases. Partners identified and registered 5,157 people, and 5,854 were assisted with finding solutions. Most of the newly identified stateless group was comprised of women and girls (around 71 per cent) while 35 per cent were children. The majority of identified cases belong to the category of "USSR birth certificate holders" (58 per

cent), followed by “USSR passport holders” (25 per cent) and “persons without valid proof of nationality” (12 per cent). Around 3 per cent of the total cases fall under the scope of the Amnesty Law. To ensure the sustainability of the statelessness reduction work, UNHCR continued to provide technical support, where needed, to deal with and resolve specific cases, sharing its expertise with the authorities in Tajikistan.

1.3 Challenges to Achieving Impacts

The authorities maintained a closed border policy with Afghanistan with few exceptions granted to Tajik visa holders. The procedure to obtain a Tajik visa for Afghan nationals has, however, become stricter. Access to asylum procedure in Tajikistan is subject to legal entry to the territory. The asylum system continues to require strengthening to meet minimum procedural and quality standards. UNHCR is not included in the RSD Commission and advocacy to return to its former observer status were unsuccessful. As a result, UNHCR faces limits in assessing the overall progress of the RSD process, including the quality of interviews held and soundness of decisions based on any case’s merits.

Refoulement of Afghans increased in August and September with a total 110 deported without the confirmed presence of the procedural safeguards or legal recourse. The situation of 148 mandate refugees remains challenging with limited options or rights available to them, effectively leaving them in legal limbo with no socio-economic inclusion opportunities.

Resolutions 325 and 328, which prohibits refugees and asylum seekers from residing in certain areas, impedes beneficiaries from the realization of certain rights, including freedom of movement and choice of place of living, which impacts various livelihood and job opportunities. In addition, accessing financial institutions is another barrier.

The closure of UNHCR’s partner in GBAO affected identifying, reducing, and protecting people at risk of stateless or assisting stateless people.

Gaps in the legislation to safeguard universal birth registration to prevent future cases of statelessness remains a challenge to address.

1.4 Collaboration and Partnerships

UNHCR co-chairs refugee coordination in Tajikistan together with the Ministry of Internal Affairs in a mechanism that brings more than 30 humanitarian, development, and international financial institutions together to support and strengthen the preparedness and response actions of the Government in case of refugee influx from Afghanistan, and led by the government.

With sister UN agencies, UNHCR collaborates on a range of activities. UNHCR, jointly with UNICEF, rehabilitated schools in Vahdat and Sughd. A temporary refugee accommodation site in Balkhi was established jointly with UNICEF and WHO and handed over to the government to assist with the refugee response. The engagement of international financial institutions has been welcome. The ADB committed to enhancing the capacities of existing services in a neighbouring community in Balkhi to absorb the increased demands on social services in the event of refugee influx. The World Bank conducted a joint socio-economic assessment of refugees in Tajikistan and examined options for making grant funding available through its Window for Host Communities and Refugees. UNHCR facilitated the delivery of assistance by UNFPA, IOM, and other organizations. It also remained engaged with OSCE, BMSC, UNICEF and RCST in capacity building of border guards.

The private sector has been critical to expanding UNHCR’s work on socio-economic inclusion. Partnerships included Hyatt, Hilton, Serena, Coca Cola and Auchan, particularly assisting skills building through apprenticeship programmes, and job placements for refugees and asylum seekers. A strategic cooperation aimed at promoting inclusion and securing opportunities for livelihoods has been established between UNHCR, the Ministry of Industry, New Technologies, Innovation and Industry Development Fund, and JICA. A new partnership to advance legal measures for refugees has started with the Parliament of the Republic of Tajikistan to assist in revising its existing refugee law. UNHCR continued its support to Refugee Association Ariana, which was instrumental in engaging and supporting refugee communities.

On statelessness projects, UNHCR continued its cooperation with the Executive Apparatus of the President's Office and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, focusing on implementation of an amnesty law and the government's pledges during the 2019 GRF.

