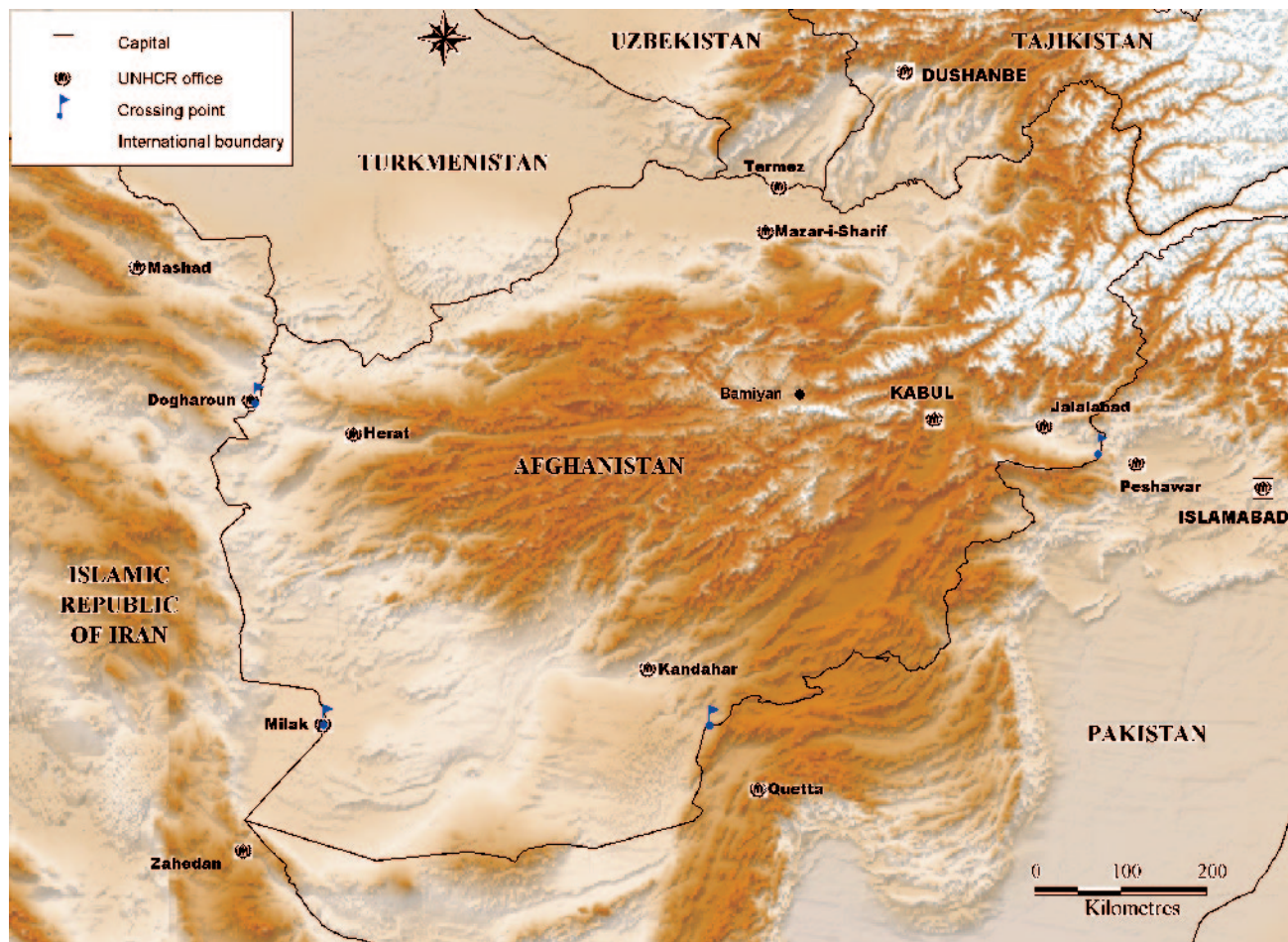


# Afghanistan



## Main Objectives

UNHCR's initial objectives were: to identify and address the needs of returning Afghan refugees through systematic monitoring of their areas of return; ensure that the repatriation conforms to international standards and that basic human rights are respected; facilitate reintegration by helping returnees meet their basic needs during the initial phase after return; implement multi-sectoral Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) jointly with local communities to boost absorption capacity, ensuring that as many women as possible benefit from these activities. UNHCR also tried to ensure that information on conditions in returnee areas was shared with all concerned parties, including refugees, NGOs, other UN agencies and donors, to enable all to work

together on a sustainable process of reintegration. In close co-operation with other agencies, UNHCR also provided technical assistance and advice on IDP camp management and provided emergency assistance to vulnerable IDPs.

The situation changed after the events of 11 September 2001 and UNHCR modified its objectives accordingly. The new objectives were: to call for open borders for refugees fleeing the military attacks and provide reception facilities in the countries of asylum; co-ordinate preparations for an expected large-scale influx into Pakistan, the Islamic republic of Iran and to a lesser extent Central Asian countries; provide emergency assistance and protection to displaced people in need inside Afghanistan and prepare for a possible voluntary repatriation operation.

## Impact

### A) Before 11 September 2001

- QIPs in the areas of shelter, water, construction of public facilities, and vocational training benefited over one million people (48 per cent women).
- UNHCR monitoring provided clear information on returnees and deportees and enabled the office to speak more effectively on behalf of deported Afghans.
- The country of origin information gathered by UNHCR's offices on Afghanistan resulted in more accurate screening of Afghans seeking assistance from UNHCR, and guided the organisation's voluntary repatriation policy.
- Many of the QIPs in water and shelter were suspended after 11 September, as were protection activities in the country. Although the protection activities were later resumed, some of the water and shelter projects had to be cancelled due to concerns about security.

### B) After 11 September 2001

- The sudden withdrawal from Afghanistan by the vast majority of humanitarian actors resulted in a dramatic downturn in an already dismal humanitarian situation. Only a few local NGOs remained to provide some forms of assistance.
