

## Working environment

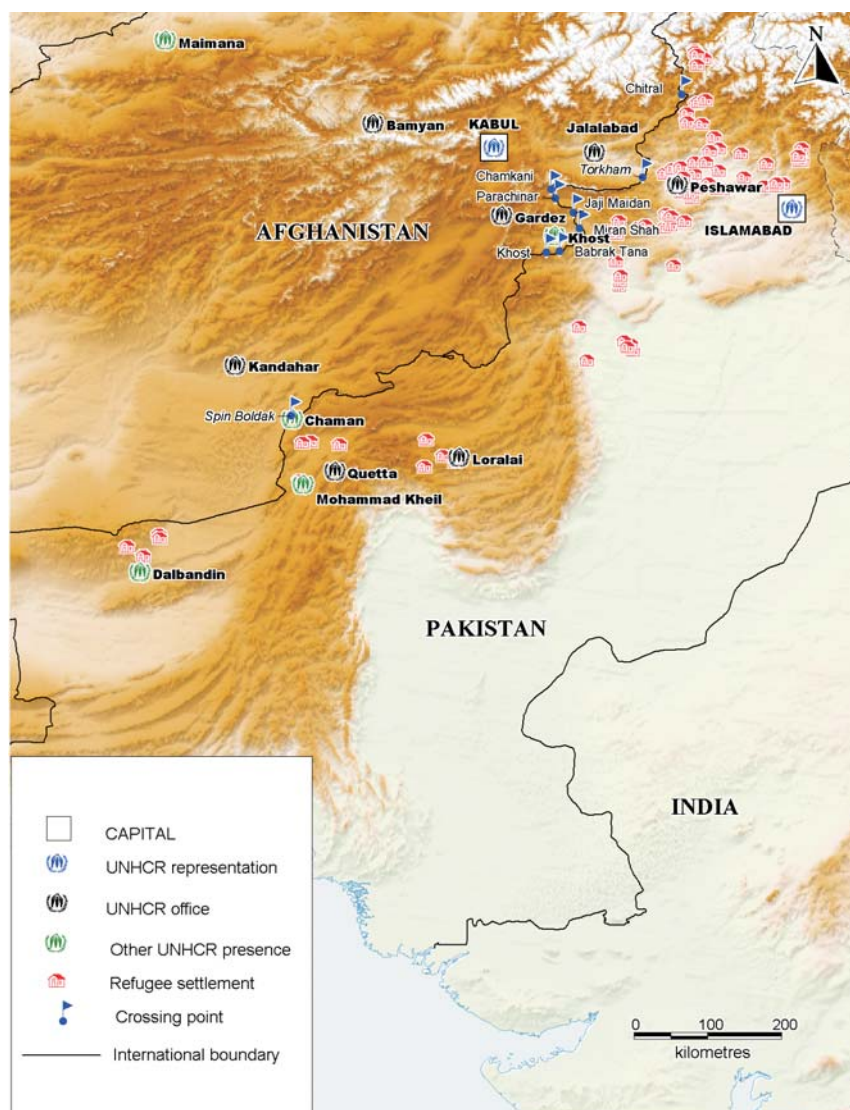
### The context

Pakistan hosts one of the largest refugee populations in the world. Though it is not a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol, the Government of Pakistan respects the principles of international protection.

Since March 2002 some 3.5 million Afghans have repatriated from Pakistan with UNHCR assistance. Still, as of August 2008 some 1.8 million Afghans remained in Pakistan, mainly in urban areas, and UNHCR is working with the Government to find comprehensive solutions for them. Voluntary repatriation is the preferred solution, but it must be gradual and voluntary in view of Afghanistan's limited capacity to absorb returnees.

The rate of repatriation from Pakistan in 2008 was higher than expected, with a total of 240,000 Afghans having returned by the end of August. This was influenced by the May 2008 closure of Jalojai refugee village, rising prices in Pakistan and an increase in threats to security. Residents of Jalojai had the

choice of repatriating voluntarily or relocating within Pakistan.



### Planning figures

Type of population	Origin	Jan 2009		Dec 2009	
		Total in country	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Total in country	Of whom assisted by UNHCR
Refugees	Afghanistan	765,680	80,000	685,680	747,370
	Somalia	500	500	600	600
	Iraq	100	100	100	100
	Various	200	200	200	200
People in refugee-like situations	Afghanistan	992,330	120,000	872,330	-
Asylum-seekers	Afghanistan	2,500	1,430	2,500	1,430
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,761,310</b>	<b>122,230</b>	<b>1,561,410</b>	<b>749,700</b>

The Tripartite Agreement, governing the voluntary repatriation of Afghans, was signed in August 2007 between UNHCR and the Governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan and is valid until the end of 2009. In August 2008, Pakistan announced that it would review its repatriation plan for 2007-2009, an important step in ensuring that returns are gradual and voluntary.

The political and security situation in Pakistan remains volatile, especially along the border with Afghanistan. Restricted access to parts of the country has hampered UNHCR's ability to assist and protect refugees. In August 2008, floods and military operations led to the displacement of a substantial number of people in the North-West Frontier Province. While many returned home in early September after the Government announced a ceasefire during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, the situation remains uncertain.

