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## Update on USAID's Afghanistan Response

Dear Colleagues,

Amidst the appalling and unprovoked attacks perpetrated against the people of Ukraine at the end of last month, we are once again reminded of the cost of war—the bravery of those who stand to defend truth and democracy; the grief of the innocent men, women, and children who seek refuge from violence; and the family members of those killed and injured. Unfortunately, this distress is an all too familiar feeling for many at USAID who have supported partners and allies in their time of need, yet you remain undeterred.

As we continue to work alongside the Ukrainian government and neighboring countries to prepare for the crisis we now face in the region, I want to take a moment to address the latest developments of the worsening humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. Concern for the Afghan people is widespread, particularly as a harsh winter has set in and critical relief and development efforts face growing challenges. I share that concern, and I want to assure you that we are continuing to respond to the urgent humanitarian needs in the region.

The beginning of this month marked a new phase in our effort to support the Afghan people, with several updates to share about how we, alongside our partners, are prioritizing their basic needs and human rights and our agency's support to our former Foreign Service National (FSN) colleagues.

Reaching a new milestone, 100 percent of our former Afghan FSN colleagues who chose to relocate to the United States have now been resettled from U.S. military bases into new communities across the United States, including many in the National Capital Region, where they are beginning new lives. To highlight the efforts of our colleagues who joined Operation Allies Welcome (OAW), we have put together a [short video](#) featuring former FSNs and some of the key players who spared no effort to support this undertaking.

Regarding the **relocation of eligible Afghan partners, USAID continues to support OAW and the Department of State (State)** via the USAID Afghan Support Cell and through the submission of P1 and P2 U.S. Refugee Admissions

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Program (USRAP) referrals to State's Office of Population, Refugees and Migration. The resettlement process is by no means complete, and we continue to work with our interagency partners and Staff Care to support our former FSNs. Our Agency's leadership, the Administration, and I are extremely grateful for and proud of the hundreds of USAID staff here in Washington and beyond, who worked alongside our interagency colleagues to welcome our Afghan colleagues over the past several months.

Given the unique and life-changing circumstances surrounding the relocation of our local staff from Afghanistan, helping these colleagues find new employment in the United States remains a priority. The Afghan FSN Working Group worked hard to create and share a resume bank with numerous hiring managers within USAID Washington and at various USAID Missions around the globe to provide opportunities for former Afghan FSNs to continue supporting USAID. The Afghan FSN Working Group, in collaboration with the Office of Human Capital and Talent Management, USAID Staff Care, and the USAID Alumni Association, continue to support Afghan FSNs who are seeking new employment opportunities outside of USAID based on their interests and expertise.

We are pleased that some of our former Afghan FSN colleagues have found employment in the private sector or within USAID, but many more continue their job search. If you are interested in providing direct support in your personal time to former Afghan FSNs, their families, and other Afghans who have been relocated to the United States, please see [Welcome.US](#), [Sponsor Circles](#), and the [USAID Alumni Association](#) to learn more about the various ways you can help.

In January, the United Nations (UN) released the 2022 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) for Afghanistan, which requests \$4.4 billion to support growing humanitarian needs—the single largest request for one country yet. At the HRP launch, we announced **an initial Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 contribution of \$308 million** for the response, bringing total U.S. humanitarian aid in Afghanistan and to Afghan refugees in the region to more than half a billion dollars since the fall of Kabul in August 2021. This funding will provide urgent food and nutrition assistance; support health care facilities and mobile health teams; bolster logistics and transportation capabilities to help aid workers deliver critical relief supplies to hard-to-reach areas; and continue support for winterization

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programs.

The Afghanistan Response Management Team (RMT) in D.C. and the Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), which is based in USAID/BHA's regional offices in Bangkok and with the Afghan Affairs Unit in Doha, continue to work with implementing partners, the interagency, and other donors to scale up the response; promote the participation of female aid workers in all aspects of the response; and ensure the principled delivery of lifesaving humanitarian assistance to all Afghans, regardless of gender or ethnicity. USAID also provided significant input into UN Security Council Resolution 2615, which created a carveout to the 1988 sanctions regime for humanitarian assistance and other activities supporting basic human needs, enabling other donors to provide assistance for the people of Afghanistan.

USAID continues to work with the Department of the Treasury to create a conducive legal environment for partners delivering humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan through the issuance of General Licenses (GL). USAID welcomes the new GL 20 issued last month by the Department of Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), which makes very clear that U.S. sanctions should not stand in the way of any transactions and activities that provide aid to the Afghan people. The issuance of GL 20 provides additional clarity to non-governmental organizations, international organizations, financial institutions, and private sector entities that their work in Afghanistan to help stabilize the economy and prevent further escalation of the country's humanitarian crisis is welcomed.

**USAID's Afghanistan Mission remains operational**, and we currently have dozens of U.S. staff stationed in Doha, Qatar, and Almaty, Kazakhstan, as well as throughout the United States. From these locations, the Afghanistan Mission continues to work with implementing partners on priority programs that complement our vast humanitarian response. These programs focus on supporting Afghanistan's health care system, maintaining basic education services for Afghan youth, supporting women and girls across the development spectrum, and improving Afghanistan's food security.

USAID's humanitarian and development programs work hand-in-hand to both address immediate lifesaving needs and provide longer-term services that are critical to enabling Afghans to survive and thrive amid difficult conditions. While

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humanitarian assistance is critical to saving lives in the near term, a resumption of basic services and efforts to address banking and liquidity challenges will be crucial to address the root causes of the humanitarian crisis. We understand that there are many outstanding questions around the recent [Executive Order to Preserve Certain Afghanistan Central Bank Assets for the People of Afghanistan](#), but note that the executive order is aimed at protecting and preserving funds for the benefit of the Afghan people and for Afghanistan's future. While no decision has been made yet about how these funds will ultimately be used pending a judicial decision, we are actively working to explore potential avenues to direct resources toward not only immediate humanitarian support, but also meeting basic needs and stabilizing the economy, while minimizing touchpoints with the Taliban and maintaining appropriate controls to prevent diversion and illicit activity.

I would like to extend a sincere and special thank you to the Bureaus for Asia; Management; Policy, Planning and Learning; Humanitarian Assistance; Development, Democracy and Innovation; Conflict Prevention and Stabilization, and the Offices for Human Capital and Talent Management as well as the General Counsel's office, for their outstanding leadership and steadfast commitment to Afghanistan. As USAID continues this vital work on behalf of the American and Afghan people, I strongly encourage all agency bidders and applicants to consider joining our Afghan mission to help us lead in this new phase of our efforts on behalf of the Afghan people. As we reconstitute our Mission, we are committed to maintaining a robust program of American assistance over the long term.

Thank you.

Deputy Administrator Isobel Coleman

Any questions concerning this notice may be directed to:

-- Samantha Hall, ASIA, [shall@usaid.gov](mailto:shall@usaid.gov)

