

SOUTH-WEST ASIA



UNHCR

2014 - 2015
GLOBAL APPEAL

Afghanistan
Islamic Republic of Iran
Pakistan



Winter kits are distributed
to IDPs and returnees in
Kabul, Afghanistan (January
2013)

UNHCR / S. SISOMSACK



Overview



Working environment

Voluntary returns to Afghanistan have been taking place since 2002, and the 5.7 million Afghan returnees make up one fourth of the country's population. Nonetheless, Afghans in exile continue to represent the largest population of concern to UNHCR in the world today. About 1.6 million registered Afghan refugees remain in Pakistan and another 840,000 in the Islamic Republic of Iran. In addition to the registered refugees, an estimated 1 million undocumented Afghans live in Pakistan and some 1.4 million in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The sustainable reintegration of those refugees who have returned to Afghanistan remains elusive, despite

the best efforts of UNHCR and other humanitarian and development actors. The main challenges impeding reintegration are the lack of basic facilities and livelihood opportunities, as well as an unpredictable security situation.

2014 will be a year of transition for Afghanistan, with elections due in April and the withdrawal of international security forces planned for the end of the year. Political and economic uncertainties and a volatile security environment are expected to increase internal displacement within Afghanistan. This may also trigger new refugee outflows to Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran, while the

deterioration in security could reduce UNHCR's access to those in need.

However, the new Governments in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan have taken a pragmatic position, with commitments to continued asylum space and sustainable solutions. To ensure a coordinated and consistent approach to the Afghan refugee situation, the multi-year Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR), which was endorsed by the international community and the three concerned Governments at an international conference organized by UNHCR in Geneva in May 2012, will support voluntary repatriation, sustainable reintegration and the provision of assistance to host countries.

| Response |

Strategies

- In the coming biennium, UNHCR's main strategy in the South-West Asia subregion will focus on the implementation of the SSAR and its goals of supporting voluntary repatriation, sustainable reintegration and assistance to host countries.
- In Afghanistan, UNHCR will work closely with government ministries, UN agencies and international and national NGOs to target accessible villages in areas of high return, including urban areas, to facilitate sustainable reintegration. The Office will advocate for the Solutions Strategy to be included in the Afghan Government's National Priority Programmes and supported through the National Solidarity Programmes. It will also engage development stakeholders to give priority to investments in areas of high return.
- The main focus in Pakistan will be on the Refugee Affected and Hosting Areas programme, which supports activities that benefit both refugees and hosting communities, thereby facilitating coexistence and preserving asylum space.
- In the Islamic Republic of Iran, the primary focus will be on sector-based assistance to Afghan refugees. Programmes promoting education, poverty alleviation and livelihoods, in particular, will help refugees reintegrate when they return to Afghanistan.

Challenges

The number of refugees voluntarily repatriating from neighbouring countries has gradually declined, owing to a combination of security, political and socio-economic factors and challenges with sustainable reintegration in Afghanistan. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, meanwhile, refugees have been particularly affected by international sanctions, which are cutting into their livelihoods. Living costs for refugees have risen and UNHCR's operating costs in the country have increased due to hyperinflation.

The complex political and security transitions that Afghanistan will undergo in 2014 and the risk of a more restricted humanitarian space may affect UNHCR's programme delivery in the country. Any new deterioration in the security situation could increase the number of internally displaced people (IDPs) and possibly lead to refugee outflows.

| Implementation |

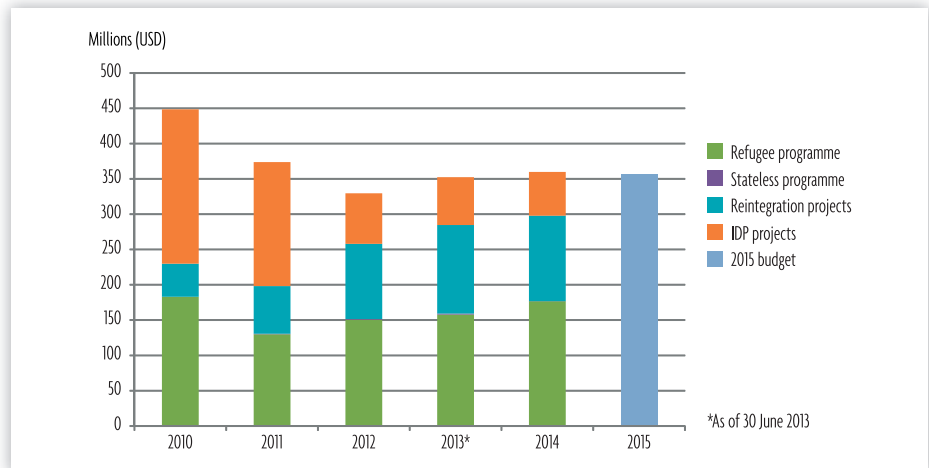
Operations

Further details of UNHCR's operations in **Afghanistan**, the **Islamic Republic of Iran** and **Pakistan** are described in separate country operation chapters.

Financial information

The budgetary requirements for South-West Asia have remained relatively stable for the past few years, with increases related to new initiatives and in response to man-made or natural disasters. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, budgetary requirements rose in 2010 with the introduction of the health insurance scheme for Afghan refugees. The Pakistan programme saw a dramatic rise in budgetary needs in 2010 and 2011 after devastating floods ravaged large areas of the country and affected some 20 million people, including refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants. The implementation of the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees is expected to increase budgetary needs in the coming years, reflecting the investments needed for fostering sustainable solutions and a more collaborative response to the immense challenges in the three affected countries. In 2014, the financial requirements for the subregion are set at USD 359.9 million.

Budgets for South-West Asia | 2010–2015



Budgets for South-West Asia | USD

Operation	2013 REVISED BUDGET (as of 30 June 2013)	2014				TOTAL	2015
		PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 2 Stateless programme	PILLAR 3 Reintegration projects	PILLAR 4 IDP projects		
Afghanistan	131,375,226	49,622,827	0	60,084,704	33,441,595	143,149,126	143,642,446
Islamic Republic of Iran	59,563,289	69,000,442	0	0	0	69,000,442	75,548,617
Pakistan	161,354,322	58,121,443	160,420	60,849,014	28,616,056	147,746,934	137,134,632
Total	352,292,837	176,744,712	160,420	120,933,719	62,057,651	359,896,502	356,325,694