

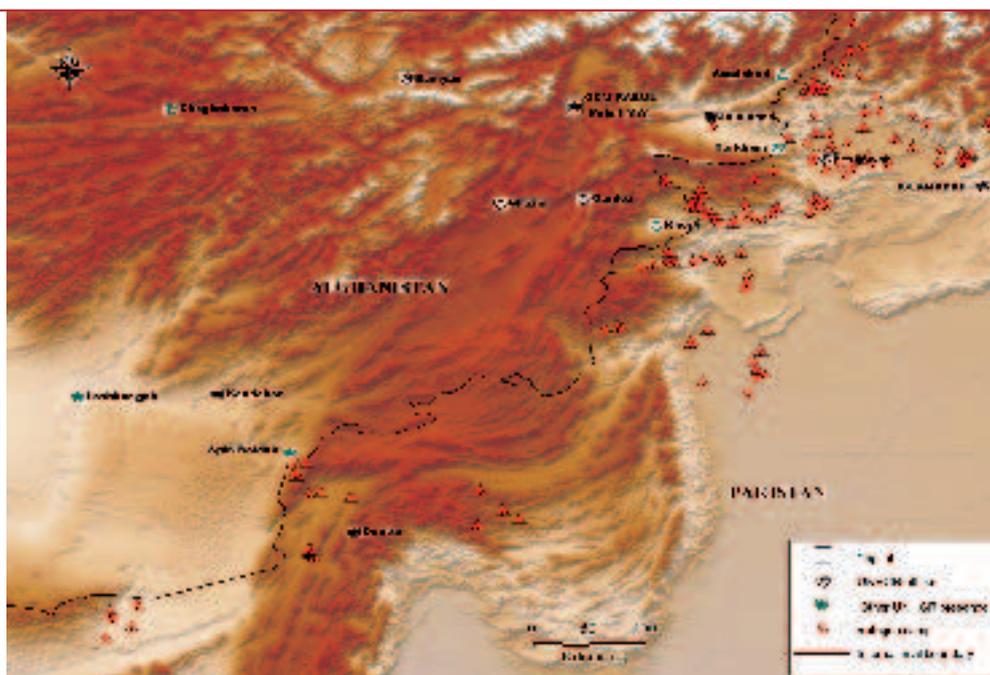
Pakistan

Main objectives

The prime aim in Pakistan was to facilitate the voluntary return of Afghan refugees. At the same time, UNHCR planned to provide protection and assistance to Afghans living in the 16 new camps (built to accommodate people who had arrived in 2000 and 2001) and to those living in the older refugee villages. The Office also set out to respond to the needs of a limited number of Afghan refugees (essentially women-at-risk and security cases) for whom resettlement may be the only viable option. In addition, UNHCR aimed to resolve the plight of non-Afghan refugees (through either repatriation or resettlement), while continuing to provide protection and assistance during their stay in Pakistan.

Impact

- Between March and the end of December, more than one and a half million Afghans went home with assistance from UNHCR and its partners. Around 82 per cent of these refugees were from urban areas. The Nasir Bagh camp near Peshawar was closed, following the repatriation of most of its inhabitants, as was one of the new camps that had been set up in Chaman, Baluchistan. The makeshift Jalozai camp was also closed, following the relocation of residents to new camps in the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP).
- More than 240,000 people in the new camps in NWFP and Baluchistan received food, shelter, health care, education, and relief items to help them settle in. Some 26,000 people who arrived at the Chaman border crossing and had to stay in the so-called "waiting area" also received assistance packages. People living in the old refugee villages continued to receive limited assistance



in the form of drinking water, primary education, basic health care and community services.

- The number of applications by Afghans for refugee status determination dropped, as did the recognition rate, which fell to an all-time low of five per cent. Resettlement processing was adversely affected by the events of 11 September 2001, but 2,000 people did leave Pakistan to be resettled in 2002 (1,000 fewer than in 2001).