## The needs

Though the number of Afghan refugees in Pakistan has been reduced by repatriation, Pakistan still hosts the largest refugee population in the world. The inhabitants of refugee villages continue to need support in the areas of water, sanitation, health and basic education. Those refugees living outside the villages have difficulty paying for education and coping with rising rental and food costs.

All refugees in Pakistan have been registered and given documents by the Government in 2007. All registered Afghans over the age of five have been given Proof of Registration cards, valid until the end of 2009 recognizing them as Afghan citizens living temporarily in Pakistan.

Using registration data, UNHCR is conducting profiling exercises to identify communities and individuals with specific needs and those for whom a particular solution may be appropriate. The Office is also trying to gauge the prospects for the return to Afghanistan of the majority of refugees remaining in Pakistan. This information will help the Governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan as well as UNHCR and its partners in the search for solutions for different groups.

The Refugee Affected and Hosting Areas (RAHA) initiative, promoted by the Government of Pakistan with UNHCR and UNDP, aims to promote co-existence by increasing support to local communities and upgrading facilities in areas affected by the presence of refugees. In addition to projects in the health sector, in late 2008 a UN joint appeal will be launched to implement projects under the Delivering as One initiative.

A supplementary programme has been established by UNHCR to respond to the humanitarian needs of internally displaced persons affected by floods and renewed conflict between the Government and armed groups in the North-West Frontier Province in August 2008.

## Main objectives

- Provide international protection and durable solutions to refugees and asylum-seekers.
- Identify categories and groups within the registered Afghan population and develop and implement a strategy for durable solutions suitable for each group.
- Integrate the Government's concerns into a regional policy framework to manage Afghan displacement in cooperation with all concerned stakeholders.
- Ensure the inclusion of refugee-affected and hosting areas and Afghan populations in the national development agenda, development programmes supported by other UN agencies, and the UN's Delivering as One initiative.
- Take coordinated action to consolidate services, with emphasis on a community-based approach to address the specific needs of vulnerable populations.
- As part of the UN country team, provide technical assistance and support to the authorities to respond to situations of displacement.
- Under the supplementary programme for floods and conflict-related internal displacement, provide shelter materials and non-food items to displaced populations, establish camps and assist in camp management where necessary, support host communities, and protect the most vulnerable populations.
- Ensure the security of all staff.

## Key targets

- Some 200,000 Afghans repatriate voluntarily from Pakistan.
- Some 1,000 refugees with specific protection needs are resettled.
- The profiling of some 60,000 Afghans is completed in order to identify and meet the requirements of individuals with specific needs under the Registration Information Project for Afghan Citizens (RIPAC).
- The Governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan are helped to improve the management of population flows between the two countries.
- The RAHA initiative is funded through the UN joint appeal in the context of the Delivering as One plan.
- Emergency preparedness measures are in place for a UN humanitarian response to displaced persons.
- Under the supplementary programme for floods and conflict-related internal displacement, up to 400,000 IDPs receive shelter and non-food assistance, and are registered and documented, with an emphasis on the most vulnerable.
- Stronger safety measures ensure staff security.



Afghan refugees are displaying food in Jaloza village.

UNHCR/B. Baroch

## Strategy and activities

UNHCR’s interventions in Pakistan are shifting from humanitarian assistance to protection and a comprehensive approach to the management of the Afghan situation. This will include the identification of those at risk and a profiling of the skills and capacities of the refugee population. Targeted interventions will be based on the profiling of the Afghans who were issued a Proof of Registration card.

In addition, a countrywide network of Advice and Legal Aid Centres (ALAC) will continue to provide Afghans with information on legal matters and the situation in their country of origin. These centres also help build the local authorities’ knowledge of refugee law. The ALACs are instrumental in seeking remedies for Afghans arrested under the Foreigners Act.

UNHCR provides community-based humanitarian assistance to nearly 817,370 Afghans in 84 camps, mainly focusing on education, health and water services. Traditional care and maintenance activities will be phased out gradually as services for Afghans are integrated into the national agenda.

Pilot RAHA projects have improved health services for both Afghans and host communities. UNHCR is also working with UN partners and the Government to implementing large projects in the areas of education, environment and livelihoods. The Office continues to work with refugee communities to provide health care, increase awareness on HIV and AIDS, and improve education and water management.

Sexual and gender-based violence networks are in place to coordinate all humanitarian action in this area. The networks cover training, development of a shared database and referral mechanisms at the camp level. They also include a tracking system within UNHCR.

At a regional level, UNHCR is advocating for more investment in areas of high potential return in Afghanistan and for a framework to support the management of displaced Afghans.

## Constraints

The deterioration in security in the border areas and restrictions on access jeopardise assistance operations and the safe return of Afghans. Staff security is also becoming a major concern, particularly in the North-West Frontier Province, and strict security measures are leading to a review of protection monitoring activities.

