

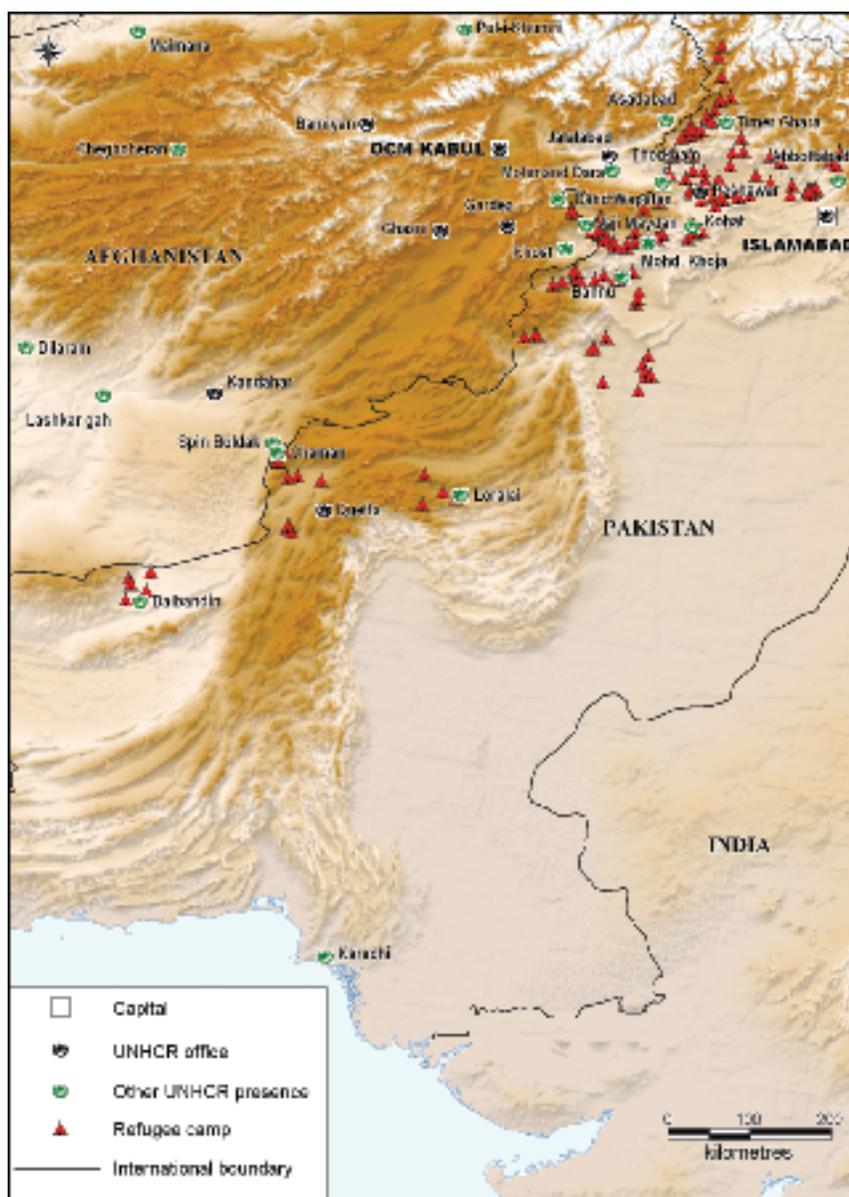
Pakistan

Main objectives

Facilitate the voluntary repatriation of Afghan refugees from Pakistan; provide protection and assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers; address more effectively the needs of Afghan refugees living in camps by maximising strategic partnerships and; develop a protection and assistance framework to respond to a potential influx.

Impact

- In 2003, UNHCR facilitated the return of over 343,000 Afghans from Pakistan within the context of the tripartite agreement which sets out a three-year time frame for the voluntary return of Afghans. The introduction of iris recognition technology – to complement UNHCR’s verification procedures for the voluntary repatriation operation – proved to be a successful deterrent against double registration.
- In spring 2003, the long-standing problem of the Afghans stranded in the Chaman Waiting Area was solved when the Government of Pakistan agreed to the dismantling of the makeshift camp there. Over half of the 16,000 Afghans residing in the camp relocated voluntarily to a settlement outside of Kandahar, and the remainder to a camp further inside Pakistan.
- In a significant advance, UNHCR signed an agreement with Pakistan’s National Aliens Registration Authority. This, for the first time, entitled non-Afghan refugees to obtain identification cards and to apply for work permits. In addition, for the first time in the history of the Afghan refugee programme in Pakistan, birth certificates



were issued for Afghan children born in the camps.

- Afghan refugees residing in the camps established after 11 September 2001 continued to receive a monthly WFP food ration and non-food items. The refugees also had access to education and health care. In the old refugee settlements, UNHCR provided minimum basic services in the sectors of education, health and water to some 1.1 million Afghan refugees.