Working environment

The context

With the collapse of the Taliban regime and the consequent potential for peace and stability in Afghanistan, UNHCR began shifting priorities in 2002, in preparation for a mass return of Afghan refugees from Pakistan. To coincide with the traditional planting season and in advance of the emergency *Loya Jirga* (Grand Council) which took place in June, the voluntary repatriation operation started in early March. From January to March, the relief effort continued, with UNHCR relocating refugees from urban Peshawar and Quetta to the new sites near the Afghan border. On 14 February, the infamous Jalozai camp was finally closed.

Despite significant changes occurring in Afghanistan, two fresh refugee waves occurred unexpectedly in the early part of 2002 in Pakistan's south western province of Baluchistan. The Government of Pakistan, after closing its border with Afghanistan in 1998, had made an exception for vulnerable refugees as part of its post-11 September response. However, when a second wave of refugees approached Chaman in mid-February, the border was again sealed, leaving some 26,000 people stranded at the crossing point.

After lengthy negotiations, UNHCR attempted to defuse the situation at the Chaman "waiting area" by offering to help those who were prepared to move to a temporary settlement outside Kandahar in Afghanistan. It was hoped that this would then encourage the Pakistani authorities to permit the transfer of some of the others to one of the new camps in Baluchistan. So far, 7,000 Afghans have volunteered to move to the Kandahar settlement. Meanwhile, UNHCR and its partners have continued to distribute life-saving assistance in the waiting area to avert a humanitarian crisis.

Soon after UNHCR opened voluntary repatriation centres in March and April 2002, hundreds of thousands of refugees came forward to register for assisted return. To accommodate the growing number of requests for assistance, UNHCR opened centres in Islamabad, Karachi, Quetta and Peshawar. Interest in return reached its peak in

May and June, with staff processing up to 10,000 persons per day in the weeks ahead of the *Loya Jirga*. The sheer number of Afghans repatriating – which surpassed one million in August 2002 – served to mitigate internal pressures in Pakistan to bring a swift end to the Afghan refugee situation. In stark contrast to early 2001, the Government adopted a less restrictive asylum policy despite the growing resentment of local communities towards refugees. Throughout the year, detentions and deportations did not occur on a large scale, and reported incidents were brought quickly under control following UNHCR intervention. The large numbers of Afghans repatriating had a softening effect on public opinion, and served to ease the pressures on the Government to bring a swift end to the Afghan refugee situation

The establishment of the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan in June 2002 encouraged closer ties between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Through a series of informal tripartite consultations with UNHCR and the Afghan government, Pakistan came to acknowledge its neighbour's limited capacity to cope with such a massive rate of repatriation and spoke openly of the need for a more gradual return. Both Governments agreed to correlate the pace of voluntary repatriation more closely with Afghanistan's reconstruction. Negotiations led to a tripartite agreement establishing a three-year timeframe for the voluntary and gradual return of Afghan refugees from Pakistan.

Persons of Concern

Main Origin / Type of Population	Total In Country	Of whom UNHCR assisted	Per cent Female	Per cent under 18
Afghanistan (Refugees)	1,932,600	1,437,800	53	60
Asylum-seekers	1,610	-	24	18

Income and Expenditure (USD) Annual Programme and Supplementary Programme Budgets

	Revised Budget	Income from Contributions ¹	Other Funds Available ²	Total Funds Available	Total Expenditure
AB	23,913,619	11,376,736	10,632,300	22,009,036	21,188,422
SB	27,766,831	8,580,941	17,605,384	26,186,325	26,057,880
Total	51,680,450	19,957,677	28,237,684	48,195,361	47,246,302

¹ Includes income from contributions restricted at the country level.

² Includes allocations by UNHCR from unearmarked or broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance and adjustments. The above figures do not include costs at Headquarters.

Constraints

Pakistan is not a signatory to the 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention and has no asylum legislation to ensure the protection of refugees. The Government has nevertheless agreed to pursue a policy of voluntary return and to abstain from mass arrests and deportations.

