



EU SUPPORT TO THE AFGHAN PEOPLE:

ADDRESSING THEIR **BASIC NEEDS**

AND **LIVELIHOODS OPPORTUNITIES**



"The European Union stands with the people of Afghanistan, supporting them through crisis and transition. We help save lives, restore livelihoods, and strengthen resilience to challenges such as climate change. Women are at the heart of our approach to economic stability, and the EU work is guided by a clear commitment to act by, with, and for women. Empowering women also unlocks one of Afghanistan's greatest potentials for development and for building greater self-sufficiency."

*Veronika Boskovic Pohar, Chargée d'Affaires,
Delegation of the European Union to Afghanistan.*

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 €1.082 billion 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, equal and meaningful participation of all Afghans – including women and girls, as well as 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.



HOW THE EU SUPPORTS THE AFGHAN PEOPLE...

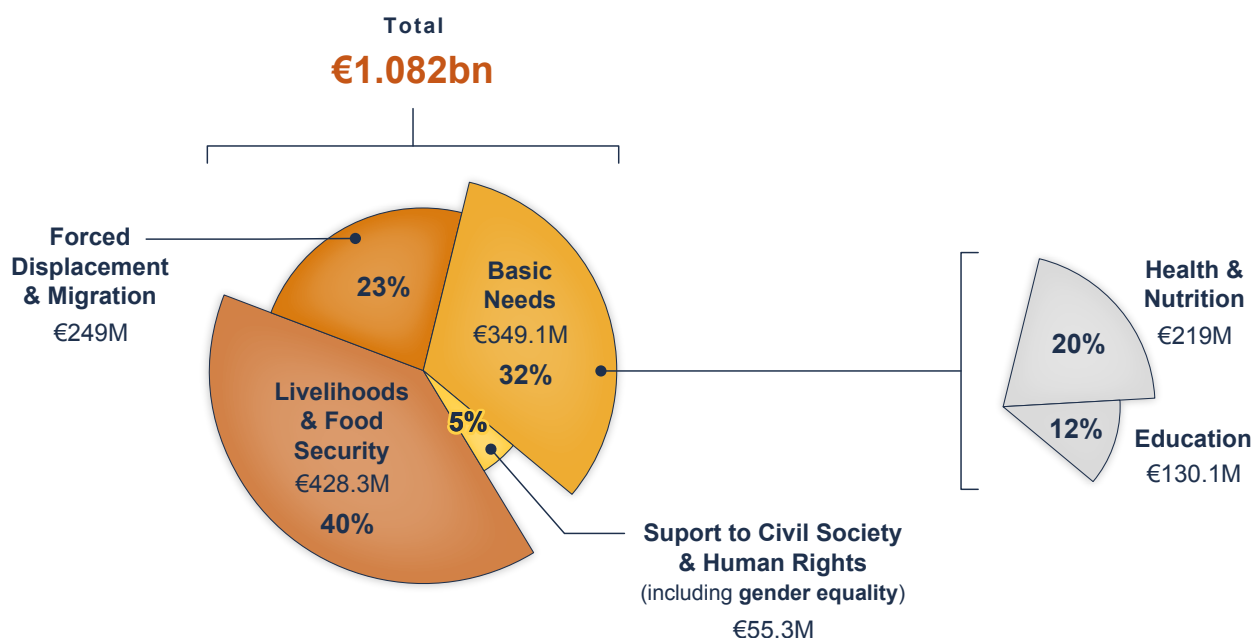
Support is provided to the Afghan people for better access to quality basic services and enhanced resilient livelihoods and economic opportunities, in line with the ACG Framework For International Partner Support in Afghanistan. The focus is on social and economic areas where both women and men can contribute 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 (2021-2026)

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).