- UNHCR wrote to governments urging them not to deport Afghans, and drew up protection

guidelines in anticipation of a large outflow of Afghan refugees into neighbouring countries, calling for the provision of temporary protection.

- In September and October 2001, UNHCR concentrated on monitoring the situation from neighbouring countries, and preparing for the requirements of those fleeing to Pakistan. The office only re-established its international presence initially in Kabul and then in Mazar-i-Sharif and Herat, after the departure of the Taliban authorities.
- Towards the end of 2001, UNHCR in Afghanistan focused on providing an immediate response to the needs of IDPs and other vulnerable populations in the country. Some 90,000 people received winterisation packages consisting of cooking/heating stoves, water containers, blankets, plastic sheeting, cooking sets and other domestic items. Approximately 600 IDPs were also helped to return to the Shomali Plain in December.

## Working Environment

### The Context

2001 was a year of abrupt and unexpected change for Afghanistan. UNHCR had been providing protection and assistance for returnees from the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and other neighbouring countries. Repatriation activities were constrained

by drought, the poor human rights situation, lack of security in some parts of the country, the absence of employment opportunities and a dearth of health and education facilities.

In July, the High Commissioner decided on a more active role for UNHCR involving a two-pronged delivery of protection and assistance: for refugees in countries of asylum and also to IDPs in Afghanistan. This approach was intensified after the terrorist attacks on 11 September when the subsequent military intervention in Afghanistan resulted in increased population displacement. In Pakistan, UNHCR

Persons of Concern				
Main Origin/ Type of Population	Total in Country	Of whom UNHCR assisted	Per cent Female	Per cent under 18
Afghanistan (IDPs)	1,200,000	-	55	-
Returnees (from the Islamic Republic of Iran)	18,000	-	35	-
Returnees (from Pakistan)	8,000	-	55	-

Income and Expenditure (USD) Annual Programme Budget and Supplementary Programme Budget					
	Revised Budget	Income from Contributions <sup>1</sup>	Other Funds Available <sup>2</sup>	Total Funds Available	Total Expenditure
AB	8,777,878	4,417,370	3,010,540	7,427,910	7,337,774
SB	8,038,898	3,037,353	7,252,170	10,289,523	5,669,434
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16,861,776</b>	<b>7,454,723</b>	<b>10,262,710</b>	<b>17,717,433</b>	<b>13,007,208</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes income from contributions restricted at the country level.