Attacks on foreigners and foreign interests in 2002 meant that security for international staff became an issue in parts of Pakistan, particularly in Baluchistan and in parts of Peshawar. Four key international implementing partners have withdrawn from the Chaman area of Baluchistan for security reasons.

Drought has continued to affect Baluchistan, as well as southern Afghanistan and Sistan Baluchistan in Iran. Scarce water supplies have not only made it difficult for aid agencies to assist refugees, but have increased local resentment of their presence.

Funding

In order to adjust the budget to accommodate the repatriation movement which was much larger than anticipated, and in an effort to help resolve UNHCR's global funding shortfall, the Pakistan programme underwent three prioritisation exercises. The cuts mostly affected assistance to the old refugee villages and to refugees living in urban environments, where activities in the sectors of health, water and sanitation were curtailed. An in-country transport grant for returnees from Karachi was also discontinued. The third round of prioritisation discussions occurred towards the end of the year at a time when repatriation was already slowing down. At this point, UNHCR closed all voluntary repatriation centres except the Takhta Baig centre near Peshawar and scaled back services provided by NGOs.

Achievements and impact

Protection and solutions

UNHCR worked throughout the year to finalise a tripartite agreement on voluntary repatriation with the Governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Meanwhile, staff interviewed potential returnees as they signed up for return to Afghanistan in order to

ensure that they were going back voluntarily, and monitored border crossings to make sure that no problems occurred.

Staff also focused on traditional refugee status determination and resettlement efforts as well as the protection of refugees living in camps. UNHCR co-operated with three NGOs to establish advice and legal aid centres in Baluchistan, NWFP, Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Mianwali. In addition to providing legal advice, the centres provided refugees with information about the repatriation process as well as news about conditions in their home areas.

Working among the camp-based populations, female protection staff addressed issues specifically affecting refugee women, including early marriage, forced marriage, and domestic violence. UN and NGO partners approved a draft plan of action to counter sexual and gender-based violence that will be implemented in 2003.

Activities and assistance

UNHCR set up seven voluntary repatriation centres in Pakistan, backed up by a series of mobile teams who were able to service urban populations, as well as access remote areas. It also established three way stations to provide overnight facilities: one at the Torkham border, one at the Chaman border and one in Khuzdar, between Karachi and Quetta. During the winter (2002-2003) UNHCR carried out a survey amongst some of the remaining refugees, to determine who wanted to return and to identify any obstacles to return.

Community services: Almost 400 male and female refugee volunteers worked on a community mobilisation programme in the new camps in Baluchistan. More than 9,000 people received skills training. Community centres initiated special programmes for women, particularly in the fields of health and hygiene and education. Parent-teacher committees were formed to encourage families to enrol children in school. Non-Afghan refugees attended community centre activities in Islamabad (with increased female participation).

Domestic needs/household support: Residents of the new camps received quilts and blankets, tents

and plastic sheeting, kitchen sets and soap, as well as cooking stoves. Kerosene stoves have been replaced with coal-fired ones for safety reasons. Items were bought locally whenever possible.

Education: UNHCR continued to provide some support to schools in refugee villages. Schools in the new camps were fully functional by the end of the year, with mud-brick structures replacing most tent classrooms. The curriculum in these camps is based on the one used in schools in Afghanistan (to help prepare children for life back in their home country). A small number of non-Afghan refugee children of primary-school age also received educational assistance.

Food: Refugees in the new camps received daily food rations. A joint WFP/UNHCR food assessment mission conducted in May and June recommended continuing food assistance in all new camps and the Chaman waiting area; by the end of the year, some 210,000 people were still receiving food assistance from WFP.

Health/nutrition: All Afghans in Baluchistan, NWFP and Punjab had access to health care, with networks of male and female community health workers acting as a bridge between communities and health units. Programmes focused on disease-prevention, with immunisation of children and women of reproductive age against measles, TB and polio; and general measures against malaria, leishmaniasis, and other prevalent illnesses.