The lack of infrastructure and jobs in Afghanistan hinders sustainable returns, and may discourage Afghans living in Pakistan from returning. On the other hand, insecure conditions and price hikes in Pakistan are forcing some Afghans to consider earlier repatriation.

## Organization and implementation

UNHCR presence	
Number of offices	3
Total staff	187
International	24
National	137
JPOs	1
UNVs	21
Others	4

## Coordination

The Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON) continues to be UNHCR’s main government interlocutor. As Pakistan is one of the pilot countries for UN reform, the UN Country Team is developing joint programmes through five thematic working groups related to the Millennium Development Goals. Refugees are a cross-cutting issue and all UN agencies and the national Government are committed to giving due consideration to them when formulating and implementing development programmes.

## Partners

### Implementing partners

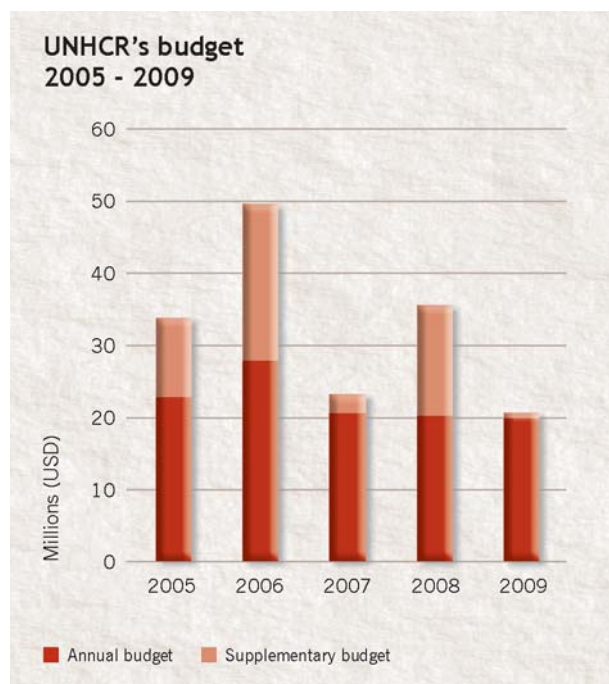
**Government agencies:** Commissioner for Afghan Refugees, Ministry of States and Frontier Regions, National Database and Registration Authority

**NGOs:** American Refugee Committee, International Medical Corps, Basic Education and Employable Skills Training, Basic Education for Afghan Refugees, Catholic Relief Services, Church World Services (USA), International Rescue Committee (USA), Save the Children Federation (USA), Sayyed Jamal-ud-din Afghani Welfare Organisation, Society for Community Support to Primary Education, Society for Humanitarian Rights and Prisoners, Struggle for Change, Taraqee Foundation, The Frontier Primary Health Care, Union Aid for Afghan Refugees, Dost Welfare Foundation, Legend Society

### Operational partners

**NGOs:** Afghan Health Training Project, *Darus-Salam*, Humanitarian Medical and Relief Body, International Medical Corps, *Médecins Sans Frontières*, Mercy Corps International, Qatar Charity

has had to respond to in the country, such as the South Asian earthquake in 2005-2006 and the renewed conflict and floods in the North-West Frontier Province in 2008.



## Financial information

The budget for UNHCR operations in Pakistan has varied over the last years due to numerous unplanned activities, emergencies and challenges that the Office

### Budget (USD)

Activities and services	2008			2009		
	Annual budget	Supplementary budget <sup>1</sup>	Total	Annual budget	Supplementary budget IDPs in Northwestern Frontier Province	Total
Protection, monitoring and coordination	6,143,685	452,021	6,595,706	6,500,982	190,856	6,691,838
Community services	877,670	0	877,670	946,670	0	946,670
Domestic needs	98,000	13,336,602	13,434,602	110,000	0	110,000
Education	1,891,954	0	1,891,954	1,606,230	0	1,606,230
Health	2,117,802	0	2,117,802	2,185,689	0	2,185,689
Legal assistance	1,479,668	0	1,479,668	2,503,418	0	2,503,418
Operational support (to agencies)	2,105,887	70,000	2,175,887	2,184,426	35,000	2,219,426
Sanitation	62,293	22,713	85,006	31,793	0	31,793
Shelter and infrastructure	0	1,479,221	1,479,221	0	384,751	384,751
Transport and logistics	261,094	0	261,094	344,384	0	344,384
Water	445,730	52,998	498,728	442,730	0	442,730
<b>Total operations</b>	<b>15,483,783</b>	<b>15,413,555</b>	<b>30,897,338</b>	<b>16,856,322</b>	<b>610,607</b>	<b>17,466,929</b>
Programme support	2,890,391	113,006	3,003,397	3,078,618	47,713	3,126,331
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,374,173</b>	<b>15,526,561</b>	<b>33,900,734</b>	<b>19,934,940</b>	<b>658,320</b>	<b>20,593,260</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes supplementary programmes for IDPs in Northwestern Frontier Province (USD 15,450,850) and water and sanitation activities (USD 75,711).

Note: Supplementary programme budgets exclude 7 per cent support costs that are recovered from contributions to meet indirect costs for UNHCR.