<sup>2</sup> Includes allocations by UNHCR from unearmarked or broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance and adjustments.

The above figures do not include costs at Headquarters.





Afghanistan was one of the largest humanitarian crisis – hundreds of thousands of civilians were uprooted. IDPs at a food distribution centre in Kabul. S. Salgado

assisted some 250,000 new refugees in addition to the 1.2 million refugees already living in refugee villages there. In Afghanistan, the number of internally displaced persons in the country nearly doubled to an estimated 1.2 million.

The Bonn agreement of December 2001 and the creation of an internationally recognised Interim Administration opened up opportunities for building peace and establishing conditions conducive to the return of refugees.

## Constraints

In the early part of the year, the operational climate was difficult. UNHCR's main office for Afghanistan was in Pakistan, and the five field offices in Kabul, Jalalabad, Kandahar, Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif were staffed with only a minimum of international staff. Due to the five-year-old ban on the employment of women, UNHCR's female local staff members were obliged to stay at home. After 11 September, all international staff members were evacuated, field offices were temporarily closed and all field activities suspended. Following the evacuation of staff members and the increased insecurity, which made it difficult for local staff to work from the office premises, many of the field offices were looted, and UNHCR lost most of its office equipment and documents. Later, local staff managed to reopen the offices and by the end of December, interna-

tional staff returned to offices in Kabul, Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif. On 22 December, the main office was moved from Pakistan to Kabul – the move coincided with the installation of the Interim Administration and the establishment of the office of the Secretary-General's Special Representative (SGSR). With the new political environment, female national staff members returned to work for UNHCR.

## Funding

The Afghan operation had for some years faced severe funding constraints. The radical change in the situation in September with the ensuing risk of large-scale displacement prompted UNHCR to launch an emergency appeal for a supplementary programme. Given the magnitude of the planned repatriation and reintegration exercises, subsequent requests for substantial funding were also launched in early 2002.

## Achievements and Impact

### Protection and Solutions

Protection relating to the Afghan operation included two major problem areas: deportation of Afghan refugees from neighbouring countries and the human rights conditions in Afghanistan. UNHCR intervened on behalf of deportees on several occasions, and often succeeded in persuading the host govern-

ment to continue to give them refuge. In Afghanistan, enhanced monitoring enabled UNHCR to carry out wide-ranging surveys of returnees in Kunar, Nangahar, Kabul province, Kunduz, Helmand and Kandahar. Results published in July revealed that 93 per cent of those interviewed had gone back to their home villages. Most were people of Pashtun origin who said they had returned because security had improved. Other key reasons for return were economic difficulties in the neighbouring countries and the fear of deportation.

Monitoring of communities of origin was organised to assess security and the needs of returnees. The monitoring was suspended after 11 September, but was later resumed wherever possible. The absence of security and lack of respect for the human rights of minority groups and female-headed households remained major concerns. Following the collapse of the Taliban, minority groups in northern Afghanistan reported widespread harassment and human rights violations. UNHCR and the Interim Authorities often took action. Tens of thousands are estimated to have fled their homes, many of them heading for Pakistan. Border monitoring was conducted throughout the year, whenever security permitted. Despite the High Commissioner's plea to governments that Afghans should not be deported, given the security concerns after 11 September, and the ongoing drought, people were forcibly returned from both Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran in the autumn and winter months.

