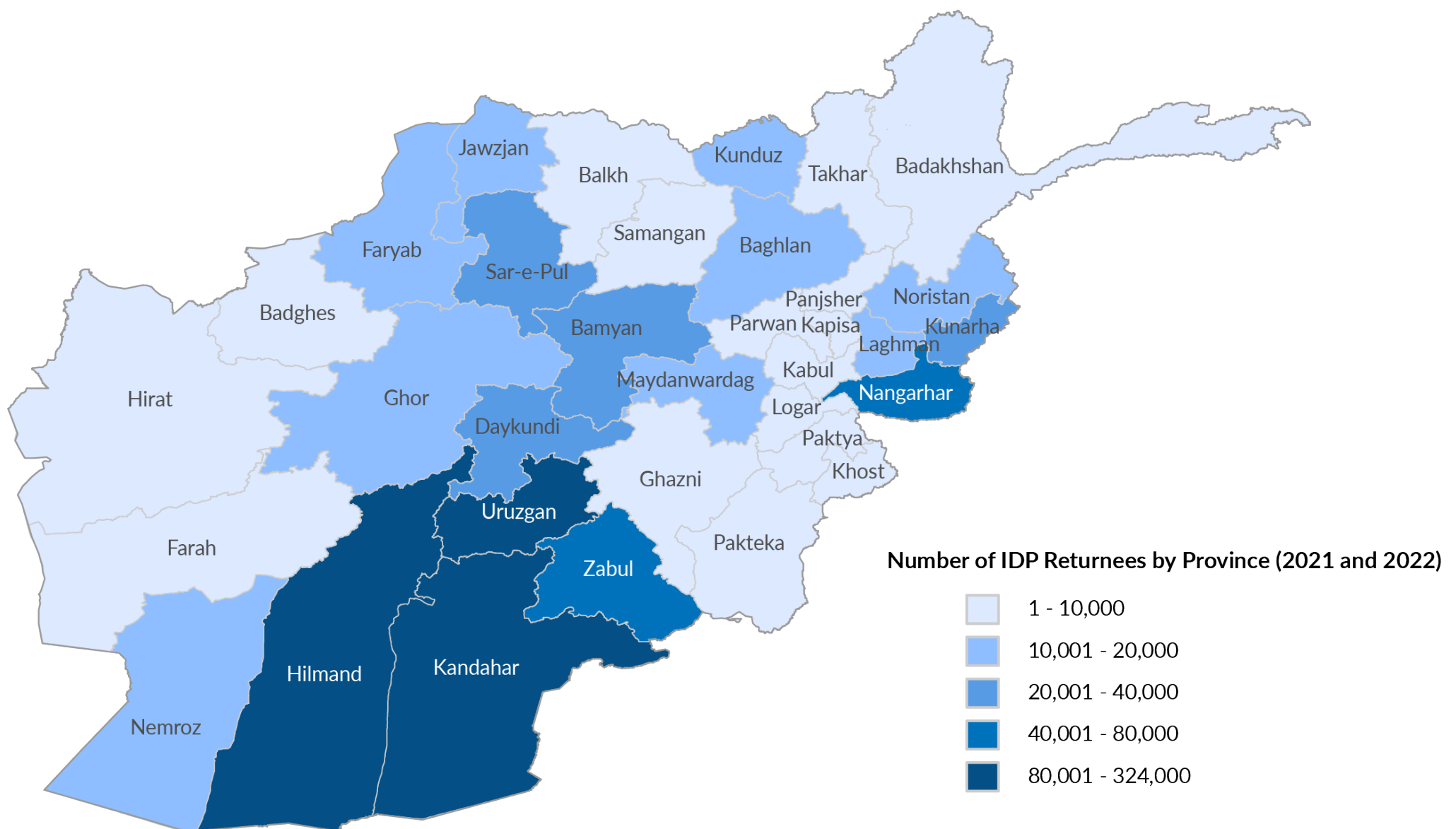


Located in the most significant areas of origin of the forcibly displaced, the PARRs seek to build the resilience of communities by linking humanitarian and development investments in essential services such as education, health, and livelihoods. This approach has assisted some of the over one million internally displaced persons who have returned since June 2021 to reintegrate. It is now laying a foundation that could enable the voluntary return and sustainable reintegration of even more refugees across the region.

WHAT ARE THE PARRs?