UNHCR collaborated within UN efforts in Tajikistan within the UNCT and Donor Coordination Council to ensure inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers within the national development plan, and efforts to progress on SDGs.

Section 2: Results

2.1. Outcomes and Achievements

1. Outcome Area: Access to Territory, Reg. and Documentation

Asylum seekers at the border have access to territory, benefit from functional referral mechanisms and improved reception facilities

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
1.1 Proportion of refugees and asylum seekers registered on an individual basis.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	80.00%	100.00%	98.80%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

Maintaining protection space continued to be a challenge, despite a resumption of the registration of asylum applications and the work of the State RSD Commission in March 2022. Through UNHCR's legal partner, 334 Afghan nationals were assisted in lodging asylum applications, including 87 new arrivals.

UNHCR continued its engagement with the government to seek a strengthening of the asylum regime through a refugee law review process initiated mid-year by the Tajik Parliament. To this effect, a Joint Taskforce was established and a workplan developed, combined with technical support and the organization of a study tour to Georgia to see its asylum model. The finalized draft of the joint taskforce's report is expected to be completed during 2023 for submission to the Parliament.

To support the government's capacity building of the Border Guards and Ministry of Internal Affairs on asylum matters, UNHCR provided equipment and technical support to enhance protection sensitive border management and asylum information/data management respectively. UNHCR conducted a biometric verification and registration of refugees and asylum seekers in Tajikistan with the authorities to enhance protection, assistance, and solutions.

The government maintained closed border policy, resulting in Afghan nationals being largely unable to seek international protection. The procedure to obtain Tajik visas for Afghan nationals also became stricter. The Temporary Accommodation Center (State Reception facility) in Hissor was unused due to a lack of clear referral mechanisms for asylum seekers at the border and no decision by the Ministry of Internal Affairs on allocation of its staffing.

Together with the Committee of Emergency Situation and Civil Defense (CoESCD) and the Border Guards Service under the State Committee for National Security, UNHCR conducted three border monitoring visits to the crossing points to have an opportunity to understand how the authorities operate at the border. In addition, UNHCR partner, the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan (RCST), conducted regular border monitoring visits covering seven border-crossing points.

UNHCR intensified its support to capacity building activities for government staff totaling 17 various trainings on diverse subject matters in 2022. Two workshops were aimed at mid- to senior-level border officials in cooperation with OSCE Border Management Staff College. Three trainings were delivered to the staff of Passport Registration Service (PRS), the Custom Service and the Migration Service and Border Guards jointly with OSCE. Seven trainings were provided to Border Guards within the framework of Partnership Agreement with the RCST. Five workshops were provided jointly with a partner for the Tajik Police Academy.

Jointly with UNICEF and WHO, UNHCR finalized the construction work for a temporary refugee settlement in Balkhi for 500 people and this was handed over to CoESCD. The ADB committed to upgrade existing

services and facilities in the nearby community focusing on support to assist communities absorb the increased demand on social services.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

The Government of Tajikistan maintained the closed border policy throughout 2022. UNHCR continued to engage in dialogue with the authorities on this and its guidance note calling on States to not forcibly return Afghans at this time to their country.

The ability of UNHCR to conduct more regular border monitoring activities was a challenge due to restrictions on access to the border and lack of a MoU with Tajikistan's Border Guards. UNHCR has a partnership with RCST, however, which already has an MoU with the Border Guards, specifically to carry out regular monitoring for any cases of irregular crossing or refoulement. There are also some limits, however, on the extent to which the RCST can easily undertake these activities due to the continued security concerns the authorities have around its borders.

2. Outcome Area: Status Determination

Asylum-seekers can enjoy fair and efficient RSD procedures with the possibility of appealing negative decisions in court

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
2.2 Proportion of individuals undergoing asylum procedures who have access to legal advice or representation.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2021, as the security situation in Afghanistan deteriorated rapidly, Tajikistan initiated a unilateral closure of its border. This has granted very limited access to its territory only to valid passport and Tajik visa holders. UNHCR legal partner registered only 87 new arrivals in 2022, although the total number of refugees and asylum seekers in Tajikistan has almost doubled, reaching over 12,000 in 2021. UNHCR legal partners assisted in drafting over 330 asylum applications which have been lodged with the Ministry of Interior in addition to providing over 2,600 legal consultations for asylum seekers and refugees during the year.

