



## HIGHLIGHTS

### Statelessness

Over 20,000 persons with undetermined nationality/ stateless persons registered from late 2014 to date.

### Emergency Preparedness

Strengthened inter-agency emergency response capacity for refugee influx from Afghanistan

### Access to Asylum

Development of border management safeguards, and technical support to national asylum system

### Refugee Solutions

Enhanced self-reliance, access to health and education services to benefit refugees who integrate locally or choose to repatriate

## Population of concern

A total of **22,140** persons of concern

### By country of origin

| Country                 | Total PoC     |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| Afghanistan             | 2,312         |
| Ukraine                 | 2             |
| Iraq                    | 2             |
| Iran                    | 5             |
| Pakistan                | 8             |
| Uzbekistan              | 2             |
| Stateless/those at risk | 19,523*       |
| Asylum seekers          | 286           |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>22,140</b> |

\*This is based on the number of people identified during the registration exercise between November 2014 and 29 February 2016 as well as on current official statistics of government identified people provided with statelessness documents.

## Funding

**USD 2.14 Million** requested

No earmarked contributions were made to the Tajikistan operation in 2016

## UNHCR Presence

### Staff:

10 national staff  
4 international staff  
5 affiliated work force

### Offices:

1 office located in:  
Dushanbe



## WORKING WITH PARTNERS

Key government partners include the Executive Apparatus of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Department for Citizenship and Works with Refugees (DCWR) within the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Education, Health and Labour, and the Ombudsman's Office. UNHCR also works closely with diplomatic missions and their respective development and humanitarian agencies, the EU, OSCE, sister UN agencies, ICRC, IOM, the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) and its humanitarian arm, and a wide range of NGOs and civil society actors, including Chashma, Consortium of Initiatives, Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Refugee Children and Vulnerable Citizens (RCVC), and Right and Prosperity (R&P).

## MAIN ACTIVITIES

### Addressing Statelessness

- Statelessness in the country is rooted in a complex array of factors, including the dissolution of the former Soviet Union; unclear or disputed borders areas; past civil conflicts; cross-border displacement; and inter-State marriages and births.
- In July 2014, UNHCR, Government and civil society partners launched a national project to address statelessness in the Republic of Tajikistan. As of 29 February 2016, nearly 20,000 persons at risk of statelessness have been registered in three target regions, with over 2,000 people submitting their applications to confirm nationality. Over 1,000 people have since had their nationality confirmed.
- In the meantime, in order to address the situation of statelessness under the current legal framework, the Government of Tajikistan together with UNHCR, developed an operational work plan to address the situation of persons under UNHCR's statelessness mandate, which includes awareness raising on statelessness, enhanced coordination with the civil society partners and facilitating solutions.

- UNHCR has also played a leading role in promoting reforms to the *Constitutional Law on Nationality*. The newly adopted Law signed by the President of Tajikistan on 7 August 2015 contains favourable improvements to prevent and reduce statelessness. Concurrently, the Government is working on developing the relevant regulation(s) to implement the *Constitutional Law on Nationality*.
- To resolve the situation of stateless persons and people of undetermined nationality who face potentially administrative penalties and criminal sanctions, the Government of Tajikistan, with UNHCR's technical support has drafted an Amnesty Agreement through the *Inter-Ministerial Working Group on Nationality/Statelessness*.

### Strengthening the National Asylum System and Solutions for Refugees

- The Republic of Tajikistan has ratified the 1951 Convention and developed national legislation which generally comports with international standards, although significant gaps exist in its implementation. UNHCR is thus engaged in a series of advocacy, technical support and capacity-building activities with Government stakeholders to strengthen the national asylum system.
- UNHCR continues to strengthen its collaboration with the National Border Guards, amongst others through the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), while Standard Operation Procedures (SOP) on Referral Mechanisms at the Border is being discussed with Government in order to ensure access to the territory and the asylum procedure, in line with international standards.
- UNHCR is providing ongoing training and establishing benchmarks with the Government of Tajikistan, to strengthen the quality of the asylum procedure and the overall protection environment. Where necessary for the protection of persons of concern, UNHCR conducts refugee status determination (RSD) under its mandate for a limited number of cases.
- UNHCR and its Government, UN and NGO partners work closely to promote refugee self-reliance (including targeted programmes for women), with focus on skills trainings, job placement and small business initiatives as well as ensuring access to basic services such as education and health. UNHCR and its partners provide legal, protection and material assistance for at-risk cases, collaborating with UNDP legal clinics, so that persons of concern can access free legal counselling.
- The Tajikistan Operation is also engaged in developing creative approaches to solutions for the refugee caseload, which contemplate community-based development initiatives that target both refugees and local populations, thus promoting peaceful co-existence and facilitating local integration.

### Preparedness for Forced Displacement

- Sitting at the crossroads between Afghanistan and the Fergana Valley of Central Asia – with ongoing conflict and unrest in the Northeastern region of Afghanistan bordering Tajikistan — the Office continues to strengthen its engagement with Government, UN sister agencies, international organizations and NGO partners on emergency preparedness.
- UNHCR places particular priority on promoting access to asylum — including at the border — and the promotion of safeguards and referral systems for persons in need of international protection.
- UNHCR has provided technical support to the Government to develop a national contingency plan for refugee influxes, with focus on Afghanistan. UNHCR's work in the preparedness context is characterized by close inter-agency collaboration, which includes leadership of the *Ad-Hoc Working Group on Emergency Preparedness for the Afghanistan Situation*, an inter-agency forum consisting of key UN and NGO partners who complement and reinforce Government preparedness.

**UNHCR is grateful for the generous contributions of donors who have given un-earmarked and broadly earmarked contributions in 2016, which have allowed the Tajikistan operation to be funded.**