



Kazakhstan
Kyrgyzstan
Tajikistan
Turkmenistan
Uzbekistan

Central Asia



Delivery of beds, mattresses and bedding sets, provided by the IKEA Foundation to a boarding school for homeless children as part of UNHCR's winterization programme benefited some 50,000 vulnerable individuals and 100 social institutions in southern and northern Kyrgyzstan.

| Working environment |

Countries in Central Asia continue to struggle for political and socio-economic stability. Democratic, social and economic reforms have been hampered by the harsh realities of political and financial crises, and tangible economic recovery is not yet visible for some countries. With the exception of Uzbekistan, all States in Central Asia have acceded to the 1951 Refugee Convention, and adopted relevant national laws. Actual implementation, however, tends to lack conformity with internationally accepted norms.

The Government of Kazakhstan has assumed full responsibility for refugee status determination (RSD), and UNHCR is helping to build its capacity in order to enhance the integrity of the State-run RSD process. Kazakhstan hosts some 1,000 refugees and asylum-seekers, approximately 7700 stateless

people, and an estimated 21,000 people of undetermined nationality.

Operations in Kyrgyzstan witnessed a major shift from assisting refugees and asylum-seekers, to an assistance programme for internally displaced people (IDPs) and returnees displaced by ethnic clashes in the south of the country in 2010. Some 300,000 individuals had been internally displaced as a result of this conflict, while 75,000 people found temporary refuge in Uzbekistan. Protection and assistance have been required by almost 13,400 people who lost their homes, and by some 120,000 returnees. Close to 1,000 refugees and asylum-seekers already in Kyrgyzstan have been joined by the recent return of some 4,600 ethnic Kyrgyz who remain in a refugee-like situation. UNHCR also assists some 17,000 stateless people.



The Government of Turkmenistan and UNHCR jointly developed and launched the Action Plan for Joint Activities on Prevention and Reduction of Statelessness in Turkmenistan in December 2010 and registered stateless people and those at risk of statelessness in the country. Legal assistance was provided to more than 8,000 undocumented people under the Action Plan on Joint Activities to Reduce and Prevent Statelessness. Recently, the President of Turkmenistan signed a decree granting citizenship to 1,590 people, while Parliament approved a bill in favour of accession to the 1954 Statelessness Convention.

Tajikistan hosts nearly 4,000 Afghans, of whom nearly 1,000 are in a situation of protracted displacement.

| Strategy |

In 2012, UNHCR will register and profile people of concern using modern data collection and management tools. It will build capacity in RSD, and seek to improve the self-reliance of refugees and asylum-seekers. Since almost all of the refugees in Central Asia are in urban areas, implementation of a policy addressing their needs will be a priority. In this respect, each office in Central Asia will draw on lessons learned from the implementation of the urban refugee policy piloted in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, and develop its own country-specific strategy, jointly with the local authorities, to respond to the needs of asylum-seekers and refugees in urban settings.

The momentum that will be generated by the intergovernmental meeting at ministerial level in December 2011 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 1961 Convention will help UNHCR to encourage further accessions to the 1954 and 1961 Conventions on Statelessness. Joint mapping and registration exercises conducted in collaboration with the governments concerned will aim at the reduction and prevention of statelessness, and the protection of the rights of stateless people.

UNHCR will continue to assist IDPs and returnees in southern Kyrgyzstan in 2012. It will address protection issues, including discrimination and harassment as well as access to documentation, property rights and other services. UNHCR will contribute towards reintegration, including the restoration of livelihoods, rule of law, reconciliation and peacebuilding, in order to ease the transition to recovery, and allow development actors to take over.

Ensuring the protection of refugee rights while preserving the integrity of the asylum system in the context of mixed migration flows and concerns over national security represent recurrent challenges for UNHCR. In this regard, efforts are being pursued with concerned governments to establish a follow-up mechanism to implement the recommendations of the Almaty Regional Conference that was held in March 2011 and the Almaty Declaration. Closer cooperation with RSD authorities, particularly national security, border-control and migration bodies, will be maintained.

In addition to building the capacity of state institutions to deal with possible emergencies, situation analysis and an early warning system will be an integral part of an updated contingency plan developed jointly with governments in Central Asia.

UNHCR will increase its advocacy for people of concern, as well as raise awareness of its mandate, activities and procedures at national and regional levels. Such efforts will aim at garnering more public and private support for UNHCR and its activities at all levels of civil society.

| Constraints |

National security considerations can hinder protection activities, whereas political instability and insecurity due to extremist activities can cause population movements within and beyond regional boundaries. The situation in Kyrgyzstan remains

unstable. Increased insecurity in northern Afghanistan and the impending withdrawal of international forces may increase the volatility in border areas and result in an increase in the number of Afghan asylum-seekers.