During a visit of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in March 2022, it was agreed to strengthen cooperation. Part of this was the resumption of the work of the state RSD Commission, previously suspended since mid-2021. In 2022, at least nine hearings of the Commission were held where 2,077 asylum seekers were granted refugee status in Tajikistan. UNHCR's request to be allowed to resume its observer status to the Commission has not to date been agreed. UNHCR continued to support the government's efforts to build the capacity of the members of the RSD Commission through provision of three comprehensive RSD trainings.

Tajikistan remains concerned about the security following events in Afghanistan. Afghans who crossed the border illegally and approached UNHCR's legal partner for support were unable to lodge their applications with DCWR, rendering them vulnerable to administrative fines, detention and refoulement. Other support is provided by UNHCR's legal partner, including representations to resolve legal and other civil matters and

appeals against negative decisions. Positively, the recognition rate for cases before the Commission stand at around 98 per cent with a good application of trainings provided by UNHCR and engagement with UNHCR and its legal partner.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

The deportations of Afghan nationals in 2022 remained of particular concern to UNHCR. Amongst the deported Afghans, there were those possessing valid refugee cards and asylum seeker certificates and despite a high refugee acceptance rate in Tajikistan's RSD procedures. UNHCR views the deportations as a lack of compliance of Tajikistan with its international commitments and national refugee-related legislation. UNHCR and its legal partner were not able to verify the presence of procedural safeguards, or a court order guiding the process of deportations. UNHCR's request to return as an observer to the RSD Commission is yet to be agreed. UNHCR has advocated on its protection concerns with various government institutions, including the Ministry of Internal Affairs, as well as Tajikistan's Parliament and Ombudsman.

3. Outcome Area: Protection Policy and Law

National legislative and procedural frameworks are reformed/harmonized to enable stateless people to have access to documentation (birth certification) and non-discriminatory education and are not penalised for illegal entry

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
3.2 Extent national legal framework is in line with the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.	Stateless Persons	Not Adequate	Not Adequate	Adequate

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

The Tajik authorities have clearly demonstrated the political will to end statelessness, which UNHCR has welcomed. UNHCR continued with activities directed on prevention and reduction of statelessness in close cooperation with the Government and relevant line-ministries. Tajikistan has made significant progress in the eradication of statelessness through series of legislative and policy changes, as well as confirming nationality for the majority of identified cases. Tajikistan's pledge to adopt an amnesty law has further paved the way for the majority of complex cases, which would allow them to legalize their stay in country. However, this law only aims to benefit citizens of former Soviet Union who entered Tajikistan before the end of 2016. The validity of the amnesty law extended to the end of 2022 and people benefitting from its measures were expected to come forward and apply for the regularization of their status within that time. However, there are people who would fall under the scope of the amnesty law who did not apply within the time scope required due to various reasons which UNHCR believes requires a need for an extension of the validity period.

In an effort to advance universal birth registration (UBR) under Tajikistan's Civil Registration System Reform, UNHCR has advocated for access to registration for all children born in Tajikistan. In close partnership with UNICEF and UNDP, UNHCR and its partners advocated for the introduction of legislative changes into the Civil Registration Law to lift barriers for people with undetermined nationality to register their children at birth. The UN has offered its joint technical and expert for any effort by the government to harmonize its legislative framework and bring it in line with international standards. Addressing existing gaps and additional resources to support Tajikistan's continuation of its legal reform of nationality and accession to Statelessness Conventions – both 1954 and 1961. Engagement with the government on these matters have helped to establish a common understanding of the legal challenges and interconnectedness of birth registration and statelessness with the Ministry of Justice demonstrating a commitment to revise respective legislation and finalize the ongoing Civil Registration System reform, which can ensure universal

birth registration for every child born in Tajikistan. In total, UNHCR undertook five interventions with authorities to support with technical observations on amendments of Civil Registration Law to advance universal birth registration.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

