



European Commission

© Sandra Calligaro/NRC



EU SUPPORT TO THE AFGHAN PEOPLE:

ADDRESSING THEIR **BASIC NEEDS**

AND **LIVELIHOODS OPPORTUNITIES**



“We know how difficult it has been to navigate the increasingly severe situation in Afghanistan. Yet, the international community has found a way to deliver desperately needed basic needs, support to women, girls, and other vulnerable groups, while not legitimizing the Taliban de facto authorities.”

Jutta Urpilainen, Commissioner for International Partnerships, 20 September 2023.

In line with the European Council Conclusions of September 2021 and March 2023, the EU is committed to peace and stability in Afghanistan and to supporting the Afghan people affected by the severe humanitarian and socio-economic crisis. Since September 2021, in addition to humanitarian aid, the EU has provided a total of €903 million for basic needs, livelihoods, forced displacement and migration. Assistance is not channelled through the Taliban de facto authorities and follows a principled approach, where women can both deliver and benefit from EU support. The EU supports the full participation of all Afghans, including women and girls and persons belonging to ethnic and religious minorities in all spheres of life.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

- **Principled** delivery of aid “for women by women” ensuring women play a meaningful role in all aspects of aid interventions, including their design.
- **Channelled through multilateral and non-governmental organisations**, not the Taliban de facto authorities
- **Conflict sensitive and human rights based approach**
- Operationalised within the framework of the **Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus**
- **Robustly monitored and results oriented**
- **Coordinated** with EU Member States, including through a migration related Team Europe Initiative, and with other international partners in the Afghanistan Coordination Group (ACG)



EU-funded actions in Afghanistan contribute to critical Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The European Union is the co-chair of the **Afghan Coordination Group (ACG)**, which aims to improve coordination among international community actors engaged in supporting basic services and livelihoods.



EU support to the Afghan people

HOW THE EU SUPPORTS THE AFGHAN PEOPLE...

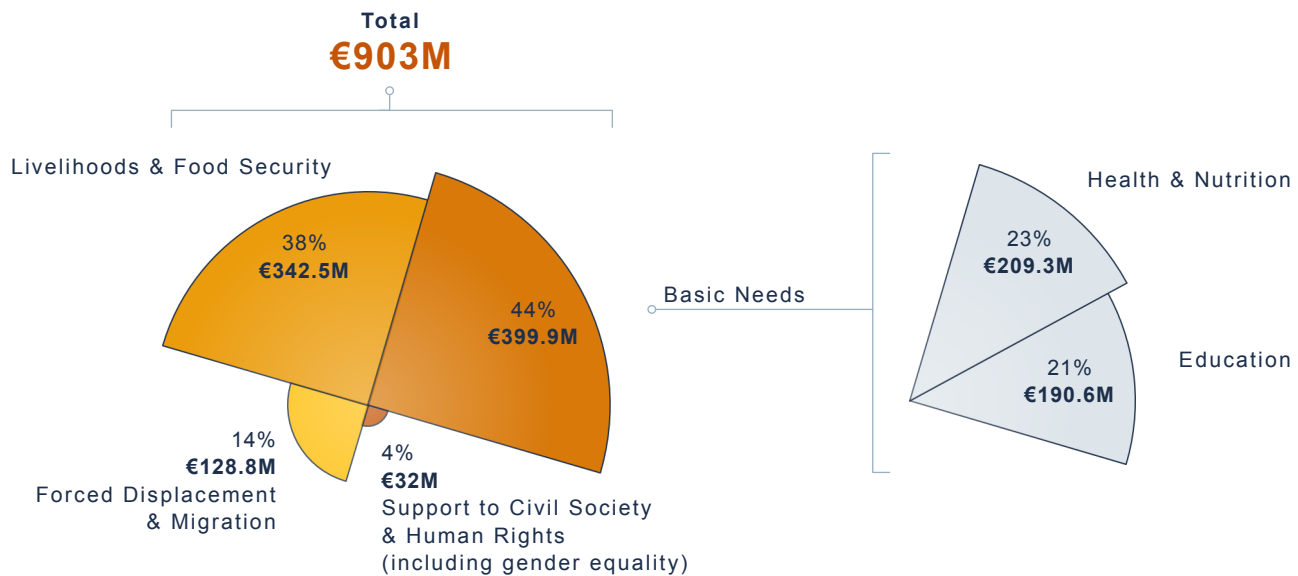
Support is provided to the Afghan people for better access to quality basic services and enhanced resilient livelihoods and economic opportunities, in line with the ACG Framework For International Partner Support in Afghanistan. The focus is on social and economic areas where both women and men can contribute in a meaningful way and be active participants in their communities.

Delivery of essential social services includes **health, nutrition, water & sanitation** and **education** for women and girls. Funding is also directed toward **support to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), agriculture, food security and community-based climate resilience**. Afghanistan's high vulnerability to climate change is factored into resilient livelihoods support which fosters local communities' capacity to adapt and respond to climate-induced shocks.