In order to reinforce the protection monitoring capacity of UNHCR offices, additional staff were deployed by means of stand-by arrangements with the various international, inter-governmental, NGOs, UNVs and independent consultants.

## Activities and Assistance

QIPs assisted the most vulnerable returnee families through the provision of shelter and water, rehabilitation of infrastructure, vocational training and income-generating activities. One key concern was to improve conditions for female returnees. Unfortunately, the September events and the subsequent evacuation of the international assistance community limited the monitoring of the situation of returnees and implementation of planned activities. Activities were gradually revived toward the end of the year.

**Community Services:** UNHCR together with some 30 local NGO conducted a survey in the central region to find out more about the IDP population.

**Domestic Needs/Household Support:** UNHCR distributed a variety of relief items such as blankets, jerry cans and stoves, to returnees and IDPs found to be in need of material assistance.

**Education:** UNHCR supported a limited number of students by supporting home based education and providing teacher training.

**Health/Nutrition:** UNHCR ran training courses in health for female returnees.

**Income Generation:** UNHCR provided a small number of home-based income generation projects to help women earn an income, as the Taliban had severely restricted female participation in the work force.

**Legal Assistance:** UNHCR monitored selected border crossing points and communities to which the refugees returned. UNHCR was thus able to keep track of the repatriation movement and assess the assistance needs of returnees.

**Operational Support (to Agencies):** Before the events of 11 September UNHCR had four international implementing partners who worked on water projects, environment projects and transport and distribution of relief items. UNHCR paid some of these partners' administrative expenses.

**Shelter/Other Infrastructure:** The focus was on assisting returnees who had no means of rebuilding their houses themselves, such as widows and the very poor. In addition UNHCR conducted QIPs to rehabilitate schools and health centres in the areas to which refugees returned.

**Transport/Logistics:** The funds disbursed under this sector ensured effective distribution of relief materials.

**Water:** UNHCR and implementing partner carried out projects to give the Afghans better access to potable water in four regions out of five in the country.

During November and December of 2001, UNHCR concentrated on supporting inter-agency efforts to provide emergency winter assistance to IDPs and other vulnerable populations in the country. Meanwhile, preparations were being made at the regional level for the repatriation of refugees from neighbouring countries, and plans were drawn up for a multi-year, regional repatriation and initial reintegration plan.

## Organisation and Implementation

### Management

In autumn 2001, the Chief of Mission for Afghanistan was appointed as the UNHCR Regional Co-ordinator for the emergency crisis in Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan. The regional co-ordinator ensured harmonisation of the country programmes and was directly responsible for the management of the Afghanistan programme. Staffing levels fluctuated during the course of the year, from fewer than 20 to around 70 internationals, in preparation for the expected large-scale outflow of Afghan refugees.

### Working with Others

In 2001, UNHCR worked closely with four international NGOs. In addition, two other organisations provided staff for protection and monitoring activities. A sophisticated pattern of co-ordination became imperative during the latter months of the year. Although this was not formalised through the SGSR's Office, UN agencies informally assumed their respective sectoral responsibilities.

UNHCR also welcomed early opportunities to discuss reconstruction efforts with development actors taking part in the first conference on the reconstruction of Afghanistan organised in Islamabad by the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and UNDP. At the same time, UNHCR began to explore with development agencies the means to ensure that humanitarian assistance and development programmes interlock.

## Overall Assessment

Progress on the first two objectives, of repatriation and reintegration, was severely disrupted after 11 September. However, subsequent political developments supported hopes of peace and sustainable repatriation in the near future. Towards the end of 2001, UNHCR Afghanistan reinforced its co-ordination role in relation to IDP assistance and took the lead role in preparing for the forthcoming repatriation exercise. Thus, the activities initiated during the last months of 2001 are expected to have a positive impact in 2002, when large-scale voluntary repatriation begins. Thanks to its extensive field presence, UNHCR has been and will remain well placed to carry out return monitoring with a specific focus on minority return, returnees with special needs, and gender balance.