The Tajik authorities continue to give careful consideration to the country's accession to Statelessness Conventions, as they undertake a comprehensive analysis of the possible legal and financial implications associated with this. The Ministry of Justice has demonstrated a willingness to accomplish the second round of Civil Registration System reform. They agreed to hold regular working meetings with UN and its partners and requested provision of technical support, including learning from good practices in other countries to accomplish the package of amendments to the Civil Registration Law and related legislation to lift the legal barriers for the universal birth registration of children born to people with undetermined nationality or those lacking any status and/or documents. Security concerns continue to be an underlying factor in how these matters are examined.

6. Outcome Area: Safety and Access to Justice

Asylum-seekers and refugees can enjoy fair adjudication with regards to their appeals and fair trial processes

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

Tajikistan's Resolutions 325 and 328, which prohibit refugees and asylum seekers from residing in certain areas, work to impede beneficiaries from a full realization of rights, affecting freedom of movement and choice of place of living, and access to self-reliance opportunities.

UNHCR does not have access to detention facilities in Tajikistan and no data is available on the numbers of detained asylum seekers and refugees. However, UNHCR was able to record the arrest, detention, and subsequent deportation of 110 Afghans, including refugees and asylum seekers, during 2022.

Through its partners, UNHCR provided 2,706 legal consultations to refugees and asylum seekers. Out of these, 334 consultations were provided to new arrivals and Afghan nationals in the process of filling in applications for refugee status. 1,033 consultations were provided to asylum seekers, 800 for refugees and an additional 123 consultations to mandate refugees and protection letter holders. Legal representation, including legal support were provided to 22 refugees, 13 asylum seekers and 1 Mandate refugee.

UNHCR also continued to build on the previous work in advocating for greater reference and inclusion of International Refugee Law in Tajikistan's national of RSD cases. The promotion of International Refugee Law also featured as part of UNHCR's training seminars for judges by UNHCR and the staff of Tajikistan's main judicial training centre. To further develop this work, a UNHCR partner was scoped to provide a legal analysis on Tajikistan's administrative and civil litigation cases related to refugee status determination.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

Advocacy to date on lifting or modifying the Resolutions of 325 and 328 have not seen any changes, but UNHCR will continue its work on this, and seek to engage a range of stakeholders. Work with Tajikistan's Judicial Training Center has offered important opportunities to promote international refugee law and UNHCR hopes to continue the partnership and extend content to cover RSD in the curricula, so that the judiciary gains a greater understanding of the minimum procedural requirements in these processes. UNHCR aims to continue its engagement with the Ombudsman on matters related to detention, among other activities, in order to promote safeguards for refugees and asylum seekers.

8. Outcome Area: Well-Being and Basic Needs

Refugees and asylum seekers in vulnerable situations are included and benefit from state social protection system and have access to cash assistance provided by international organizations or the State

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
8.1 Proportion of PoC in need that receive cash transfers or in-kind assistance.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

As a part of Afghan situation response efforts, UNHCR's operation in Tajikistan implemented a cash-based project to contribute to the basic needs of those residing in Tajikistan. In 2022, living conditions of refugees and asylum seekers has been drastically worsened caused by number of factors, including global impacts on Tajikistan's national economy, which resulted in inflation that had an impact on the cost of living. A total of 9,979 individuals (2,090 households) received cash assistance during the distribution. In addition to the one-time blanket cash assistance for people of concern, selected vulnerable individuals/households also received cash on assessed needs through a UNHCR partner. 3,011 individuals benefited from this scheme, which included cash for reimbursement of medical bills and other health related expenses (532 individuals emergency assistance (26 individuals), cash to meet urgent basic needs (1,911 individuals), livelihoods grants (190 individuals), and schoolbooks support (352 individuals). Deportations of refugees and asylum seekers in August – September caused distress and fear among refugees and asylum seekers with many afraid to commute to work. In the absence of a general assistance programme, this resulted in additional hardship for people, making cash interventions all the more relevant.