Working environment

The context

Having conducted a survey on intentions to return at the end of 2002, UNHCR anticipated that there would be a decline in the overall numbers of refugees opting to repatriate in 2003. The majority of Afghans remaining in Pakistan had expressed a desire to "wait and see": although they still intended to return, few of them could say when. By December 2003, some 343,000 Afghans had registered for return.

UNHCR's primary focus in 2003 was on facilitating repatriation from camps, where some 1.1 million refugees continued to receive basic assistance. Alongside this, UNHCR developed a camp consolidation strategy for the post-11 September 2001 population, where refugees will have the option of relocating to another site in Pakistan or returning voluntarily. This strategy is expected to precipitate more returns.

Concerns over double registration led UNHCR to introduce a number of technical improvements to the voluntary repatriation operation in 2003. Tamper-proof voluntary repatriation forms, which included features such as micro-printing and ultraviolet ink, were procured out of country. Refugees six years of age and above were screened at Iris Validation Centres. And an enhanced regional Voluntary Repatriation database allowed for more rapid cross-checking and analysis of return movements.

Constraints

By signing the tripartite agreement with the Government of Afghanistan and UNHCR, the Government of Pakistan has committed itself to a policy of gradual and voluntary return until 2006. The 2002 mass return of 1.5 million Afghan refugees appears to have given rise to a more relaxed asylum climate. However, global initiatives to eradicate terrorism, threats to Pakistan's national security and sectarian clashes, could jeopardize UNHCR's efforts to provide protection and assistance to the remaining

Persons of concern

Main origin/Type of population	Total in country	Of whom UNHCR assisted	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Afghanistan (refugees)	1,123,600	1,123,600	53	59
Nigeria (asylum-seekers)	300	-	-	-
Iraq (asylum-seekers)	200	-	-	-

Income and expenditure (USD) Annual programme and Supplementary programme budgets

	Revised budget	Income from contributions (earmarked at the country level)	Other funds available ¹ (inc. income earmarked at the subregional level)	Total funds available	Total expenditure
AB	26,047,690	5,681,440	19,830,202	25,511,642	25,489,368
SB	10,927,484	294,602	9,491,337	9,785,939	9,765,397
Total	36,975,174	5,976,042	29,321,539	35,297,581	35,254,765

¹ Includes allocations by UNHCR from unearmarked or broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance (amounting to USD 1.6 million for the AB and USD 0.1 million for the SB) and adjustments (of which USD 17.2 million for the AB and USD 8.3 million for the SB represent transfers of income earmarked at the subregional level). The above figures do not include costs at headquarters.

Note: The Supplementary programme budgets do not include a 7 per cent charge (support costs) that is recovered from contributions to meet indirect costs for UNHCR.



UNHCR provides primary education at a school in Zar Karez camp, in Loralai district, Balochistan. *UNHCR/J. Redden*



Afghan population in Pakistan. For example, while the Government continued to advocate voluntary repatriation, local administrations in Islamabad, Karachi and Quetta ordered the mass arrest of Afghans following high-profile security incidents. In December 2003, after two assassination attempts on the President, the Government announced its intention to impose a more restrictive policy on the remaining camp population in the Tribal Areas.

The rise in sectarian violence and disputes with local landowners have also increased the risks to humanitarian aid workers operating in the more remote camps. Balochistan in particular has seen a steady deterioration in its security environment since March 2003, with almost weekly mortar attacks in Quetta town between rival groups. Meanwhile, the provincial government's crackdown on poppy cultivation, which involved the closure of access roads, periodically disrupted the delivery of assistance.

Funding

Reductions in UNHCR's annual Programme budget have had a negative impact on the assistance programme in the established camps housing an estimated 1.1 million Afghan refugees (some of whom came to Pakistan as long ago as the early 1980s). Strategic partnerships with NGOs and UN agencies – to supplement the support currently provided by UNHCR – became increasingly vital, and will have to expand in the coming years.

In mid-2003, basic health units were closed and schools consolidated. Retrenchment entailed the loss of some 300 teachers and more than 400 implementing partner staff. Activities such as the upgrading of infrastructure and repairs to water distribution networks in the older, more established, camps were also discontinued.

Achievements and impact

Protection and solutions

Throughout 2003, the Government of Pakistan honoured its commitment to the principle of voluntary and gradual return of refugees.

The promotion and dissemination of refugee law was intensified through discussion groups and workshops conducted for civil servants, members of the

judiciary and law enforcement officials. UNHCR contributed to the proposed amendments to the Foreigners' Act drafted by the Parliamentary Commission on Human Rights – a key feature being the incorporation of the refugee definition and the exemption of asylum-seekers from the punitive provisions of the Foreigners' Act. Equally important was the agreement reached on the issuance of birth certificates to Afghan children born in camps in Pakistan.