...AND SUPPORTS 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 and prevent their erasure:

- 40% of healthcare providers are still women. Through its investment in basic services the EU has safeguarded women's employment in the health sector;
- 482,989 people in 9 provinces and 35 districts in Afghanistan were provided reproductive health services in 2025;
- 32,400 female trained to participate in Sharia-compliant rotating saving and credit associations.

The EU supports protection of women's rights in Afghanistan, delivering services to address gender-based violence. Feedback is regularly collected from over **2,000 Afghan women** across the country, and EU partners raise awareness on women's rights with communities, religious scholars and teachers.



EXAMPLES OF INITIATIVES & RESULTS



FORCED DISPLACEMENT & MIGRATION

Examples of achievements in migration since 2021

Afghan returnees received post-arrival assistance	49,317
Afghans benefited from quick-impact community improvement projects	over 762,000
Afghans received essential primary health-care or mental health support	nearly 200,000
Employment opportunities created or sustained	nearly 15,000
Afghan refugees in Iran enrolled in the national health insurance system	405,000

The EU promotes the dignity, resilience, and self-reliance of Afghan returnees, refugees in neighbouring countries, and affected host communities. Support includes **Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)**, MSME development, and cash-for-work initiatives. Social cohesion programmes have reached **35,600 people**, and **10,000 individuals** have obtained civil documentation in Afghanistan.

Across the region, Afghan refugees in Iran were enrolled in national health insurance between 2022 and 2025, gaining access to secondary and tertiary healthcare. In Pakistan, EU support has expanded access to legal assistance, healthcare, education and livelihoods, including the launch of the first **dedicated GBV helpline** for the Afghan community in 2024.

The EU and **14 Member States** established the Regional Team Europe Initiative (TEI) on Forced Displacement, supporting Afghans across Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, and Central Asia through protection, resilience-building, and economic inclusion.



LIVELIHOODS

Examples of achievements in livelihoods since 2021

Number of jobs supported/sustained by enabling access to guarantees and grants	over 55,000 (16,000 jobs in women led MSMEs)
Volume of finance enabled through guarantees and matching grants	EUR 68 million
Food and cash assistance provided between 2023-2025	1.6 million people
Farmers Supported with agriculture, livestock, irrigation, and food processing inputs/kits	over 370,000

Community Based Saving Groups (CBSGs) established	1,622 (1,343 women)
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Rotating Savings and Credit associations (ROSCAs) in the Northern, Western, North Easter Regions	1,880
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EU-supported livelihoods projects generate economic opportunities, create jobs, and strengthen community resilience. Local communities receive agricultural inputs, small livestock, cash-based assistance, and technical training, alongside climate-smart assets such as greenhouses, irrigation canals and terracing.

Promoting **access to finance** – through formal MSMEs, major microfinance providers, and Community-Based Savings Groups – has been a cornerstone of EU support, playing a key role in restoring microfinance lending following the 2021 crisis. A particular focus is **addressing the drivers of forced displacement** by improving resilient livelihood opportunities for returnees and displaced persons and supporting their integration into host communities.



HEALTH

Examples of achievements in health since 2021

Children and adolescents reached with community nutrition services	over 3.9 million
Pregnant and lactating women reached with community health and nutrition services	over 304,000
Afghan refugees in Iran enrolled in national health insurance	405,000
Provincial infectious disease laboratories set up and functional	28
Patients completing drug treatment programmes (2023)	11,836
Physiotherapist graduated after 2021	137 (98 women)

EU support improves nutrition care for children under five, adolescent girls and women of reproductive age, strengthening national nutrition surveillance in urban and rural areas. The EU is also enhancing preparedness and response systems for outbreaks and health emergencies, with a focus on diagnostics, surveillance, and infection prevention.

Inclusive care services are provided for people with mental health and drug use disorders and physical disabilities. Through WASH infrastructure, the EU supports safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene in health facilities and communities.