While the general inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers into the national social protection systems is not available at present, 512 refugees and asylum seekers households were able to benefit from a one-off cash assistance. This was a positive development and would greatly benefit asylum seekers and refugees if the option to expand the scheme becomes available, which could also benefit from additional UNHCR welcomed the decision of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection to include affected populations in its vaccination campaign against COVID-19. By year end, 4,670 refugees received their first dose while 4,666 refugees were fully vaccinated and 2,054 received a third booster dose. The immunization for new-borns was also available free of charge in state-run clinics.

UNHCR partners continued to provide cash for the most vulnerable individuals at risk of statelessness and undetermined nationality to cover administrative fees related to acquiring documentation. In total, 1,016 persons benefitted from this support.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

For cash distributions, it was challenging to engage financial service providers with the result that UNHCR needed to employ a more direct cash distribution modality which required an allocation of internal capacity. Future cash distributions would benefit greatly from displaced and stateless people having access to financial service provides, which is a matter UNHCR hopes to further engage the authorities on.

Inclusion of asylum seekers and refugees into the national social protection system remains a challenge. The office will continue its work in this area in 2023. This also is an area of interest UNHCR will aim to engage in discussions with the Government and relevant authorities.

13. Outcome Area: Self Reliance, Economic Inclusion and Livelihoods

Refugees and asylum seekers have access to an increased number of livelihood opportunities, along with unhindered access to employment

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
13.2. Proportion of PoC who self-report positive changes in their income compared to previous year.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	57.83%	80.00%	41.32%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In line with its Multi-Year Strategy, UNHCR continued to gear its efforts towards expanding livelihoods and self-reliance interventions through partnerships and coordination with State and private sectors along with development partners. Efforts to amplify livelihoods ranged from advocacy initiatives with private employers coupled with facilitation of job placements, ensuring access to skills trainings and further apprenticeship schemes.

To this end, in April 2022, UNHCR, with support of its partners, undertook a rapid assessment of the educational backgrounds and level of employability among refugees aged 18-59 to ensure tailored and/or customized livelihoods programming. The assessment revealed some 2,500 refugees are self-employed. Some 30 per cent of the adult population were involved in some form of employment or income generation activities. The number of employed women continued to grow progressively as well since 2015.

Entrepreneurship/business training was organised for 331 refugees to enhance basic business and marketing skills with subsequent job placements. 260 people were linked to apprenticeship schemes and 569 refugees granted access to vocational training courses. To foster home-based work during the pandemic, UNHCR provided 92 refugees with equipment and 190 refugees with cash grants to engage in self-employment or initiate start-ups. The apprenticeship programmes with private sector have successfully continued with some 30 refugees retained as regular work force.

UNHCR Tajikistan in cooperation with the Ministry of industry and New Technologies and Public Fund's "Innovation and Industry Development Fund" also established a framework to run a joint programme to promote the economic inclusion of refugee and local youth through innovation, digitalization, and technology.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

Economic conditions in Tajikistan in 2022 affected employment opportunities nationally. Stricter national policies were in place to promote access to jobs and financial services. The ban to access financial services is still in place. The meaningful economic access continues to be an area of focus for UNHCR advocacy.

