



Almost 300,000 people have been newly displaced in Afghanistan in the last two months. In areas where people have recently fled, including Kabul, field reports indicate that there are increasing cases of diarrhoea, malnutrition, COVID-19-like symptoms, and reproductive health complications.

Photo: WHO Afghanistan

299,106

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) between 9 June to 9 August 2021

35,000

Verified IDPs needing humanitarian aid, including health aid in Kabul

13,897

Conflict-related trauma cases received at 70 WHO-supported health facilities in July 2021

26

health facilities affected by attacks between January to July 2021

31

health care personnel affected, of which 12 were killed between January to July 2021

SITUATION OVERVIEW

- Deterioration in the humanitarian situation continues to unfold in Afghanistan.
- The conflict has forced hundreds of thousands of people to leave their homes and move to Kabul and other cities in search of safety.
- Most of major health facilities are functional, based on field monitoring at provincial level. Health workers have been called to return to/remain at their posts, including female health staff.
- Trauma injuries and health needs have increased because of the recent conflict, requiring emergency medical services and specialized doctors.
- Despite rising health needs, attacks on health care remain a major challenge.

WHO RESPONSE

- **ASSESSMENTS**
 - Rapid assessments of the health needs of newly displaced populations conducted by WHO and health partners.
 - Daily monitoring and reporting of health situation and access by WHO personnel across all 34 provinces.

- **SERVICE DELIVERY**
 - 3 mobile health teams deployed to provide medical services to IDPs in Kabul. Interventions on hold for the past 36 hours due to insecurity.
 - A center assisting survivors of gender-based-violence, supported by WHO, provided medical care to 4 survivors in Kabul city last week.
 - 6 mobile health clinics, 1 sub-health center and 3 physical rehabilitation centres supported in hard-to-reach and conflict-affected areas in 6 provinces since January 2021.

- **COVID-19 RESPONSE**
 - Support health partners in COVID-19 sample collection, vaccination, and referrals of recently displaced people in major cities

- **COORDINATION**
 - Convening of health cluster partners to map activities needed for internally displaced persons.

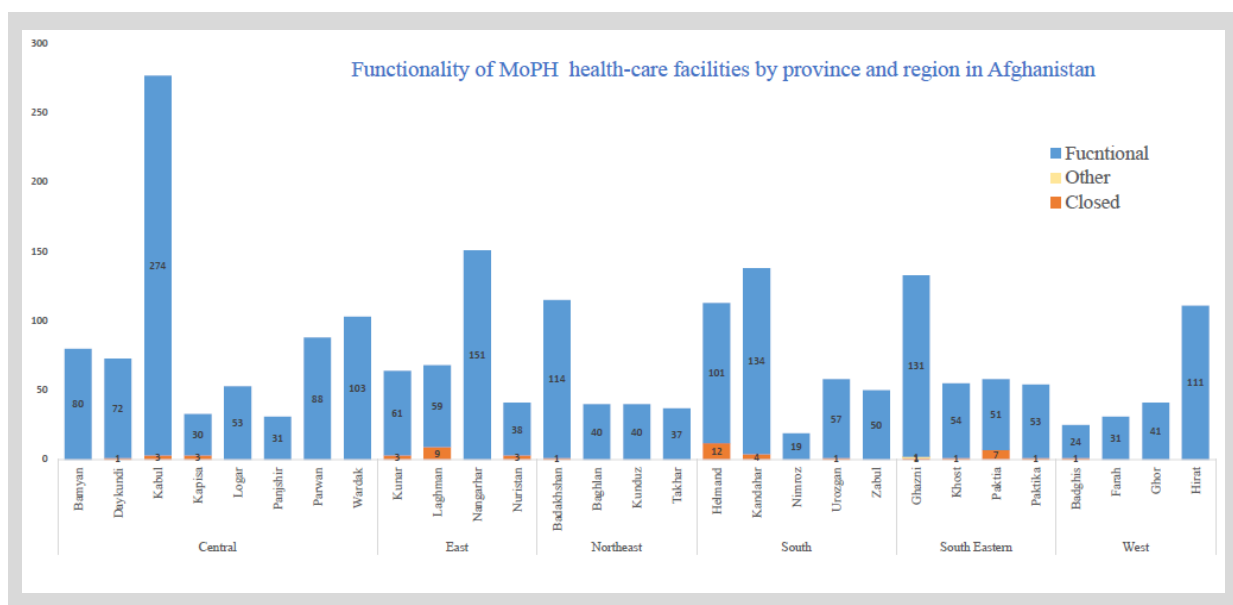
- **SUPPLIES**
 - 33 units of different modules of trauma kits, enough to cover 500 surgical procedures for 500 trauma and 750 burn victims, and 10 basic medical kits, enough to provide essential medicines for 10,000 people for 3 months. These were dispatched yesterday to Wazir Akbar Khan Hospital in Kabul despite insecurity.
 - 6 basic medical supply kits and 1 cholera kit to support provision of basic medicines for 6,000 people for 3 months and management of 100 diarrhea cases provided to Helmand regional hospital this week.
 - 3 tents to support treatment of mass casualty cases in regional hospitals in Kandahar and Herat provinces provided in coordination with UNICEF this week.
 - 3 health partners provided with 36 basic medical kits, 29 supplementary medical kits, and 35 units of different modules of trauma kits in the past weeks, covering gaps in availability and to sustain critical work at their health facilities. The supplies provided are enough to cater to the health and trauma-related needs of 326,000 people and cover 4,100 major and minor surgeries.
 - 5 key health facilities in Urozgan, Zabul, Helmand, Nimroz and Kandahar provinces provided with emergency medical supplies last week, including 3 basic medical supply kits and 2 trauma kits. These supplies are enough to cover basic health needs of 3200 people for 3 months including 200 major and minor surgeries.
 - 500 health facilities (all catering to IDPs) have been provided with essential medical supplies including 1685 basic medical kits, 5 trauma kits and 5 cholera kits, since June 2021. Those supplies are enough to cover the basic health needs of 1,686,000 people for 3 months and to conduct 500 major and minor surgeries.
 - 134 health facilities provided in 34 provinces provided trauma care support since January 2021. Those hospitals have reported 20,988 trauma cases in the past two months.