EU interventions aim to **alleviate multidimensional poverty** in support to **SDG 1 – No Poverty** and contribute to **SDG 2 – Zero Hunger** by addressing food insecurity and malnutrition, **SDG 3 – Good Health and Wellbeing** by strengthening health care services, **SDG 4 – Gender Equality**, **SDG 5 – Quality Education** by supporting public schools and community-based education, **SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth** by enhancing resilient livelihoods and economic opportunities, **SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities** and **SDG 13 – Climate Action**.

Figure 1. Tentative distribution of EU funding per sector

Including funding allocated under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (national, regional and thematic allocations) and the Development Cooperation Instrument (both repurposed funds and ongoing projects active after September 2021).



...INCLUDING GIRLS AND WOMEN

From August 2021 onwards, the European Union strengthened its commitment to **the rights of girls and women and their livelihoods in Afghanistan**. With its partners, the EU has deployed countrywide initiatives to support women's economic empowerment:

- 25,500 women empowered through Local Enterprise Development;
- Financial resources and support provided to over 11,000 businesswomen;
- 158 Women's Self-Help Groups set up to help women develop financial management skills, including savings and investments;
- 1,470 bank accounts opened for female recipients of micro-grants;
- Organisation of 200 'women-only market days'.

The EU provides support for **the protection of women's rights in Afghanistan**, delivering essential services to address gender-based violence. Data is regularly collected on gender equality and women's rights, including views and feedback from over 2,000 Afghan women across the country. EU partners raise public awareness on women's rights within communities, including men and boys, religious scholars and teachers.



EXAMPLES OF INITIATIVES & RESULTS

EDUCATION



Examples of achievements in education since 2021

Teachers who received emergency cash support and could continue working	199,202
Schoolchildren in 28 provinces who could benefit from learning material	1,500,000
Schoolchildren who received daily and monthly food assistance	1,196,830

KEEP CHILDREN LEARNING

A partnership with UNICEF aims to improve foundational learning outcomes for girls and boys in primary schools in Afghanistan. It **creates safe and conducive learning environments for primary public-school children, girls and boys**, with a particular focus on vulnerable children in deprived provinces and areas.

SCHOOL MEALS

Together with WFP, the EU is contributing to the **provision of school meals and snacks for boys and girls in primary schools**. The objective is to address short-term hunger among schoolchildren during their time at school. This also contributes to increasing school attendance, keeping children in classrooms and improving learning outcomes.

LIVELIHOODS



Examples of achievements in livelihoods since 2021

Local MSMEs and producer groups in priority sectors supported	3,129
Number of jobs at SMEs supported/sustained	4,208 in total (800 women)
Number of staff trained from the microfinance providers	478 in total (123 women)
Number of MSMEs with access to financial services (loans) with EU support	1,016 in total (310 women led) (131 youth led)
Vulnerable people receiving food assistance for assets	1,476,223
Businesswomen trained and coached in production and processing	3,502
Surface of agricultural land improved in hectares	37,240

EU-supported livelihoods projects are addressing food insecurity, promoting climate resilience, and creating jobs. Local communities and vulnerable households are provided with **agricultural inputs** (e.g. seeds, equipment) and **small livestock, cash-based assistance, work opportunities and technical trainings**, and climate-smart community **assets** (e.g. greenhouses, watersheds, terracing, wells, irrigation canals).

Economic opportunities, especially for women and vulnerable groups, are being bolstered through a range of initiatives such as **business development services, enhanced market access and microfinancing** (including support for microfinance institutions and community-based saving groups).

Livelihoods support is designed in a participatory way with key stakeholders and informed by comprehensive assessments. For instance, in the aftermath of the Herat earthquake in 2023, the EU teamed up with the United Nations, World Bank and Asian Development Bank for the **Post Disaster Needs Assessment** (report published in February 2024), which serves as useful guidance for the identification of future interventions.

HEALTH



Examples of achievements in health since 2021

Children and adolescents reached with community nutrition services	1,120,000
Health practitioners who received specialised training (ICU* and IPC**)	over 2,900
In-patient and out-patient severe acute malnutrition (SAM) units were created with competent staff, equipment and supplies	94
Drug Addiction Treatment Centres set-up and functional	13
Patients who completed drug treatment programs in 2023	
Graduate and employed physiotherapists	254
Individuals who received physiotherapy services in 2023	5,689 in total (2,477 women)
Provincial infectious disease laboratories set-up and fully functional with competent health staff, equipment and supplies	28
Fully operational provincial integrated infectious disease hospitals	5

* Intensive Care Unit (ICU) - ** Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)

ADOLESCENT, MATERNAL, CHILD NUTRITION

EU support aims to improve nutrition care and treatment services for children under five, adolescent girls and women of reproductive age. Overall, strengthen the national nutrition response capacity including surveillance in urban and rural areas of Afghanistan.

PREPAREDNESS, SURVEILLANCE AND RESPONSE TO HEALTH AND NUTRITION EMERGENCIES

The EU will enhance the effectiveness of preparedness and response systems for outbreaks, health and nutrition emergencies in Afghanistan. With a focus on diagnostic capacities, surveillance and rapid response, case management as well as infection prevention and control systems.

DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION, MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT AND PHYSICAL REHABILITATION

Support is provided to increase access to and availability of quality, comprehensive and inclusive continuum of care services for people with mental health and drug use disorders and physical disabilities.

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE IN HEALTH FACILITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Through WASH infrastructure interventions, the project provides support to improved provision of a safe and reliable supply of drinking water, safe sanitation and hygiene practices in health facilities and communities.

HUMAN RIGHTS & CIVIL SOCIETY



The EU ensures that **human rights and civil society support** are addressed throughout its interventions.

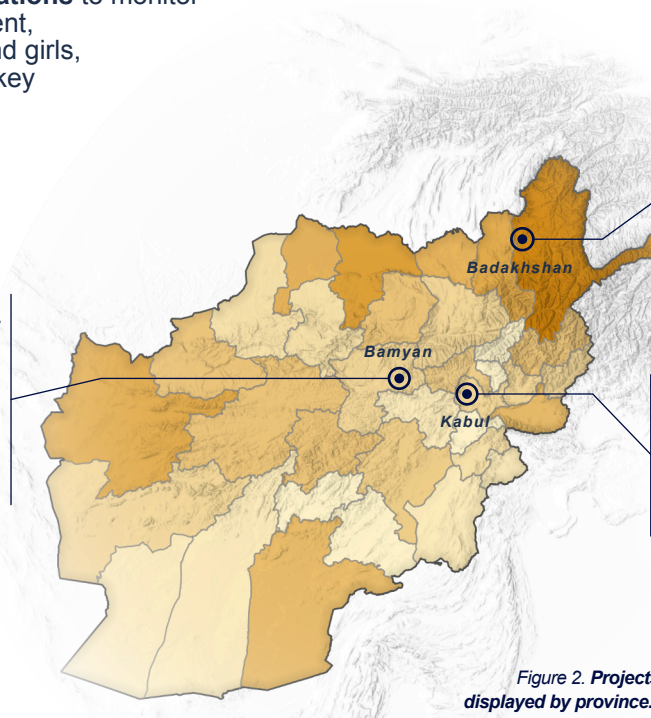
The EU **protects human rights defenders** and supports the preservation and safeguarding of documentation relating to grievances.

Over **50 independent media outlets**, including 8 women-led radio stations, have been assisted to provide relevant and reliable information to the Afghan population. More than 1,000 male and female **journalists have been trained** to produce quality and trustworthy public interest media content.

The EU holds regular **consultations with non-governmental organisations** to monitor the operating environment, especially for women and girls, and to receive input on key areas of intervention.

Physical Aid and Rehabilitation Service Development in Afghanistan (PHARDA) - Handicap International (HI)

The programme seeks to support children, women and men with disabilities and those most at risk of developing medium to long-term impairments. As a result, Khan Ali, who lost his right leg in 1992, received a new orthopaedic prosthesis at the physical rehabilitation centre (PRC) in Bamyan.



Livelihood Improvement through Comprehensive Food Security - Aga Khan Foundation (AKF)
The project aims to improve accessibility, provision and usage of water and natural resources for promoting greater sustainability in the upper catchments of the Zarafshon valley. Coming from modest backgrounds in Shahr Buzurg district (Badakhshan), women such as Zahra received Cash for Work support from to start a tree nursery.

AESLSP - Dutch Committee for Afghanistan (DCA)
Operating across 16 provinces, the project aims to address the challenges of inadequate and expensive food due to conflict, severe drought, poor harvests, and the impact of COVID-19. The project helped herder Lal Ghul from Qarabagh (Kabul), to vaccinate his goats against sheep and goats pox, protecting them more efficiently, as his flock was stricken by chronic diseases.

Number of projects supported per province: 7 12 20

Figure 2. Projects supported by the European Union in Afghanistan displayed by province. Most projects displayed cover multiple provinces.

FORCED DISPLACEMENT & MIGRATION



Focusing on **dignity, resilience and self-reliance**, the EU is addressing challenges of **forced displacement inside Afghanistan and irregular migration across the region**, and supports Afghan returnees from neighbouring countries.

In Iran, 14,000 Afghan children benefitted from **new schools** built with EU support, while 7,612 undocumented Afghans received **life-saving post-arrival humanitarian and protection assistance** in 2023. In Pakistan, the first toll-free dedicated **Gender-Based Violence (GBV) helpline** for the Afghan community was launched with support from the EU. 250,000 people received **support to basic needs** in response to 2022 floods.

In response to the displacement crisis, the EU, alongside 13 Member States, launched a regional **Team Europe Initiative (TEI)**. Through the TEI, Afghans and host communities are supported in **Iran, Pakistan, and Central Asian** countries through **protection initiatives, resilience strengthening** and employment activities, as well as support to **migration governance**.

THE EU SUPPORTS THE AFGHAN PEOPLE WHEREVER THEY ARE

CONTACT

Delegation of the European Union to Afghanistan

delegation-afghanistan@eeas.europa.eu
www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/afghanistan
@EUInAfghanistan