14. Outcome Area: Voluntary Return and Sustainable Reintegration

Refugees and asylum seekers realize their right to return in an informed and dignified way

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
14.2 Proportion of PoC who wants to receive the CoO information actually receives it.	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	100.00%	0.00%	100.00%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2022, facilitated voluntary repatriation for refugees who wish to return home was provided UNHCR maintained its guidelines against forcible returns of Afghans and also believed conditions were not fully conducive for return. It facilitated return for those choosing it voluntarily in order to preserve their right to return. UNHCR facilitated voluntary return for 15 individuals (5 households) upon their request. It is also

likely that there were spontaneous departures to Afghanistan that did not avail of UNHCR assistance. Socio-economic challenges in Tajikistan were cited as the main reason for return. At the same time, family unification was the second main reason for voluntarily repatriation in 2022, including residual family members of deported individuals

Close coordination with UNHCR in Afghanistan was undertaken in respect of all returns, including for the provision of updated information on places of origin or return. Information of this nature, which is important for informed decision-making, was provided to 25 individuals who approached UNHCR in 2022 with a voluntary repatriation request. UNHCR has distributed information brochures on voluntary repatriation to ensure that all refugees who wish to repatriate are aware of counselling support available, their rights, and available assistance. UNHCR assisted refugees to obtain exit visas and accompanied refugees wishing to return throughout the process.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

Afghanistan's situation at this time is not favourable to the promotion of voluntary repatriation as conditions are not conducive. However, UNHCR facilitates requests for voluntary repatriation based on an informed decisions by refugees.

16. Outcome Area: Integration and other Local Solutions

Asylum seekers and stateless people are provided avenues for naturalization (for stateless people) and regularization of their status and documentation (mandate refugees)

Indicators	Population Type	Baseline (2022)	Target (2022)	Actual (2022)
16.2. Proportion of PoC covered by social protection floors/systems [SDG 1.3.1].	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	19.87%	80.00%	100.00%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

With complex cases of statelessness, the issue of obtaining Tajik citizenship can be achieved in an expedited manner (obtaining a residence permit and application for a nationality), whereas naturalization remains aspirational to refugees. As to date, no known refugee has obtained Tajik nationality so far with an addition to an absence of expedited procedures following the adoption in 2015 Constitutional Law on Nationality.

Afghan nationals face challenges to pursue Tajik citizenship as Afghan legislation does not allow its citizens the option to denounce citizenship, which is prerequisite to apply for Tajik citizenship, along with obtaining residence permit, among other steps.

The situation of Mandate refugees remains precarious in terms of access to employment and enjoyment of rights, limiting socio-economic inclusion opportunities that affect their welfare and protection. UNHCR continued to approach the authorities on this situation and was encouraged by agreement by the Ministry of Internal Affairs to review the situation of this group. UNHCR has tracked the protection situation of this group and continues to also seek other options and solutions, including resettlement as a protection tool. Access to basic services, including social protection, remains limited for undocumented stateless individuals, as services very often require documents. UNHCR is engaged in discussions with the authorities to advance solutions for these people of concern.

UNHCR made progress in registering 5,157 stateless persons and those with undetermined nationality, while 5,854 stateless and persons with unconfirmed nationality were documented. Seven awareness raising campaigns were conducted in 2022 to strengthen these efforts.

Against this background, UNHCR continues working closely with the Government to further expand its statelessness identification and reduction activities as well as foster socio-economic inclusion through ensuring access to basic services and promoting self-reliance.

Challenges to Achieving Outcome

Although people of concern enjoy many socio-economic rights on par with Tajik citizens with , for example, access to state healthcare systems, there are limits. Medical interventions, for example, are not available on a free-of-charge basis, which have to be covered individually. A medical insurance system is not currently available to people of concern, requiring continuous intervention from partners with UNHCR support. Refugees with disabilities are not covered by Tajikistan's the National Scheme of Social Allowance,. This scheme does not universally cover Tajik citizens and special support may be needed to extend its coverage to specific groups of refugees. UNHCR continues advocating with the relevant authorities on the possibility of inclusion of refugees with disabilities in the scheme.

2.2. Age, Gender and Diversity

UNHCR continued to build on its longstanding work aimed at streamlining the integration of Age, Gender and Diversity approaches into its work in Tajikistan, as well as, strengthening the role of community-based protection in its planning, implementation, monitoring, advocacy, and work with people of concern. A social-economic assessment, conducted by World Bank, richly informed UNHCR's planning, alongside other assessments and focus group discussions conducted by humanitarian actors with affected populations

Four town hall meetings were held in 2022, in addition to other ad-hoc meetings and focus group discussions. A verification exercise conducted by UNHCR in collaboration with the authorities reached 10,370 persons who were biometrically registered, providing valuable disaggregated data capturing specific needs.