- **TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

- Mental health support training for health workers conducted last week to provide psychological first aid services to people affected by the recent conflict.
- Blood bank standard operating procedures training conducted last week for staff of two high-risk province hospitals.
- 10 referral hospitals provided training in mass casualty management over the past three months.

HEALTH NEEDS

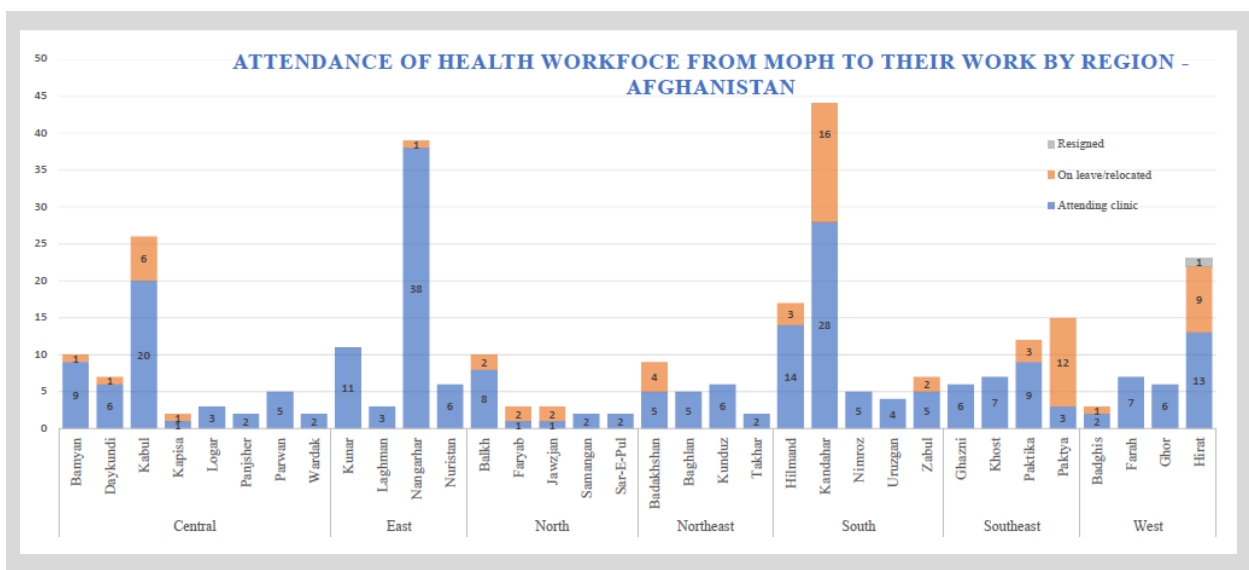
- All parties must swiftly address disruptions to medical supplies and equipment being shipped into and across the country to plug gaps in needs at health facilities.
- There is an urgent need for reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health (RMNCH) services to be provided to newly displaced people in Kabul and other cities.
- Mental health and psychosocial counseling services are needed for people suffering from the impacts of conflict.
- COVID-19 and other routine immunization, including polio vaccination, must be resumed urgently to prevent secondary health emergencies.
- Mosquito nets and hygiene kits are needed for newly displaced people.
- Nutrition supplements are needed to address rising malnutrition among children, especially those affected by conflict.
- Control of infectious diseases, especially at overcrowded IDP sites.
- Trauma care needs are unfolding.



CHALLENGES AND IMPACT ON HEALTH FACILITIES AND PUBLIC HEALTH

- Newly arriving IDPS in Kabul and other cities have little to no access to health care. Field assessments indicate health concerns among IDPs. These include increasing cases of diarrhea, malnutrition among children, COVID-19-like symptoms and reproductive health complications.

- Crowding at health facilities and IDP camps limits implementation of infection prevention protocols, increasing the risk of COVID-19 transmission and other disease outbreaks.
- A sharp rise in trauma and emergency cases associated with the current conflict has increased health needs at already overwhelmed health facilities.
- Disruptions due to the conflict are delaying critical health supplies from being shipped into the country and affecting distribution of medical supplies and equipment to health facilities which were already facing shortages.
- With only 5% of the population vaccinated, the conflict is impacting COVID-19 vaccination across the country and delaying routine immunization, which could lead to secondary health emergencies.
- Attacks on health care facilities and personnel continue to strain an already fragile health system.



WHO RECOMMENDATIONS

- All parties must respect neutrality of health interventions and ensure safety of health workers, patients and health facilities.
- Unimpeded and sustained access to humanitarian assistance, including essential health services and medical supplies, is a critical lifeline for millions of Afghans, and must not be interrupted.
- There is an immediate need to ensure continuity of health services across the country, with a focus on ensuring women have access to female health workers.

Further information:

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