Operations

Building on reintegration and peacebuilding activities, UNHCR will address the remaining protection gaps in **Kyrgyzstan** through community-based Quick Impact Projects. Small infrastructure, community development and livelihoods projects will promote reconciliation by connecting affected communities in Osh, Jalalabad and Batken. Collaboration with local authorities will address urgent concerns, including those relating to protection and health.

The Ferghana Valley spanning eastern Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan remains key to UNHCR's preparedness and response capacity in Central Asia. Activities here will include the establishment of early warning mechanisms, including border monitoring, inter-agency contingency planning, and replenishment of emergency stocks of relief items. They will also include strengthening the capacity of local actors. UNHCR will continue to build the capacity of asylum structures, including courts, other relevant authorities and civil society.

In **Kazakhstan**, UNHCR will continue to work with the Government to upgrade the procedural integrity of the State-run RSD process. UNHCR is also liaising with the Government on the revision of the refugee law and other legislation that is not in conformity with international standards. Monitoring and capacity-building activities will ensure the consistency of national legislation with international law. UNHCR will also advocate for the registration of undocumented

persons, accession to the statelessness conventions, and a joint plan of action to prevent and reduce statelessness.

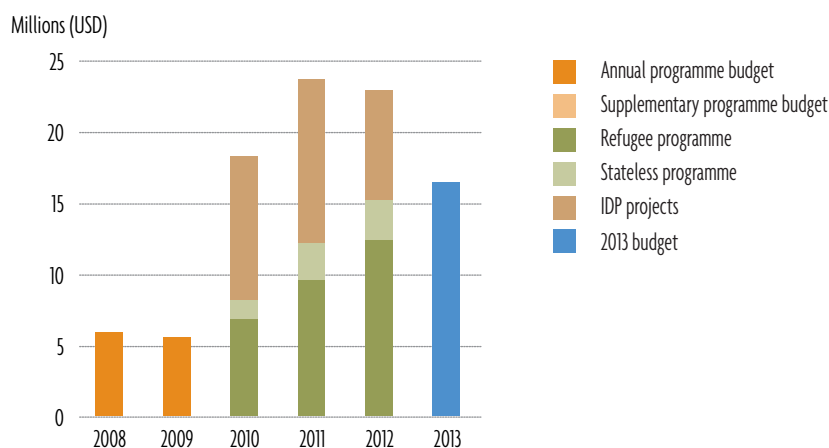
In **Tajikistan**, UNHCR will work with the local authorities to develop national RSD procedures. Since the situation in Afghanistan and overall instability in the region could cause new arrivals of asylum-seekers in Tajikistan, priority will be given to updating the contingency plan and improving emergency preparedness through continuous monitoring and capacity-building of relevant government entities. Tajikistan is a pilot country for UNHCR's urban policy project. A countrywide profiling exercise of urban refugees will be implemented in 2012. The priorities will be to improve freedom of movement and residence, reception facilities, RSD, and data collection as well as to seek more livelihood opportunities and durable solutions.

UNHCR in **Turkmenistan** will build on the progress made so far towards further reform of citizenship legislation and the Government's accession to the statelessness conventions. Turkmenistan is focusing on finalizing the results of registering all stateless people and those at risk of becoming stateless under the Action Plan on Joint Activities to Reduce and Prevent Statelessness, endorsed by the Government in December 2010.

Financial information

In 2012, budgetary requirements for Central Asia, amounting to USD 22.9 million, are less than the revised financial requirements of USD 23.6 million in 2011. This is due to the discontinuation of the supplementary budget for the Kyrgyzstan situation, and the anticipated disengagement from the IDP operation in 2012. Financial requirements for 2013 will amount to some USD 16.4 million.

UNHCR's budget in Central Asia 2008 – 2013



UNHCR Budget in Central Asia (USD)

OPERATION	2011 REVISED BUDGET	2012				2013
		REFUGEE PROGRAMME PILLAR 1	STATELESS PROGRAMME PILLAR 2	IDP PROJECTS PILLAR 4	TOTAL	
Kazakhstan Regional Office	7,691,607	7,334,466	1,363,773	567,780	9,266,019	6,543,080
Kyrgyzstan	13,238,884	2,814,269	290,895	7,082,404	10,187,569	6,281,147
Tajikistan	1,876,998	1,731,669	98,518	0	1,830,187	2,031,598
Turkmenistan	812,789	549,667	1,044,217	0	1,593,884	1,542,400
Total	23,620,278	12,430,071	2,797,403	7,650,184	22,877,659	16,398,225