For the next three to five years, UNHCR's role in Afghanistan is expected to concentrate on the voluntary return in safety and dignity of millions of refugees and on building the capacity of the local authorities to receive them and safeguard their rights. First steps will include the establishment of legal and operational frameworks for return with the Governments of the Islamic republic of Iran and Pakistan and the Interim Administration. UNHCR will also draw up detailed profiles of areas of return, and build up knowledge of the refugees and their repatriation plans in the neighbouring countries.

### Offices

---

Kabul  
Herat  
Jalalabad  
Kandahar  
Mazar-i-Sharif

### Partners

---

NGOs  
Agency for Rehabilitation and Energy Conservation in Afghanistan (AREA)  
Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees (DACAAR )  
Danish Refugee Council  
JEN  
Mercy Corps  
Norwegian Refugee Council  
*Radda Barnen*

Financial Report (USD)						
Expenditure Breakdown	Current Year's Projects			Prior Years' Projects		
	Annual Programme Budget	Supplementary Programme Budget	Total	notes	Annual and Supplementary Programme Budgets	notes
Protection, Monitoring and Co-ordination	1,336,783	172,614	1,509,397		3,997	
Community Services	0	44,200	44,200		0	
Domestic Needs / Household Support	95,150	538,286	633,436		0	
Education	47,764	0	47,764		399,483	
Forestry	0	0	0		134,334	
Health / Nutrition	32,586	0	32,586		3,565	
Income Generation	114,799	0	114,799		420,672	
Legal Assistance	925,419	0	925,419		12,440	
Livestock	0	0	0		19,893	
Operational Support (to Agencies)	309,564	519,509	829,073		85	
Sanitation	0	0	0		44,697	
Shelter / Other Infrastructure	1,118,670	501,883	1,620,553		225,016	
Transport / Logistics	35,160	51,018	86,178		1,388,769	
Water	208,092	0	208,092		750,082	
Transit Accounts	4,866	0	4,866		2,872	
Instalments with Implementing Partners	259,500	175,600	435,100		(2,587,572)	
<b>Sub-total Operational</b>	<b>4,488,353</b>	<b>2,003,110</b>	<b>6,491,463</b>		<b>818,333</b>	
Programme Support	1,487,037	506,618	1,993,655		13,773	
<b>Sub-total Disbursements / Deliveries</b>	<b>5,975,390</b>	<b>2,509,728</b>	<b>8,485,118</b>	(3)	<b>832,106</b>	(5)
Unliquidated Obligations	1,362,384	3,159,706	4,522,090	(3)	0	(5)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,337,774</b>	<b>5,669,434</b>	<b>13,007,208</b>	(1) (3)	<b>832,106</b>	

#### Instalments with Implementing Partners

Payments Made	259,500	175,600	435,100		699,864	
Reporting Received	0	0	0		3,287,435	
<b>Balance</b>	<b>259,500</b>	<b>175,600</b>	<b>435,100</b>		<b>(2,587,572)</b>	
Outstanding 1st January	0	0	0		2,620,815	
Refunded to UNHCR	0	0	0		0	
Currency Adjustment	0	0	0		0	
<b>Outstanding 31 December</b>	<b>259,500</b>	<b>175,600</b>	<b>435,100</b>		<b>33,244</b>	

#### Unliquidated Obligations

Outstanding 1st January	0	0	0		920,018	(5)
New Obligations	7,337,774	5,669,434	13,007,208	(1)	0	
Disbursements	5,975,390	2,509,728	8,485,118	(3)	832,106	(5)
Cancellations	0	0	0		87,912	(5)
<b>Outstanding 31 December</b>	<b>1,362,384</b>	<b>3,159,706</b>	<b>4,522,090</b>	<b>(3)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(5)</b>

Figures which cross reference to Accounts:

(1) Annex to Statement 1

(3) Schedule 3

(5) Schedule 5