- The Priority Areas of Return and Reintegration (PARRs) are 80 areas in Afghanistan (5 cities and 75 districts covering over 12,000 villages) where UNHCR and partners link community-based protection initiatives to medium- to long-term development objectives to improve access to basic services and infrastructure in areas where internally displaced persons (IDPs) and Afghan refugees return.
- The PARRs are at the heart of UNHCR's protection and solutions work in Afghanistan, facilitating access to durable solutions for refugee and IDP returnees and channelling multisectoral interventions by various partners that span the humanitarian-development nexus to help stabilize communities and promote resilience and self-reliance.

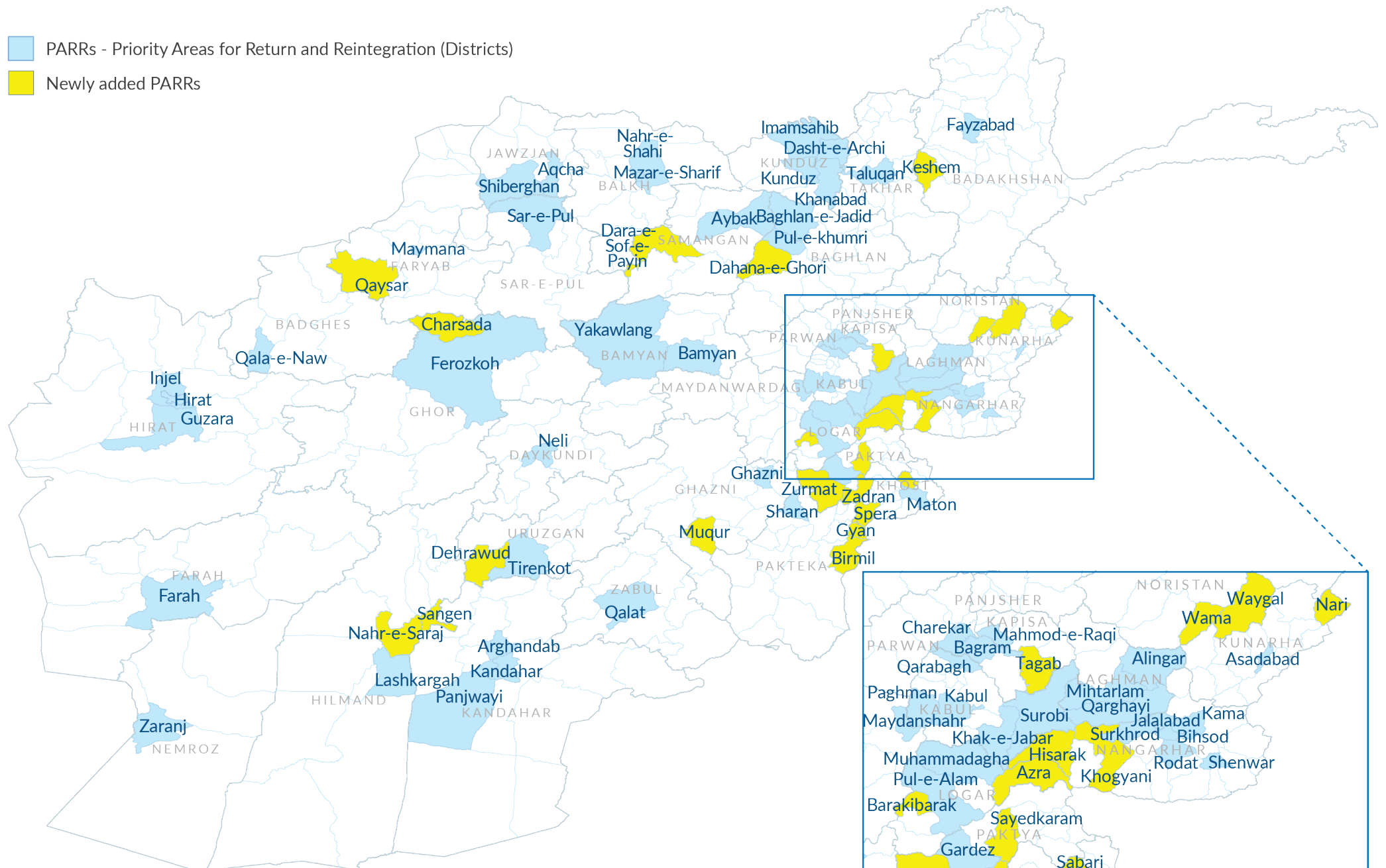


PARR SELECTION CRITERIA

- **Alignment with national priorities and the policy framework for refugee and IDP returnees**, also subscribed by the de facto authorities, including the Land Allocation Scheme as appropriate.
- **Demographics and population trends**, including the population of registered refugees and IDPs (protracted and newly displaced) from the area, and recent refugee and IDP returnee trends.
- **Social cohesion**: The benefits of investment in services reach all people in the area, building community resilience and self-reliance.