Legal assistance: Advice and Legal Aid Centres provided services on a range of issues, and helped refugees in making submissions to administrative bodies, lodging complaints and petitioning courts. They also acted as mediators for people about to leave the country who were seeking reimbursement of security deposits from landlords.

Operational support (to agencies): Funds allocated to implementing partners allowed for the smooth implementation of the programme and contributed to cover some of the administrative expenses of UNHCR's partners.

Sanitation: Latrine construction and repair took place throughout new camps in Baluchistan and NWFP, alongside hygiene education and camp cleaning activities.

Shelter/other infrastructure: Upgrading temporary shelters to semi-permanent mud-brick buildings for new arrivals proved unpopular with local authorities and host communities, who perceived the building work as reinforcing the long-term refugee presence on privately or tribally owned land. Permission was eventually given to build mud houses for very vulnerable people in Old Bagzai and Bassu camps in NWFP. It was not possible to build houses in Baluchistan.

Transport/logistics: During the winter of 2001-2002, UNHCR relocated refugees from urban areas and the Jalojai camp in NWFP. The organisation also stored and transported large quantities of materials for use in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Water: The ongoing drought, frequent breakdowns in water supply systems, increased fuel prices, and lack of funds to upgrade supply schemes all hampered the water supply in 2002. Nonetheless, residents of the old villages received a minimum of 15 litres of water per day. Water had to be brought to the Chaman camps in Baluchistan and Shilman in NWFP by tanker. UNHCR funded well-digging and *karez* (irrigation channel) rehabilitation to provide water to other camps.

Organisation and implementation

Management

Operations were managed through the country office in Islamabad and sub-offices in Peshawar and Quetta. A field office in Karachi oversaw the repatriation of a sizeable proportion of the Afghan community living in that city. Offices throughout Pakistan worked closely with colleagues in Afghanistan and in the Islamic Republic of Iran, establishing regular cross-border contacts and holding planning sessions with counterparts in Jalalabad and Kandahar, as well as between the country offices in Kabul and Islamabad.

Working with others

UNHCR worked with the Government, UN and NGO partners to meet assistance needs in Pakistan and support the repatriation operation. Government sup-



An older refugee man going home. *UNHCR / P. Benatar*

port has been very active throughout the repatriation operation, and UNHCR welcomes the co-operative spirit within which a new tripartite agreement for repatriation in 2003-2005 has been negotiated.

Overall assessment

The mass return of Afghan refugees from Pakistan surpassed all expectations. At the start of the year, refugees were still arriving at the Chaman border crossing. By early May, 400,000 had repatriated, with voluntary repatriation centres processing up to 10,000 people per day. Despite elaborate verification measures, the sheer number of would-be returnees approaching the repatriation centres on any given day made it very difficult for UNHCR to cross-check every application and avoid double registration. The new iris recognition technology introduced in March 2002 and in use in most centres in 2003 should go a long way to address this shortcoming.

UNHCR was generally successful in its attempts to simultaneously run a massive repatriation operation, register and assist new arrivals in Baluchistan and relocate urban refugees to the new camps. At the same time, it continued regular programme activities, notably providing some basic assistance in the old camps and carrying out refugee status determination and resettlement of those with no prospect of any alternative solution.

Efforts to provide assistance in the Chaman region, however, were complicated by a plethora of issues, ranging from drought to uneasy relations with local landowners. Important international partners withdrew from the region in the summer, citing security concerns. Meanwhile, the situation of the Afghans at the Chaman border remains unresolved and will therefore continue to be high on the agenda in 2003.