EDUCATION

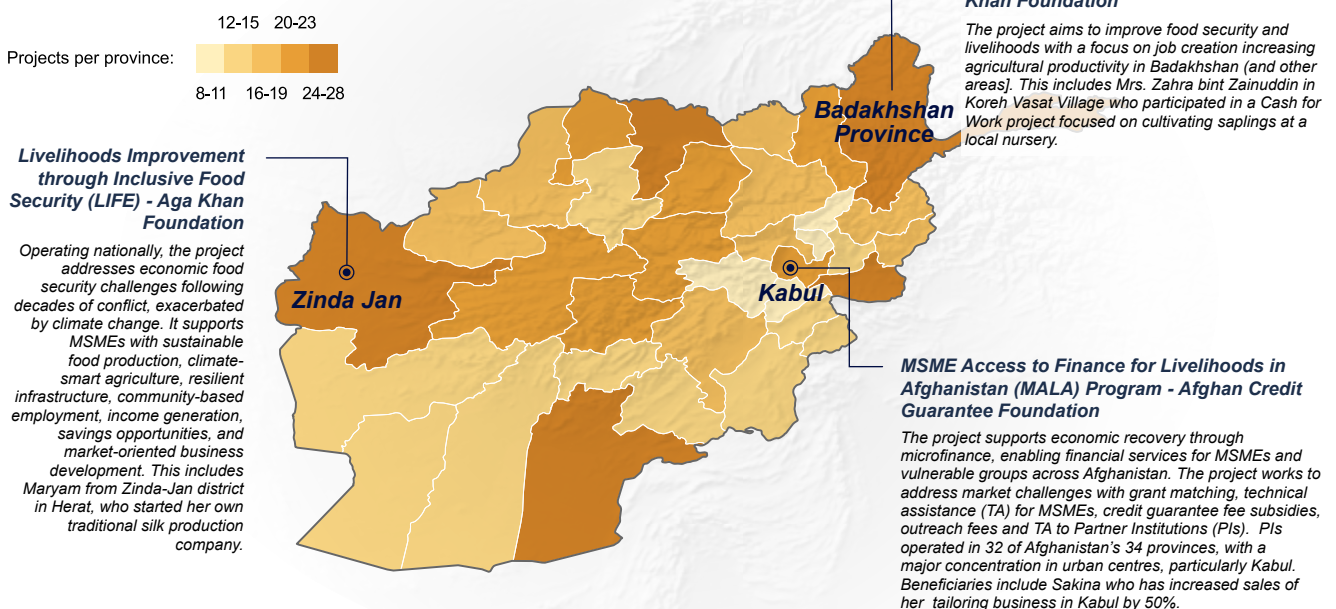
Examples of achievements in education since 2021

Primary school children who benefited from daily nutritious snacks and take-home food rations (e.g. vegetable oil)	over 4 million
Teachers and Shura members who completed training courses	15,300
Schools that benefitted from light rehabilitation	119

Together with WFP, the EU provides **daily nutritious snacks** for boys and girls in primary schools, addressing short-term hunger and improving attendance and learning outcomes, with linkages to local bakeries supporting livelihoods. With UNICEF, the EU contributes to **safe learning environments** in public primary schools, with a focus on vulnerable children in deprived areas, through school rehabilitation and teacher training.

THE EU SUPPORTS THE AFGHAN PEOPLE WHEREVER THEY ARE

Figure 2. Examples of projects supported by the European Union in Afghanistan



HUMAN RIGHTS & CIVIL SOCIETY

The EU supports civil society actors in maintaining and upholding civic space, and building an enabling environment for an inclusive, diverse and rights-based Afghan society. In addition to targeted thematic actions relevant to civil society and human rights, involving Afghan NGOs across all actions as service providers, thereby contributing to the Localisation agenda and providing continued financial and technical support to national NGOs is key.

The EU ensures that human rights and support for civil society are integrated across all its interventions, while also providing targeted assistance to Afghan human rights defenders and civil society through its dedicated thematic programmes on human rights and civil society.

Over **50 independent media outlets**, including 13 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.

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