The office continued to strengthen promotion of gender balance and facilitated wider participation of women in programmes. Refugee women took active role in activities, including overseeing food and hygiene kits distributions. Out of total 1,160 participants in a livelihoods programme run by UNHCR and its partners, 557 were women. Out of 5,854 documented stateless and undocumented persons, 4,134 were women. Such an increased level of women's participation improved women's and children's lives, including the family and the community at large.

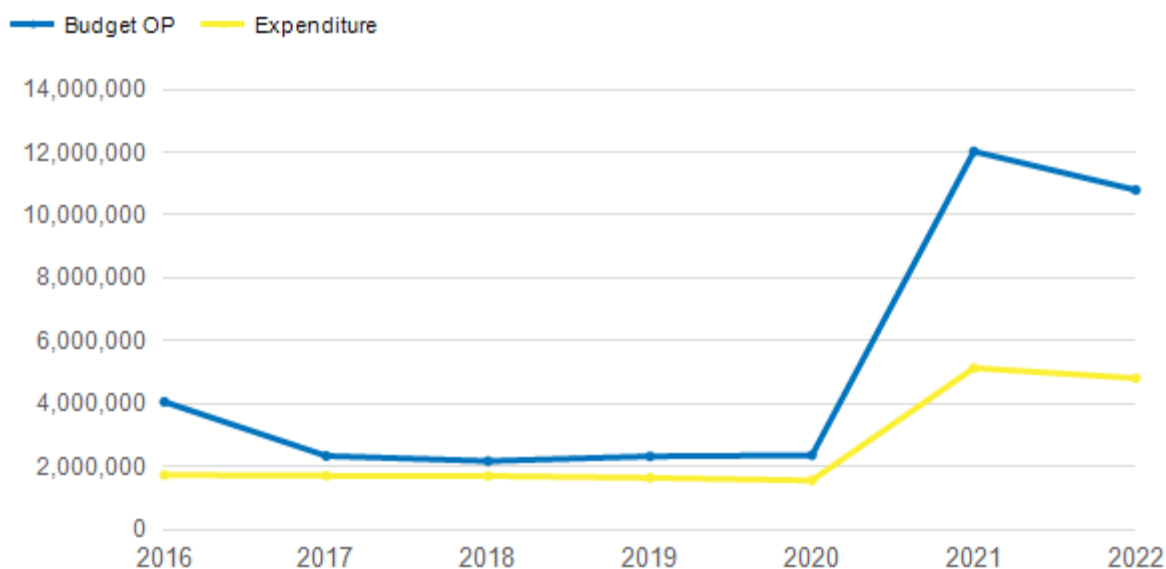
Section 3: Resources

3.1 Financial Data

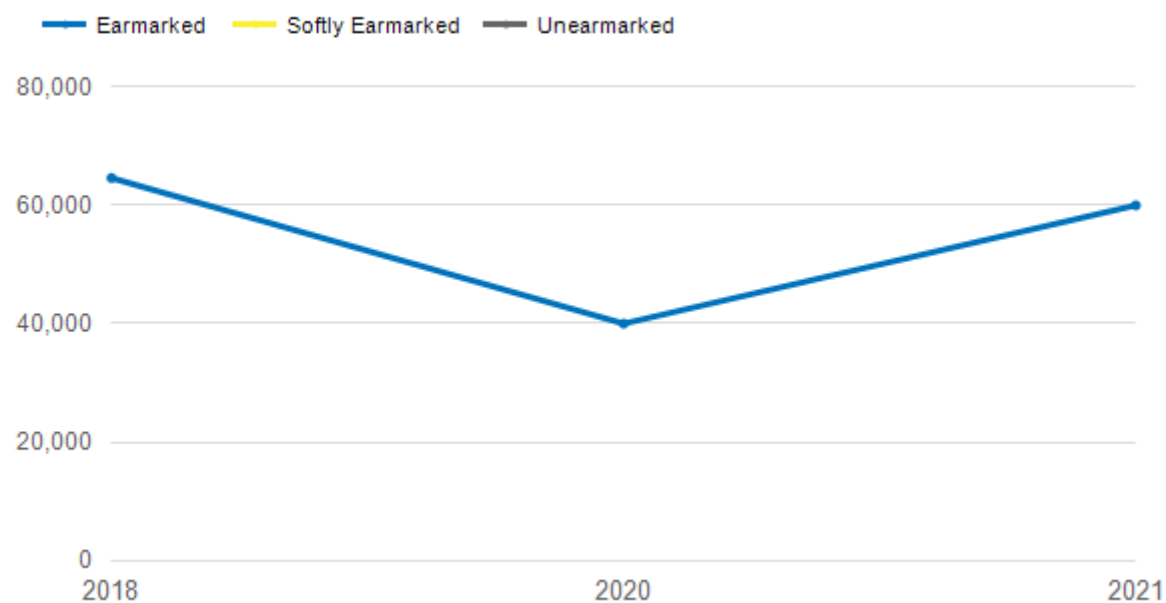
Impact Area	Final Budget	Funds Available	Funds Available as % of Budget	Expenditure	Expenditure as % of Funds Available
IA1: Protect	9,045,920	3,481,411	38.49%	3,571,911	102.60%
IA2: Respond	820,000	552,624	67.39%	552,624	100.00%
IA4: Solve	935,000	882,066	94.34%	694,272	78.71%
All Impact Areas		90,500	0.00%		0.00%
Total	10,800,920	5,006,601	46.35%	4,818,807	96.25%

Outcome Area	Final Budget	Funds Available	Funds Available as % of Budget	Expenditure	Expenditure as % of Funds Available
OA1: Access/Doc	8,720,412	3,078,147	35.30%	3,168,647	102.94%
OA2: Status	86,111	37,559	43.62%	37,559	100.00%
OA3: Policy/Law	127,730	134,584	105.37%	134,584	100.00%
OA6: Justice	111,667	228,867	204.96%	228,867	100.00%
OA8: Well-being	500,000	205,363	41.07%	205,363	100.00%
OA10: Health		187,793	0.00%		0.00%
OA13 Livelihood	320,000	347,261	108.52%	347,261	100.00%
OA14: Return	50,000	52,201	104.40%	52,201	100.00%