Activities and assistance

UNHCR's camp consolidation strategy, developed in July 2003, streamlined and reduced the costs of the post-11 September 2001 assistance operation. More importantly, the streamlining will result in enhanced security for refugees and humanitarian staff, providing improved access to assistance and protection.

Community services: UNHCR and partner staff trained male and female social workers in the camps to monitor and respond to incidences of sexual and gender-based violence and child labour. Workshops on landmine awareness and the rights of women and children were also conducted in the camps.

Domestic needs/Household support: During the winter season, donations of blankets, quilts and winter clothing were distributed to refugees in the new camps. Finding itself unable to procure sufficient quantities of good quality coal, UNHCR shifted to kerosene, supplying an average of 15 to 25 litres per family per month for heating and cooking in the new camps.

Education: In 2003, UNHCR funded just over 400 primary schools attended by more than 166,000 refugee children, 30 per cent of them girls. The Government of Pakistan's Education Cell provided middle and secondary education to some 8,000 students in 100 schools in North West Frontier Province (NWFP).

Food: Having assumed responsibility for food distribution in the new camps (under a global pilot project), WFP provided a ration of 2,100 kcals/person/day. The October WFP/UNHCR Joint Food Assessment Mission recommended continued food supply in the new camps to an estimated population of 206,000 refugees from January to June 2004, and 160,000 refugees from July to December 2004.

Health/Nutrition: By maintaining 135 Basic Health Units throughout 2003, UNHCR was able to provide all camp-based refugees with preventive and curative immunisation, mother and child, and reproductive health care.

Legal assistance: UNHCR extended protection and legal aid to camp-based and urban refugee populations through an expanded network of Advice and Legal Aid Centres. Lawyers and counsellors working in twelve centres provided free legal advice, helped to resolve legal matters, disseminated country of origin information and responded to queries related to refugee rights and voluntary repatriation.

Operational support (to agencies): Funds were used for the implementation of the programme and covered parts of their administrative expenses. On one hand, UNHCR maintained a flat rate for the salaries of international partner staff, while on the other hand, salaries for local staff were on par with Pakistan's national salary scale.

Sanitation: The new camps in NWFP were equipped with a solid waste disposal system in 2003.

Shelter/Other infrastructure: Some 7,000 refugees, relocated from the Chaman waiting area, were provided with tents upon arrival at Mohamad Keil. In anticipation of the camp consolidation strategy due to start in Balochistan in early 2004, UNHCR undertook basic site development at Mohammad Khail to absorb refugees relocated from the Chaman camps. Implementing partners distributed roofing kits, purchased with their own funds, to vulnerable refugees in Balochistan's new camps.

Transport/Logistics: Pakistan's National Logistics Cell received some financial support from UNHCR to maintain its fleet of transport vehicles (primarily trucks). Expenditure was incurred for the transport of refugees from the waiting area to Mohammad Khail.

Water: UNHCR endeavoured to supply an average of 15 litres of water per person per day to the entire camp-based population. Water supply, however, remained the most challenging and costly component of the post-11 September 2001 assistance operation. Sites selected for closure and consolidation in 2004 depended on expensive delivery of water by tankers, whereas others were able to access supplies through recently established or

repaired tube wells. Boreholes, shallow wells and handpumps were installed in only a few of the old camps.

Organization and implementation

Management

Although UNHCR's office in Islamabad managed the country programme, sub-offices in Peshawar and Quetta acquired more autonomy in 2003 through a decentralization process which encompassed budgets, planning and implementation. The Karachi field office, established in 2002 to support the voluntary return operation, continued to fulfil this function in 2003. Close liaison with UNHCR offices in Afghanistan was maintained, with staff from both countries participating in joint planning discussions, training workshops and cross-border visits throughout the year.

Working with others

UNHCR continued to work closely with the Government of Pakistan, while also enhancing strategic partnerships with other UN agencies, notably UNICEF, UNESCO and WFP, as well as with national and international NGOs. As UNHCR phased out its assistance programme in camps, it relied increasingly on these partnerships to remedy any unforeseen needs or systemic flaws. When mid-year funding constraints compelled UNHCR to scale back some of its planned activities in the camps, a number of key implementing partners were able to come forward with their own sources of funding. UNHCR was proactive in helping partners develop the capacity to raise their own funds.

Overall assessment

The security situation in parts of Pakistan and Afghanistan continues to affect UNHCR's operations. The resumption of facilitated returns in March 2003 coincided with the start of the military conflict in Iraq. Anxious that this would have repercussions in Afghanistan, many refugees delayed their departure from Pakistan. Return movements only began to gather pace in April, reaching their peak in June.