THE PARRs' COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE

- The PARRs are underpinned by the *Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees to Support Voluntary Repatriation, Sustainable Reintegration, and Assistance to Host Countries* (SSAR), the regional framework for protection and solutions of Afghan refugees agreed by the governments of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan in 2012, and subsequently endorsed by the international community. The SSAR envisages a future in which displaced Afghans might return to their homeland permanently and prosper. The strategy advances a regional approach to solutions and promotes burden- and responsibility-sharing for refugees at regional and global levels in line with the Global Compact on Refugees.
- The SSAR is supported by a [Support Platform](#) that channels technical and other support via its [Core Group](#). The current members of the Core Group are the European Union (as Chair), Asian Development Bank, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Japan, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, United Nations Development Programme, United States of America, and the World Bank.
- The PARRs are integral to the SSAR, and are the centrepiece of its first two objectives: 1) building resilient communities and enhancing capacity for voluntary return and sustainable reintegration; and 2) working toward conditions conducive to voluntary repatriation, including by supporting Afghanistan with land distribution to returnees and IDPs and investing in the human capital, resilience and portable skills of refugees in host countries, to enhance the potential for return and reintegration.
- The first 15 PARRs were established by the Government of Afghanistan and UNHCR in 2019 and expanded to 80 PARRs today, pioneering area-based programming in Afghanistan that is distinctly linked to resilience and solutions. More PARRs may be added in the next two years, based on demographic trends, while several existing PARRs may be graduated and handed over to development actors as of 2023, thereby completing the humanitarian-development transition.
- Surveys show that the PARRs are attractive to returnees. In 2021 – 2022, out of 1.1 million IDP returnees UNHCR has recorded thus far, 55 percent (601,500 individuals) returned to 70 PARR locations across the country (figures may increase as assessments are ongoing). Of the overall IDP returns recorded so far in 2021, almost 50 percent returned to PARR locations in Kandahar, Helmand, Uruzgan, and Zabul provinces – all in the Southern Region of Afghanistan. In a March 2021 evaluation, 76 percent of people reported that their lives and well-being had improved while living in PARRs.



PARRs IN PARTNERSHIP

- The PARRs are aligned with the **UN Transitional Engagement Framework (TEF)**, the overarching strategic plan for the UN system's assistance in Afghanistan in 2022. The TEF provides a conduit for the international community to rapidly re-channel resources to key strategic priorities, which include:
 - i. Providing life-saving assistance;
 - ii. Sustaining essential services;
 - iii. Preserving social investments and community-level systems essential to meeting basic human needs.
- The PARRs seek to include all partners who can contribute to their objectives. Aside from funding UNHCR receives directly, investments in the PARRs are made via other funding mechanisms such as the Special Trust Fund for Afghanistan (STFA), established in October 2021. Out of the initial round of funding that generated USD 96 million (of which UNHCR received some 17 million), 68 million were invested in the PARRs by STFA partners such as UN Habitat, ILO, UN Women, FAO, UNDP, and IOM. Bilateral agreements between UNHCR and various UN and community-based entities and organizations strengthen the multidisciplinary approach in the PARRs.
- While multisectoral, key area-based interventions are in the areas of health, education, community infrastructure, and livelihoods, which complement the ongoing work and existing needs identified by the respective clusters under the Inter-Cluster Coordination Team (ICCT) in Afghanistan. UNHCR coordinates these multi-partner interventions in the PARRs, ensuring prioritization and eliminating duplication while amplifying tri-cluster synergies from the Protection and Emergency Shelter/Non-Food Items clusters and CCCM working group (which coordinates IDP solutions), all led by UNHCR.
- The UNDP-led Area-based Approach to Emergency Development Initiative (ABADEI) for Community Resilience in Afghanistan being supported through the STFA, took its inspiration from the area-based programming approach of the PARRs. ABADEI and PARR interventions are thus complementary, with ABADEI including interventions in the PARRs countrywide, especially in the first cycle of funding.



Women Community Business Centre in Guzara, Herat Province. © WASSA