Offices

Islamabad
Karachi
Peshawar
Quetta

Partners

Government Agencies

Government of Pakistan

NGOs

Action Contre la Faim
Afghan Construction and Logistic Unit
Afghan Medical Welfare Association
Agency for Construction and Training
American Refugee Committee
Association of Medical Doctors of Asia
Basic Education and Employable Skill Training
British Broadcasting Company
Church World Services
Concern Worldwide
Cooperazione Internazionale
Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees
Frontier Primary Health Care
Global Movement for Children and Women
Handicap International
Health Net International
Health Vision
International Catholic Migration Committee
International Medical Corps
International Rescue Committee
INTERSOS
Islamic Relief – UK
Islamic Relief Agency
Kuwait Joint Relief Committee
Mercy Corps International
Norwegian Church Aid
Norwegian Refugee Council
Ockenden International
Organisation for Mine Clearance and Afghan Rehabilitation
Pakistan Community Development Programme
Pakistan Red Crescent Society
Participatory Integrated Development Society
Rifah Foundation
Save the Children Federation

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SAVERA Counselling Services
Sayyed Jamal-ud-Din Afghani Welfare Organisation
Society for Awareness of Human Development and Rights
Society for Human Rights and Prisoners Aid
Taraqee Trust
Tearfund
Union Aid for Afghan Refugees
Water, Environment and Sanitation Society
World Assembly of Muslim Youth

Others

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
UNDP
WFP

Financial Report (USD)

Expenditure Breakdown	Current Year's Projects			Prior Years' Projects		
	Annual Programme Budget	Supplementary Programme Budget	Total	Notes	Annual Programme and Supplementary Programme Budgets	Notes
Protection, Monitoring and Co-ordination	2,570,613	6,365,484	8,936,096		113,417	
Community Services	430,894	704,797	1,135,692		292,335	
Domestic Needs / Household Support	236,150	2,158,785	2,394,935		417,849	
Education	3,992,719	344,134	4,336,853		1,210,249	
Food	0	456,261	456,261		52,535	
Health / Nutrition	3,685,249	1,227,483	4,912,732		1,503,167	
Legal Assistance	2,529,138	978,295	3,507,433		168,953	
Operational Support (to Agencies)	978,358	2,438,613	3,416,971		1,668,892	
Sanitation	74,716	921,476	996,193		310,521	
Shelter / Other Infrastructure	0	1,536,590	1,536,590		832,427	
Transport / Logistics	76,364	2,145,124	2,221,488		582,731	
Water	585,164	952,244	1,537,408		1,252,476	
Transit Accounts	0	41,284	41,284		598	
Instalments with Implementing Partners	2,610,686	2,579,195	5,189,881		(3,357,745)	
Sub-total Operational	17,770,051	22,849,765	40,619,816		5,048,406	
Programme Support	1,732,917	1,531,085	3,264,002		65,083	
Sub-total Disbursements / Deliveries	19,502,968	24,380,850	43,883,818	(3)	5,113,489	(5)
Unliquidated Obligations	1,685,454	1,677,030	3,362,484	(3)	0	(5)
Total	21,188,422	26,057,880	47,246,302	(1) (3)	5,113,489	
Instalments with Implementing Partners						
Payments Made	14,334,272	12,911,664	27,245,936		2,335,360	
Reporting Received	11,723,586	10,332,470	22,056,055		5,693,105	
Balance	2,610,686	2,579,195	5,189,881		(3,357,745)	
Outstanding 1st January	0	0	0		4,525,225	
Refunded to UNHCR	0	0	0		1,150,538	
Currency Adjustment	0	0	0		(16,942)	
Outstanding 31 December	2,610,686	2,579,195	5,189,881		0	
Unliquidated Obligations						
Outstanding 1st January	0	0	0		5,701,074	(5)
New Obligations	21,188,422	26,057,880	47,246,302	(1)	0	
Disbursements	19,502,968	24,380,850	43,883,818	(3)	5,113,489	(5)
Cancellations	0	0	0		391,593	(5)
Outstanding 31 December	1,685,454	1,677,030	3,362,484	(3)	195,991	(5)
Figures which cross-reference to Accounts: (1) Annex to Statement 1 (3) Schedule 3 (5) Schedule 5						