The facilitated return operation was then temporarily suspended in November 2003 following the murder of a UNHCR staff member in Afghanistan.

The signing of the tripartite agreement between Pakistan, Afghanistan and UNHCR was a significant achievement, in that it committed both Governments to a policy of voluntary return. The three-year agreement also foresees a regular dialogue between the parties with the establishment of the Tripartite Commission. This has had the added benefit of strengthening bilateral relations and providing a forum for the resolution of disagreements.

In 2003, UNHCR focused on returns from camps by deploying mobile teams, organizing discussion groups, and arranging "go and see" and "come and discuss" visits to help refugees find ways to overcome obstacles to return. Although this approach was resource- and labour-intensive, it was deemed conducive to more sustainable returns. UNHCR must nevertheless reconcile gradual returns from camps with its longer-term intentions to phase out the assistance programme. UNHCR will increasingly look to the partnerships forged in 2003 to meet any unforeseen needs, while ensuring continued protection to the remaining Afghan refugee population in Pakistan.

Offices
Islamabad
Abbottabad
Bannu
Chaman
Dalbandin
Karachi
Kohat
Loralai
Mohammad Khail (Balochistan)
Peshawar
Quetta
Timergar

Partners

Government agencies

Government of Pakistan

NGOs

American Refugee Council

Association for Medical Doctors of Asia

Afghan Medical Welfare Association

Basic Education and Employable Skill Training

Church World Services

Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees

Frontier Primary Health Care

Global Movement for Children and Women

Guardians

Health Net International

International Rescue Committee

INTERSOS

International Medical Corps

International Catholic Migration Commission

Kuwait Joint Relief Committee

Mercy Corps International

Norwegian Refugee Council

Ockenden International

Pakistan Red Crescent

Pakistan Community Development Programme

Save the Children (USA)

SAVERA Counselling Services

Society for Human Rights and Prisoners Aid

Sayyed Jamal-ud-Din Afghani Welfare Organisation

Society for Community Support for Primary Education

Union Aid for Afghan Refugees

World Assembly of Muslim Youth

Water Environmental and Sanitation Society

Others

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit

RIFAH Foundation

UNVs

WFP

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 Coordination	3,056,408	4,393,475	7,449,883		121,295	
Community Services	1,112,577	0	1,112,577		254,827	
Domestic Needs/Household Support	523,105	115,132	638,237		566,107	
Education	3,988,765	0	3,988,765		1,082,036	
Food	0	0	0		70,890	
Health/Nutrition	3,383,400	11,562	3,394,962		1,851,920	
Legal Assistance	929,807	1,132,840	2,062,647		478,520	
Operational Support (to Agencies)	1,774,858	1,126,433	2,901,291		872,974	
Sanitation	355,538	2,485	358,023		141,732	
Shelter/Other Infrastructure	66,827	42,750	109,577		391,522	
Transport/Logistics	465,709	119,853	585,562		234,115	
Water (non-agricultural)	1,254,881	4,948	1,259,829		446,287	
Transit Accounts	0	4,911	4,911		0	
Instalments with Implementing Partners	4,625,967	270,433	4,896,400		(4,358,222)	
Sub - total Operational	21,537,842	7,224,822	28,762,664		2,154,003	
Programme Support	1,891,363	1,040,616	2,931,979		90,287	
Sub - total Disbursements / Deliveries	23,429,205	8,265,438	31,694,643	(3)	2,244,290	(5)
Unliquidated Obligations	2,060,163	1,499,959	3,560,122	(3)	0	(5)
Total	25,489,368	9,765,397	35,254,765	(1) (3)	2,244,290	
Instalments with Implementing Partners						
Payments Made	16,603,387	1,644,595	18,247,982		1,711,639	
Reporting Received	11,977,420	1,374,163	13,351,583		6,069,861	
Balance	4,625,967	270,432	4,896,399		(4,358,222)	
Outstanding 1st January	0	0	0		5,189,881	
Refunded to UNHCR	0	0	0		763,226	
Currency Adjustment	0	0	0		(68,433)	
Outstanding 31 December	4,625,967	270,432	4,896,399		0	
Unliquidated Obligations						
Outstanding 1st January	0	0	0		3,558,476	(5)
New Obligations	25,489,368	9,765,397	35,254,765	(1)	0	
Disbursements	23,429,205	8,265,438	31,694,643	(3)	2,244,290	(5)
Cancellations	0	0	0		1,314,186	(5)
Outstanding 31 December	2,060,163	1,499,959	3,560,122	(3)	0	(5)

Figures which can be cross-referenced to the Accounts:

(1) Annex to Statement 1

(3) Schedule 3

(5) Schedule 5