OA16: Integrate	885,000	644,325	72.81%	644,325	100.00%
All Outcome Areas		90,500	0.00%		0.00%
Total	10,800,920	5,006,601	46.35%	4,818,807	96.25%

Budget and Expenditure Trend



Contributions Trend by Type



3.2. Resources Overview

UNHCR Tajikistan continued to work collaboratively with others and Inter-Agency partnerships to mainstream people of concern into existing partner’s programmes. Input on this was provided for the National Development Strategy, UNDAF, as well as in fora.

Close coordination also exists with the donor/development community in an effort to mobilize resources for UNHCR and its RRP partners.

UNHCR and its partner efforts in Tajikistan have benefitted from the Regional Refugee Response Plan 2022. This appeal document remains a strong platform for garnering support. Overall, more than 1.2m USD under the RRP 2022 for Tajikistan benefitted refugees and host communities through work on various infrastructure projects and assistance.

UNHCR was able to also initiate a cash distribution with the resources it received, reaching 9,979 individuals who were registered through biometrics verification. This modality of assistance greatly benefitted people of concern affected by COVID-19 economic conditions. Since refugees and asylum seekers live within the host community, paying rent and meeting basic needs like food, health, and education-related costs, mainly depending on the informal sector, cash assistance was appreciated, particularly after the COVID pandemic, which impacted the informal sector negatively.



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

www.unhcr.org