

PM pledges £50 million to UN Afghanistan appeal

- Support will go to some of the most vulnerable people in Afghanistan, particularly women and girls
- Funding is the first major commitment under the £286 million of aid for Afghanistan announced by the PM in September
- The PM will call on G20 leaders today to do more to support girls' education around the world

Two and a half million Afghans, most of them women and girls, will receive urgent life-saving humanitarian support thanks to £50 million of funding announced by the Prime Minister today.

The funding, which is drawn from the UK's £286 million aid commitment to Afghanistan announced by the Prime Minister in September, will be channelled via UN agencies and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The humanitarian situation in Afghanistan has rapidly deteriorated since the Taliban seized control of the country in August. Under the UK's evacuation effort 'Operation PITTING' 15,000 British nationals and vulnerable Afghans were brought to the UK.

Since the conclusion of the NATO withdrawal two months ago we have provided extensive support to those Afghans now starting their lives in the UK, including £25 million to provide housing, schooling and healthcare this year. Further UK military flights have also brought additional Afghans to the UK in the last fortnight.

The funding announced today will help the critical need for food, nutrition, shelter and medicine over the winter months in Afghanistan and bolster the UN's wider humanitarian response. Protecting women and girls from gender-based violence will also be prioritised.

The Prime Minister said:

Two months ago this week NATO withdrew its final forces from Afghanistan after the most extensive evacuation effort in the alliance's history, an effort which saved a huge number of lives.

We now have a responsibility to protect the people of Afghanistan most at risk under the Taliban regime, particularly women and girls.

Today's funding will provide urgent protection for the most vulnerable people. But preventing a humanitarian disaster in Afghanistan and preserving the gains of the last twenty years will require a truly global effort.

At the G20 Summit today the Prime Minister will underscore the need to prioritise the rights of women and girls in all our international development efforts. In particular he will highlight the role girls' education can make in unlocking opportunities for both individuals and whole societies.

Addressing a session on sustainable development, the Prime Minister is expected to say:

We must educate our daughters as surely as we educate our sons. That is the silver bullet, the Swiss army knife, the Black and Decker toolkit that solves an abundance of problems.

For every extra year a girl in the developing world spends in secondary school, her future income rises by 25 per cent and her own children will be twice as likely to go to school themselves – and 50 per cent more likely to be immunised against killer diseases.

In July, the Global Partnership for Education summit in London raised \$4 billion to support education in developing countries. The Prime Minister will also use his intervention at the G20 to call for countries to step up to raise the further \$1 billion the organisation needs to fund its activities over the next five years.

The UN agencies and ICRC will work with a number of international and national NGOs to deliver the £50 million Afghanistan funding announced by the UK today. No funding will be provided to the Taliban or through government systems. The partners we are working with have measures in place to ensure funding gets to those who need it most.